

The Romantic Revival of Castilian Frontier Ballads in England: Its Precedents and Aftermath

La difusión de los romances fronterizos castellanos en Inglaterra:
precedentes y consecuencias

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RESUMEN

Revisión del conocimiento que se tenía en Inglaterra de la literatura española relativa a asuntos moriscos y granadinos a partir del siglo XVI y su evidente renacimiento en el XVIII y primera mitad del XIX. Análisis de las traducciones de algunos libros y de la influencia de autores como Pérez de Hita y los antiguos romances de la Frontera, y de la culminación de aquellas influencias en autores como Walter Scott y Washington Irving.

Palabras clave: Granada. Romances fronterizos. Literatura española, ss. XVI-XVIII. Moriscos. Literatura inglesa, ss. XVIII-XIX.

ABSTRACT

A review of English knowledge of Spanish literature regarding the Moriscos and Granada beginning in the sixteenth century and its evident revival in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries. An analysis of the translations of certain books and the influence of authors like Pérez de Hita and the old frontier romances, and the culmination of these influences in authors like Walter Scott and Washington Irving.

Key words: Granada. Frontier romances. Spanish literature, sixteenth-eighteenth centuries. Moriscos. English literature, eighteenth-nineteenth centuries.

The impact and lasting influence of the ballad collection *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* compiled by Bishop Thomas Percy (1729-1811) was one of the first signs of a new trend in creative writing and literary taste that would lead to the romantic movement. Contrary to the Renaissance, Baroque and Neoclassic codes, which were first developed in romance literatures, the new revolution in literary concepts and practice that would prevail until the advent of realism originated in Anglo-Saxon and Germanic areas, and later took root both in the established and the emerging literatures of Europe and of the American continent. Essential to the literary renewal was the fascination with past eras when heroic deeds occurred and were recorded in apparently artless chant and lore, giving rise to the anonymous ballads surviving in oral tradition.

One of the merits of Thomas Percy's contribution was that, while concentrating in folk-lore close to his roots, he extended his search to anonymous medieval poetry belonging to the heritage of foreign lands. He collected, translated and discussed texts from several alien languages and expressed his preference for those stemming from the northern and southern borders of Europe: Scandinavia and the Iberian Peninsula. Norwegian ballads were the most distant in subject-matter to the poetic repertoire of his time and they offered insights into a hitherto unknown mythology, whereas the "reconquered" kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula, as the Southern border line of Christian Europe, were frequently engaged in fighting the long established Moslem states of Al-Andalus, facing therefore adversaries of the same faith as those the crusaders had confronted.

If that fact could be interpreted, from a Castilian or Portuguese point of view, as a bond with the land of Richard the Lion Hearted, it also highlighted a difference; the adventures of the warrior king carried him and his men across the sea to conquer or to defend sacred sites in faraway lands, confronting for that purpose empires viewed by Christians as hostile and alien, whereas in the late Middle Ages the Moslem segment of the Iberian peninsula had reached with the caliphate of Cordoba a high level of civilization, and, in spite of later fragmentation, the ensuing small states and finally the kingdom of Granada established in eastern Andalusia, were also rich in culture and creativity. Their inhabitants were seen by the Christian population as their adversaries, but also as neighbors with whom they sported and traded. There was ample recognition of their expertise in certain fields, like medicine, architecture or the manufacture of silk and costly weaponry. If not peace, truce often defined the relationship between the inhabitants living on both sides of the Andalusian frontier. The frequent occurrence of captivity inflicted much hardship, but it also promoted ample exchange of information about the way of life and the structure of society in the neighboring land of the enemy. Separated by faith and allegiance, Christians and Moslem combatants differed also in mores, dress, horsemanship and military arts, but the bonds of friendship could cross frontier lines, since similar honor codes regarding warfare were professed on both sides, and all felt a strong bond to the disputed land that Christians and Muslims called their own. In the eyes of strict loyalists, some Castilian "fronterizos" –men of the frontier– went too far in adhering to the pleasurable ways of life they learned from their infidel friends, but folk-poets and the public that preserved their work tended to show the frontier leader reacting loyally and effectively in a moment

of crisis. Such frame of mind was apparent in the romances or ballads that Percy and other British men of letters brought back to the European repertoire. They dealt with feats of arms, seen from a close perspective that highlights the individual experience. Moorish hosts displaying sportmanship or going through shattering experiences are colorfully portrayed. The city of Granada, or a fortresses of the frontier, may be given protagonism, as the possessive drive of contenders foreshadows their future.

Before dealing with the impact made in the nineteenth century by the Castilian poems selected by Percy, it may be worthwhile to dwell in retrospect on some of the views about Spain that presumably were held in England and vice-versa, from the time when each people was made aware of the other before they became important players in European conflicts. If we consider early awareness of England in the Iberian Peninsula, we can mention the chivalric figure of Richard the Lion-Hearted, as it is reflected in *La gran conquista de Ultramar*, the Castilian adaptation of a history of the Crusades that circulated in manuscript form and in early sixteenth century editions. Focusing on facts, it is worth noting that from the XIIIth century on, a sequence of royal marriages took place, creating bonds between England and the Christian states of the Iberian Peninsula. Thus a Plantagenet princess became queen of Castile, and Fernando III, the conqueror of Seville, married his daughter Leonor to Edward Plantagenet, who would eventually inherit the English throne. This Castilian princess accompanied her husband on the Seventh Crusade, before they became king and queen of England.

In the XIV century another Edward Plantagenet –the prince of Wales with the profile of a chivalrous knight who was known as the Black Prince– became famous in Castile, since he took part in the civil strife between Pedro I and his half-brother Enrique of Trastámara, who eventually took the king's life in a duel, reputedly with the help of a famous French knight. The slain king was a controversial figure seen by many of his subjects as a strict defender of justice and accused by others of vindictiveness and cruelty. His character remains to this day a matter of controversy and all those involved in his strife became part of the legend. As to the Black Prince, he first helped the legitimate sovereign to regain his throne, and turned later against him. In England it was said that during his stay in Spain he contracted a disease that would eventually kill him. British involvement in the civil strifes of Castile remained active. The daughter of Pedro I was married to the Duke of Lancaster, John of Gaunt, who eventually would fail in a claim to the throne of Castile, but conducted daring military and naval operations on the Iberian coastline, in the framework of the War of the Roses. It has been suggested that he imported from Spain the “Morris Dance” –supposedly linked to a Moorish dance–, which would later become a feature of village festivals in England (*Encyclopædia Britannica*). At the end of the fifteenth century, when Isabella and Ferdinand negotiated with Henry VII the marriage of their daughter Catalina of Aragón to the heir of the English throne, prince Arthur, they were far from breaking new ground, but this match opened unforeseen opportunities of conflict that would later develop, more often on the British than the Spanish scenario.

At the offset of the sixteenth century and thereafter the events of real life were to some extent paralleled by the pseudo historical setting of some books of chivalry produced in the Peninsula, notably the masterpiece of the genre, *La vida de*

Amadís de Gaula. This book was printed in 1610 as the work of Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo, who presumably modified a text previously known in manuscript form and wrote the final part. The fictional hero of this immensely popular work, Amadís de Gaula, was reared in childhood by a Scottish nobleman, and as a youth he fell in love with the English princess Oriana, whose father not only reigned in Great Britain, but also received allegiance as a sort of emperor from a number of rulers of smaller states, some of which correspond to real places while others belong to the realm of myth or fantasy. A fictionalized court of England will also appear in similar books produced during the sixteenth century, while the Portuguese poet and playwright Gil Vicente—whose work represents a fine synthesis of late medieval and Renaissance trends—presents the English royal prince don Duardos, likewise a literary character in books of chivalry, as the hero of an exquisite court play.

When Isabella and Ferdinand completed the conquest of the kingdom or emirate of Granada, thereby closing the period in which Christians and Moors held sovereign states on Iberian soil, the king took care to share in a formal manner the good news with other sovereigns in Europe. They responded by celebrating the event solemnly as a great advancement for Christendom, holding religious services and civil festivities in cathedrals, palaces and the public square. The king of England Henry VII, who would soon establish family connections with the Spanish monarchs, ordered the Lord Chancellor to read at St. Paul's Church, in London, a solemn announcement of the victory signaling the final point of the historical process named "Reconquest" (Vincent). Disregarded, at least on the public level, was the disappearance of a state, that, although of different faith, was esteemed in Europe, among other considerations, for its achievements in architecture, its flourishing silk industry and the handicraft used in the production of luxurious apparel and weaponry (Ladero, pp.53-56). The fact that the English term grenadine designates a form of weaving may reflect the scope of Andalusian influence on this particular craftsmanship.

Peace between England and Spain was of short duration. Events known by all are Henry VIII's marriage to his brother's widow, his following repudiation of queen Catalina and his marriage to Anne Boleyn, which led to the separation from Rome of the Church of England. At that time Charles V held both the crowns of Spain and of the Sacred Roman Empire and he was recognized as a foremost champion of the Catholic Church. This view would prevail likewise in the case of his son Philipp II, who inherited his titles and possessions, except for the imperial throne. His previous marriage to queen Mary Tudor raised some expectations, which failed to materialize, that as consort king he would become a leader of catholicism in England. In fact, he left that country after his wife's death, and the enmity between him and Elizabeth I grew and led to the disaster of the Armada in 1588.

In Spain the antagonism was seen as stemming from a conflict of faith, and it was often echoed in writing and performance. An example of this negative view may have surfaced in the context of the festivities of Corpus Christi, as they were celebrated each year in the city of Toledo. The pageantry for this feast included a symbol of evil in the form of a dragon, called la Tarasca, on whose back rode a female, who at least in connection to the Toledo pageants, has been seen as a likeness of Ann Boleyn (Bernáldez Montalvo). Indeed, such images of the mother of the English protestant queen

endured beyond the times when they might have had a political significance. Late in the seventeenth century Pedro Calderón de la Barca depicted a somber image of the intrigues and passions leading to Henry VIII's divorce in his play *La cisma de Inglaterra*. An exception to the disparaging view of protestant England, which was prevalent (Herrero García pp. 454-492), may be seen in the fair treatment given to queen Elizabeth in Cervantes' short novel "La Española Inglesa", which is part of his collection *Novelas Ejemplares* (1612). And yet the story deals with an episode of the ongoing Anglo-Spanish conflict and it features the abduction of a child by a British officer, who is otherwise positively portrayed. Moreover, he belongs to a Roman Catholic family, forced to pursue in secrecy their religious practice, a situation not unlike that of crypto-Jews, crypto-Moslems or for that matter Christian dissidents in Spain at the time.

We should mention the presence in Spain of Catholic refugees from Ireland and England. In Seville, where they had established a Seminar in 1592, the major poet and humanist Fernando de Herrera wrote a biography of Thomas More, the Chancellor who was executed in 1535 because of his stand against Henry VIII's plan to divorce Catalina of Aragón. Sir Thomas was also one of the late Renaissance most renowned men of letters, and his *Utopia* was influential in Spain even before this dialogue in Latin, outlining a perfect state, was translated by his biographer into Spanish (López Estrada).

Moreover, diplomacy promoted the knowledge of English by some Spanish noblemen. Rare moments of Anglo-Spanish alliance on the highest level occurred after James Stewart became king of England in 1603, and specially when negotiations for the marriage of his son and heir Charles to a sister of Felipe IV took place in 1623. The dispatches of England's ambassador in the first instance deal with the way he was received at the Spanish court and the interesting pageantry and court theater he could witness (Shergold, pp. 247-249 and 243-294). As for the visit of the Prince of Wales to the Spanish court, he was offered a welcome full of splendor. Among other equestrian games, a "fiesta de toros y cañas" took place. That kind of sportsmanship had developed in Andalusia during the Middle Ages and it was often practiced with one of the teams of the "juego de cañas" wearing Moorish attire. The time that the British prince and his retinue spent in Madrid may be considered a moment of fruitful exchange in cultural matters, exemplified by the fact that the infanta made a serious effort to learn English (Martín-Gamero, pp. 103-112). Eventually the negotiations broke down, because on the Spanish side the adherence to Catholicism was considered a pre-requisite to the marriage, and whatever disposition the prince might have towards conversion, his father and the English parliament would not let it happen. Actually, the antagonism based on politicized religious allegiance persisted, at least until events such as the French revolution and the Napoleonic invasion of Spain led both parts to revise the negative views they held of each other. Eventually, British and American travelers would discover among Spain's lower classes the virtues they found lacking in their rulers (Alberich).

Turning our attention to earlier literary production, we may wonder if the antagonism towards Spain prevalent at the time in England influenced the pre-shakespearean dramatist Thomas Kyd to place in that country the display of cruelty and despair

of his non-historical Spanish Tragedy (1594), avoiding the usual scenario of remote and alien cultures where the violence of Renaissance plays of the Senecan variety usually unfolds. On the other hand, Thomas Middleton's play *A game of chess* (1624) brought to stage the diplomatic interplay of the failed marriage project we have mentioned (Stubbings # 112), and the same author must have taken from Cervantes' "La Gitanilla" the utopian view of a gipsy community, as well as the main plot of his tragicomedy *The Spanish Gipsy*.

Along the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the English public became familiar with the main trends of Spanish literature, beginning with *La Celestina*, a portrayal of human passion encompassing love, greed, envy and despair. It was followed closely by some books of chivalry and more significantly by the mundane and –given the prevalent taste at the period–very readable works of Antonio de Guevara, whose *Epistles* provided a degree of insight into some peculiar facets of Spanish society, including the presence of "new christians". Pastoral fiction also found its way, and *La Diana* by Jorge de Montemayor became the vehicle for the diffusion in England, among other countries, of the anonymous short novel *El Abencerraje*, with its attractive portrayal of noble adversaries confronting each other at the Andalusian frontier and of young lovers who are Granadine moors (Fosalba, pp. 207-208, 240; Munari, pp. 26, 40-41, 54). Beginning with Thomas Shelton's translation of *Don Quijote* [Part I] in 1612, the works of Cervantes and the most important of the so-called picaresque novels depicting the margins of society were translated into English. Such books included episodes or inserted short novels highlighting a different view of human nature than that expressed in the autobiographical narrative of a rogue, and some of these contrasting segments would have in translation an itinerary of their own. It is the case of the exquisite Moorish novel "Historia de los enamorados Ozmín y Daraja", inserted in the First Part of Mateo Alemán's *Vida de Guzmán de Alfarache* (1599), which was recast in the French novel *La Palme de fidélité* (1620) by Nicolas Lancelot (Carrasco, 2002). The English public became familiar with *The Rogue* in 1623 through the excellent translation by James Mabbe, and the inserted Moorish novelette provided, as noted by a XVII century critic, the model for a bullfight in a "heroic play" by John Dryden that we will discuss briefly (Langbaine, p.158). All in all, literary translation provided a multiple image of Spain, oscillating between realism and idealistic stylization.

One instance worth highlighting in any survey of Spanish translations into English is that of an apocryphal history of the fall of Visigothic Spain, followed by an idealized portrait, equally pseudo-historical, of the first period of Moslem occupation of the Peninsula. I refer to *La verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo* (1592) written by Miguel de Luna, who embodied the paradoxes of a Granadine bourgeoisie of Moorish origin when it was nearing extinction, at least as a recognizable segment of society. Luna is known to-day to have contributed to a secret scheme carried out by Moriscos involving falsified antiquities and texts about the remote origins of Granada and the existence of early Christian martyrs in the region, circumstances which they hoped might counteract the growing hostility against the Morisco community (Márquez Villanueva pp. 45-93; Bernabé Pons 2001). To his contemporaries Luna was a physician and a translator of Arabic documents, who in this second capacity had become a valued public servant. He dedicated to Philip II the book we are discussing, pretending his

role was merely that of the translator of an Arabic manuscript, a device profusedly used in that period to authenticate the veracity of plots obviously based on legendary or fictional subject-matter. A second part of the book appeared in 1600 and the total work was repeatedly published in Spain, but at the time it was not taken into consideration by writers or historians. To be noted, however, is the fact that during the seventeenth century the book was translated into English, French and Italian, –in that order, which at that period was rather exceptional–. The first partial English version was printed in London in 1627 with an inscription to King Charles, who as Prince of Wales had visited Spain trying to negotiate his wedding with a sister of Felipe IV. The mild exoticism of the subject matter and the embellishment of an element in the past which was antagonistic to the core of the Spanish Catholic monarchy exerting power in Europe may have contributed to the temporary success of this minor writer outside Spain. One wonders if, from a distant perspective, the fantasized history by Luna gained in credibility. In any case, it made English readers aware of the fact that an advanced civilization had once flourished in Moslem Spain.

Surprisingly, the *Civil Wars of Granada* (1595) by Ginés Pérez de Hita, a fictionalized chronicle of the conquest portraying a chivalric society in Moslem Granada, was not translated into English until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the Moorish and frontier ballads it contained had already become popular among audiences aware of the new romantic values. In real life, as events unfolded during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, we see small but articulate groups of religious or political dissidents leave Spain or Portugal and settle mainly in cities like Lyon, Rouen, Paris or Amsterdam (Cioranescu, pp. 33-56). Some of them them produced books that were also read in England.

The most notorious exile was Antonio Pérez, a former secretary to Phillip II who had reached in Madrid a position of power. He was suspected of plotting the death of a colleague, and according to rumors he did it at the instigation of his royal master. To avoid been tried by the Inquisition, Pérez fled from Castile to his native Aragón where medieval legislation protecting the rights and privileges of hidalgos was still in place, though constantly challenged. The Chief Justice of Aragón, who stood firmly by the fugitive, payed disobedience to the king with his life, as did a sizable portion of the Aragonese aristocracy and gentry who were punished as traitors. The main player succeeded, however, in escaping to France, where he settled down to write a book of memoirs entitled *Relaciones* (1598), which turned out to be damaging to the reputation of king Philip II and became one of the sources for the “black legend”.

English literature offers one important contribution to the repertoire of literary works dealing with the fall of Granada and the previous moment of splendour painted in late medieval and Renaissance ballads as well as in the *The Civil Wars of Granada*. This book was not translated into English during the Renaissance or the Restoration periods. However, it left its mark on English drama. No less an author than John Dryden produced *Almanzor and Almahide or the Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards* (1669-1670), which is, according to his terminology, a “heroic play” in two parts.

The main plot and several subsidiary episodes, as well as the portrayal of a chivalrous Moorish court modified by the sophistication of French society, are borrowed

from *Almahide ou l'Esclave reine* (1660-1668), an extensive roman de longue haleine by Georges de Scudéry, which was translated into English only after Dryden used it as the main source of the drama we are discussing. Drawing from Pérez de Hita's adaptation of the theme of the slandered queen whose innocence must be proven in a judicial duel, the French author describes his heroine as a compendium of opposites: she is both a Christian and a Moslem, a queen and a slave, a maid and a married woman. Presiding over a gallant court, which is presented as an anticipation of Versailles, she is wooed by both Castilian and Granadine knights. The main plot is intertwined with episodes of courtship and lengthy descriptions of tournaments and festivals, as well as learned discussions in the sophisticated style named précieux. As is the case in the work of Pérez de Hita, courtesy becomes the common virtue that brings about a meeting of minds between the contestants at the time when the sovereign of Granada, portrayed here as both weak and cruel, loses the esteem of his gallant courtiers. Although the book was never finished, the outcome, foreshadowed in a horoscope, must have included the surrender of the Granadine monarch to the Catholic Monarchs.

The main feature of Dryden's *Almanzor and Almahide* is the fact that it is focused on the main character, a knight of unknown origin embodying a concept of human greatness. Unsurpassed as a warrior, he feels contempt for the king he serves, who is also his rival as he vows *Almahide*. Always yielding, however, to the will of the woman he loves, *Almanzor* becomes the sole obstacle to the fall of Granada, until by supernatural intervention he is made aware of his identity and learns that the Castilian leader he is about to overcome is his own father. The surrender of the hero, whose birth may be seen as emblematic of a fusion of cultures, brings about the end of the fictionalized court of Granada, where Christian and Moslems forget that they were born enemies to pursue their individual rivalries as champions and lovers. The new prototype created by the author, who explains his intentions in a long introduction, resembles the heroes of Antiquity in the reluctance to show allegiance to a worldly power, but to some extent the modern disregard for birth and the contempt for established authority is also prefigured.

While translations of Spanish literature and the French output of fiction inspired by facts and fantasies stemming from Spain were well known by French writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, no similar trend is discernible in England predating Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765). This collection includes a free translation of "Río verde, río verde" and a "Moorish Tale" inspired by "Por la calle de su dama". Both romances appear, as many others, intertwined in the narrative of *The Civil Wars of Granada*. By that time an interest in medieval balladry had emerged in British scholarly circles, and on the other hand the diplomat Henry Swinburne was about to publish his sensitive travel memoirs sharing the thrill he had experienced in a visit to the historic sites of Granada (Arié, 2002). After the appearance of the *Reliques*, Bishop Percy began planning another collection of *Ancient Songs* chiefly on Moorish Subjects, and John Pinkerton remarked that the public's interest in primitive Spanish poetry had been awakened rather than satisfied by the samples made available, and accordingly he increased by four the number of English translations when he published his own anthology of *Select Scottish Ballads* (1783).

Also relevant was the appearance in 1801 of Thomas Rodd's translation of the interpolated ballads in *The Civil Wars of Granada*, which preceded by two years his translation of Pérez de Hita's book. His interest was echoed by significant poets who provided their own poetic versions of some of the poems. Among them we should mention Lord Byron's "Woe is me, Alhama" ["Paseábase el rey moro"], which appeared interpolated in the first published part of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812). Actually this is one of the frontier ballads that have led some scholars to consider the possibility that a comparable repertoire of poems in arabic dialect, dealing with events at the frontier, might have existed in Moorish Granada, providing the insight into the adversaries' emotional reaction which is a trait of this type of ballads (Fórneas Besteiro).

In 1797 Robert Southey, more inclined to other medieval Spanish subjects like the exploits of the Cid, produced the first of his own translations of seven ballads from Pérez de Hita's book (Bryant, 1973, p. 26). Important on the scholarly front were the *Spanish Ballads* (1823) –enlarged as *Ancient Spanish Ballads* (1842)– published with learned introductions by John Gibson Lockhart. Another significant collection was published by Sir John Bowring with the title *Ancient Poetry and Romances of Spain* (1824). The choice of the Spanish term 'romance' in lieu of 'ballad' in the title is indicative of the collector's first hand knowledge of Spain. Indeed, the contribution of British and North American scholars to the colossal development of scholarship devoted to the romancero and its survival to this day as oral poetry of many communities –including North African and Sephardic–, deserves to be recognized.

The initiative of Bishop Percy and his followers was soon paralleled in other European countries. In Germany the discovery of medieval romances strengthened the theories, formulated by Johan Friedrich von Herder, about the nature of folk poetry as an expression of deep human emotions already existing in primitive mankind, still close to nature. This philosopher had also published as early as 1778 a collection of *Volklieder* which included Spanish frontier and Moorish ballads. Soon scholars became engaged in a controversy that would linger for many years concerning the role of the minstrel in the creative process. For some scholars medieval performers were the recipients, for others the authors of the oldest poetry voicing the legends and values of an ethnic community. With few exceptions it was believed that the people whose myths and ideals found expression in epic poetry played a decisive rule in at least structuring, through the process of repetition and omission, the poems surviving in oral tradition.

In the case of the Spanish ballads on Moorish subjects occasional errors were made, like considering that certain romances composed by poets as sophisticated and concerned with details of composition as was Luis de Góngora, were the fruit of a collective creative process. However, the mistake was justified since both traditional ballads and many contemporary romances dealing with frontier or Moorish themes that were composed by individual authors, appeared side by side, with no record of the author's name, in collections printed during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Moreover many of the old and the new romances were sung.

Among European scholars of the nineteenth century a debate lingered between the believers in communal composition and those insisting on the indispensable role of an unnamed author who identified with the concerns and sensibility of his community. It

is a fact that the oral romancero partially survives to this day in certain rural areas of the Iberian Peninsula and the Spanish speaking countries of America, as well as in some closely knit communities, in particular those of Sephardic Jews now spread around the world.

Turning our attention to romantic revival in England of the themes of Granada, we must notice that, outside the realm of the ballad, it remained rather scanty. Mention should be made, however, of some interesting contributions. As early in his career as 1797, Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote a tragedy, *Osorio* [recast as *Remorse* in 1813], which bears testimony of his interest in a less glamorous segment of the history of Moslem Spain. I refer to the Moriscos, who were the offspring of the Moors but had converted, often under coercion, to the religion of the conquerors. During the reign of Philipp II an uprising took place in a mountainous region—the Alpujarras—of the former kingdom of Granada, and it took an army commanded by don Juan de Austria to overcome the insurgents. In the play the period that follows becomes the setting for a conflict arising between two brothers who belong to a prominent Spanish family. One of them stands by the downtrodden Moriscos while the other takes part in the repression and is killed by a Morisco widow. Actually, as the author himself explains, this situation is not based on an actual episode but rather on the plot of the German play *Die Räuber* by Friedrich Schiller, which is unrelated to Moors and Christians conflict. The relocation is not without merit, since during the sixteenth century Spanish society was actually divided in its views of the Morisco problem (Márquez pp.117-129, 171-195 and 248-256), and to some extent literary authors and historians would continue to reflect such dichotomy.

In Austria and Germany the fascination and scholarly engagement with the work of Pérez de Hita and the interpolated ballads led two major writers, who introduced in theory and practice the aesthetics of romanticism, to write fiction, translate ballads or compose original poems featuring their themes and style. They are Herder, whom we have already mentioned, and August Wilhelm Schlegel, who praised Spanish seventeenth century theater in his famous Vienna lectures. Among younger poets, it was Heinrich Heine who wrote a long and complex drama on the plight of the Moriscos, with the title of *Almansor*. It has in common with Coleridge's *Remorse* the interplay of opposing attitudes in members of the same family facing adversity, but in this play it is not the victors but rather the defeated Moriscos who follow opposing paths after their land has been obliterated. While a young girl educated by a Spanish family is a devout Catholic, her childhood friend and sweetheart will not yield in his beliefs or his loyalty to the lost homeland. The disastrous end of all characters follows. This rarely mentioned tragedy has been recently studied with remarkable insight by André Stoll. The critic relates the plight of the protagonist to the perplexities of the dramatist, who was part of the German intellectual elite but still faced discrimination as a Jew. Moreover, a planned disturbance was staged on the occasion of the opening performance of this ambitious work, and the incident may have been one of the reasons for Heine's voluntary exile.

In France, where the Roman Hispano-Mauresque had flourished for more than two centuries, another influential work appeared in 1791. *Gonzalve de Cordoue ou Grenade reconquise* by Jean Pierre Claris de Florian introduced certain themes expressing

a new outlook, like the love of a hero for a woman of different faith or the despair of an unyielding champion when his sovereign surrenders his homeland to the conquerors. Gonzalve de Cordoue was widely read in France and Spain and it became the source of plays and musical performances. Another influential book, this time by a major romantic author, was published in 1826, though written earlier, and would remain influential for many years. I refer to the short novel *Les Aventures du dernier Abencérage* by François René de Chateaubriand. From a different angle, it deals also with a conflict of opposing family and religious allegiance. This work captures for the first time in romantic fiction the enchantment of the Alhambra and the significance of landscape. It also expresses the interplay of historic memory and personal experience (Arié 1997). In the field of French scholarship, the interest in Castilian ballads was by then apparent, as in most European learned circles. Another new development, the emergence of travel books, gave rise to a lasting trend, following the appearance in 1843 of Théophile Gautier's *Tra los montes* [first title of *Voyage en Espagne*], which includes some of the most inspiring accounts of a prolonged visit to the Alhambra.

Among the fantasies relating to Granada's past of other European authors, we could mention *Maurerpigen* [The Moorish Maid], another play on the subject of the Moriscos, by Hans Christian Andersen, the famed collector of folk-tales, who in his mature years would visit Spain and write an engaging page on his encounter with the Alhambra. Inspired also by the religious and cultural duality of Granada, but more personal and allegorical in subject matter was the poem *Die Alhambra am Vorabend des Advent* by the Austrian author Clemens Brentano (Carrasco, 2001).

Towards the turn of the century and thereafter, England had become a refuge for Spanish liberals who during their years of exile were made aware of the revolution taking place in literary appreciation and in creative writing. When around 1834 political change allowed for the return of the exiles to their homeland, most of them had embraced Romanticism and they played a major role in the renewal of the literary scene. In some cases, their contribution was important, both in terms of their literary output and their political significance. They also promoted, among other changes, an interest in the country's own past, highlighting the complexity of its culture as well as the emergence of individual style.

Our subject to-day is not the romantic revival or revolt in Spain, to use the terminology of the British scholar Edgar Allison Peers, but an exception should be made in the case of an exile who chose to remain in England and wrote novels in English featuring the Middle Ages in Spain or specifically the history of the Moriscos. I refer to Telesforo de Trueba y Cossío, who was the first Spanish novelist to use the model of Walter Scott's historical fiction to revive the past of his native country. He did so in *Gomez Arias or the Moors of the Alpujarras* (1828), a novel whose plot is taken from seventeenth century plays about an episode occurring during the Morisco upheaval of 1668. Later he wrote *The Castilian*, introducing a theme of civil strife, specifically the dynastic conflict in which the Black Knight took part. His most successful work, entitled *The Romance of History. Spain* (1829) is a three volume collection of episodes of a 'romantic' nature covering a variety of regions and periods and duplicating at times the subject of his novels.

It is necessary to add a word concerning british travel books. The approach to a foreign land reflected by most memoirs offers an alternative to that of historians and creative writers and it has been approached from widely different perspectives, including that of the specialist, exemplified by Richard Ford. The multiplicity of Andalusia's roots, reflected in its monuments and ruins, influenced the visitor to create his own image of the land and the people he observed, particularly in regard to the lower classes. Actually, the differences perceived, not always objectively, were influential in shaping a fantasized image that became a topic accepted by the very people it portrayed. At the same time, the traveller who came in contact with the Andalusian myths was often moved to search for a lost paradise of his own (González Troyano). In the case of *The Bible in Spain* (1843) by George Borrow, a deep understanding of the character of the country is sought, since the visitor, who has a mission, spends time interacting with its people. Moreover, the author's disposition moves him to enjoy the company of the vagabonds and Gypsies he meets on the roads. These unconventional memoirs show real insight and yet they impress the reader as an adventure book (Zulueta).

Travelers included artists who produced sketches and prints capturing the beauty of sites, highlighting what was exotic and portraying also picturesque scenes. The effect was to make the peculiarities of Spain and particularly of Andalusia well known outside its borders, and to promote travel. Visitors' memoirs became popular as a growing circle of persons felt that they could experience through reading the emotions of a voyage to a land still revealing shades of past and exotic cultures. They also sought after works of art or at least luxury objects capturing the flavor of the Alhambra. Eventually a style was promoted in architecture and decorative art that spread from England through Europe and also America (Raquejo).

This new Alhambraism paralleled the currents in literature and scholarship that had developed earlier, and their synthesis is best represented in the writings of Washington Irving. An American story writer bent on historical research, he spent time in Granada collecting and reading old Castilian chronicles. He remained at the same time a seeker of sensations and developed an empathy with the simple folk who crowded the historical sites. His response to the beauties of art and nature in southern Spain were intertwined with such encounters. Moreover, as he recorded his experiences in *The Alhambra. A Series of Tales and Sketches from the Moors and Spaniards* (1832) he allowed himself to bring into the scene, not only local legends about the Islamic past and the loss by the last Moorish king of his earthly paradise, but also oriental touches and even elements of magic that belonged to unrelated myths (Delpech 2000 and 2001).

We might consider Washington Irving's masterpiece as the climax of the romantic revival we have tried to sketch. It could be noted that our survey does not cover the earlier treatment of the memories of Granada in the Spanish context. They encompass a vast corpus, which raises questions of identity versus rejection of the Islamic past (González Alcántud). The conflicting views of historical events displayed by Spanish writers do not concern, at least in a significant way, the trend that was started in Northern Europe, when Castilian frontier ballads were integrated in the poetic corpus which promoted the deep renewal in literary practice and sensibility leading to romanticism.

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