



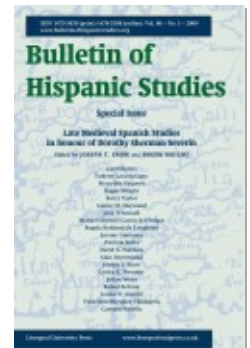
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Dorothy Sherman Severin

Introduction and Bibliography



DOROTHY SHERMAN SEVERIN, OBE

This volume marks the retirement in 2008 of one of the outstanding scholars in the field of late medieval Castilian culture. Dorothy Severin was born in Texas and enjoyed a delightful family life with her parents and her brother and sister, growing up in Dallas. Her schooling was remarkable; she ultimately attained admission to America's best, Harvard University, where she completed all of her degrees (AB in 1963, AM in 1964, PhD in 1967). Her doctoral dissertation, directed by the *Celestina* scholar Stephen Gilman, became her first notable book, *Memory in 'La Celestina'* (London: Tamesis 1970). It was preceded by her edition of *La Celestina* (Madrid: Alianza 1969; still in print) with its introductory essay by Gilman; her 1988 Cátedra edition still sells 25,000 copies per year.

The year 1969 also marked the beginning of Dorothy's permanent presence among British hispanists, when she was offered a lectureship at Westfield College in London. She had previously served one-year appointments in the University of the West Indies (Jamaica) and in Vassar College. Dorothy was a member of Westfield's distinguished department, under the leadership of John Varey and Alan Deyermond, until 1982, when she was appointed to the Gilmour Chair of Hispanic Studies at the University of Liverpool. She also became the General Editor of Liverpool's prestigious international review, the *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, a position she maintained until her official retirement in the summer of 2008. By that point Dorothy had enjoyed a teaching career extending over 40 years.

Although based academically in England, Dorothy was called to several shorter appointments as a Visiting Professor/Scholar at select North American institutions: Harvard (1982), Columbia and Yale (1985), the University of California at Berkeley (1996) and the University of Victoria in British Columbia (2001). She headed the Department of Hispanic Studies at Liverpool from 1982 until 1989, when she became one of the University's Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Head of the Academic Committee (1989–92); she was later elected to a second period on the

Academic Committee (2001–03). From 1997 to 2001 she again headed the Department, and in 2001, under a new University alignment, Dorothy was appointed Head of the School of Modern Languages. She stepped aside from that role in 2005. In addition, she served for eight years on the Northern Ireland Higher Education Council (1993–2001), five years as External Examiner for Trinity College, Dublin, and the University of Ghana (1991–96), and two years on the British Academy's Humanities Research Board (1994–96); from 2005 to 2008 she was deputy chair of the Research Assessment Exercise's Iberian sub-panel. These appointments collectively attest to the amount of extra time she has invested in the advancement of higher education.

Much of Dorothy's energy over the last ten years has been devoted to WiSPS (Women in Spanish, Portuguese and Latin-American Studies), of which she was the first president and one of the *primae mobiles*. WiSPS is concerned with Luso-Hispanic feminist and gender studies, and the role of women in British and Irish universities. Its many study days and conferences have helped maintain the vitality of British and Irish Hispanism in general, as WiSPS continues to evolve and reshape itself for the new millennium. An institutional career deliberately directed towards the promotion of women in both the administrative and the academic aspects of university life is thus having successful results, which may turn out in retrospect to be as important a legacy as are the advances made by Dorothy in our understanding of *La Celestina*, the *cancioneros*, and 15th-century literature in general.

In addition to her editorial work with the *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, Dorothy owns a long service record on the editorial committees of *Celestinesca* (since 1977), *Hispanic Review* (from 1993), and the Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar published at Queen Mary in London (since 1995). Dorothy has also served in an elected capacity on the Modern Humanities Research Association (since 1979), the British Branch of the International Courtly Literature Society (as president, 1986–89), the Asociación Hispánica de Literatura Medieval (Executive Board, 1997–99), Convivio (the association for *cancionero* scholars, on the Executive Committee since 2004), and the International Association of Hispanists (also on the Executive Committee since 2004).

For a lifetime of devotion to scholarship, service and administration, and to the cause of women in British academia, Dorothy was awarded in 2003 the distinction of Honorary Member of the Order of the British Empire (OBE), a ceremony proudly attended by her mother, her daughter, and her son-in-law.

Dorothy Sherman Severin is a well-known and widely respected scholar of Spanish literature, in particular of that of the 15th and 16th centuries. The seventy-odd articles, six monographs and ten editions in the appended bibliography, in addition to over seventy book reviews, are living witness to an extraordinary dedication to the Castilian literature of that period, including, most notably, *La Celestina* and the *cancioneros*, but also Diego de San Pedro, the sentimental romances and the poetry and prose of the Isabelline court, with occasional excursions into *Lazarillo de Tormes* and Cervantes. Dorothy's confer-

ence appearances have been fully international; she has presented papers not only in the UK and in Spain but also in Argentina, Mexico, Canada, the USA, Italy, The Netherlands, France, Belgium and Germany. Equally numerous have been her appearances as guest lecturer, especially at universities in the USA, England, Italy and Spain. Such dedication over a lifetime has been generously supported by the American Philosophical Association, the Universities of London and Liverpool, the Spanish government and the British Academy and, most recently, by the generous grants from the Leverhulme Foundation and the AHRB Resource Enhancement Fund for the massive project of editing the Spanish *cancioneros* currently being directed by Dorothy.

The contributors to this Homage volume are all Dorothy's academic colleagues with an interest in the Castilian literature of this period. Many of us have worked closely with Dorothy in the past, either as fellow scholars working on the same books, in particular *Celestina* and the *cancioneros*, or as colleagues in London or in Liverpool, or both. The editors found no difficulty in recruiting the participants, all of whom wish to honour the contribution she has made to the understanding of the culture of that age, a contribution which, we hope and expect, will extend well beyond ostensible retirement for many years to come.

We also wish to thank Alan Deyermund and Andrew Kirk of Liverpool University Press for their practical help with this volume.

Joseph T. Snow and Roger Wright
Summer 2008

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An Electronic Library of the 15th-Century Castilian Cancionero Manuscript Corpus (website, 2007; <http://cancionerovirtual.liv.ac.uk>).