



Spanish Poetry of the Golden Age, in Contemporary English Translations (Shearsman Classics)

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In the 16th and 17th centuries, Spain experienced a literary Renaissance akin to that in England, with great poets, dramatists and novelists establishing new forms and blazing new trails: Garcilaso de la Vega, Góngora, Quevedo amongst the poets, Lope de Vega & Calderón de la Barca amongst the dramatists (although both were also poets), Cervantes - of course - amongst the prose writers. The Renaissance in England was also a time when translations of contemporary European literature became more common, beginning with contemporary Italian works, and the importation of the Petrarchan sonnet, and then Montemayor's Spanish version of arcadian pastoral. While Spanish literature was not the main focus of English translators during this period - no doubt affected by the strained political relations between the two countries - it did attract some particularly fine writers to try their hand. This selection is driven by what is available, but it also manages to cover some of the greatest Spanish writers of the Renaissance and the Siglo de Oro: Juan Boscán, Garcilaso de la Vega, Jorge de Montemayor, Miguel Cervantes (some poems from 'Don Quixote'), Bartolomé & his brother Lupercio Leonardo de Argensola, Luís de Góngora, Francisco de Quevedo, Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza and Juan Pérez de Montalbán. The translators are Herbert Aston, Philip Ayres, William Drummond of Hawthornden, Sir Richard Fanshawe, Thomas Shelton, Sir Philip Sidney, Thomas Stanley and Bartholomew Yong. The translations are never less than effective and, especially in the case of Fanshawe's Góngora, often show rare genius at work.

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