

CULTURES IN CONTACT IN MEDIEVAL SPAIN:

Historical and Literary Essays Presented to L.P. Harvey

**Edited by
DAVID HOOK
and
BARRY TAYLOR**

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INTRODUCTION

Since its foundation in 1831, the Department of Spanish at King's College London has, with the exception of brief periods of hiatus between the appointments of staff during the nineteenth century, been continuously engaged in teaching and publication on Spanish themes. The Cervantes Chair of Spanish, the establishment of which in 1916 speaks for a commitment to scholarship undaunted by the turmoil of contemporary events, has been held by a succession of distinguished Hispanists: James Fitzmaurice-Kelly, Antonio Pastor, Edward M. Wilson, Alexander A. Parker, R.O. Jones, and L.P. Harvey, who succeeded Roy Jones in 1973 and retired as Cervantes Professor and Head of Department in 1983, a date of which the significance will be all too apparent to observers of the contemporary British academic world. As will be seen from our list of L.P. Harvey's publications, the years since 1983 (during which he has continued to serve both the Department and Hispanism, first in a part-time capacity, then as Emeritus Professor) have witnessed an increase in scholarly productivity fostered by freedom from the burdensome administration which has fallen so heavily upon senior academic staff in the last decade. It is, moreover, our confident expectation that works in press and in prospect will rapidly render our list of publications an historical statement rather than a complete catalogue; we have already been delighted to have to update it during production of this volume, and, like Pat Harvey's *curriculum vitae*, it is open-ended. It is, however, exhaustive to 1990, with the exception of book reviews. The purpose of this collection of essays at this point in Pat Harvey's career is not principally to commemorate his retirement, therefore, but rather to honour the continuing work of someone whose breadth and depth of learning and exacting scholarly standards are as much a feature of the man as are his humanity, generosity and *mesura*.

Because of practical constraints, the contents of this volume are but a partial reflection of Pat Harvey's professional interests. Hispano-Arabic studies are represented by the papers of Charles Burnett and T.J. Gorton, and the relations between Islamic and Christian Spain in the fields of literature, culture, and history by those of Samuel G. Armistead, Roger Boase, Brenda Fish, Richard Hitchcock and Francisco Marcos Marín; contacts between east and west also underlie the textual transmission studied by Barry Taylor, and Arabic loan-words in Spanish, though not the principal subject of Ralph Penny's paper (itself a reminder of Pat Harvey's interests in historical linguistics), abound in his lists of examples. The other minority of medieval Iberia in which Pat has been interested, Spanish Jewry, forms the cultural backdrop to John Edwards's examination of the problems encountered by a fifteenth-century bishop. A wide range, in theme and period, is thus spanned in essays exploring various aspects of the contact between the three principal cultural and religious communities in the Peninsula, and some clearly successful contacts are discussed in addition to the failures,

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though the latter bulk larger in the historical record. We are inevitably reminded of Pat Harvey's observation that 'Cultures can come into contact . . . but only with the utmost difficulty can they communicate' (*JRAS*, 1977, p. 117).

The insights which a comparative approach opens up are a feature of Pat's work on the Old Spanish epic, beginning with his important article of 1963 on the *Poema de Mio Cid* and Yugoslav heroic songs. In the present volume, Alan Deyermond's paper on the influence of biblical modes of thought upon traditional epic legend reveals one aspect of the interplay of different levels within a single Christian culture; points of contact between Spain and two other areas of Western European culture are also represented in our collection, with David Hook's examination of the debt of Spanish epic to French epic phraseology, and the suggestion by Roger Walker and Milija Pavlović that the influence of Germanic legal concepts helps to explain an obscure statement in the *Poema de Mio Cid*.

It is a matter of regret to the editors that more contributors could not be invited to participate, but the volume does represent in this way, albeit summarily, the major fields in which Pat Harvey has worked. It is particularly pleasing, moreover, that, in addition to the London colleagues and the former students of Pat's who form a large part of our team, we have received the enthusiastic collaboration of scholars from other universities in Britain, Spain, and the United States. That Arab scholarship is not represented among our contributors is due entirely to the limitations of the editors' professional range; Pat Harvey, of course, is equally at home in Europe and in the Islamic world, and it would be perfectly possible for his Islamicist colleagues to produce a volume in his honour which did not overlap in content with this one, and still did not exhaust the range of themes on which Pat has written, edited, spoken, or chaired conferences and colloquia: for even such a volume would be unlikely to embrace both textual criticism and Canadian placenames.

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David Hook
Barry Taylor