

Memory and Exile in María Teresa León's *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa (1950)*

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María Teresa León (1903-1988) is most well known for her autobiography *Memoria de la melancolía* (1977), written during her last years of exile from her native Spain. The year 2003 marked the centenary of her birth and a reevaluation of her fiction, including a new edition of her short stories edited by Gregorio Torres Nebrera. [1] In the twenty-first century León finally receives much overdue recognition. [2] This article will examine León's conception of memory and exile, through a close textual reading of her short stories "Primera peregrinación de Teresa," "El noviciado de Teresa," "Cabeza de ajo," and "Esplendor de Teresa" from the collection *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* (1950). Analyzed through the critical lens of Edward Said's theory of contrapuntal juxtaposition, I discuss how León makes use of the physical distance from her native country to evaluate Spanish female subjectivity in the first half of the twentieth century. The stories "Primera peregrinación de Teresa" and "El noviciado de Teresa" focus on the Catholic Church's domination of young women. "Cabeza de ajo" and "El esplendor de Teresa" explore women's experiences of the Spanish Civil War. María Teresa León's decision to name the protagonist of each story Teresa in *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* evinces her sense of solidarity for the experience of all women who are relegated to secondary citizenship, becoming exiles even within the borders of their native country.

León's short stories take an inferior place to studies of her autobiography *Memoria de la melancolía* which is due in part to the historical dismissal of the short story as a sub-genre. [3] Janet Pérez reminds us that the short story is considered "hermano menor de la novela" and are "twice forgotten" if they are authored by women (122). I choose to focus on *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* because to date it has received little critical attention in comparison to León's other short story collections: *Cuentos de la España actual* (1936), *Morirás lejos* (1942), and *Fábulas del tiempo amargo* (1962). [4] I contend that León's exclusive focus on women in *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* leads some to disassociate this collection from her other works that have a broader range of characters; however, *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* explores the topics of marriage, war, and education found throughout the majority of her writing. In the 1979 compellation of León's stories, *Una estrella roja*, the editor Joaquín Marco categorizes the stories as 'cuentos sociales' but excludes all the stories in *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* from his edition. In a 2003 conference Joaquín Marco presented a paper entitled, "Los cuentos sociales de María Teresa León," where he expands the term 'cuento social' to discuss another collection, *Rosa-Fría patinadora de la luna*, (1934) but did not include a single story from *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* into his study. Gregorio Torres Nebrera's 2003 compellation of León's short stories includes four stories from *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa*. I interpret Nebrera's effort as an intention to break from the belief that views women's issues as tangential to other political and social concerns.

León draws on her own adolescence to create protagonists whose experiences mirror her own. She recalls her frustrations growing up in Spain in *Memoria de la melancolía*,

suffering an inner exile even before she left Spain in 1939 (Zatlin). The following passage from her autobiography reveals León's ongoing disconnection with her surroundings, "Niña de militar inadaptada siempre, no niña de provincia ni de ciudad pequeña con catedral y obispado y segunda enseñanza. . . La vida parecía hecha para acomodar los ojos a cosas nuevas: veraneos, parientes y luego a comparar: esto es mejor que lo otro" (73). A similar sense of frustration is expressed by Teresa in the story "El noviciado de Teresa" where the young character longs to find her own unique place in the world, apart from familial restrictions. The Teresa in "Cabeza de ajo" suffers emotional abuse from her mother who consistently criticizes her daughter's lack of intelligence, thus labeling her "garlic head." All the Teresas in the collection *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* suffer from an awareness that women are not equals in society and therefore León voices this problem in her stories.

León's identity is based largely on exile, both socially and geographically. María Teresa León and her female contemporaries, Rosa Chacel (1898-1994) and María Zambrano (1904-1991), suffered a double state of exile: the physical exile from Spain and the social exile of gender inequality. At the same time León's life in exile unites her with thousands of other Spaniards who were forced to flee their country. She states in her autobiography:

¿Cuántas veces hemos repetido las mismas palabras, aceptando la esperanza, llamándola, suplicándola para que no nos abandonase? Porque todos los desterrados de España tenemos los ojos abiertos a los sueños. León Felipe aseguró que nos habíamos llevando la canción en los labios secos y fruncidos, callados y tristes. Yo creo que nos hemos llevado la ley que hace al hombre vivir en común, la ley de la vida diaria, hermosa verdad transitoria. (97)

The isolation León feels as a child is replaced by the collective experience of exile where she becomes part of a generation of Spaniards who find their identity in their struggle against fascism. For many Spaniards of her generations the bonds established due to exile are, "indicative of a collective consciousness. It affirms that Spaniards are not bound together as Spaniards without the mechanisms of expulsion as an essential part of the group's social and juridical practice" (Ugarte 10). León's choice of the word "desterrado" as opposed to "exiliados" "carries certain connotations specific to Spanish sensibilities. To be "unearthed" (*desterrado*) is to have lost the essential link between land and soul" (10).

Edward Said's concept of contrapuntal juxtaposition is my point of departure to examine León's exile experience and explain how she utilizes memory in her stories. Said explains that for those in exile, it is necessary to consistently negotiate memories of the present with the past:

Most people are principally aware of one culture, one setting, one home; exiles are aware of at least two, and this plurality of vision gives rise to an awareness of simultaneous dimensions, an awareness that—to borrow a phrase from music—is the contrapuntal . . . For an exile, habits of life, expression, or activity in the new

environment inevitably occur against the memory of these things in another environment. Thus both the new and the old environments are vivid, actual, occurring together contrapuntally. (186) [5]

When María Teresa León published *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* in 1950 she had already been living in Buenos Aires for ten years. León's physical separation from Spain did not impede her recollection of the first thirty years of her life. The contrapuntal juxtaposition during the nineteen forties and fifties for León consisted in raising a daughter in Argentina while recalling her own childhood and adolescence in Spain. Juan Carlos Estebáñez Gil comments on the psychological differences that allow León to look back at her former self when she lived in Spain. He says of her autobiography *Memoria de la melancolía*, "La autora ha cambiado el correr de los años y al recordar sus experiencias pasadas, es como si un 'yo' hablara del oro 'yo'. Ambos pertenecen a la misma persona biológica, pero no a la misma persona psicológica" (169). Estebáñez Gil's observation of León's autobiography can also be said of *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa*. The function of memory is germane to *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* because it is the vehicle by which León is able to excavate the past as she states in her preface to the collection:

Hubiera preferido escribir estas historias mi mano en tu mano,
un día denso, con la memoria alerta por el chubasco de la primavera,
cazadora yo inconsciente de sueños trasperdidos. Quiero nombrar así a los
que se quedaron sin suceder detrás de los tangibles, aquellos no nacidos al
tacto de mis manos, sin gustar por mis labios, sin herir por mi voz. En esa
trasmemoria hundo hoy, primaveral y algodonoso día. (n. pag.)

León is cognizant of the contrapuntal juxtaposition she maintains in Latin America while she delves into her Castilian past, recollecting parts of her former self. Medardo Fraile observes that the words "soñar," "sueño," and "recordar" are words that repeat throughout León's oeuvre (54). *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* is no exception and in the preface she invents the words "sueños trasperdidos" and "trasmemoria." These terms represent a 'thinking back' to give women a platform from which to voice their subjectivity. León describes her protagonists as, "a los que se quedaron sin suceder detrás de los tangibles, aquellos no nacidos al tacto de mis manos, sin gustar por mis labios, sin herir por mi voz." The author takes on a maternal role as an author as she 'gives life' to her creation.

The first two stories in question "Primera peregrinación de Teresa" and "El noviciado de Teresa" are the means by which León criticizes the institution of the Catholic Church. Although María Teresa León left Spain before the beginning of Franco's reign, she draws on Spain's ecclesiastical history that dictated women's place in the nation's agenda (Morcillo Gómez 51). León's commentary on the Catholic 'education' of Spanish young women in *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* foreshadows her memory of a conversation she writes about in *Memoria de la melancolía*. In her autobiography León recalls a conversation she has with her cousin. León's cousin Jimena boasts that her mother, María Goyri, was the first woman in Spain to receive a doctorate in literature, "Por qué

antes ninguna mujer lo fue? Tonta, porque en España estaban atrasados y, además, aquí la mujer no cuenta” (89). León received a strict parochial education while her cousin Jimena was educated at the *Instituto Libre de Enseñanza*.

Both “Primera peregrinación de Teresa” and “El noviciado de Teresa” acknowledge the ‘backwardness’ evoking the aforementioned quote “en España estaban atrasados.” These two stories fall into Debra Campbell’s category of “flight narratives” “It turns out that flight, known by many names (including escape, exodus, exile, diaspora, and crossing over), represents a central theme in the life-writings of twentieth-century Catholic women” (xiv). It is important to remember that León is able to criticize the Catholic Church only because she is free from the Francoist censorship while living abroad. In “Primera peregrinación” the protagonist’s flight consists in exploring a forbidden area of a religious institution for sickly young girls. In the second story “El noviciado de Teresa” the young Teresa’s exodus is her decision to leave her family however her freedom will be cut short when she finds herself ‘trapped’ in a convent.

“Primera peregrinación” tells the story of young woman who has an encounter with a man named Carlos at an asylum or ‘asilo’ for sick girls. Carlos is a gardener and he fascinates the young girls with his talents. Although never clearly explained, it is said that all the girls are there because they suffer from the same terminal illness “reclama niñas muy enfermas de enfermedades vergonzantes para cuidarlas por amor de Dios” (25). Teresa, a frequent visitor to the asylum, is the only mobile young girl among a group of girls who remain sedentary and travel in horse-drawn carriages. In the opening paragraph the protagonist recalls her visits to the asylum, “Teresa oyó su propia voz de siete años. La niña y ella se han reconocido” (23). León juxtaposes the two Teresas: the young Teresa who visited the institution and the adult Teresa who looking back is able to analyze and make sense of her experience.

Carlos becomes a mythical figure for the girls because they are prohibited from certain areas of the garden of the institution that he frequents “Al fondo del jardín existía una trampa. Una trampa que unificaba los sueños de las niñas detrás de la mirada aluciante del príncipe Carlos . . . para él no contaba la trampa. Iba y venía por los caminos”(32). The girls are separated from Carlos by the nuns’ orders and by their limited physical mobility. In the asylum a social separation between genders is established due to the cultural taboos dictated by patriarchal code. An otherwise private gender-exclusive environment continues to be answerable to the dominant masculine order.

Teresa decides that as the one young girl who can walk she will explore the forbidden areas of the residence. Teresa’s absence alarms the nuns and the girls who know that she chose to enter a prohibited area. Ironically, Teresa’s decision to rebel reveals that one of the nuns of the convent has had a tryst with Carlos. When Teresa returns from her wanderings she arrives wearing a black veil, left behind by sor Corazón de María, “¿Quién, quién podía haber perdido su inocente velo entre los rumores del jardín? La Superiora paseó sus ojos por el atribulado rebaño puesto a su obediencia. Faltaba una religiosa. --- ¿Dónde está sor Corazón de María?” (37). León reveals the Mother

Superior's lack of authority making it now obvious that she does not command as much authority as her position would dictate.

The last paragraph of the story ends with Teresa's reflection on her experience "A veces, recordando aquella noche de su infancia, sentía envidia" (40). Memory functions in this story to recall the unfortunate girls who reside in the institution as well as to reveal the mystery of the forbidden areas of the garden which is the site of transgression between sor Corazón de María and the gardener Carlos. In this story the sickly girls are in a state of exile because they are separated from the outside world and it is only Teresa who is free to move from outside the asylum walls and the enclosed space of the residence. The isolation of nuns is similar to the limited mobility of the sick young residents. León utilizes Teresa and sor Corazón to demonstrate that it is possible for women to question authority. In the next story León changes her focus to explore how the Church does at times maintain its hegemony. Unlike, "Primera peregrinación de Teresa," "El noviciado de Teresa" is not a reflection and León places the reader right along with the protagonist as she makes her towards self discovery.

The story "El noviciado de Teresa" further explores the topics of women's education or indoctrination in a surreal setting to narrate how Teresa begins her journey toward self-agency, "Grandes sucesos van ocurriendo entre las cuatro paredes del cráneo. Es tan feliz que siente cómo acciona el corazón de general en jefe de su cuerpo. Nunca pudo pensar que su cuerpo estuviese tan cerca. ¡Por fin, con su cuerpo!" (61). The comparison between Teresa's heart as a general evinces her feelings of autonomy. Teresa is sixteen years old and longs to be alone, "y nadie a su lado para fatigarla con negativas: No hagas eso, Teresa. Al decirlo alguien, casi siempre su abuela o su madre, con sus caras ovals y sus miradas ásperas tan idénticas" (61). Teresa finds herself in a personified forest, one that looks at her with contempt and has birds that are suspicious of any animal that enters with two feet, "El bosque avisó: Ha llegado una muchacha, no parece fea. Los pájaros pusieron su grito en el cielo porque siempre sospechan de los animales que ven en dos pies" (62). Ironically in the open space of the forest, which Teresa sees as the opposite of the confined space of her home, she continues to be judged.

However, in this new environment, separated from all the people she knows, Teresa begins to articulate her desires. The young protagonist makes an argument for change,

Cuando yo tenga niños haré que lo sepan todo y para que mi madre aprenda a educar criaturas la invitaré a que vea mi sistema. Vea, señora, éstos son chicos que hacen todo el día su santa voluntad. Llenan la casa de gritos, el portal de juguetes, hay montones de barro sobre la mesa del comedor y palanganas para echar barcos de papel. ¿Dónde flotan mejor los barcos, en agua dulce o en agua salada? ¿Salada? ¡Pues a traer el bote de la cocina para que floten los barcos de mis niños! (63)

León's promotion for education reform is very clear despite the fairytale backdrop of the story in an 'enchanted forest'. She describes what today would be labeled a "hands-on" education, inspired by the Krausist intellectuals which lead to the founding of the

Institución Libre de Enseñanza (Mangini 3). This view is representative of the ideals that León's generation proposed in order to modernize Spain before Franco ultimately succeeded in halting any form of progress.

Unfortunately, Teresa's fears deter her from acting upon her freedom and she runs off to find her family. In an attempt to flee the environment of the forest, that gave her so much hope, she then unexpectedly finds herself in a convent. León emphasizes the ideology of 'otherness' of the convent that prevents anyone who is not 'pure' sexually or ethnically to be part of a selected group. León makes reference to Spain's expulsion of the Jews when a nun inquires about her family history:

--- Teresa, he de decirte que hace siete siglos no entró aquí nadie que no fuera cristiano viejo. ¿De dónde son tus padres?
 ---De Toledo.
 ---¿Qué dices? También a la limpieza de alma hay que añadir la no menos importancia de la sangre, porque el honor es un pañuelo de cuatro puntas y aquí no entrará quien no conozca hasta la sexta generación de sus nobles abuelos. (71)

Teresa is not welcome because the nuns do not approve of her reason for entering, that she is a '*chica perdida*' or a 'non-virgin' according to the nuns, "¿Perdida? Entonces, vete, el primer requisito en nuestra Orden es la virginidad" (72). Teresa knows that she is not the only one banished from the convent because she sees others who are driven out because of their poverty, religion, or loss of virginity, "una fila de caballeros que, como ella, debían haber sido expulsados por pobres, judíos o no vírgenes" (72). León sympathizes with the marginalized figures in the story because as we saw previously in her autobiography she rarely felt a sense of belonging to a location. León exhibits what Edward Said calls "stigma of being an outsider" (186) and therefore in her stories she remembers many people, but particularly women who remained on the margins of society.

A saint finds her and promises to help her find her way.[6] Saint Amaro asks, "¿-- y por qué merced del cielo llegaste aquí? --Me extravié en el bosque al querer ser yo. --- Nosotros te ayudaremos a encontrarte" (75). Teresa is reassured that her family will be informed of her entry into the convent, but the reader learns that the saint has no intentions of informing them. The saint warns Teresa, "aquí no hay más que camino de ida" (73), and later, to assure that Teresa will not leave the convent, León writes, "Pero el buen Amaro se dirigió con sus pasos de viejo hacia su peana de piedra, no sin antes borrar todos los pasitos de la niña con su pie, iluminando el rostro por una sonrisa no muy santa" (76). The depiction of the saint as he erases the footprints of Teresa is a metaphor for the impossibility of Teresa realizing her plans for independence. The story ends with a warning, "Niñas, cuando os extraviéis en un bosque, cuidado de no tropezaros con un santo" (77). This conclusion is a caveat to the reading audience to beware of those that appear so willing to guide and nurture. It is up to the individual to travel the road of self-realization and not allow others to impede one's plans. León exposes her suspicions of Catholicism and how control is used to build a homogeneous community. The

protagonist Teresa is a victim and an example of the consequences when one attempts to break away from social order.

The next two stories “Cabeza de ajo” and “Esplendor de Teresa” are fictional representations of women’s experience during war time. León juxtaposes the experience of a naïve, conservative woman who encounters a *republicano* soldier in “Cabeza de ajo” and a *republicana* woman who speaks out against the *nacionalistas* in “Esplendor de Teresa.” The Teresa of the first story maintains her place in the domestic space of the home. In contrast the Teresa of “Esplendor de Teresa” is vehemently in disfavor of Franco’s victory and will ultimately lose her life. The experience of the Teresas in these two stories support the veracity of the fact that during the Spanish Civil War women did experience some freedom but by the end found themselves under the same repression as the start of the war (Mangini 80). Curiously, “Cabeza de ajo” opens *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa* and León concludes her series of stories with “Esplendor de Teresa.” Such a decision explicates that these stories are equally political as the collections *Cuentos de la España contemporánea* or *Morirás lejos*.

“Cabeza de ajo” is a parody of the religious ideals of the conservative, pro-Franco movement. Here León presents another Teresa that defies authority, those imposed by her rigid mother who gives her the derogatory nickname “Cabeza de ajo.” The daughter is limited to the realm of the household in the absence of her mother. In the introductory paragraph to the story León juxtaposes the mother who willingly accepts the aging process as opposed to her daughter, “La madre confinaba ya en las adustas llanuras de la vejez, caminándolas con el coraje de un ejército que marcha a su objetivo, pero Teresa, no” (11). The word ‘ejército’ emphasizes the mother’s authority which Teresa rebels against when she finds herself alone at home. The negative portrayal of the maternal figure in this story is reminiscent of other similar portrayals of mothers such as the grandmother in Ana Maria Matute’s *Primera Memoria* 1962 and Angustias in Carmen Laforet’s *Nada* 1945. The trope of the embittered mother-figure symbolizes the rigidity of women’s identities mapped out by Franco’s dictatorship (Gámez Fuentes 4).

The balcony, the threshold between the interior of the domestic space and the exterior space of Madrid, represents Teresa’s confusion of whether or not to succumb to her curiosity to respond to the man who is calling to her from below. León, like Martín Gaité in *Entre visillos*, uses the balcony as a metaphor of transition. At the end of this story the reader learns from the conversation between the Republican soldier and Teresa that the war has just ended. Spain is now on the brink of loss as Franco leads the country into a fascist state. Teresa takes advantage of an opportunity to confront this man who is considered taboo for his gender as well as his political stance. This is a double threat to the maternal authority figure because not only is the daughter exposed to a man that represents a modernization and secularization of Spain, but he enters the private realm of the home. The erotic element of the encounter between Teresa and the soldier further problematizes the integrity of the private realm of the home that is designed to protect the honor of the family. Teresa struggles with her associations of the *republicanos* or *rojos* because she is taught to see them as the enemy that prevents her and her mother from attending mass, “¡Pero como ahora ya no existen misas para cristianos viejos! Ahora a

calladitas se abre la radio para oír una misa rezada en algún punto ruin de la tierra. Hasta me han dicho que la hacen decir los rojos para engañarnos y que no sirven para el bien de las almas” (12). León makes the decision to speak through the voice of the conservative character Teresa to criticize the nationalists that she so opposed.

Teresa rationalizes this wounded soldier as a suffering Christ figure that she is obligated to comfort. León eroticizes the ecclesiastical image of the *pietá* by describing Teresa’s overwhelming sexual feelings as she holds the soldier in her arms as she describes the soldier’s suffering, “corriéndole la sangre como a un Cristo” (16). León describes how to clean the soldier’s wounds Teresa must undress him, “Para ella un cinturón de cuero era la frontera viril . . . Teresa se adelantó con esta idea y tocó el cinturón. Lo hacía con sed de conocimiento, como esos sabios a quienes les estaba prohibido estudiar al hombre” (15). The story ends before the mother learns of Teresa’s encounter with the soldier, “Los pasos de la madre torcieron camino hacia la cocina. ¡Ay si hubiera entrado! Si hubiera entrado y visto se le habrían caído los ojos de asombro. Lo que Teresa, Cabeza de Ajo, estrechaba contra su pecho virginal era un soldado muerto” (21). One can imagine the punishment Teresa will receive for her behavior. León gives agency to the Republican side to cross a political divide in such an unassuming manner. This is the irony of the story which also shows the naiveté of the young Teresa. Despite the revelation to Teresa that the nationalists have won, the Republican soldier is triumphant in his influence over the naïve Teresa as he gains entry in the nationalist home.

In contrast to the bourgeois environment of the Teresa of “Cabeza de ajo,” the Teresa of “Esplendor de Teresa” experiences first hand the violence and consequences of war. León offers an alternative view of romantic images of the Spanish countryside by focusing on the poverty of the isolated town. The story “Esplendor de Teresa” begins with a commentary on the protagonist’s name: “No se llamaba más que Teresa. El apellido no habían tenido tiempo de pensarlo” (109). Teresa awaits her husband Lucas who is fighting for the Republican side. This story is told from the perspective of those outside the urban realm of the city. The setting of the story is described as a “*pueblo perdido*” where people do not speak of their feelings. Lucas was always enamored of his wife’s eyes but never complemented her, “Su mirar se entusiasmó Lucas, pero no se lo había dicho jamás. En los pueblos no se usa decir los sentimientos” (115). Life is very rudimentary and belongings are few and bare the signs of usage, “Se tapaba con las mismas sábanas crujientes de memorias, con el mismo cobertor de ganchillo y apoyaba la cabeza en el cabezal que no se vareaba desde su boda. Todo andaba usado por los bordes” (110).

This Teresa is overtly rebellious and participates in the violence of war as León demonstrates further sympathy for the Republican troops. Teresa prays to the Virgin Mary that the fascists will be killed and that she will see her husband Lucas soon, “Por la señal madre preciosa, mátalos a todos, de la Santa Cruz, haz que sus ojos los coman las hormigas, de nuestros enemigos no dejes ni rastros, líbranos, Señora, Reina nuestra, de los canallas que gobiernan y en el nombre del Padre, del Hijo, y del Espíritu Santo devuélveme a Lucas. Amén” (110). Teresa’s prayers to the virgin evoke a bond between

herself and the feminine manifestation of divinity thus dismissing the patriarchal representation of God.

León is quick to capture how men looked upon women who resent women's participation in the war efforts. The men make such comments as "una mujer es tan ignorante" (115) and "una mujer es un poco de humo en nuestro incendio" (117). In contrast to the male attitude that women are inconsequential to the war, Paula, another member of the community, is described as, "esas manos de la Paula tan hacendosas que parecían instrumentos de huso" (111). She is shot by nationalist troops for talking back to a *nacionalista* soldier who complains about not having bread. León narrates her death when the *nacionalistas* force her to face the church wall, "¡Lame, perra! Y le aplastaban la noble cara contra las nobles piedras de la Iglesia. ¡Lame! ¡La guerra la hemos ganado nosotros, puercos! ¡Fuego! Y la Paula cayó!"(111).

Teresa's decision to admit to the killing of 'el jefe,' a nationalist soldier who comes to occupy her town after the war, is a metaphor of the sacrifices women are called to perform in a society that functions on gender inequality. She awaits her beloved Lucas to return from the frontlines, who is willing to take the blame for Teresa's crime. The "*coro de mujeres*" represents the community that insists she accept her fate in order to save the town from further murders. Teresa becomes a martyr for a town that describes women as "obedientes como corderos" (115). The ultimate rebellion is María Teresa León's choice to represent women in times of war, a growing topic in recent fiction such as Dulce Chacón's *La voz dormida*.

León uses exile to her advantage to be able to criticize her country outside of its national borders and is therefore successful in avoiding Francoist censorship. The hindsight she has of the first three decades of her life makes it possible for her remember the struggles of Spanish women. It is especially important for women to remember because "forgetting is a major obstacle to change" (Greene 298). Said speaks of the need of exiles to repair their lives, "Exiles feel, therefore, an urgent need to reconstitute their broken lives, usually by choosing to see themselves as part of a triumphant ideology or restored people" (82). León does negotiate her past by others, particularly women, who were not as fortunate enough to be able to write of their experiences. María Teresa León is finally remembered not as the 'wife of Rafael Alberti' but as a distinguished author independent of her private life.

Notes

[1] Nebrera's 2003 edition *Fábulas del tiempo amargo y otros relatos* includes four stories from *Las peregrinaciones de Teresa*: "Cabeza de ajo," "Madame Pimentón," "El diluvio de Teresa," and "Esplendor de Teresa."

[2] The following are two collections of conference proceedings celebrated in March and April 2003 respectively: *Recuerdo de un olvido María Teresa León en su centenario* edited by Maya Altolaguirre and *Homenaje a María Teresa León en su centenario* edited by Gonzalo Santonja.

[3] Two recent articles on *Memoria de la melancolía* include Ofelia Ferrán's "Memoria de la melancolía The Performativity and Disidentification of Exilic Memories" and Helena López's "Algunas clases para una lectura feminista de *Memoria de la melancolía* de María Teresa León."

[4] During the April 2003 conference, *Homenaje a María Teresa León*, three papers were dedicated to specific collections of León's short stories: "Una aproximación a 'La bella del mal amor'" by Jesús Carazo, "El compromiso de una Femme de Lettres en los *Cuentos de la España actual*" by María Pilar Celma, and "Rosa-Fría, patinadora de la luna. Tradición y vanguardia." by José Luis Puerto. Recently, Tabea Alexa Linhard dedicated a chapter of her book, *Fearless Women in the Mexican Revolution and the Spanish Civil War*, on León's short story collections *Relatos de la España contemporánea* and *Morirás lejos*.

[5] Contrapuntal in music refers to two different melodies that compliment each other and can be heard simultaneously.

[6] Saint Amaro, in Spanish tradition, is said to have been a priest who crossed the Atlantic in search of paradise. It is ironic that this saint, who symbolizes, travel, works to hinder Teresa's freedom.

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