

Antonio Garrido Domínguez. *Mujeres viajeras recorren la Andalucía del siglo XIX*. Ronda: Editorial La Serranía, 2011.

The issue of English-speaking women travellers in Spain has given rise to a number of monographs and studies in the last thirty years both at home and abroad. Long gone are the days when pioneering M.A. López-Burgos del Barrio published *7 viajeras en Granada* (1996), followed one decade later by *Viajeras en la Alhambra* (2007) as part of a collection of monographies published by the Junta de Andalucía on English-speaking visitors in the eight provinces of Andalusia. Jane Robinson's seminal *Wayward Women* (1990) and Dea Birkett's *Off the Beaten Track: Three Centuries of Women Travellers* (2004) gave women travellers abroad an international status that they had not had before. On a more national level English-speaking women travellers abroad (in Spain) have been described in Francisco Morales Padrón's *Viajeras extranjeras en Sevilla: siglo XIX* (2000). Those who travelled abroad, but not in Spain were depicted by the journalist Cristina Morato in her *Viajeras intrépidas y aventureras* (2001), although in this case the author addressed the general reader. Only a handful of years ago Alberto Egea Fernández Montesinos edited an anthology of Romantic women travellers in Spain titled *Viajeras románticas en Andalucía* (2008). As far as French women visitors in Spain were concerned, one must consult Elena Echeverría Pereda's *Andalucía y las viajeras francesas del siglo XIX* (1995), where she concludes that French women travellers behaved and were interested in the same issues as men travellers; or more recently, Nicolas Bourguinat's edition of *Le voyage au féminin: perspectives historiques et littéraires (XVIII-XXe siècles)* (2008). And as for American women travellers, it is compulsory to consult *American Women Abroad, 1830-1920* (1997), by Mary S. Schriber, even though she does not deal exclusively with Spain as a destination.

Dr Garrido Domínguez's latest book on travel literature in Spain is a double-fold homage to women in general (women travellers in particular) and Andalusia. The very title perfectly summarizes what the book is about, and this is achieved by emphasizing its two main pro-

tagonists (19th-century women travellers and Andalusia) and the productive way that they interact with each other in the book: on the one hand, the title focuses on the presence of British and French women writers in Andalusia and their perception of Andalusian towns and cities, landscapes, sights, customs, people and Spanishness in their travellers' accounts; and on the other hand, it reminds the reader of the fact that women travellers contributed with more than a fair share to the depiction of the southern region as what they believed was the perfect epitome of Spain. S.J. Henríquez Jiménez (ULPGC) contributes to the book with an illuminating prologue based on John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. He offers a state-of-the-art bibliography and a description of the latest trends on how the phenomenon of travel is analysed. All this helps to contextualize Dr Garrido Domínguez's contribution within the critical study of the genre.

The author's career as a researcher, translator and editor of travel literature in Spain has been long and fruitful, and well-known among those who dedicate their efforts to studying and dissecting the fascinating genre of travelogues and Anglo-Spanish relations. His clean, silken poetic style is one of the most recognizable characteristics of his literary and scholarly work. Indeed, many of his descriptions of routes, landscapes, monuments, towns, people and customs surpass the literary quality of the works that he is researching. His writings are also loaded with a sense of gentlemanly respect and understanding for the reader that is not frequent in scholars, many of whom enjoy wrapping their writings with a pseudo-cryptic blanket of academicism.

In his book Dr Garrido Domínguez repeatedly declares his admiration for the inappropriately known as "fair sex" in their travels. He believes that they should be called the "stronger" sex. His book is evidence enough of the proven bravery of the many 19th-century British and French women travellers who had been confronted with innumerable hardships and travails throughout their journeys to the unknown and to the most uncivilized areas of the earth. But women travellers' contributions to the improvement of civilization in remote lands started in their very own countries, as the author very





clearly and sympathetically states. In his brief introduction, he succeeds in presenting the social limitations of women in Victorian Britain, which were prescribed by law. Women were in charge of the running of their household and family, and if married, were tightly bound to their husbands (in terms of their adoption of their surname, the passing of their properties to their spouse, and the impossibility of being granted custody of their offspring in case of divorce). Higher-class women were excluded from university education and those from the lower classes had no access to any education at all, a situation that, he adds, was specially striking “in a country like Britain, which was considered to be advanced” (23). The author’s intention is to provide ample evidence in favour of women’s capacity and prowess as travellers and as social pioneers both at home and abroad. Travelling was for many women a way to defiantly combat the existing male-oriented rules of the time. The majority of them had to struggle for recognition in a society that systematically objected to any type of women’s physical and psychological independence from men and from man-made social conventions. A sense of liberty which was only obtainable through travel to the farthest and remotest lands was frowned upon. Very few of these women escaped misunderstanding and ill-intentioned remarks on their suspiciously free natures. Indeed, as the author asserts, women proved to be as adventurous and as determined as their contemporary male counterparts.

Dr Garrido Domínguez’s book introduces a few novelties from his previous works, especially from his latest ones (*Viajeros del XIX cabalgan por la serranía de Ronda*, 2006, and *Viajeros americanos en la Andalucía del XIX*, 2007). His approach to the travel phenomenon is now more comprehensive: he does not limit his research to only one nationality of women travellers. He widens his scope of study to include French travellers too (and more marginally, others from the U.S. and various European countries, and different centuries). Both British and French travellers fill the largest part of the book, especially the former. However, before describing them and their travel accounts one by one concentrating on their stays in Andalusian lands, the author dedicates a short

section to three Spanish women travellers in the 16th century (not the 19th century), all reluctant immigrants to America during the Spanish colonization of the continent. He also includes the odd Belgian, Dutch, Austrian and Hungarian, and a few other American travellers to support the idea that the experience of travelling abroad was widespread in Europe and America. Alas, Dr Garrido Domínguez inserts examples of non-British and non-French representatives who had no (or virtually no) connection with Spain or Andalusia, thus confounding the reader. Next, he includes a long list of 19th-century European and American women explorers to remote areas: spinsters (the largest group), wives travelling with their husbands, women scholars, artists, missionaries, etc., with brief biographical data (although often little is known of their lives) and literary notes, but none of them were visitors of Spain. The author might have omitted them and the work would not have been impoverished for it.

British and French women travellers in 19th-century Andalusia are classified in five chronological groups: those who visited the region during Carlos IV’s reign (1788-1808; with only one representative: Lady Holland, with her two journeys during the Peninsular War); Fernando VII (1814-1833; again with only a single representative: Caroline Elizabeth Cushing). Isabel II (1833-1868; with twenty-one representatives, namely the Marquess of Londonderry, E.M. Grosvenor, two anonymous authors, I.F. Romer, Dora Quillinan, Mme de Suberwick, Lady Tenison, J.E. de Brinckmann, E. Stuart Worthley, O.W. Le Vert, E. Murray, S. Dunbar, J. de Robersart, H.T. Allen, M. Eyre, Mrs Byrne, Lady Herbert, Matilda B.B. Edwards, V. Gasparin and Lady Holland); the so-called “Sexenio Revolucionario” in Spanish historiography (1868-1874; Mrs Tollemache, Mrs Ramsay and M.C. Jackson), and the Bourbon Restoration (1875-1900, another eighteen: D’Auxais L. de Lavinllorée, C. Vignon, Madame C. de la B., H.B.G. Bellingham, Mrs Howard-Vyse, M. Bashkirtseff, F. Eliot, J. Dieulafoy, S. Hale, L.C. Moulton, J. Fancy, M. Thomas, C. White, F.B. Workman, M.F. Nixon-Roulet, A.S. Hall, M.C. Harris and Marie Star). The number of travellers studied is large enough to make

the book a reliable study on the phenomenon of European ladies in Spain in the turbulent 19th century. Their presence in Andalusia at different periods of the century is revealing and informative enough about the varying perception of Spain/Andalusia as a troubled land that could be visited or avoided depending on the circumstances. When the country was deeply immersed in political or social turmoil or simply a civil or international war such as the Peninsular War, José María el Tempranillo's rule in the southern lands of the country in the 1830s, the Espartero-Narváez tug of war for power during the early 1840s, etc, it is clear that foreign women visitors kept away from Andalusia. Indeed, up to the 1940s the number of women visitors is rather reduced. However, when Spain started to enjoy some rare periods of political bonanza (despite the three Carlist wars, which did not affect Andalusia greatly), such as General Narváez's 10-year government in the 1840s and 1850s, the short-lived reign of Alfonso XII (1875-85) and the infant Alfonso XIII's reign through his mother's regency, the number of female globetrotters of all (high) walks of life multiplied considerably. Other factors also contributed to this larger flow of women travellers in Spain: the railway's deployment, making the main routes between the main towns more comfortable and almost devoid of unpleasant surprises, and last but not least, the proven efficiency of the Guardia Civil, who had successfully thrust a deadly blow to chronic brigandage and crime from the 1840s onwards.

In spite of all of the book's numerous merits, too many to include here in the full extent that they deserve, there are a few flaws that I cannot but comment upon. The scholar from Ronda chooses his quotes appropriately, but translates them into Spanish (a fact that in my opinion betrays his secret wish to make his book accessible to the non-specialist reader too). There is nothing wrong with this; besides, his translations are excellent. However, he does not accompany his translated quotes with the original English or French, which he could have added in footnotes. The original texts would have been more than handy for the specialist reader, who wishes to have direct access to the primary sources, and not through somebody else's pen. The biographical

data that he includes for each author are of the highest quality and reliability and many of them were previously unknown to many specialists on the subject. Of special value is the inclusion of the authors' maiden names (when relevant or known) and the high number and quality of the illustrations on Spanish women's scenes and portraits of the writers that are inserted among the book's pages. This is evidence enough of his ample experience as a researcher (the Garrison Library of Gibraltar is well-known to him). However, I believe that the sources of such useful biographical information should have been made known to the reader.

This is a book that cannot fail to be in any travel scholar's specialized library. Dr Garrido Domínguez is one of the leading scholars of foreign travel literature in Spain (and more specifically in Andalusia) and any book of his is always welcome by all of those who, like myself, have the voracious habit of devouring travel accounts. His previous works are valued pieces of research and didacticism. *Mujeres viajeras recorren la Andalucía del XIX* is no exception.

José RUIZ MAS

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