

Samuel G. Armistead

The Menéndez Pidal Collection of Judeo-Spanish Romances

The vast archive of unedited Hispanic traditional ballads formed by the late Don Ramón Menéndez Pidal contains what is without doubt the richest and most abundant collection of Sephardic Spanish traditional poetry in existence. During the summers of 1970, '71, '72, '73, and December-January 1975-76, with the support of grants from the American Philosophical Society, I worked at the Archivo Menéndez Pidal in Madrid classifying this unique collection of Judeo-Spanish *romances*. The result of this endeavour is a three-volume, 1,150 page catalog, index, and anthology to be published in Madrid late in 1976 by the Cátedra-Seminario Menéndez Pidal: *El Romancero judeo-español en el Archivo Menéndez Pidal (Catálogo-Índice de romances y condones)*, by Samuel G. Armistead, with the collaboration of Selma Margaretten, Paloma Montero and Ana Valenciano and with musicological transcriptions edited by Israel J. Katz.

Volumes I and II comprise a catalog of the various text-types represented in the collection. Spanish and English narrative summaries and a bibliography of the Judeo-Spanish, Pan-Hispanic, and European analogs of each ballad are provided. The Introduction, printed in both Spanish and English in Vol. I, traces the history of the collection and stresses the importance of the new text-types—a total of 35—which the Archive's holdings add to the known repertory of the Sephardic *Romancero*. Vol. III contains an "Anthology of Rare Ballads" (with musicological transcriptions where available) and a series of indices to facilitate the study of the materials presented in Vols. I and II. The following indices are included: Index of interviews; of ballad repertories of the various geographic sub-traditions; of the geographic origins of the texts; of informants; of collectors; of musical transcriptions; of titles of Sephardic ballads and songs; of titles of ballads from other Hispanic and European traditions; of first verses of the Judeo-Spanish texts; of first verses of sixteenth-century *romances* and other source texts; of narrative motifs; and of proper names. A glossary of dialect forms and Arabic, Hebrew, and Turkish words is also included.

The collection comprises a total of 2,150 texts of Judeo-Spanish *romances* and narrative poems, plus 217 other songs of various types. The *romances* and narrative songs represent 298 different text-types and were collected (or at least sent to the Archive) between 1896 and 1957 by such distinguished scholars and ballad collectors as José Benoliel, Manuel Manrique de Lara, Saül Mézan, Diego Catalán, Michael Molho, Moshe Attias, and many others. By far the largest contribution came from Manrique de Lara, who between 1911 and 1916 added a total of 1,972 Judeo-Spanish texts from both the Eastern Mediterranean and the Moroccan traditions to the Menéndez Pidal collection, as well as 354 precious musical transcriptions.

Together with numerous already well-known *romances* of epic origin, both Spanish and Carolingian in subject matter (*Las quejas de Jímena*, *El rey Fernando en Francia*, *Sancho y Urraca*, *Búcar sobre Valencia*, *Roncesvalles*, *La muerte de don Beltrán*, *El sueño de doña Alda*, *Amerique de Nar-*

bona, and others), the Menéndez Pidal collection also includes several ballads on epic themes which have never before been reported from the Judeo-Spanish tradition. Such are *El entierro de Fernandarias* (á-o), derived from the old romance, "Por aquel postigo viejo" (*Primavera* 50-50a), on the *Cerco de Zamora*, of which the Menéndez Pidal collection now offers us four versions from Izmir and one from Larissa; *La jura de Santa Gadea* (ú-o), a unique modern survival of the old artistic ballad, "Hizo hacer al rey Alfonso / el Cid un solemne juro" (Dúran 810), collected by Manrique de Lara in a single version from a 98-year-old woman in Tangier; *Roldán al pie de la torre* (ú-a), which echoes the chanson de geste of *Ogier le Danois*, in eight versions from Sarajevo, Salonika, and Larissa; *Guarinos y Floripas* (á-e), a curious, unique fragment from Morocco, reproducing the circumstances of an episode of the Old French *Fierabras*; and the rare, exclusively Sephardic romance of *Galiana*, a derivative of the *Mainete* (*Enfances de Charlemagne*).

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ICLS-1977

The Second Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society took place at the University of Georgia, March 31-April 2, 1977. Among the sections of interest to most of the readers of *Olifant* were ones devoted to Tristan, Marie de France, Roman Courtois, Courtly Love, the French Chanson, Otherworldly Motifs in Romance, Lexicography, Chrétien de Troyes, Chivalry, Modern Uses of Courtly Literature, Poetic Language, Provençal, Spanish, Italian, and Non-Western Literature.