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THE IMAGE OF SPAIN
IN NON-DRAMATIC FRENCH LITERATURE
FROM CHATEAUBRIAND TO MONTHERLANT
1800-1936

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in French at
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- ABSTRACT -

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Since Morel-Fatio's Etudes sur l'Espagne (1885), there have been several studies of the influence of Spain on the literature of France, particularly by those scholars who have been associated with the growth of Hispanic studies in France. There have been many studies of the influence of Spain on individual authors. Martinenche's le Romantisme et l'Espagne (1922) deals at length with the drama and with the influence of Spain on French lyric poetry; Hoffmann's Romantique Espagne (1961) is another significant contribution although it concentrates on minor authors and makes no distinction between the récit de voyage and imaginative works. There is, however, no **study** of the image of Spain over the complex period from 1800 to 1936 in terms of the general attitude of French authors to Spain and the function of Spanish themes and images in the genres of poetry and the novel.

The object of the present study is to establish and where possible to analyse the conception of Spain which

imaginative literature in French offered to the reading public of the period 1800 to 1936. The works examined are those of major French authors of prose and poetry, although occasional reference is made for comparative purposes to lesser writers. The formative influence of the récit de voyage is considered but the images presented in this genre are not examined per se. Drama is not included. As background to the discussion of the image of Spain, social and political links between the two countries are outlined and the influence of Spanish literature on the general literary climate is taken into account where appropriate.

Three aspects of the image of Spain are examined. The thesis investigates first the presentation of landscape from Chateaubriand to modern times exploring its treatment by Romantics and later nineteenth-century writers; it argues that the full implications of Chateaubriand's attitude were realised only in the twentieth century, in particular by Montherlant and Peyré. The thesis then examines the treatment of Spanish character in French literature and two aspects of life in Spain, namely toreo and music, which manifest national characteristics. Similar changes in the treatment of these two latter aspects are traced. The images of toreo and music, for instance, are sometimes vehicles for psychological analysis and sometimes are closely allied, as in the writings of Montherlant, to themes of sexuality, religion or adolescence.

Discussion of these aspects is pursued with reference to the years 1800-1850, 1850-1890, and 1890-1936. There are introductory sections on the antecedent situation and on Chateaubriand. The concluding section argues that since the image of Spain projected by the "imagination collective" of an age is subject to preconceived ideas, illusions, prejudice and literary fashion, it is not fruitful to examine these matters with any expectation of finding

'the best image'; Montherlant's image of Spain is not 'better' than Mérimée's. The more 'symbolist' approach of modern poetry is reflected in the novel where cadre and décor are more closely linked to character development and action than in Romantic works in which the brilliance of purely exotic aspects of the cadre dominate.

In general terms, however, one may conclude that the place of Spain and Spanish themes and images play a vital role in the broad conception of 'la condition humaine' and that the function of these has changed in harmony with the general trends of French literature. A further aim of this study is to make some contribution to the compilation of a bibliography related to the image of Spain in French literature, thus continuing the work of Baldensperger and Friederich (1950, rev. 1960) and Hoffman (1961).

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- P R E F A C E -

In this study it is proposed to present and analyse the image of Spain in French literature in the complex period which extends from 1800 to 1936. Limited to an examination of the literary representations of Spain which are to be encountered in literature which may broadly be termed imaginative, an attempt will be made to analyse these representations as they appear primarily in the genres of prose and poetry.

The study does not purport to be a comparative essay centred on the influence of Spanish literature upon French literature, although certain aspects of this field will of necessity be considered. However, these influences will be regarded in this case more as conditioning agents than as the central theme.

THE IMAGE:

The use of the word image in this context is limited not to the literary representation of absolute reality, but rather to its subjective interpretation. In other words the object of the study is to fix and where possible to analyse the conception of Spain which imaginative literary works have offered to the reading public. It is not intended in the narrow confines of the work to attempt to establish an exact appraisal of how much the French nation in its entirety knew about Spain during the period under review.

The image current in France in the years from 1800 to 1936 will be found to be the product of preconceived ideas, illusions, fruits of prejudice and a sense of conformity. It will also be affected by political events, literary fashions and the demands which these events place upon the population as a whole as well as upon a generation of writers. The intellectual climate in which the works reviewed were created will of necessity be taken into consideration in any conclusions reached.

The images to be examined will fall into three groups. The first will concern the physical background or cadre created for works of prose or poetry and the contrasts encountered therein; next, against this physical scene, characters of Spanish nationality will be discussed, to be followed by an analysis of features of Spanish society, mores and customs. Conclusions will be presented at the end of the examination of each period, to be discussed as a whole in the final section.

SPAIN:

The Spain which will be sought through the images will be the Spain presented to the reading public. Spain, as will be shown in the introductory chapters, has for centuries attracted the attention of writers in France. And although, with a few rather rare exceptions, Spanish literature of the period 1800-1936 did not achieve great international fame, the country, the people, the historia y ambiente proved to be powerfully attractive to other nations. France, it cannot be denied, also exerted considerable influence upon Spain, and the period 1830-1850, the strongest years of this phenomenon, should not be underestimated in any consideration of the relationship between the two countries. France's southern neighbour gave unbridled opportunities to French writers both to rail against the barbarous land beyond the Pyrenees and to sing the praises of a country which provided new outlets leading to the full realisation of the exotic dream.

It is not intended to analyse representations of Spain which are to be found in the domain of other arts. Spanish subjects found in painting, sculpture and latterly in the cinema would not only demand a much greater availability of primary source material than that required for a purely textual analysis, but would open up a number of secondary considerations largely of a non-literary kind.

Although at different times during the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century, the interest of the French people turned to articles of Spanish manufacture or to fashions originating in Spain, it is not proposed to examine the role, albeit at times considerable, which Spain played in the everyday life

of the French people except where this is reflected in literature. A study of the broader aspects of the role of Spain in French society has been completed by Léon-François Hoffmann.(1)

FRENCH LITERATURE:

This study is limited to a consideration of the image of Spain as it appears in a selection of works of imaginative literature and as stated above is further limited to the genres of prose and poetry. This further limitation has not been imposed arbitrarily but was dictated by three related considerations.

The first of these was that dramatic literature exists primarily to be acted. It follows therefore that a full and correct assessment of the image of Spain as presented in dramatic works would involve discussion of costume and stage décor. After an interval of some hundred years this would not only pose a number of problems regarding reliable sources but would also lead to discussion of non-literary side issues. For instance, individual interpretations by actors, producers and directors, while important to an examination of the image of Spain in the French theatre, would not properly fall within the compass of this enquiry.

The second consideration was that prose and poetry were more representative of the material available to the reading public than were plays. The spectacular development of newspapers after the Revolution meant

(1) Léon-François Hoffmann, Romanticue Espagne, l'image de l'Espagne en France entre 1800 et 1850, New Jersey/Paris, 1961.

that the story genre was transformed and became available to a wider public. The growth of journals such as the Revue de Paris, the Revue des Deux Mondes and the Correspondant brought new poetry and prose to an ever-increasing number of readers.

Finally, although it cannot be denied that Hugo, Vigny, Musset and others were playwrights as well as poets, the view held by Cazamian has validity. He points out that dramatic works of the Romantic period had not quite enough autonomy, solidity and substance to constitute a self-contained literary development and that they are, in fact, appendages to the poetry. (2)

In prose writing the predominant fields to be considered will be the novel and the short story. Récits de voyage will not be studied as providers of an image but rather as a touchstone to provide reinforcements or contrasts with the images of Spain presented in imaginative literature. It cannot be denied that the journeys into Spain effected by Alexandre Dumas in 1846 (3), by René Bazin in 1894 (4) or by others less illustrious or anonymous, constitute an important factor in the formation and presentation of an image. However profound the influences of the récits de voyage were upon the creators of imaginative literature it is the final image that will form the basis of this assessment.

(2) Léon Cazamian, A History of French Literature, Oxford, 1955, p. 321.

(3) Alexandre Dumas, Impressions de voyage. De Paris à Cadix, Paris, 1847-1848.

(4) René Bazin, Terre d'Espagne, Paris, 1895.

It is interesting to note here that Foulché-Delbosc recorded the bibliographical details of six hundred and forty récits de voyage concerned with journeys made through parts of Spain and Portugal in the nineteenth century. The importance of this carefully compiled document to comparatists cannot be valued too highly.(5)

Specialist works, although useful in the analysis of the image of Spain encountered in imaginative literature will not be examined per se as forming part of that image, for in many ways the role of these works is similar to récits de voyage although the aim is quite different. Difficulties of demarcation were resolved partly by the utilisation - in reverse, it must be noted - of the criteria adopted by Sister Albert Cécile Coutu in her discussion of the definitions of hispanism, espagnolisme, espanolismo, hispanist and hispanophile:

"For the initiated Hispanism does not connote the dilettante's attraction for the Spain of the Romantic Victor Hugo and Théophile Gautier, or closer to our own days, for the Spain of a Barrès, which according to Boisdeffre, announces that of a Montherlant. Rather it implies the scholarly knowledge of Spain of a Morel-Fatio, a Foulché-Delbosc, and, to include a few contemporaries, of Marcel Bataillon and Charles V. Aubrun. A different attitude and purpose when writing on or about Spain, distinguishes the scholar from the poet, essayist, novelist or dramatist, and imposes a discrimination between Hispanism which is literary and that which is scientific or scholarly to use an expression which is more suitable in English." (6)

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- (5) Raymond Foulché-Delbosc, "Bibliographie des Voyages en Espagne et en Portugal," Revue hispanique, III, 1896, pp. 1-349.
- (6) Sister Albert Cécile Coutu, Hispanism in France from Morel-Fatio to the Present (circa 1875-1950), (Ph.D. Thesis submitted to the Catholic University of America), Washington, 1954, p.2.

Spanish literature is a further element which undoubtedly influences the formation of an image. Translations of Spanish works of literature will be considered here it is apparent that these contributed to a general literary climate in which literary works in French with Spanish themes and motifs were written. The dates of publication of Spanish works of significance and their subsequent availability to the French-speaking reading public will be noted. The date of their republication in original form or in translation will be of particular importance in the general survey of the literary relationship between France and Spain from the earliest contacts to the first years of the limits of this study.

The works under consideration are those of major French authors. It has not been possible, as was done in Romantique Espagne, to consider authors or works "tombés dans un oubli bien mérité". Hoffmann's thesis tends in the other direction even: "On remarquera que nous avons tendance à négliger les plus grands".(7) Rather than follow the pattern adopted by L.F. Hoffmann, it was considered preferable to adopt the same criteria as Martinenche:

"Nous consulterons la plupart des oeuvres où se peut le mieux saisir le rôle de l'Espagne, mais nous n'insisterons que sur celles dont la gloire est assurée. On a mis à la mode dans ces dernières années la lecture patiente des revues et des journaux de l'époque étudiée. N'est-ce pas là qu'il convient de chercher l'opinion moyenne sur laquelle nous égarent les grands écrivains, puisque précisément ils ne sont grands que parce qu'ils la dépassent."(8)

(7) Léon-François Hoffmann, Romantique Espagne, p.3.

(8) Ernest Martinenche, Histoire de l'influence de l'Espagne sur la littérature française. L'Espagne et le Romantisme français, Paris, 1922, p. 14.

LIMITS OF THE STUDY:

The temporal limits of this study were fixed after considerable discussion. In choosing the period extending from 1800 to 1936 cognizance was taken of the importance of the contribution of Chateaubriand to French literature, particularly as many nineteenth-century developments stem from his search for new subject material. Following Chateaubriand, the Romantic era was particularly rich in literature presenting varied images of Spain. The wealth of material to be found between 1800 and 1850 has been commented on by Hoffmann:

"Entre 1800 et 1850 l'histoire de la France (comme l'histoire de l'Espagne d'ailleurs) est marquée par des changements de la plus haute importance. Sans doute est-ce sous l'effet de ces changements que de profonds remous se produisent dans l'âme française."

These changes will prepare France for the reception of new ideas and trends just as other countries in Europe had prepared themselves. Hoffmann's statement continues:

"C'est l'époque où, dans l'Europe toute entière, les originalités nationales s'affirment, où les peuples manifestent une nouvelle curiosité à l'égard de leurs voisins." (9)

A preliminary examination of the material revealed that in French literature some of the ideas that were consolidated at the termination of the romantic era were continued. This is particularly true of the dual development of nationalism and exoticism which reaches perhaps its highest point in the literary expression of Maurice Barrès.

(9) Léon-François Hoffmann, Romantique Espagne, p.2.

The terminal date of the present study was fixed at 1936, the year in which Spanish Loyalists and Nationalists took up arms against each other. The Civil War - in some publications referred to as the Crusade - was a crucial testing period of Spain's relationship with her nearest neighbours, France and Portugal. From this conflict developed the modern Spanish state and gradual recognition by the world. Spain's isolation ended in 1955 with admission to the United Nations. It seemed proper that our study should include the early works of Henry de Montherlant, but an overall view of the period following the Civil War demands separate study in a form quite different from the analysis to be undertaken here.

The analysis is presented in three major divisions:

- 1800 to 1850
- 1850 to 1890
- 1890 to 1936.

In view of the complexity of literary currents in the nineteenth century it appeared that, in order to be able to detach the image of Spain sufficiently from this complex pattern, it was better to establish a clear division of date and to draw from the analysis itself conclusions which would include gauging the literary climate of the period.

It appeared necessary, before undertaking a serious appraisal of the image of Spain that some account should be given of the literary relationship between France and Spain in the years preceding the study proper. The account of this relationship is presented in a separate section with the following chapter divisions:

- From the earliest times to 1600
- The Seventeenth Century
- The Eighteenth Century.

The works of Chateaubriand relevant to this topic are discussed in a separate section.

Preceding the analysis of the selection of literary works in which an image of Spain is found, there is in each section a chapter detailing the points of contact between the two nations, predominantly studied from a literary point of view. It is, however, in this chapter that political and other influences upon the image of Spain will be briefly reviewed.

It is also intended that the present work should be of bibliographical value to those interested in pursuing this topic further. For this reason it has been considered worthwhile to include liberal quotations from critics and specialists who have contributed their views in this field to journals and reviews that are now difficult to obtain. The bibliography is accordingly an enlargement upon the standard bibliography related to this topic which Baldensperger and Friederich published in 1960 (10) and continues the compilation effected by Hoffmann. (11)

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(10) Fernand Baldensperger and Werner P. Friederich, A Bibliography of Comparative Literature, New York, 1960.

(11) Léon-François Hoffmann, Romantique Espagne, pp. 163-202.

NOTE ON SPELLING:

Except in the case of direct quotation, where the author's spelling of Spanish place names has been retained, place names mentioned in the text are written according to current spelling in Spanish.

e.g. English - Andalusia
French - Andalousie
Spanish - Andalucía

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