

TWO TRACES OF THE CYCLE OF GUILLAUME D'ORANGE IN THE OLD SPANISH ROMANCES*

IN his treatise on the old Spanish *romances*,¹ Sr. M. Menéndez y Pelayo calls attention to a few traces of the epic cycle of Guillaume d'Orange found among the *romances* of the Carolingian cycle. He mentions particularly *El Soldan de Babilonia y el Conde de Narbona*,² *El Almirante Guarinos*,³ and in *Valdovinos y el Marques de Mantua*, a vow similar to that of Guillaume in *Aliscans*.⁴ Two other fragments of the cycle of Guillaume, which seem not to have been ascribed to their probable sources, occur, one in *Valdovinos*,⁵ the other in a poem concerning Floripes and Gui de Borgoña, which forms one of a series of *romances* about Charlemagne and his followers.⁶

The first part of *Valdovinos*, which Menéndez y Pelayo considers the oldest part, relates a situation very similar to the famous scene of the death of Vivien. Danes Urgel, Marques de Mantua,⁷ while hunting, is separated from his followers and loses his way. In the heart of the forest he finds his nephew Valdovinos dying of wounds received through the treachery of Carloto, the son of Charlemagne. The servant of Valdovinos has been sent to find a confessor, and returns, while the marquis is speaking with his nephew, accompanied by a hermit, who administers the last rites to the dying man. After telling of the treachery of Carloto, Valdovinos expires in his uncle's arms. The latter places the body on his horse, and

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¹ *Antología de Poetas Líricos Castellanos*, vols. XI, XII; *Tratado de los Romances Viejos*. Madrid, 1903 and 1906.

² *Antología*, vol. XII, p. 408.

³ *Loc. cit.*, p. 374.

⁴ *Loc. cit.*, p. 395.

⁵ *Autores Españoles, Romancero General*, I, 355; also Wolf and Hofmann, *Primavera y Flor de Romances*, Berlin, 1856, vol. II, p. 174 ff.

⁶ *Romancero General*, II, 1255, 1256.
son de Saisnes, see *Antología*, vol. XII, p. 393 ff., and cf. Gautier, *Epopées*, II, p. 339, notes, with passages from other critics there mentioned.

takes it first to the chapel of the hermit, where the marquis makes a formal vow of vengeance; thence he continues his journey to "Mantua." The following passages give the main outline of the story:

Cuando llegó á un rio,
En medio de un arenale
Vido un caballero muerto,
Comenzóle de mirare.
Armado estaba de guerra
A guisa de peleare;

.

Una voz sintió hablare:
—!Oh Santa Maria Señora,
No me quieras olvidare!
!A tí encomiendo mi alma,
Plégate de la guardare!
En este trago de muerte
Esfuerzo me quieras dare;
Pues á los tristes consuelas
Quiras á mí consolare,
Y al tu precioso Hijo
Por mí te plega rogare
Que perdone mis pecados,
Mi alma quiera salvarre.

.

!Oh noble marques de Mantua,
Mi señor tio carnale!
?Dónde estás que no ois
Mi doloroso quejare?
!Qué nueva tan dolorosa
Os será y de gran pesare
Cuando de mí no supierdes
Ni me pudierdes hallare!
Hecístesme heredero
Por vuestro Estado heredare,
!Mas vos lo habréis de ser mio
Aunque sois de mas edade!

.

—?Qué dices, amigo mio?
?Traes con quien me confesare?

Que ya se me sale el alma ;
 La vida quiero acabare :
 Del cuerpo no tengo pena,
 Que el alma querria salvar.

.

Quando aquesto oyó el Marques
 La habla perdido hae,
 En el suelo dió consigo,
 La espada fué arrojare,
 Las barbas de la su cara
 Empezólas de arrancare,
 Los sus cabellos muy canos
 Comiéndalas de mesare.
 A cabo de una gran pieza
 En pié se fué á levantare ;
 Allegóse al caballero
 Por las armas le quitare.

.

En la boca lo besaba
 No cesando de llorare,
 Las palabras que decia
 Dolor es de las contare.
 —!Oh sobrino Valdovinos,
 Mi buen sobrino carnale!
 ?Quién os trató de esta suerte?
 ?Quién os trujo á tal lugare?
 ?Quién es el que á vos mató
 Que á mí vivo fué á dejare?
 !Mas valiera la mi muerte
 Que la vuestra en tal edade!
 ?No me conoceis, sobrino?
 !Por Dios queraisme hablare!

.

A vos tenia por sobrino
 Para mi Estado heredare,
 Agora por mi ventura
 Yo vos habré de enterrare.
 Sobrino, de aquí adelante
 Yo no quiero vivir mase :
 Ven, muerte, cuando quisieres,
 No te quieras retardare ;

.
Su escudero fué á llegare:
Un ermitaño traia
Que en el bosque fué á hallare,
Hombre de muy santa vida

.
Esforzando á Valdovinos
Comenzóle amonestare
Que olvidando aqueste mundo
De Dios se quiera acordare.

.
Confesóse Valdovinos
A toda su voluntade.
Estando en su confesion,
Ya que queria acabare,
Las angustias de la muerte
Comienzan de le aquejare:

.
Acuerdo van á tomare
Que se fuesen á la ermita,
Y el cuerpo allá lo llevare.
Pónenlo encima el caballo,
Nadie quiso cabalgare.
El hermitaño los guia,
Comienzan de caminar;
Llevan via de la ermita
'Aprisa y no de vagare.
Desque allá hubieron llegado
Van el cuerpo desarmare.
Quince lanzadas tenia,
Cada una era mortale,
Que de la menor de todas
Ninguno podria escapare.

Cuando así lo vió el Marques
Traspasóse de pesare,
Y á cabo de una gran pieza
Un gran suspiro fué á dare.
Entró dentro en la capilla,
De rodillas se fué á hincare,
Puso la mano en un ara

Que estaba sobre el altare,
 Y en los piés de un crucifijo
 Jurando, empezó de hablare.
 —Juro por Dois poderoso,
 Por Santa María su Madre,
 Y al santo Sacramento
 Que aqui suelen celebrare,
 De nunca peinar mis canas,
 Ni las mis barbas cortare;
 De no vestir otras ropas,
 Ni renovar mi calzare;
 De no entrar en poblado,
 Ni las armas me quitare,
 Sino fuera una hora
 Para mi curpo limpiare;
 De no comer en manteles,
 Ni á mesa me asentare,
 Hasta matar á Carloto
 Por justicia ó peleare,
 O morir en la demanda
 Manteniendo la verdade:
 Y si justicia me niega
 Sobre esta tan gran maldade,
 De con mi Estado y persona
 Contra Francia guerreare,
 Y manteniendo la guerra
 Morir ó vencer sin pare.
 Y por este juramento
 Prometo de no enterrare
 El cuerpo de Valdovinos
 Hasta su muerte vengare.

Besides the similarity of the principal events, certain little touches recall familiar details of the French poem. Compare the description of the place where Valdovinos is found:

Cuando llegó á un rio,
 En medio de un arenale—

and

Vivien trove sur un estanc
 'A la funteine dunt li duit sunt bruiant^s

^s *Chanson de Willame*, 1987, 1988.

Also the formula that describes his mortal wounds:

Quince lanzadas tenia,
Cada una era mortale,
Que de la menor de todas
Ninguno podria escapare,

and in *Willame*, 1992, 1993:

Parmi le cors out quinze plaies granz
De la menur fust morz uns amirailz.

Compare the following details from the uncle's lamentation:

Cuando aquesto oyó el Marques
La habla perdido hae,
En el suelo dié consigo—
.
Ven, muerte, cuando quisieres,
No te quieras retardare

with the following lines of *Aliscans*:

Ne pot mot dire tant par fu adolés,⁹
.
Au duel k'i maine si chaï de Bauchant,
Encontre terre se vet sovant pasmant,¹⁰
.
Or vos ont mort Sarrasin et Persant.
Terre, car ouvre, si me va engloutant!¹¹

The most striking elements of the Vivien story, the broken vow, the lay communion, the glory of death in battle, the tragedy of defeat, are wanting, to be sure, in the Spanish version; but the points of similarity are not so commonplace that they can be attributed to chance. Valdovinos, like Vivien, holds in his uncle's affections the place of a son; like Vivien, he is found by his uncle alone beside a stream under the trees, dying of many wounds; both receive the last communion in the heart of the forest, under unusual

⁹ *Aliscans*, 692.
¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 720, 721.
¹¹ *Ibid.*, 711, 712.

conditions. In each case the dying man sends loving messages, the one to his mother and his wife, the other to Guibourc; in each case also, the body is placed upon a horse to be taken away. In both cases, the body does not receive immediate burial. As to the chapel, a chapel is frequently associated with the resting place of Vivien.¹² It seems clear that this first *romance* of the Valdovinos series may well be a distant echo of the impressive episode of Vivien.¹³

The French poems, being much older and more primitive, are more simple, direct and crude, and, for that reason, more effective; but the Spanish poem is not lacking in these qualities, especially if we compare it with the other *romances* of the same series, which tell of the trial and execution of Carloto.

It is to be noted that, in the *romances* derived from the French epics, the imitation is never servile, and that in some cases the story is changed almost beyond recognition. Keeping in mind this freedom of treatment, the similarity between *Floripes y Gui de Borgoña* and the *Prise d'Orange* is perhaps more apparent than that of Valdovinos and Vivien.

In a battle between Christians and Moors, Oliver has wounded and defeated Fierabras, son of the "Almirante Balan." Fierabras is taken to the camp of Charlemagne, and is baptized. Oliver and four others are taken prisoners and confined in a tower. Floripes, the daughter of Balan, is in love with Gui de Borgoña, whom she has seen in a tourney. After killing the guard, who opposes her,

¹²The fullest statement of the circumstances of the burial of Vivien is to be found in an article by Raymond Weeks, in *Romania*, XXXIX, pp. 260-63, 266.

¹³The Conde Viviano, mentioned as present in the portion of *Valdovinos* derived from *Ogier*, is qualified as: "de Agramonte," and is of course Vivien de Monbranc, son of Beuve d'Aigremont. The name Valdovinos is of course from the French Baudouinet. Fr. J. Wolf, in his *Primavera*, II, p. 217, note, drew attention to the fact that the Spanish *romances* confused Baudouinet, son of Ogier, with Baudouinet, brother of Roland. Cf. G. Paris, *Histoire poétique de Charlemagne*, p. 413, note 2. The possible influence of Vivien on *Valdovinos* merits a fuller examination than can be given it here. Is it, for example, an accidental coincidence that Naime is the grandfather of Vivien in the *Enfances Vivien*, and of Valdovinos in the Spanish *romance* (for this latter relationship, see p. 199, of volume II of Wolf)? . . . For the legend of Baldovino, son of Ogier, in Italy, vid. Pio Rajna: *Romania*, III, p. 31 ss. In the Franco-Italian version, Carloto slays Baldovino while they are hunting; cf. the Spanish *romance*.

she visits the prisoners in their dungeon to see whether Gui is among them. With the usual candor of the Saracen princess in such a story, Floripes announces that she will help the prisoners to escape if Gui will marry her. Oliver promises that he shall, and Floripes conceals the knights in her own apartments. In the meantime, Charemagne has sent Roland with six other knights to demand the surrender of Balan and the restitution of the five prisoners. As soon as they enter the town, they are recognized and disarmed. Floripes, upon hearing that Gui is among the new prisoners, tells Oliver of the event and arranges with him a plan of rescue. She asks her father to let her have charge of all the prisoners, saying that she wishes to torture them. Balan agrees, and she arms Roland and his companions as she has done the others. They sit down armed to dinner, and Floripes with them. Gui agrees to the marriage that Oliver has arranged for him, and the troth is pledged. A courtier discovers them at dinner, and is immediately killed by Naymes. After another interview with her father, Floripes gives the signal, and the prisoners rush from their hiding-place and kill all the Moors except Balan. The French knights fortify themselves in the tower, while Balan summons his men from the city; the tower is attacked, Gui is captured and freed again, and a messenger is sent to Charlemagne, who arrives with an army just in time to save his knights. Balan is taken and put to death, Floripes is baptized, and marries Gui.

In the *Prise d'Orange*, there are not so many prisoners, but they are recaptured a number of times. Orable, like Floripes, asks for the prisoners, but her request is refused. Guillaume dramatically defies Arragon, as Roland defies Balan, the hero in each case being a prisoner and unarmed. In both poems the captured knights dine with the Saracen princess, and are supplied by her with the necessary armor. In both, a messenger is sent for help, and the poem ends with the death of the pagan leader, the capture of his city by a christian army, and the baptism and marriage of the princess.

Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo explains the presence of these traces of the Guillaume cycle in the *romances*, by the fact that this cycle is "meridional por la patria de sus héroes y por el teatro de sus hazañas," and finds it quite natural that this epic should have left its mark, "tratándose de una poesía tan vecina, y que alguna

vez, como en el *Sitio de Barbastro*, había tratado asuntos de nuestra propia historia."¹⁴ The surprising part is rather that the traces of this great "neighboring" cycle should be so few and so faint. The names of its leading characters appear to be unknown, and their deeds, when not entirely forgotten, are attributed to others.

As given in the *Romancero General*, the text of *Valdovinos* is of the sixteenth century, and that of *Floripes* of the beginning of the nineteenth.¹⁵ These dates alone account sufficiently for the many changes the stories have undergone, but not the complete loss of the cycle to which they belong and their transference to another. Why did the "southern" epic, whose action is often laid in Spain, disappear, and the northern epic survive? A partial explanation is offered by the influence of the church, which supported the Carolingian epic by the legends of Charlemagne's pilgrimage to Compostela and his grant to the church of Sant Iago of the primacy of Spain;¹⁶ but this influence alone, though powerful, seems hardly sufficient to account for the different fate of the two cycles.

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¹⁴ *Antología*, XII, 410.

¹⁵ *Romancero General*, I, pp. lxvii and lxxxvii.

¹⁶ *Antología*, XI, p. 189.
