

Background to the Theory of Arabic Origins

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In 1912 Julián Ribera read his discourse of reception into the Royal Spanish Academy on the *Cancionero* of Ben Guzmán. His final assertion produced a shock among the learned Academicians: "la clave misteriosa que explica el mecanismo de las formas poéticas de los varios sistemas líricos del mundo civilizado en la Edad Media está en la lírica Andaluza, a que pertenece el *Cancionero* de Ben Guzmán."¹ Although the romanists found Ribera's hypothesis very reasonable, they asked for documentary proof that this lyrical system existed before Guzmán and the Provençal poets who were using it in the twelfth century, whom everyone considered to be predecessors of all *Romania*. In 1915 he presented his proof, but the Academicians, who resisted any radical change in the question of origins, remained silent on the matter. It was not until other scholars continued and extended the investigation on the subject that it gained many new followers. Menéndez Pidal, who in 1919 gave little importance to the theory, by 1938 had become convinced of the Arabic-Andalusian thesis.

Ribera's assertion re-opened for discussion and investigation a thesis which had lain dormant for over a century—a thesis which had been championed by some of the foremost scholars of the last half of the eighteenth century, but which, due to lack of concrete proof, had been all but forgotten.

One of the first to subscribe publicly to a belief in the Spanish-Arabic origin of the Provençal poetic tradition was Xavier Lampillas, who, in his *Saggio storico-apologetico della letteratura spagnuola contro le pregiudicate opinioni d'alcuni moderni scrittori italiana* (6 vols.; Genoa, 1778-81)² attempted to establish as fact that the Italian poets of the fourteenth century were directly indebted, through the Provençal, to Spanish poetic tradition.

¹"The mysterious key which explains the mechanism of the poetic forms of the various lyric systems of the civilized world in the Middle Ages is in the Andalusian lyric, to which the *Cancionero* of Ben Guzmán belongs."

Xavier Lampillas was one of the thousands of Spanish Jesuits who, following the mandate of Carlos III in 1767, were exiled from Spain and took refuge in Italy. While there, he became acquainted with the Italian historians Saverio Bettinelli and Girolamo Tiraboschi and took exception to their claims that Italy was the "maestra del orbe" and that Spain was directly responsible for all the poor taste and decadence which had appeared from time to time through the centuries in Italy. In his *Saggio storico-apologetico* he vindicates Spain and makes certain claims as to Spain's priority in time over Italy in certain literary genres. His thorough treatment of Spanish literature of all types and of all periods constitutes the first complete history of Spanish literature.³

The claims which Lampillas makes for Spanish priority over Italy in the field of poetry after the eleventh century are based upon his belief that Provençal poetic tradition was taken from the Spanish Arabs. The Italians admit having received their poetic forms from the Provençal poets, and the Spanish, as teachers of the Provençal poets, were, therefore, the teachers of the Italians: "De los Españoles tomaron los Provenzales el uso de la rima, y de estos los Italianos, como confiesan muchos críticos de ambas naciones."⁴ (*Ensayo histórico-apologético*, V, 37.)

It was Lampillas's contention that during the eleventh and twelfth centuries poetry flourished in Spain, not only among the Arabs but among the Spanish Christians as well. Around the middle of the twelfth century the Spanish princes who ruled in Provence began to protect and encourage poetry, "y de estos, y de los poetas Españoles, que se exercitaron en la poesía, llamada provenzal (si bien tuvo su origen en España) se comunicó después a los Italianos."⁵ (Lampillas, II, 160.) Under the influence of these Spanish princes the Provençal

²This was translated from the original Italian to Spanish by Doña Amar y Borbón in Madrid, 1789, with the title *Ensayo histórico-apologético de la literatura española, contra las opiniones preocupadas de algunos escritores modernos italianos*.

³See M. Carl Gibson, "Xavier Lampillas: His Defense of Spanish Literature and His Contribution to Literary History," a thesis written for the Department of Languages of the University of Oregon, 1960, as partial fulfillment of requirements for the Ph.D. degree.

⁴"From the Spaniards the Provenzals took the tradition of rime, and the Italians took it from the Provenzals, as many critics of both nations confess."

⁵"And from them, and from the Spanish poets who wrote poetry which is now designated as Provençal (even though it had its origin in Spain), it was later passed on to the Italians."

language arrived at such a high point of perfection that it was imitated and copied by other nations. Lampillas cites the testimonies of Varchi, Bembo, Fontanini (Abp. of Ancyra), and others to the effect that the Italian literary language was made up of many expressions and locutions imitated from the Provençals. He then traces the Provençal poetic tradition to Spain through the Catalan language which, he claims, was the same as Provençal:

La lengua Provenzal, que desde el principio del siglo XII fué la erudita, la de los poetas, y la que enriqueció la Italiana, no era otra que la Catalana, que llevaron a Provenza los Condes de Barcelona. Estos la afinaron con algunas voces y locuciones propias a su país, y así tomó el nombre Catalán-Francés. . . . Montaner escribió su historia en Catalán puro y claro, como acredita la empresa en Barcelona. Y sobre todo, para convencerse más de la identidad de estas dos lenguas, pueden leerse las poesías de los poetas antiguos Provenzales, y se verá quantas voces, y frases tienen propias de la Catalán.⁶ (Lampillas, II, 163.)

He bases this rather startling claim that the Provençal language was nothing but Catalan on the supposition that from the ninth century the Counts of Barcelona introduced their native language into those provinces of France where they ruled with the title of Duques de Septimania. Raymundo Berenguer, the third Count of Barcelona, acquired the Condado of Provence in 1080, and it remained under the Berenguer counts until 1245. That prince, claims Lampillas, being very fond of the *bellas letras* sought to beautify the language of his domain and eventually succeeded in making it the most suave and flowery of those times.

Lampillas seeks proof for his claim in the French and Italians themselves, who seem to agree with him as to the effect that the Counts of Barcelona had on the language of

⁶"The Provençal language, which since the beginning of the twelfth century was the learned language—that of poets, and that which enriched the Italian language—was nothing other than Catalan, which the Counts of Barcelona took with them into Provence. The Provençals embellished it with some locutions and figures of speech common to their region, and thus it took the name Catalan-French. Montaner wrote his history in pure, clear Catalan, according to the Barcelona press. And furthermore, in order to be even more convinced of the identicalness of these two languages, one can read the poetry of the ancient Provençal poets, and one will see how many words and phrases there are in common with Catalan."

Provence. He quotes Bouche⁷ as saying that "por los años de 1110, y en tiempo de los Berengueres, Condes de Barcelona, llegó a tal perfección el dialecto provenzal, que lo aprendían muchos extranjeros, y era comunmente preferida a los más de Europa."⁸ (*Histoire de Provence*, Tom. I, lib. 2, cap. 6), and the Italian Jacobo Giunti⁹ who holds up the Counts of Barcelona as models:

No hay cosa que conserva más el aprecio de las lenguas que el favor de los Príncipes; el qual las hace florecer y ser estimadas. Buena prueba es de ello la Provenzal en tiempo de los nobles Condes de aquella provincia, en especial del buen Conde Berenguer, Señor tan celebrado, y que por su medio llegó esta al colmo del honor, y a extenderse por toda Europa. Entre nosotros, ya se sabe que se conservó a los principios con todo cuidado, y que después nos dedicamos a imitarla.¹⁰ (*Dedicat. del Decamer. de Bocacio.*)

Although Lampillas does not offer sufficient evidence to substantiate his claims, he is nevertheless thoroughly convinced that Catalan, being, as he maintains, the mother of the Provençal language, played an important rôle in the formation of the Italian language, and thus Spain should receive the credit and the glory for this contribution. Spain, according to him, has the honor and distinction of having contributed to the development of both the modern Italian language and its poetry, through Provençal.

As further clarification for his claims, Lampillas explains that poetry flourished among the Arabs, as did other forms of letters, and by the ninth century Arabic poetry was very common among the Spaniards. It was easy to carry this poetic tra-

⁷Probably Charles François Bouche (1737-1795). The earliest edition of his *Essai sur l'histoire de Provence* listed by the Bibliothèque Nationale is that of 1785. Lampillas must have had access to an earlier edition or to the original manuscript.

⁸"Around the year 1110, in the era of the Berenguer Counts of Barcelona, the Provençal dialect reached such perfection that many foreigners learned it, and it was commonly preferred over the rest of the dialects of Europe."

⁹Jacopo Giunti (fl. 1564). Giunti was known primarily for his *Esequie del divino Michelagnolo Buonarroti*, written in 1564.

¹⁰"There is nothing which preserves the dignity of languages more than the favor of Princes. This causes them to flourish and be esteemed. A good example of this is that of Provençal in the era of the noble counts of that province, especially the good Count Berenguer, a gentleman of so much renown. Because of him the language reached the height of honor, and was extended through all of Europe. We know that this language was nurtured in the beginning with great care, and that later we dedicated ourselves to imitate it."

dition over into the Catalan language, which was already flourishing in the territory of Provence. Once established in Provence, the Counts of Barcelona instructed the Provençals in their poetry as well as in their language, and thus the Spaniards became the first teachers of the Provençals:¹¹ "Los Españoles (dice Fontanini) no aprendieron de los Provenzales el arte de romancear; antes estos lo tomaron de ellos en el largo tiempo que fueron sus súbditos."¹² (Lampillas, II, 165, quoted from Fontanini Lib. I, cap. 22.)

Some Italian historians held ideas not too far removed from those of Lampillas. Quadrio had recognized that Spain was in a position to introduce and perfect poetry in Provence and in speaking of Berenguer and the Spaniards of his court who went to Provence, says: "no tuvo necesidad el Conde ni sus Cortesanos de que les enseñaran lo que era poesía. Ya entendían en España su mérito, y belleza, porque era tan conocida entre los naturales, como entre los Moros."¹³ (Lampillas, II, 167, quoted from Quadrio, Vol. II.) It can be inferred from this, comments Lampillas, that in 1080 the Spaniards already knew the merit and beauty of poetry, whereas, according to Bettinelli, Italian poetry was not even cultivated until 1200.

When the Spanish court in Provence fell, Provençal poetry began decaying.

Recobróse entonces en su país nativo, es decir en España, donde se vieron florecer luego las Academias de *gaya ciencia*, primero en Barcelona, y después en Tortosa. Desde aquel tiempo tuvo tres poetas célebres en lengua Lemosina, que son Messer Jorge (Giordi), Gayme Febrer, y Ausias March.¹⁴

¹¹Some modern scholars hold contrasting views as to the extent of Catalan. Joan Gili, in his *Introductory Catalan Grammar* (2nd ed.; New York: Hafner Pub. Co., 1952), p. 66 ("Historical outline of the language and literature"), says that "from the middle of the twelfth to the end of the thirteenth centuries, Provençal was used as a literary language by Catalan poets and Troubadours During this period, production in *Catalan* was confined to prose and to popular poetry, mostly of a religious nature."

¹²"The Spaniards (says Fontanini) did not learn the art of writing ballads from the Provençals; rather, the latter took it from the former during the long period when these were their subjects."

¹³"The Count and his retinue had no necessity of being taught poetic art. They already understood its merit and beauty in Spain, because there it was as well understood among the native Spaniards as it was among the Moors."

¹⁴"It returned then to its native country, that is, Spain, where academies of the poetic art were seen to flourish, first in Barcelona, then in Tortosa. Since that time there have been three famous poets in the Limousin language, which are Messer Jorge, Cayme Febrer, and Ausias March." (Lampillas, *op. cit.*, p. 168.) Lampillas does not identify Messer Jorge or Gayme Febrer, but they

For Lampillas the influence of the Spanish Arabs on the poetry of the other nations of Europe was an historical fact, not a theory. He never refers to the idea as a theory and does not develop it as one. He does not go into a discussion of Arabic or Provençal poetry nor the similarities between the two. His main interest was to point out to the Italian historians and his other readers that modern Spain had poetry *first*, and that Italy is indebted to Spain for her own poetry which developed much later.

If we consider Lampillas's treatment of the question of Arabic origins as an attempt to prove a theory, we must admit that he failed. There are many areas within the whole problem which he does not clarify; for example, to what extent was the Catalan language, which he maintains was taken into Provence by the Counts of Barcelona, modified by the already existing language of that area. He does not indicate specifically the territorial extent of Provence or of the Provençal language, although he implies that it extended into parts of northeastern Spain. He is not specific in naming the poetic forms which may have been carried from Spain into Provence, nor in crediting the Provençals with any native poetic tradition. In fact he does not offer any proof based on sound, unbiased, personal scholarly investigation that the poetry of Provence was derived from Spain. His belief in Spanish origins seems to be based on random statements by historians and on a personal desire to establish Spanish priority over Italian poetry rather than on an objective study of the problem. Nevertheless, his claims, though lacking proof, caused others to investigate the problem and were responsible for the great activity in this area of research by more recent scholars.¹⁵

are probably Jordi de Sant Jordi (Valencia, early XVth century) and Andreu Febrer.

The idea that when Provençal poetry began to decay it took asylum in Spain is also held by Juan Andrés, who writes that many attempts were made in Provence to revive poetry, viz. regal protection, contests, prizes, etc., "but these prizes and this protection were not enough to sustain Provençal poetry, which continues to fall into decadence. Nor could they restore the honor and dignity of the troubadours who were now held in little esteem. It was necessary for Provençal poetry to find honorable asylum in Catalonia, where, as we have already stated elsewhere, it is very probably it had its beginning." (Juan Andrés, *Origen, progresos y estado actual de toda la literatura*, III, 98.)

¹⁵In the eighteenth century, Andrés, Tiraboschi, Pla; in the nineteenth century, Sismondi, Fauriel, and Schack; in the twentieth, Julián Ribera, Burdach, Singer, Menéndez Pidal, González Palencia, and A. R. Nykl. The whole problem has recently been reviewed. One of the most interesting treatments

The belief in Arabic origins was not entirely original with Lampillas. Several scholars had held similar views before him, and the problem has not been entirely settled yet. Many scholars have thrust the theory aside as foolish, denying that there is any basis for such a belief, but a few modern scholars have taken new interest in the problem, and many new discoveries have been made which seem to corroborate some of Lampillas's claims. We shall attempt to summarize briefly the development and present status of the problem.

One of the first to investigate the theory was apparently Giammaria Barbieri, who in the sixteenth century wrote *Dell'origine della poesia rimata*. Although he was probably the first to write extensively about the Arabic theory, it certainly must not have been original with him, as Piccolo states: "Non vorremo certamente fare risalire al Barbieri la prima responsabilità di questa che chiamiamo pure teoria arabica, per quanto nel suo libro essa si trovi per la prima volta letterariamente e sistematicamente presentata."¹⁶ (Francesco Piccolo, *Sull'origine della poesia*, p. 33.) He summarizes briefly Barbieri's beliefs:

L'influenza degli Arabi non si arrestò alla Spagna e alla Provenza; ma si estese, per altra via, alla Sicilia che essi occuparono fino alla sconfitta subita da Roberto Guiscardo, dopo la quale sconfitta ne restarono ancora tanti nell'isola che Federico II potè più tarde trarne parecchie migliaia nel continente e popolare di essi Lucera.¹⁷ (Piccolo, pp. 31-32.)

It is unlikely that Lampillas knew his work, for it was not generally known until it was revived in 1790 by Girolamo Tiraboschi, one of those who was awakened to the possibilities of the problem by Lampillas's *Ensayo*. Lampillas does not refer to Barbieri or to his work.

Other writers before Lampillas also recognized that the Moors of Spain had a highly developed poetic tradition. One

is that of Francesco Piccolo (*Sull'origine della poesia moderna*, Naples, 1938) in which he discusses in some detail the arguments of those who have been most influential in promoting the theory.

¹⁶"We would certainly not want to ascribe to Barbieri the responsibility of being the first to advocate this which we call the Arabic theory, although in his book it is found presented in a systematic, literary form for the first time."

¹⁷"The influence of the Arabs was not limited to Spain and Provence, but was extended, by other means, to Sicily, which they occupied up until the sudden defeat by Roberto Guiscardo, after which there remained so many of them on the island that later Frederic II was able to bring several thousand of them onto the continent and populate Lucera with them."

who admitted this was Quadrio, who is quoted by Lampillas as having stated that "the poetry of the Moors of Spain caused the Provençals to be imitators or emulators of their fine taste." (Lampillas, II, 167.)

Had not Lampillas voiced his belief with such conviction the whole problem of Arabic origins may never have come to light. Barbieri's book was already forgotten, and Quadrio's admission had gone largely unnoticed. However, when Lampillas stated his claim, the problem suddenly received the attention of some of the foremost scholars of the time due to the polemic¹⁸ which was in progress. Spanish scholars, for the most part, were anxious to substantiate the claim—Italian scholars, to disprove it. Girolamo Tiraboschi was the exception. After examining Lampillas's claim, he found it tenable and instigated further investigations to prove it.

The next after Lampillas to adopt the thesis was Juan Andrés, who treats it, in his *Origen, progresos y estado actual de toda la literatura*, in even more detail than does Lampillas. Because of the encyclopedic nature of his work, Andrés has enlarged his scope of investigation and attributes much more influence, in all fields of learning, to the Arabs of Spain. His work has been widely circulated and is much better known than is Lampillas's *Ensayo*, and this may account for the fact that modern scholars have credited Andrés, instead of Lampillas, with first advancing the theory of Arabic origins.¹⁹ For this reason we will examine Andrés's views rather carefully, keeping in mind that it was Lampillas who gave impetus to his research.

In a letter to Tirabocshi in 1785 Andrés stated that there was no doubt that the Provençal language included Catalonia,

¹⁸Lampillas's *Ensayo histórico-apologético* had caused a heated polemic to flare in Italy over the relative merits of Spanish and Italian literature, which assumed tremendous proportions. Many books, newspaper articles, pamphlets, letters, and speeches were inspired by this discussion. See Pedro Sáinz y Rodríguez, *Las polémicas sobre la cultura española* (Madrid, 1919).

¹⁹A. R. Nykl, in his *Hispanio-Arabic poetry and its relations with old Provençal Troubadours* (Baltimore, 1946, p. 378), speaking of the new interest taken in the theory after the first world war by Burdach and Singer, makes the statement that "Ribera had long before been the strongest defender of the Andalusian origin of the Troubadour versification, an idea which appears to have been first advocated in print by the Jesuit P. Juan Andrés in the last decade of the XVIIIth century."

Ángel González Palencia, in his *Historia de la literatura Árabe-Española* (Barcelona, 1945, p. 310), also credits Andrés with having advanced the theory for the first time in the eighteenth century. Neither Nykl nor González Palencia mentions Lampillas.

Valencia, and Majorca and that it had spread from Spain. This letter was occasioned by the dispute which grew out of the claims of Lampillas and the investigations which it caused. Cian reports on the famous letter as follows:

È fin d'ora curioso l'assistere alle oziose dispute che questi eruditi, digiuni del Provenzale, facevano con mirabile disinvoltura intorno ai caratteri della lingua trovadorica e alle sue relazioni con altre. Su di che l'Andrés in quella medesima lettera scriveva: "Che sotto il nome di Provenzali sieno stati compresi Catalani, Valenzani e Maiorchini non ammette alcun dubbio. Ciò che il Sigr. Ab. Lampillas asserisce e non prova, ed io cerco di provare ma non ardisco d'asserire, è che la lingua e poesia provenzale sia più catalana che francese, e che dalla Spagna, sia passata nella Francia, no al contrario. Se qualche espressione del Barbieri darà lumi su questo, meriterà certamente d'essere rilevata; io osservo nell'indice dei codici de lei citati che una volta si dice lingua catalana la provenzale, ma vi saranno altre espressioni più conchiudenti."²⁰ (Cittorio Cian, *L'immigrazione dei Gesuiti spagnuoli letterati in Italia*, p. 29.)

The knowledge which Andrés had of Spanish literature, his examination of the long forgotten ancient writers, his study on the origin and development of modern languages and their poetry, the style of ancient Spanish and Provençal poets, and many other difficult but necessary investigations led him to the conclusion which to many seemed a ridiculous paradox: that modern literature had as its mother the Arabic, not only in the field of *bellas letras* but also in the other sciences.

Para manifestar todavía mejor la influencia de los Árabes en la cultura de Europa, he querido traer algunos inventos, cuyo honor se disputan inutilmente muchas naciones, siendo así que los debemos a aquellos. El papel, los números, la pólvora y la brújula han llegado hasta nosotros por medio

²⁰"It is still interesting to witness the disputes that these learned men, who did not know the Provençal language, carried on with admirable aplomb concerning the nature of the troubadour language and its relationship to others. Andrés wrote about it in that same letter: 'That under the name of Provençal had been included the Catalonians, the Valencians, and the Majorcans, there was no doubt. That which Lampillas asserted but did not prove, and that which I seek to prove but am not anxious to assert, is that the Provençal language and poetry are more Catalonian than French, and that they passed from Spain to France, and not vice versa. If some quotations from Barbieri will throw light on this, they will certainly merit being revealed. I observe in the index of the codex quoted by him that once the Provençal language is referred to as Catalan, but there are probably other statements which are more conclusive.' "

de los Árabes;. . .²¹ (Juan Andrés, *Origen, progresos y estado actual de toda la literatura*, I, xviii-xiv.)

Andrés's investigations led him to the discovery that the types of poetry used by the Provençal poets were correspondent to those used by the Arabs of the same and earlier periods. (See Andrés, II, 74-75.) Although he reached this conclusion, he had no dated Arabic examples of poetry to back his claim. Recent discoveries are now showing that his conclusions were essentially correct. He also discovered that the Arabs had poetic academies before Italy, France, and the Christian part of Spain. (See Andrés, I, 461-62.)

Although Andrés was a remarkable scholar and was correct in many of his conclusions, he was not entirely free from error. Although the original manuscript of the French epic *La Chanson de Roland* had not yet been discovered, the epic hero had been known for centuries in Spain. Many legends had grown up, and these had given rise to other poems in all languages of Europe concerning the great hero. Andrés firmly believed that the first romance about Charlemagne's expedition into Spain and the battle in which Roland was wounded was written in Spanish, later translated or adapted into French, and imitated in Italy. He felt that this "fact" was a decisive factor in proving that poetry had its origin in Arabic and came into Europe through Spanish. (Andrés, II, 79-80.)

This theory that the knightly hero was of Arabic and Spanish origin need not seem so strange when we consider that it was a widely accepted notion that the tradition of courtly love and the serenading of ladies by gentlemen came from the Spanish Arabs.²² Even Bettinelli, so reticent to attribute anything to Spain, concedes this:

Sin dall'anno 1065 i Mori di Spagna erano giunti a gran coltura di vivere. Cordova poteva dirsi la loro Atene, e Abderamo il loro Augusto; la mollezza, il lusso, l'arti, gli amori vi furono in voga, e a sommo studio di dilicatezza. Sembra di là esser venuta la cavalleria romanzesta pei giuochi, pugne, corse fatte in presenza delle donne, e premiate per loro mano, come la musica, e la poesia amorosa,

²¹"In order to manifest even better the influence of the Arabs on the culture of Europe, I have sought to refer to some inventions, the honor for the discovery of which is being disputed by many nations in vain, since we owe them to the Arabs. Paper, numerals, gun powder, and the compass have all come to us through the Arabs; . . ."

²²See Saverio Bettinelli, *Risorgimento d'Italia negli studi, nelle arti, e ne' costumi dopo il mille* (Bassano, 1786), Part I, page 11.

con cui celebravan le Belle.²³ (Bettinelli, *Risorgimento*, I, 9, note.)

This admission that the Arabs were the source of the European chivalric tradition seems also to be an argument that the Arabs were the source of Provençal literature, if Piccolo's statement is correct:

La poesía dei trovatori essendo nel convincimento pressocchè generale una manifestazione della mentalità cavalleresca, il problema delle origini della cavalleria si converti nel problema delle origini della letteratura provenzale.²⁴ (Piccolo, p. 130.)

Juan Andrés claims that the Spanish Arabs were writing books on music theory while the rest of Europe had no more idea of it than the psalms and antiphonies. It is not entirely impossible that the first vernacular songs were those which were written by Alfonso X who transferred the Arab taste for popular music into Spanish. This seems even more logical, explains Andrés, when we consider that the Spaniards took some musical instruments from the Arabs, some of which are still used today and that these instruments spread, along with the new taste for vernacular music, through France where they were known by the name of *moriscos*. "Dos cosas insinuaré: una es . . . que si los Provenzales tomaron de los Árabes el exemplo de poetizar, habrán igualmente recibido de los mismos el uso de aplicar la música a la poesía, . . ."²⁵ (Andrés, II, 61 note.)

Andrés, like Lampillas, held the view that ancient Provençal was not limited to southwestern France but that it extended southward into eastern Spain. This opinion seems to have been held by many eighteenth-century scholars, among whom was Gaspar Escolano, a Valencian writer whom Andrés quotes as an authority on the languages that pertain to Spain:

²³"As far back as 1065 the Moors of Spain achieved a very high level of culture. Cordova could be called their Athens, and Abderamo their Augustus. Effeminacy, luxury, the arts, and courtly love were in vogue there, and they attained the utmost refinement. It appears that from there came the adventurous chivalry with its games, jousts, and races, which were carried on in the presence of the ladies, and rewarded by their hands, as well as the music and poetry of love with which beauty was honored."

²⁴"The poetry of the Troubadours being, according to general acceptance a manifestation of the chivalric mentality, the problem of the origin of chivalry converts itself into the problem of the origin of Provençal literature."

²⁵"I shall suggest two things: one is . . . that if the Provenzals took from the Arabs the tradition of poetizing, they also took from them the custom of setting poetry to music; . . ."

La tercera y última lengua maestra de las de España es la lemosina, y más general que todas . . . por ser la que se hablaba en Provenza, y toda la Guyena y en la Francia gótica, y la que agora se habla en el Principado de Cataluña, Reyno de Valencia, Islas de Mallorca, Menorca, Ibiza y Sardenia.²⁶ (Part. I, lib. I, cap. XIV.)

Don Antonio Bastero, in the preface of *Crusca Provenzal* (Rome, 1724), also gives the Catalans credit for having created the language spoken in Provence and of having taken it into France along with their political rule, just as they later spread it through the kingdom of Valencia and the Balearic and Sardinian islands.

Although most people, according to Andrés, refer to the French who live in the Langue d'oc region as Provençals, this was not the case anciently. Originally the language was not called Provençal but Catalan, and the people who spoke it were also called Catalan: "Esto lo comprueba la sobredicha disputa, en la qual Alberto, tomando la parte de los Catalanes, baxo este nombre comprehende también los Gascones, Provenzales, Lemosines, Bearnese, y Vianese."²⁷ (Andrés, II, 64.) Andrés also cites several ancient and modern French authors who concur that the *langue d'oc* was the Spanish Catalan language and that it is referred to by some as *Catalana-francesa*, all of which proved to him, as it had to Lampillas, that Spain was the originator and mother of the Provençal language and poetry, hence the source of modern poetry.

Pero para venir más particularmente a nuestro asunto, la poesía provenzal no se cultivó menos en España que en Francia; y así tal vez puede decirse de esta más que de la lengua, que nació en Cataluña, y pasó después a Francia.²⁸ (Andrés, II, 66-67.)

After Andrés had published his work in 1782, one of his fellow Spanish Jesuits, Esteban Arteaga, in a note in his book

²⁶"The third and last principal language among those of Spain is the Limousin, and it is even more general than the rest, because it was spoken in Provence, and in all of Guyenne and in Gothic France, and it is the language which is now spoken in the principality of Catalonia, the kingdom of Valencia, the islands of Mallorca, Menorca, Iluz, and Sardinia."

²⁷"The forementioned dispute proves this, for in it Alberto, taking the side of the Catalonians, under this name included also the Gascons, Provençals, Limousins, Bearnese, and Vianese."

²⁸"But to come more directly to our subject, Provençal poetry was cultivated no less in Spain than in France; and it can probably be said of the poetry even more than of the language, that it was born in Catalonia and afterwards passed into France."

Rivoluzioni, opposed the theory of Arabic origins, taking the stand that Provençal poetic models were to be found not in Arabic but in low Latin and ancient Nordic songs. He felt that a note would be sufficient to combat the theory, but when in 1790 Giammaria Barbieri's book was published by Tiraboschi,²⁹ who had enlisted the aid of Andrés and Pla because of their knowledge of the Catalan language—which he felt would facilitate the interpretation of Provençal poetry, Arteaga was no longer content with a mere note; he wrote a long dissertation of 118 pages (*Dell'influenza degli Arabi sull'origine della poesia moderna in Europa*, Rome, 1791) in which he politely disagreed with Tiraboschi, but his respectful tone prevented further polemic.³⁰

Although there were several scholars during the nineteenth century who upheld the theory, no great discoveries were made which might be presented as proof either for or against it. It has not been until the last forty-five or fifty years that the theory has inspired more fruitful investigation. Julián Ribera's discourse before the Royal Spanish Academy in 1912 added new fuel to the smoldering problem and awakened an interest in such great contemporary scholars as Menéndez Pidal, González Palencia, and others.

Menéndez Pidal has produced evidence from Christian chroniclers of the early twelfth century of the poetic activity among the Arabs at that time and the testimonies of Arabic writers indicating that a Cordovese poet at the end of the ninth century imitated songs of Christians who lived within the Mussulman dominions, "lo cual nos permitía afirmar, que también los Cristianos de Andalucía tenían sus canciones siglos más antiguos que las de los cancioneros gallego-portugueses."³¹ (Menéndez Pidal, *Los orígenes de las literaturas románicas a la luz de un descubrimiento reciente*, p. 19.)

²⁹Just how much influence Lampilla's *Ensayo* had upon Tiraboschi's newly-found interest in Arabic origins is not known. It is probably great. Andrés had been moved, by his own admission, to investigate the theory by what Lampillas had written, but it is doubtful that Tiraboschi, the main opponent of Lampillas's *Ensayo*, would have made any such confession.

³⁰For a more detailed discussion concerning Barbieri's stand and the polemic over the Arabic theory between Tiraboschi and Arteaga, see Francesco Piccolo, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-69.

³¹"All of which permits us to affirm that the Christians of Andalusia also had their songs which were centuries older than the Galician-Portuguese *Cancioneros*."

The investigations of the Arabists Julián Ribera and A. R. Nykl, the Egyptian Abdalaziz Al-Ahwani, and Professor E. García Gómez have given us testimonies of two Arabic writers of the twelfth century: Aben Bassam and Al-Hijari, who affirm that a well known poet of Cabra named Mucáddam invented a new poetic genre, the Muwashshaha, a form which broke from the classical Arabic meters and which permitted a final strophe written either in vulgar Arabic or in the Romance of the Christians. This poet flourished from 888 to 912.

It was hoped that some of the Muwashshahas containing Romance could be found, but none had at the time of Menéndez Pidal's writing. The scholars responsible for these discoveries had to content themselves with another Arabic-Hispanic poetic form, the *Zéjel*, a type of Muwashshaha without the final verses in the vernacular but which are written in conversational Arabic with occasional romance words and phrases. Of particular interest is the collection of Aben Guzmán, who died in 1160. His *Zéjel* number 82 has a complete verse in Romance which sings of the coming of dawn: "Alba, alba es de luz en nuevo día,"³² a verse which, according to Menéndez Pidal, belongs to a "albada mozárabe," or a tradition of dawn (*alba, aube*) songs. And what is most significant, "el género literario de la albada era popular entre los Cristianos de Andalucía, medio siglo antes que se escribían las primeras albas provenzales hoy conservadas, las cuales pertenecen a fines del siglo XII."³³ (Menéndez Pidal, p. 25.) The dawn song, a poem in which two lovers lament the arrival of morning, the hour of painful separation, in Provence, always has a refrain in which appears the word *alba*, announcing the arrival of a new day; this word appears three times in the song attributed to Rimbaut de Vaqueiras (end of twelfth century): "L'alba, l'alba, oc l'alba!"; "Well," exclaims Menéndez Pidal, "now we know that much earlier it was done in Córdoba, also repeating *alba, alba!*" This is an isolated example, but according to this scholar: "Para muestra basta un botón!"³⁴

In 1948 Professor S. M. Stern announced the discovery of twenty Hebrew Muwashshahas which had been imitated from

³²"Dawn, dawn, a new day is breaking."

³³"The literary genre known as the *dawn song* was popular among the Christians of Andalusia a half century before the first Provençal dawn songs which are preserved today were written, which was at the end of the twelfth century."

³⁴"Only one button is needed as a sample."

the Arabic and which did have final verses in very archaic Spanish. A little later Stern published a Muwashshaha in Arabic with final Romance verses, and García Gómez is studying another series of Arabic texts. Others (including Francisco Cantera and Dámaso Alonso) are engaged in very important tasks which promise to shed more light on the problem.

A. R. Nykl, in his *Hispano-Arabic poetry and its relation with the old Provençal Troubadours*, assures us that within Poitou the harsh Poitevin dialect could hardly have appealed to people whose character attracted them towards the South. We may, he says, consider the population of this corner of France as psychologically akin in many ways to the Celtiberians of Spain, extending from the Basque provinces to Galicia. A similar connecting population linked southern France, through Roussillon, with Cerdagne, Aragón, Navarre, and Catalonia. Within this entire region the population would be inclined to enjoy the songs and melodies of the same general kind:

The situation could be briefly stated thus: what is now called Old Provençal poetry was *formed* in its beginning, about 1100 A.D., from elements which were partly autochthonous and partly imitated from the poetic activity in the neighboring Christian-Muslim world in such of its aspects as happened to please the contemporary Méridional taste, especially at the Courts of Noblemen. Guillaume IX of Poitiers and the first Troubadours gave these new forms a vogue, and later a further eclectic elaboration of form and content took place. When after 1200 A.D., following the Crusades against the Albigenses, the social conditions and taste changed, and too much learning replaced the freshness of feeling and the novelty of joyful melodies, Old Provençal poetry gradually died of excessive codification and *trobar clus*. (Nykl, p. 373.)

Guillaume of Poitiers, who is generally regarded as one of the first Provençal Troubadours, had a very close connection with Spain. Nykl tells us that Sancho, the King of Aragón, was related by marriage to the Count of Toulouse. When Sancho died in 1094, the twenty-two-year old queen, Philippa, accepted a marriage proposal from Guillaume de Poitiers, and toward the end of 1094 became his wife. It is not unlikely, he says—and his argument is based on speculation rather than fact—that in her suite there were singers acquainted with the Andalusian ways of composing songs, from whom Guillaume

may have learned something. If we compare forms of poetry used by Guillaume, Marcabru, and Rudel with the forms which were current in contemporary Muslim Spain as well as in the East, "we cannot fail to find considerable analogies which can only be explained by imitation or adaptation, not by independent invention." (Nykl, p. 379.)

The status of the theory at the present time seems to be as follows: Some of the foremost scholars in the field are converted to the idea that Julian Ribera's assertion is correct, and they are searching for further conclusive proof. That further evidence will be found there is little doubt, judging from the recent findings, but whether or not sufficient proof of a conclusive nature can be produced which will have enough impact to overcome the inertia of conservative, traditional beliefs is questionable.

Xavier Lampillas was not responsible for all the research that has gone into the theory of Arabic origins, for the problem was not entirely original with him. However, he did give impetus to the investigations which began in the late eighteenth century, since he was responsible for the interest which Andrés took in the problem and for the activity of Tiraboschi in this area of study. The thesis which Lampillas advanced, far from being disproved, has become the subject of much research and has been substantiated to the satisfaction of many scholars. Lampillas has never received proper credit for his part in the advancement of the theory; he was actually a prime motivator in the investigations which have been conducted since his time.