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Terence Dooley is currently putting the finishing touches to an anthology of contemporary Spanish women poets for Shearsman. Previous translations include *The Year of the Crab* by Mariano Peyrou, and *Selected Poems* by Eduardo Moga.

SAMPLER

STREETS WHERE TO WALK IS TO EMBARK

Spanish Poets in London

(1811-2018)

edited by

Eduardo Moga

translated by

Terence Dooley

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FOREWORD

Londres es todo niebla y gente triste.
No sé si es la niebla la que produce la gente triste,
o si es la gente triste la que produce la niebla.
Oscar Wilde

London is too full of fogs and serious people.
Whether the fogs produce the serious people,
or whether the serious people produce the fogs, I don't know.
Oscar Wilde

For centuries London was the capital of the world, and it remains, even today, one of the most fascinating cities in the world, a magnet for writers intrigued by its diversity and contradictions. Before the 19th century, very few Spaniards had seen or written about it, although there was perhaps an early missed opportunity. Fernando Sánchez de Tovar, an admiral in the service of Enrique II and Juan I of Castile, sailed up the Thames in 1380, in the middle of the Hundred Years' War, with the wicked aim of sacking London, having already twice laid waste to the main South coast ports from Plymouth to Folkestone, but he got no further than Gravesend, which, either from habit or from frustration at not having reached the capital, he razed to the ground. This feat of the devastating admiral is fittingly described by Pedro López de Ayala in the *Crónicas de los reyes de Castilla* [*Chronicles of the Kings of Castile*] devoted to Juan I: 'They waged great war on the seas in this year, and sailed up the Artemis (Thames) further than any enemy galleons had reached, almost as far as London'. Though, even had Sánchez de Tovar reached London, it's extremely improbable he would have left us his written impressions: he'd have been too busy burning the place down.

Not until long after those troubled times do we encounter a significant presence of Spanish writers in England. In the reign of Elizabeth II, London became the refuge of choice for exiled Spanish Protestants. The three most important were Casiodoro de Reina, Cipriano de Valera, and Antonio del Corro. De Reina translated the first full version of the Bible in Spanish, the *Biblia del oso* [*Bear Bible*], published in Basel in 1569, which de Valera later corrected as the *Biblia del cántaro* [*Jug Bible*] in 1602. Now known as the *Biblia Reina-Valera,* this is the most beautiful of all the translations into Spanish. Antonio del Corro, an Oxford don,

wrote the first Spanish grammar for English use, published in 1590, as an introduction to the first Spanish-English dictionary. In the reign of James I, another protestant priest, Juan de Luna, wrote the extremely anticlerical *Segunda parte de la vida de Lazarillo de Tormes* [*Second Part of the Life of Lazarillo de Tormes*], which was published in Paris in 1620, an English translation following in 1622. In 1623 he published a new edition in English and Spanish of his Spanish textbook *Arte breve y compendioso para aprender a leer, pronunciar, escribir y hablar la lengua española* [*Brief and Compendious Art of Learning to Read, Pronounce, Write and Speak the Spanish Tongue*], which had been a success in France as a Spanish text in 1615. None of these writers, however, or any other of the Spanish Protestants who sought refuge here during the period, left a written record of their life in the British Isles, perhaps because of their struggle to earn a living. For Casiodoro de Reina, there was the added complication of his having to face accusations of being a spy in the service of Elizabeth I, and a practising homosexual.

The first account of a Spanish writer's experiences in London is the poet and playwright Leandro Fernández de Moratín's *Apuntaciones sueltas de Inglaterra* [*Notes on England*],[1] which remained unpublished until 1984. Moratín had been given a grant by the government of Manuel Godoy to study French theatre in Paris, but in 1792 he fled the horrors of the guillotine to study English theatre in London, where he stayed a year. He became the first translator of *Hamlet* directly from the English, in 1798, and wrote poems about British heroes such as Nelson. *Notes on England* is a delight: a melange of diary, essay and travel-writing in which he relates what he sees in late 18th century London in a highly lively style, a mixture of wit, astonishment and the scientific spirit. He memorably lists the 'implements, devices and instruments needed to serve tea to two guests in any decent English home', twenty-four in total. Also memorable are his reflections on religious freedom; Englishwomen's feet ('enormous'); suicide ('very common in England: the people's melancholy nature is exacerbated by their environment and, after due consideration, they resolve that they should kill themselves'); the clergy – 'canons, deans, archdeacons and bishops' – who stroll arm in arm with their wives and surrounded by their children; the kangaroo, that animal 'newly discovered (…), tranquil and well-mannered'; donkeys, 'of greater utility and better treated than in Madrid', because, instead of bearing loads of plaster, brick and stone on their backs, with the consequent risk of collapse under the weight, they pull it along behind them in carts; ostentatious funerals,

because 'in England much attention is lavished on the dead'; and, finally, his half-amazed, half-revolted depiction of the English passion for alcohol:

> 'The Prince of Wales is drunk every night: drunkenness is not considered a vice in England, and it's the most usual thing in the world to encounter distinguished persons four sheets to the wind in private houses, pubs and theatres. When a foreigner is a guest at an English table, he must either get drunk with everyone else, or lose the good opinion of his host, and the company; he may not abstain or drink moderately. No excuse is accepted; any refusal is an affront, an unforgiveable insult. As soon as the tablecloths are removed, the bottles arrive and the toasts begin; with each toast a glass of wine must be drunk. The first toast is generally to His Majesty and our glorious Constitution; then every single person present toasts someone dear to him, an absent friend, and everyone drinks, repeating the toast, and all this is performed with a ceremony and gravity ridiculous to behold, and so on, from toast to toast, so that everyone must drink as many glasses as there are people invited. And after the first round there is usually a second or third, and there they sit for four, six, eight hours not moving from the table except to urinate, which they do in a large bucket placed for that purpose in a corner of the room'.

Almost a century later, Benito Pérez Galdós, one of the greatest 19th century European novelists, visited England three times, in 1883, 1886 and 1889, to survey in detail the London described by Dickens, his idol. During his third visit he also went to Stratford, and around 1895 he published *La casa de Shakespeare* [*Shakespeare's House*],[2] in which he writes about the absence of Spanish names in the visitor's book: 'I believe I am one of the very few, perhaps the only Spaniard to have visited that literary Jerusalem and I confess I am proud to have rendered this homage to the most sublime of all poets…'. Of London, however, he gives a less flattering picture, focusing on those left on the margins of the prosperity brought by capitalism:

> 'In the very centre of the city, around the hotels and train stations, one sees flocks of ragged children, with sooty faces and bare feet, and without shelter of any kind. It's dreadful to think of these poor creatures' existence when winter's rigours set in'.

In 1905, *Los ingleses vistos por un latino: impresiones de viaje* [*The English as Seen by a Latin: Travel Notes*][3] by the Catalan Federico Rahola Trèmols, a little-known writer in comparison with those mentioned above, saw the light of day. Rahola depicts Albion favourably and admiringly, but not without irony. Unsurprisingly, when we think of Moratín, his first chapter is called *Alcohol in England:*

> 'In England, to get drunk is the most natural thing in the world, as natural as it is for us to bask in the winter sunshine back home. It's the only way the English have to leave their island without crossing the channel. The flecks of soot in the air, the constant roar of machinery, the black-stained buildings, the thick and penetrating fog, the gloomy expressions and the shut mouths form an entity driving them to drink, as we are drawn to light'.

Also like Moratín, Rahola dwells unflatteringly on the Englishwoman's feet: 'Her face is a poem and her feet monstrous; one's eyes skip from Greek sculpture to grotesque late Baroque; an angel would be happy with her countenance and a clodhopper disdain her soles. It's as if an exquisite form were placed on a pedestal of disproportionate size', though, in a footnote, he has the grace to admit: 'This isn't always the case'.

Pío Baroja, another great Spanish novelist and Dickens devotee, like Galdós, came first to London in 1906 to explore the Dickensian city. After a month of tramping its streets, he realised, as he writes in his memoirs, that it was a world even wider than his hero's novels, 'impossible to understand given many months or years; a world wrapped in darkness and fog, of unfeasible distances, with a greater gulf fixed between extreme wealth and abject poverty than anywhere else'. This first stay gave rise to his novel of 1909 *La ciudad de la niebla* [*The City of Fog*],[4] set entirely in London, which depicts scenes of misery and lowlife similar to those described by Galdós.

> 'At nightfall, these streets around Covent Garden market became lively: overweight women, scruffy girls and a swarm of little ragamuffins emerged from the doorways. These children did not seem light-hearted and gay like poor children in Spain: they were dirty, miserable; the girls looked squashed by huge woollen berets; the boys, shy and quiet, hardly played. (…). From every house and tavern came the sound of rows and fighting. Men beat their wives and children mercilessly. It was wretched to see, in the midst of a

> civilisation so perfect in so many other ways, that children were treated more cruelly here than anywhere else in the world'.

Baroja came again to England in the middle of the Spanish Civil War, and stayed from 1937 to 1939. This time he also travelled outside London. The city plays a central role in several novels inspired by this second visit: *Los impostores joviales* [*Jovial Imposters*], *Laura o La soledad sin remedio* [*Laura or Incurable Loneliness*], *Los espectros del castillo* [*The Castle Ghosts*], and *El hotel del cisne* [*The Swan Hotel*].

In 1916, the Galician writer and journalist, Julio Camba, published an extraordinary collection, simply titled *Londres. Impresiones de un español* [*London. A Spaniard's Impressions*].[5] He arrived in London at the end of 1910 as correspondent to the newspaper *El Mundo,* and, in the course of a long year's stay, wrote more than 150 articles which appeared in the Spanish press over the next two years. Then he returned to England in 1913, this time for only a few months. Taken together, the articles which make up *London…* form one of the most intelligent and good-humoured portraits ever painted of the city. Camba writes with the same mild irony and subtle pungency employed by the British in their travels abroad, perhaps because, as a Galician, he like them had come under a Celtic influence. The humour in this light-hearted book arises from the perpetual contrast between Camba's mañana-ism, spontaneity and sense of fun, and the puritanism of his hosts, determined to observe the law, pay bills on time, and suffer the rain. Despite his originality of tone, the reader will recognise certain topics from previous travellers' chronicles. For example, Camba discusses 'English suicide' like Moratín; sandwich-men like Rahola; and the Englishwoman's feet, like both of them ('she has big feet so as not to fall over'). Also, predictably, drunkenness, and the food, dull and unappetising (Camba was a gourmet, and wrote one of the best books on gastronomy of the 20th century, *La casa de Lúculo* [*The House of Lucullus*]), the fog and the rain. In the memorable first article in *London…*, *El guardia objetivamente considerado* [*An Objective Look at the Police*], he takes the 'bobby' as a metaphor for the unblinking imperturbability of the society in which he finds himself.

> 'There seems to me something superhuman about the English policeman; he is above our passions and everyday sentiments. Once I had to ask one the way; I approached him and gazed up at him. The policeman had his head in the air and didn't see me. I called to him, to ask my question. Then the policemen, without

looking in my direction, gave me a most detailed answer and, as I went on my way, he still held his impassive statuesque pose. And this is because when you ask an English policeman a question it's not you he answers, he is answering society. Whether you are well or badly dressed and whether you're polite or rude won't influence his response. I already said he was superhuman. His spirit is the spirit of duty. If you or I or anyone approaches him, we are society calling. The policeman answers, that is all'.

The first Spanish poets to write about London arrived in the city in the most substantial of the many political migrations of the 19th century. Ferdinand VII twice declared absolute power (in 1814 and in 1823) and Romantics and liberals fled his persecutions. A thousand or more Spanish families set up home in the capital, most of them in Somers Town, near King's Cross, which became the quintessential Spanish *barrio*. England became their destination, since no other country (all of them ruled by the heirs of the *ancien régime*) would accept the Spanish revolutionaries, but the United Kingdom still gave shelter to the oppressed and believed in free thought and free expression. Valentín Llanos Gutiérrez, a friend of Keats who wrote novels in English, expresses this well: England was 'the only country in Europe where the honourable patriot could find a refuge and a sympathetic welcome and breathe the health-giving air of liberty'. Among those refugees were well-known literary figures such as José Joaquín de Mora, journalist and poet, translator of Walter Scott and Jeremy Bentham; Bartolomé José Gallardo, poet and satirist, literary critic, bibliophile and serial book-thief, who composed, while in London, *El panteón de El Escorial* [*The Escorial Pantheon*], a violent and factual poetic diatribe against all the Spanish kings, from the *Reyes Católicos* to the vile Ferdinand VII himself; Ángel de Saavedra, Duke of Rivas, poet and author of the classic Romantic drama *Don Álvaro o La fuerza del sino* [*Don Álvaro or The Force of Destiny*], which until recently all Spanish children studied for the Baccalaureate; Antonio Alcalá Galiano, who lived in England for many years and, despite his dire need, refused a British government grant, because he was writing a biography of Rafael del Riego which criticised that government's treatment of him, and who also became the first Professor of Spanish at London University; and José de Espronceda, poet and standard-bearer for Spanish Romanticism who lived in London from 1827 to 1829, and again in 1832. As well as pursuing their own work, many of them contributed to the reviews or magazines published by the Spanish colony. The most significant of these, perhaps, was *Ocio de*

Españoles Emigrados [*Entertainment for Spanish Migrants*], which ran from 1824 to 1827.[6] A series of articles by an anonymous contributor, 'The Migrant', gives us a splendid picture, not only of pre-Victorian London but also of the Spanish mindset in those years. 'The Migrant' is first of all amazed at the traffic, 'the vast agglomerations of people, which lead to collisions and fracas, without the consolation of being able to give the perpetrator a good mouthful, since he wouldn't understand us, it would be like preaching in the desert'. He praises the 'peerless nocturnal illumination, provided by the happy invention of gas', and his admiration is understandable, given that gaslight didn't reach Spain until 1841. He has interesting things to say about men and women's clothing: the men don't wear shorts, but 'trousers and tailcoats –even the road-sweepers'. But the way the women dress raises a difficulty: 'Though they dress with utmost decency, the way their corsets emphasise the figure arouses violent passions in us Spaniards'. Imagine the torture these Catholic Spanish exiles endured, strolling around London and witnessing those balconied bosoms. He also notes the effects of Spanish clothes on the English: 'I'm surprised to see that our capes are more ridiculous to them than Greek or Asiatic costume. What would they say if they saw someone in Maragato or Valencian costume? And are these more shocking than a Scotsman in his kilt?'. But these Spanish capes brought insults as well as mockery: 'They called us French dogs (…). But, when we told them we were Spanish, they began to praise us instead, for these people know full well that our resistance, loyalty and honour halted Napoleon in his tracks and put an end to the threat to their might and well-being'. These exiles so disconcerted by Englishwomen's figures, being used to Spanish women shrouded in layers of clothing, are also disconcerted by their behaviour: they go out alone, and no-one shouts compliments after them. So, 'such is the general law abidingness, young girls leave their houses unaccompanied and travel by coach from one town to another'. And he gives an admiring example: 'A girl, a gentleman's daughter, was in the carriage with us all the way from Bristol to London'. Though he doesn't mention her feet.

Setting aside the chronicles of 'The Migrant', which one may consider an exception, few other exiles paid much attention to their host city during their stay, nor did they view it with affection. They were sunk in melancholy: their main preoccupation was getting back to a Spain which they felt to be suffering in darkness. Even their poems about London, such as those by Espronceda and Martínez de la Rosa in this anthology, are really about Spain: transpositions of a more desired place. The Duke de Rivas

wrote poems with eloquent titles such as *El desterrado* [*The Outcast*] and *El sueño del proscrito* [*The Outlaw's Dream*]. In the latter he writes:

> I wake with a start
> and find myself a fugitive
> from Spanish soil,
> the place of my birth (…);
> and instead of the balm
> of the soft breeze
> of the Andalusian sky
> which I loved so,
> the foul fogs
> of the frigid Thames
> sick at heart
> shall I inhale…

A forerunner of these writers was the unusual and eminent figure José María Blanco White, who set up home in England in 1810, fleeing the Bonapartist Spanish government, and never returned to Spain, dying in Liverpool in 1841. He was atypical in that he wrote in English. Among his works are the memorable *Letters from Spain* and the sonnet *Night and Death*, described by Coleridge as 'the finest and most grandly conceived sonnet in our language'.

A second wave of poets and writers arrived in the United Kingdom during the Spanish Civil War or after the Republic's fall, in 1939. The best-known were Luis Cernuda, Pedro Garfias, Arturo Barea, Esteban Salazar Chapela, Manuel Chaves Nogales and José Antonio Balbontín. Cernuda, an Andalusian from Seville, lived in Great Britain from 1938 to 1947: in Glasgow, in Cambridge and in London. His years of exile were a torment to him: the weather, the puritanism and coldness of the people, a thriving capitalism deadly to the imagination and to *joie de vivre*. If London suffocated him with its crowds and tumult, Glasgow was even more hellish, a frigid inferno, although early on he discovered the 'morning delight of bathing with *déshabillés* or naked Scotsmen'. But he found the Caledonian city dark, soporific, desolate: a 'heap of management niches', 'a sink'. In 1943 he moved to Cambridge, where he taught Spanish at Emmanuel College. This was the high point of Cernuda's time in England: he was at least contented there; one could never say he was truly happy anywhere. Finally, in 1945, he went to work in London, at the Spanish Institute, which was financed by the Republican government in exile, and

began to write literary criticism for the *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies.* He spent his summers in Oxford with his friend the painter Gregorio Prieto. Though he didn't enjoy himself much in England, his stay greatly benefited his writing: he read the Metaphysical poets, Eliot, Auden, Wordsworth, Blake, Yeats, Shelley, Keats and Browning, and translated Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida.* All this reading (as he explains in *Historial de un libro* [*History of a book*]) led Cernuda to reject the pathetic fallacy and excessive aestheticism, and to develop an elegant plain style. The subtlety and naturalness so characteristic of English literature would be evident in his writing for the rest of his life, and would exert a profound influence on Spanish poets up to the present day. He had good words too to say about his fellow countrymen of the past decade, with whom he had suffered the horrors of the Second World War: 'The English, for me at least, don't inspire warm feelings, but I can't think of a people I admire or respect more'. And elsewhere: 'England is the most civilized country I know of, the place where civilisation has reached its apogee. All one can do is bow to its superiority and learn from it, or leave'. He decided to leave, and was glad to go. We see this in his poem *La partida* [*Leaving*], written in America. It details his impressions of grey rivers, damp skies, all he had to live through, and it ends prophetically: 'Farewell cold land, cold as your men,/ Where error took me and where error bids me leave./ Thanks for everything and thanks for nothing./ I won't be back again'.

Another Andalusian, Pedro Garfias, only spent a few months in England, but started on the road to alcoholism there, and wrote *Primavera en Eaton Hastings (Poema bucólico con intermedios de llanto)* [*Spring in Eaton Hastings (Pastoral with Interludes of Lament)*],[7] which he published on his arrival in Mexico, in June 1939, which Dámaso Alonso described as the best of all poems about Spanish exile. He wrote it in the village of the same name, home of Alexander Gavin Henderson, 2nd Baron Faringdon, a Labour peer who had given him shelter. *Spring in Eaton Hastings* takes up again that song for Spain sung by the exiled liberals of the early 19th century. In the interlude *Noche con estrellas* [*Starry Night*] he writes:

> Although, frail dome, you crack, this starry night,
> into a thousand shards,
> I must cry out amid this English wood
> of thoughtful oaks and lofty, sounding pines.
> I must uproot the trees convulsively,
> and batter on the heavens with my fists,

and weep out loud this bitten misery
that wells and gushes from my inmost self.

Alone amid a race who shape their fate
and roll their dice with calculating eye;
who work and play and take their Sunday rest
and all week long patrol their vast estates,
as vigilant as sheepdog with its herd;
who walk straight paths as one parts children's hair;
who gobble the black entrails of their soil
with a green tongue of parterres and of parks;
who tend their flowers with a Franciscan care,
who tend their fish and birds and enslave India;
alone amid a race who sleep tonight
alone I shed my tears.

Although the silence creak, the swan awake
(that Royal swan) and break the quiet waters
with its wings; although the waters flow
and softly tap their knuckles on the bank
and the din spread throughout the listening wood
and finally awake the sleeping breeze
behind the curve of hill; though the breeze swoop
to shake the meadows, rattle window-panes;
although the quivering note should reach the stars,
perturb the constellations in their seat
while England sleeps, I bellow my lament
like a poor calf who's from his mother rent.

Though Garfias wasn't in England long, his stay did include an extraordinary episode recounted by Pablo Neruda in *Confieso que he vivido* [*Memoirs*],[8] a kind of metaphor for communication between people and, by extension, peoples. Neruda writes:

> '(Garfias) went to stay in the castle of a lord (…). He was always by himself there and, as he was a restless Andalusian, he would go every day to the village pub and silently (since he couldn't speak English, only a gypsified Spanish which I could barely understand myself) drink a depressed and solitary beer. The publican was much intrigued by this mute customer. One night, when all

the other drinkers had gone home, he invited him to stay behind and the two of them went on drinking by the fire, whose crackling did the talking for them.

This invitation became a ritual. Every night Garfias was welcomed by the publican, who was also lonely, with no wife or family. Gradually their tongues were loosened. Garfias told him the whole story of the Civil War, with exclamations, oaths and Andalusian curses. The innkeeper heard him out in devoted silence, naturally not understanding a single word.

Then the Scotsman began to relate his own misfortunes, probably how his wife had left him (…). I say probably because, in all the long months of these bizarre exchanges, Garfías didn't understand a single word either.

Nonetheless, the friendship of the two lonely men, each speaking passionately of his own concerns and in his own language, unintelligible to the other, grew and grew: to meet every night and talk till dawn became a necessity to them both.

When Garfias had to leave, to go to Mexico, they bid each other farewell drinking and talking, weeping and embracing. What they both felt so deeply was the parting of their solitudes. *I never understood a word, Pablo, but whenever I listened to him I felt… I was certain I caught the sense of what he was saying. And when I spoke I was sure he understood me too*'.

Arturo Barea, from Extremadura, also fled Spain after the defeat of the Republican forces. He settled in London and worked for the Spanish section of the BBC's World Service from 1940 until his death in 1957. He gave more than 900 talks for them under the pseudonym of Juan de Castilla. He later took British nationality and moved to Eaton Hastings (thanks again to Baron Faringdon) with his wife, the Austrian journalist Ilse Kulcsar. In London he wrote one of the most significant books of 20th century Spanish exile, the novelised autobiography *La forja de un rebelde* [*The Forging of a Rebel*]. Translated by Ilse, it was first published in English in three parts, between 1941 and 1946, and was a great success both in the UK and the US. The first edition in Spanish was published in 1951 in Argentina. Unsurprisingly, given Franco's animus against Barea, whom he called 'the English Beria', this major work didn't come out in Spain until 1977.[9]

José Antonio Balbontín was another defender of the Republic who sought exile in London in 1939, where he lived until 1970, returning

then to Spain, where, in 1978, he died. Like many other exiles, he made his living from translation and his meagre royalties. In England he wrote *Por el amor de España y de la Idea. Cien sonetos de combate contra Franco y sus huestes* [*For Love of Spain and the Idea: 100 Fighting Sonnets against Franco and his Hordes*], a ferocious political diatribe which he published in Mexico under the pseudonym Juan de Luz in 1956; and *A la orilla del Támesis (Poemas del destierro)* [*On the Banks of the Thames (Poems of Exile)*], 44 poems expressing the longing for Spain one would expect in a Spanish poet in exile, as well as the misery of London life, and also his admiration for Byron, Shelley and Keats, published in 2005.[10] This wasn't the only one of Balbontín's works to be published long after his death: *Mis impresiones de Inglaterra* [*My Impressions of England*], a prose memoir intended 'to set down plainly, as in a family letter, for friends who may be interested, some of my personal impressions from throughout my exile in England, a country which has been my second homeland, and which I will hold in my memory when I return to my true homeland, where my only dream is to die in peace under the sun of Castile, if God allows me this grace', did not appear until 2013.[11]

Two more writers, who died in exile, should be mentioned. The first, Esteban Salazar Chapela, became Spanish consul for the Republic in Glasgow in 1937. In 1939, he moved to London with his wife and, in 1941, began to work for the BBC World Service, also teaching at Cambridge. He became secretary of the Republican Spanish Institute when it opened in 1944. In 1947, his *Perico en Londres* [*Perico in London*], an idiosyncratic narrative, part humorous, part wistful, was published in Argentina,[12] as well as the light-hearted *Desnudo en Piccadilly* [*Naked in Piccadilly*], in 1959. His *Cartas de Londres* [*Letters from London*], articles in which he commented on the cultural, social and political life of the U.K, and news items on Spanish and Latin American themes, appeared in the principal Latin American newspapers. He died in London in 1965. In *Perico in London* he writes:

> 'Who am I?' (…). 'A Spaniard'. 'What am I doing here in the swaddled island, below pearl-grey skies?'. 'Waiting perhaps'. 'Why am I here? Why aren't I in the Paseo de la Castellana, the Rambla de las Flores or in the María Luisa park?'. 'Because if you showed your face in any of those places you'd be a dead man' (…). 'In that case, I'm a hunted man, what they call a fugitive, who is here on this kindly hospitable island simply because he cannot

be back there' (…). 'What did I do?'. 'You disagreed, in other words you are heterodox, heterodox, Perico'. 'How silly! (…) and just for that they'd kill me if I showed my face in the Paseo de la Castellana, the Rambla de las Flores or in the María Luisa park?' (…). 'Certainly, it's ridiculous, grotesque, but I've seen it happen many times'. 'Where?'. 'In Spain'. 'When?'. 'For the last five centuries' (…). 'From the 16th century to the present day' (…). 'They were heterodox too. But in the 16th and 17th centuries they called them Protestants, and in the 18th century encyclopaedists, and in the 19th century constitutionalists and liberals. Now in the 20th century they're called republicans, although it's true you could call them antifascists, since they are both things'. 'And what became of the heterodox of, the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th centuries?'. 'All who managed to escape came to this island'. 'To this island? Like me?'. 'Exactly like you'. 'Oh, Perico! What a wonderful and heartbreaking discovery!'. 'As wonderful and heartbreaking as the raging river of our history'. 'Therefore I must have, here on British soil, perhaps on the very greensward of this peaceful park, an army of Spaniards, ghostly, invisible to mortal eyes, keeping me company… That's right, isn't it, Perico, these ghosts are by my side?'. 'They're with you, Perico. They are your ancestors'.

Manuel Chaves Nogales, Andalusian like Cernuda, fled Franco for Paris in 1936, then fled Hitler for London in 1940. He was a well-known journalist and writer of many books, including one of the best books on the Civil War, a collection of nine stories, *A sangre y fuego: héroes, bestias y mártires de España* [*By Blood and Fire: Heroes, Beasts and Martyrs of Spain*], published in Santiago de Chile in 1937. In London he founded and ran *The Atlantic Pacific Press Agency*, was a columnist on the *Evening Standard*, and worked for the BBC World Service, like Barea, Salazar Chapela and many other Republican exiles, before his early death from cancer in 1944.

During the long night of Franco's dictatorship, Spaniards continued to emigrate as they had always done. But few now came to the UK. Latin America, because of the shared language and culture, and a handful of European countries, France, Germany and Switzerland, were the main destinations of a primarily economic, though never without some political motive, migration. Only 5% of Spaniards emigrating within Europe settled in Great Britain. Despite the dictatorship and Spain's isolation, poets and writers continued to visit England, usually to work

in academia, as university language or literature teachers. Already, before the Civil War, various members of the celebrated 1927 generation of poets had set an example: Manuel Altolaguirre lived in London from 1933 to 1935, where he founded and edited the bilingual magazine *1616* (the year both Shakespeare and Cervantes died), publishing his own translations of T. S. Eliot and Byron and part of Shelley's *Adonaïs*; Dámaso Alonso taught at Oxford and Cambridge; Jorge Guillén at Oxford; and Pedro Salinas at Cambridge. After the war, other well-known poets followed in their footsteps: Claudio Rodríguez at Nottingham; José Ángel Valente at Oxford; and Juan Antonio Masoliver Ródenas, who became Professor of Spanish and Latin American Studies at the University of Westminster. However, none of them wrote about London, with the exception of Masoliver Ródenas, whose poem is in this anthology. Only in the 1970s, when Franco's dictatorship was loosening its hold, and then in the early years of democracy, did a new wave of young poets arrive in London to enjoy the freedom, cosmopolitan atmosphere, and wealth of culture it offered. This latter group did write about their experiences. Some of them – Gimferrer, Leopoldo María Panero, Carnero – belonged to or moved in the orbit of the *novísimo* group, writing a new poetry no longer rooted in social concerns; others were free spirits, hungry for life and independence, who, as they washed dishes in Soho restaurants or strummed guitars in the underground, soaked up the atmosphere and described it or let it filter through in their stories and poems.

With the coming of democracy and entry into the Common Market, Spain became a modern society, with opportunities to travel to London for the majority, as a tourist or a student – not just, as before, to taste bohemia, to work as an *au pair*, or to procure an abortion. Many people came, up until the 2008 recession, which was especially devastating in Spain because of the collapse of a large part of the financial system and many building societies. This produced an influx of economic migrants to the UK, in search of work or prospects unavailable to them in their own country. At least 200,000 Spaniards now live in Britain, around half of them in London. They are no longer fleeing political repression, but attempting to escape poverty and inequality. And, as they struggle to improve their own lot, and to contribute to the society that welcomes them, some of them write about their experience. So do some of the students, teachers and the many tourists still attracted to a seductive and troubling, tranquil and bewildering, wealthy and mysterious city, where one is never sure if the fog makes people sad, or the sad people make the fog.

This anthology

I bring together in *Streets Where to Walk Is to Embark* a wide selection of poems written about the city over the past two centuries by Spanish poets. The starting date had to be 1800 as I couldn't find anything written earlier.

The poems had to be recognisably about the city. There are probably many more poems written *in* London by Spanish poets, but I wasn't about to enter into an archaeology of creation or sift through biographies, a task beyond the scope of this anthology: I wanted poems that mentioned London, whatever else they were also about. So all these poems have an explicit connection to the city. Sometimes London is the protagonist, sometimes the setting, and sometimes it represents an outside space which the poet interiorises, but it always remains a real place, an urban environment to accept as it is or to confront.

I didn't select the poems on the basis of form or style. *Streets Where to Walk Is to Embark* contains every kind of expression, tradition, sensibility and voice – the only benchmark for inclusion was quality. So the anthology, as well as being a balanced history, is also a display of the breadth of styles of current Spanish poetry, and of the poetry of the past.

The poems had to have been already published. I wasn't looking for new work, but for a significant historical record.

The poets are all Spanish, writing in Spanish, with the sole exception of Jèssica Pujol, who wrote her poem in English. I haven't included poetry in the other peninsular languages, though I know of some poems on London in Catalan and there may be others in Galician or Basque. Many Latin American poets have also written about London, either in Spanish or Portuguese, from the Peruvian Antonio Cisneros to the Brazilian Vinícius de Moraes. So have many Portuguese, such as Alberto Lacerda, Mário Cesariny, and Manuel A. Domingos, and many French, most famously Rimbaud and Verlaine, pursuing their tormented love-affair. In fact London has been a focus for world literature in numerous languages, too many for this anthology to contemplate or to include. So I've confined myself to my mother tongue, the language I write my own poems in, and I believe I've made a representative and generous selection of Spanish poetry which recognises, and pays homage to, the affectionate relationship between our two venerable nations, which has had its ups and downs over the centuries, but which has been so fruitful in terms of mutual literary artistic and social interchange. On other matters: I'm disappointed not to have been able to include more women poets, but I could hardly find any poems about London written by women. And please forgive me for including one of

my own poems. I thought that its theme (and I hope quality) justified its presence, but its presence is also my personal homage to a city in which I spent two and a half years of my life, angst-ridden, but also revitalized and hopeful. I miss it more and more.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Eduardo Moga
Sant Cugat del Vallès (Barcelona),
December 16th, 2018

PUBLICATION NOTES

[1] The first (incomplete) edition was published in 1984. Many editions followed. The one used here was Ana Rodríguez-Fischer's, Promociones y Publicaciones Universitarias, 1992.
[2] Antonio López, editor, Librería Española; recently reissued: Rey Lear, 2007.
[3] Antonio López, editor, Librería Española.
[4] Bruguera, 1980.
[5] There are modern editions, the most recent by Francisco Fuster García in Reino de Cordelia, 2012.
[6] All editions of the magazine have been scanned and are available online in the Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes: http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/portales/ocios_de_espanoles_emigrados/.
[7] The most recent edition was published by Point de Lunettes, 2018.
[8] Seix Barral, 1974. English edition by Penguin, 1978.
[9] Turner. Many further editions followed, notably Gregorio Torres Nebrera's for Editora Regional de Extremadura in 2009. There have also been several English (and American) editions, the most recent by Pushkin Press (2018).
[10] Edition by Aitor L. Larrabide, Ayuntamiento de Santa María de Cayón, colección «La Sirena del Pisueña», nº 23.
[11] Edition by Aitor L. Larrabide, Renacimiento.
[12] Buenos Aires, Losada.

SAMPLER

FRANCISCO MARTÍNEZ DE LA ROSA
(Granada, 1787–Madrid, 1862)

EL RECUERDO DE LA PATRIA

(En Londres, año de 1811)

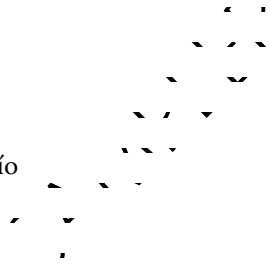
Vi en el Támesis umbrío
Cien y cien naves cargadas
De riqueza;
Vi su inmenso poderío,
Sus artes tan celebradas,
Su grandeza.
Mas el ánima afligida
Mil suspiros exhalaba
Y ayes mil;
Y ver la orilla florida
Del manso Dauro anhelaba
Y del Genil.
Vi de la soberbia corte
Las damas engalanadas,
Muy vistosas;
Vi las bellezas del norte,
De blanca nieve formadas
Y de rosas:
Sus ojos de azul del cielo;
De oro puro parecía
Su cabello;
Bajo transparente velo
Turgente el seno se vía,
Blanco y bello.
¿Mas qué valen los brocados,
Las sedas y pedrería
De la ciudad?
¿Qué los rostros sonrosados,
La blancura y gallardía,
Ni la beldad?
Con mostrarse mi zagala,
De blanco lino vestida,
Fresca y pura,

FRANCISCO MARTÍNEZ DE LA ROSA

REMEMBRANCE OF HIS HOMELAND
(London, 1811)

On the umbrous Thames I saw
One hundred and a hundred ships
With riches laden;
I dwelt on its vast power,
Its arts wide-famed,
Its grandeur.
But my wretched soul
A thousand moans exhaled,
A thousand sighs;
I yearned to gaze upon
Sweet Dauro's flowered shore
And the Gentil.
I saw great ladies of the court
Bedecked in their proud
Hauteur.
I saw the beauties of the North,
Of white snow made
And roses:
Their eyes celestial blue;
Their bright hair shining
Pure as gold;
Beneath transparent veil
Their bosoms swell
White and beautiful.
But what avail
The fine brocade, the silk,
The jewelled city?
And what the blushing skin,
The white, the gallantry,
The beauty?
When my dear girl appears,
Clothed in white linen,
Cool and pure,

Condena la inútil gala,
Y se esconde confundida
La hermosura.
¿Dó hallar en climas helados
Sus negros ojos graciosos,
Que son fuego,
Ora me miren airados,
Ora roben cariñosos
Mi sosiego?
¿Dó la negra cabellera
Que al ébano se aventaja?
¿Y el pie leve,
Que al triscar por la pradera,
Ni las tiernas flores aja,
Ni aun las mueve…?
Doncellas las del Genil,
Vuestra tez escurecida
No trocara
Por los rostros de marfil
Que Albión envanecida
Me mostrara.
Padre Dauro, manso río
De las arenas doradas,
Dígnate oír
Los votos del pecho mío;
¡Y en tus márgenes sagradas
Logre morir!



She banishes vain show,
And modesty conceals
Her loveliness.
  Where in frosty climes to find
The grace of her black eyes
Of fire,
Now may they flash at mine,
Now, doting, steal away
My care?
  Where her black tresses
Finer far than ebony?
And her light foot,
That, tripping through the meadows,
Harms not the wild flowers,
Nor stirs them?
  Oh, damsel of the Gentil,
Your dusk complexion
I would praise
Above all marble
Proud Albion
Displays.
  Father Dauro, sweet river
Of golden sands,
Pray hearken to
My heartfelt cry;
And on your sacred margin
May I die!

DOMINGO MARÍA RUIZ DE LA VEGA
(Seville, 1789–Madrid, 1871)

LA CONSOLACIÓN O MEMORIA DE LA PATRIA

No siempre, revolviendo
rugiente espuma, azotan
los roncos vendavales
de Albión las canas rocas.
Ni del Támesis frío
en la opulenta costa
se ven siempre tendidas
las hiperbóreas sombras.
He aquí ya del Favonio
el aura blanda sopla,
y del pintado Mayo
la cándida luz torna.
¿Y será que nosotros
siempre en tenaz congoja
acusemos los hados
que en nuestro mal se gozan?
¿A qué llorar en vano
de la española gloria
el fracaso, y los frutos
de la civil discordia,
y los tristes sucesos
de la suerte azarosa
que de la dulce patria
el caro bien nos roban?
¡Oh! demos tregua al pecho,
y afuera las zozobras;
venga el laúd teyano
presto, muchachos, ¡hola!
Esparce tú aquí en esta
pradera frescas rosas,
y traiga el otro luego
las regaladas copas.
Que aquí beber yo gusto
a la escondida sombra

DOMINGO MARÍA RUIZ DE LA VEGA

SOLACE OR MEMORY OF THE HOMELAND

Not ceaselessly the winter gales
with roaring whirling foam
lash the ancient rocks
of Albion.
Not ceaselessly the hyperborean shades
of frigid Thames
lie swart upon
the opulent shore.
Now Favonius
exhales its gentle air
and now revives
bright-painted May.
And shall we still
to sorrow vowed
denounce the fates
that in our sadness joy?
Why vainly mourn the fallen
glory of Spain
and the fruits
of rebellion,
and the harsh blows
of fickle destiny
that steal from us the glory
of our dear homeland?
Oh peace be in our hearts,
our storms be lulled;
bring out the lute boys
and play to us!
Deck you these meadows
with new rose-buds,
and let him bring us then
rich draughts of wine.
For it's my pleasure to drink deep
here in the secluded shade

de los gigantes olmos
que a Kensington decoran.
  Del néctar, pues, que envían
de nuestras ricas lomas
los béticos viñedos
henchid las tazas hondas.
  Henchidlas, y de yedra
con vividoras hojas
ornadlas, y bebamos
de la patria en memoria.

of the gigantic elms
of beauteous Kensington.
  Fill then the beakers to the brim
with nectar from
the copious vineyards
of Andalusian hills.
  Oh fill them, and with everlasting
ivy-leaves entwine them,
and we shall toast the homeland
in our memory.