

This article was downloaded by: 10.2.97.136

On: 26 Sep 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

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The Routledge Companion to Iberian Studies

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Hispano-Irish Women Writers of Spain's Late Enlightenment Period

Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315709895.ch21>

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Published online on: 28 Mar 2017

How to cite :- Elizabeth Franklin Lewis. 28 Mar 2017, *Hispano-Irish Women Writers of Spain's Late Enlightenment Period* from: *The Routledge Companion to Iberian Studies* Routledge

Accessed on: 26 Sep 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315709895.ch21>

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PART III

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HISPANO-IRISH WOMEN WRITERS OF SPAIN'S LATE ENLIGHTENMENT PERIOD

Elizabeth Franklin Lewis

Spain's Enlightenment was, until the second half of the twentieth century, almost completely overlooked by scholars. Primarily understood as being a time of foreign imitation (an idea debunked by Russell Sebold 1967, 1970), many have considered the Spanish Enlightenment not to have produced anything original or good, with the great exception of Goya. However, some recent studies have emphasized this period as a time of major social, cultural, and political changes that propelled Spain towards modernity: Joaquín Álvarez Barrientos (2005) outlines features of the Spanish eighteenth century that connect it to the larger Enlightenment movement, and that propel Spain into a "mentalidad moderna" (12), while Michael Iarocci (2006), tracing Spanish Romanticism to José de Cadalso's *Noches lúgubres* (1775), also identifies the beginnings of modernity in the eighteenth century. This was especially the case for Spanish women (see Bolufer and Burguera 2010): for the first time Spanish women began to publish translations, treatises on education, and poems and plays in significant numbers. They led and participated in the culturally and politically influential *tertulias* of the day such as the *Academia del Buen Gusto* in Madrid. They were both contributors and subscribers to increasingly popular periodical publications such as the *Semanario de Salamanca* and the *Diario de Madrid* (see Jaffe 2010). Women also participated in important male groups such as the Royal Economic Society of Madrid, and formed their own all-female civic organizations that attempted to solve difficult social problems of poverty and the lack of education in groups such as the *Junta de Damas* and the *Asociación de Señoras* (see Bolufer 1998; Jaffe and Lewis 2009; Lewis 2004; Palacios Fernández 2002, Smith 2006, and García Hurtado 2016).

These Enlightened women were both commoners and aristocrats, living in Madrid and the provinces, and notably, a number of them came from wealthy immigrant families from Ireland. Four of the most influential of these Hispano-Irish Enlightenment women were Inés Joyes y Blake, Margarita Hickey y Pellizzoni, María Gertrudis Hore y Ley, and Frasquita Larrea y Aherán, all of whom made significant contributions to the advancement of women in Spanish culture, education, and politics of their day. They were women of economic and sometimes political privilege, yet commoners excluded from some aristocratic circles. Many resided in the provinces (especially Cádiz and Málaga), but with strong ties to Madrid. Their unique multicultural and multilingual perspectives allowed them to successfully negotiate conservative male expectations of Spanish women, while they also contributed to a changing notion

of women's importance to the modernization of Spanish society through their writings and through their intellectual and social exchange.

Spain found itself at the end of the Hapsburg dynasty and the turn of the eighteenth century with a number of pressing problems – an economy that was underdeveloped and lagged behind the rest of Europe, waning political influence on the world stage, an education system that was outdated for men and practically non-existent for women, and a perceived decadence in literature and art that held tightly to the successes and excesses of its *Siglo de Oro* baroque style. The new Bourbon dynasty sought ways to address these problems and to consolidate and increase their own political power. Their new, more cosmopolitan court in Madrid brought French and Italian influences to government and culture (see Bergamini 1974), while they also encouraged the participation of reform-minded Spanish *ilustrados*, who looked to French models, but also to English ideas for possible solutions to Spanish problems. Enlightenment British authors including Sir Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Alexander Pope, Edmund Burke, Samuel Johnson, Edward Young, and Mary Wollstonecraft have all been cited as important influences on Spanish *ilustrados* from Benito Feijoo, to Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, Juan Meléndez Valdés, and Josefa Amar y Borbón among others (for more on British influences in Spanish eighteenth-century authors, see Fuentes 2004; García Calderón 2007; Glendinning 1968; Polt 1964; and Sebold 1970).

The Irish diaspora in eighteenth-century Spain

Coinciding with this increased interest in adapting British Enlightenment ideas and reforms in Spain came a rise in English-speaking migration from Ireland. Irish immigrants began coming to Spain in large numbers at the end of the seventeenth century as a result of the defeat of the Jacobites by the supporters of William III. Irish Catholics who as a result of the conflicts with Britain lost their social positions, livelihoods, and even civil rights, continued to immigrate to Spain throughout the eighteenth century, concentrating in coastal cities such as Bilbao to the north and especially in Cádiz and Málaga to the south, as well as in the Spanish capital Madrid. Unlike later Irish migrations to the Americas, these eighteenth-century migrants were for the most part wealthy, educated, and urban (Bolufer 2009a, 172). Embraced for their shared Catholic faith and for the infusion of capital they offered Spain, Irish immigrants were welcomed first by the Hapsburg King Carlos II in the late seventeenth century, and later by the Bourbon Felipe V in the eighteenth, who gave Irish men who married Spanish women the right to own real property and to conduct their commerce freely (Bolufer 2009a, 172). They came as military officials, merchants, and exiled priests. Many went on to build prominent businesses and hold important military and government positions, and to raise their families in Spain (see Villar García 2000). After a few generations they were absorbed into Spanish society. However a few – both men and women – are remembered as having made lasting contributions to Enlightenment Spain: men such as economist Bernardo Ward, minister of finance for Felipe VI, who also published two books on economics and charity; General Enrique O'Donnell, who fought for Spain in the Peninsular War against Napoleon; and intellectual and journalist José María Blanco White, an important liberal thinker and cultural critic in the early nineteenth century (see Bolufer 2009a; Lewis 2012 ; and Villar García 2000). Included in this list of important Hispano-Irish figures in Spanish society were several women: translator and essayist Inés Joyes y Blake, poet and translator Margarita Hickey y Pelizzoni, poet María Gertudis Hore, and intellectual and author Frasquita Larrea y Aherán, all of whom wrote and published in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These four women stand out

among a handful of eighteenth-century women writers in Spain, and together with them made important contributions to the advancement of women in Spanish culture.

Enlightenment voices in defense of women: Feijoo to Amar

Fray Benito Feijoo, in his famous 1726 essay “Defensa de la mujer” from the *Teatro crítico español*, affirmed women’s “aptitud para todo género de ciencias, y conocimientos sublimes” (1778, 325–326). His essay sparked a heated debate throughout the century over women’s education and place in Spanish society (see Lewis 2004, chs 1 and 2), and by the end of the century, women were openly contributing to this discussion, as well as to Spanish culture overall with their publications, their participation in important *tertulias* and academies, and their social action through their own civic groups, forming what Theresa Smith has called an *emerging female citizen* (2006). Many recent studies on eighteenth-century women such as Inés Joyes y Blake, Josefa Amar y Borbón, María Rosa Gálvez, María Gertrudis Hore, and María Lorenza de los Ríos, Marquesa de Fuerte Híjar, have clearly shown the importance of this group of women intellectuals and artists to the period (Bolufer 2008; Establier 2012; Jaffe 2013; López Cordón 2005; and Morand 2007). They are united by themes of education, of the defense of women’s rights and abilities, of the importance of love and friendship among women, a critique of heterosexual love and marriage, and an exploration of women’s active role in society and the family. A comparison of an important Castilian female voice, Josefa Amar, to the Hispano-Irish women writers we study in this essay, reveals both points of contact in their shared concerns and the ways in which they addressed them, as well as distinct differences, stemming from their unique bicultural and bilingual perspective.

Born in Zaragoza, and later a member of the Economic Society of Zaragoza, Josefa Amar y Borbón (1749–1833?) is one of a handful of eighteenth-century Spanish women studied by late twentieth and early twenty-first century historians as an early feminist writer. Her two major original works – her 1786 “Discurso en defensa del talento de las mujeres” and her 1790 book on female education – the *Discurso sobre la educación física y moral de las mugeres* – have gone from complete oblivion to almost canonical status in the past twenty years, with frequent appearances of these two main works in course reading lists, encyclopedia articles, and essay collections. Amar also published two translations from original Italian texts, which not only legitimated her work as an intellectual gaining acceptance for her as part of the elite group of Spanish eighteenth-century *ilustrados*, but they also helped to set the trajectory of her brief but remarkable career as a thinker and writer, as scholars such as López-Cordón and Sullivan have noted (see López Cordón 2005, 77–98; Sullivan 1992).

The “Discurso en defensa del talento de las mujeres, y de su aptitud para el gobierno, y otros cargos en que se emplean los hombres” was published in the *Memorial literario* in response to the controversy over women’s admission to the Economic Society of Madrid and in particular to two previously published essays in the *Memorial literario* for and against female admission by Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos and Francisco Cabarrús. In the essay, Amar defends women’s equal abilities and talents and calls for their acceptance into the Madrid Economic Society for the important public role they could play (see Lewis 2004 for a deeper analysis of Amar’s essay, compared with essays by Feijoo, Jovellanos, and Cabarrús):

Concluyamos, pues, de todo lo dicho que si las mugeres tienen la misma aptitud que los hombres para instruirse; si en todos tiempos han mostrado ser capaces de las ciencias, de la prudencia, y del sigilo, si han tenido y tienen las virtudes Sociales;

[. . .] con tales hipótesis, lejos de ser perjudicial la admisión de las mugeres, puede y debe ser conveniente.

(Amar 1786, 430)

Amar's strong defense of women has been compared to Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, although Amar's essay predates Wollstonecraft's publication by six years (see Bolufer 2009b; López-Cordón 2005; and Sullivan 1992). Amar's book on female education, the *Discurso sobre la educación física y moral de las mugeres*, was published by the prominent Madrid printer Benito Cano. It is both a book of medical advice on pregnancy, childbirth and child-rearing, as well as a guide for women and their daughters about women's education and their social role in Spain. One important topic in the book is marriage. Amar counsels careful consideration of the choice girls must make between marriage and convent, the only two available, she notes, since a single woman "es un cero" in the eyes of society (Amar 1790, 225). She warns that girls educated in the convent might either decide to stay "de haberse familiarizado" (226) or to get married because they think it will bring happiness "que acaso no existe" (227). Happiness came instead from the "recto uso de las facultades racionales para obrar con cordura y discreción" (135). Mónica Bolufer points out Amar's rejection of the popular sentimental model that was taking hold of Europe and Spain in the late eighteenth century, especially in the novel, in which women found happiness within their domestic confines. Instead, Amar's views on marriage are pragmatic, and happiness for women comes from "hallar por sí mismas otras fuentes de satisfacción, de las que el estudio y la escritura, como placer íntimo y como ocasión de reconocimiento público, fueron las más apreciadas" (Bolufer 1997, 212).

Inés Joyes y Blake

While her life and writings were extraordinary, Amar was not the only Spanish woman of her time translating important foreign works, defending women's abilities and rights, or giving advice to daughters. Inés Joyes y Blake (1731–1808) also published an important translation and wrote about women's education and women's role in society through a published letter addressed to her own daughters. Born in Madrid to a wealthy Irish family originally from Galway, she married her distant cousin Agustín Blake, a businessman in Málaga, raised nine children, was widowed at age 50, and published one book in 1798 at the age of 67, a translation of Samuel Johnson's 1759 *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia*. She accompanied her translation with a small original treatise, "Apología de las mugeres en carta original de la traductora dirigida a sus hijas." Mónica Bolufer calls Joyes' essay "one of the most lucid and vehement texts on women's condition in eighteenth-century Spain" (Bolufer 2009b, 27), and points to similarities between Joyes' text and previous publications on women's education and women's rights by Benito Feijoo (1726), Josefa Amar y Borbón (1790) and Mary Wollstonecraft (1792). The "Apología" does not specifically reference the translation of Johnson (1798) that it follows, yet Bolufer finds that the two texts coincide in their praise of certain Enlightened values – the exultation of wisdom and virtue over riches and frivolity, and of reason over passion (Bolufer 2003, 145). Both also are critical of marriage, and yet both see it as an important element of order in the family and society. Lastly, in both there is a tension between the individual's pursuit of happiness, and the good of society. In her essay, Joyes urges women not to underestimate themselves, and she uses strong words to describe male oppression. She goes on to urge women to respect themselves and to support one another, which will win respect from men too: "respectaos a vosotras mismas y os respetarán: amaos unas a otras" (Joyes 1798, 204).

Joyes criticizes more forcefully than Amar the limited choices eighteenth-century Spanish women had between convent and marriage: “¡Máxima perniciosa, erradísimo concepto que es causa de infinitos casamientos disparatados e infelices, y de que se vean tantas arrepentidas!” (Joyes 1798, 195). While Amar’s tone is calm and distant (she makes no personal references to her own experience as a woman), Joyes shows her indignance at male hypocrisy that subordinates women: “Los hombres en general las quieren ignorantes porque solo así mantienen la superioridad que se figuran tener” (203). Joyes passionately wants to get through to women her message of empowerment: “Yo quisiera desde lo alto de algún monte donde fuera posible que me oyesen todas darles un consejo. Oíd mujeres, les diría, y no os apoquéis: vuestras almas son iguales a las del sexo que os quiere tiranizar” (203–4). She concludes her treatise connecting women’s individual happiness to the positive effects their good education and virtue will have on society: “tendréis la Gloria de reformar las costumbres haciendo amable la virtud; irá decayendo el lujo: vuestro exemplo hará moderados a los hombres: vuestros maridos os amarán y apreciarán: vuestros hijos os venerarán: vuestros hermanos se tendrán por dichosos con vuestro trato: viviréis felices quanto cabe en el mundo, y moriréis con la gloria de dexar una posteridad virtuosa” (204). Despite Joyes’ hope for a better future, her optimism was not shared by all eighteenth-century women writers.

Margarita Hickey y Pellizzoni

Margarita Hickey y Pellizzoni, the daughter of an Irish father and an Italian mother, was born in Palma de Mallorca in 1728 (Pierucci 2006, 13). Her father served in the military (Pierucci 2006, 13–14; Salgado 2009, 62). She grew up in Barcelona and married Juan Antonio Aguirre (from Navarre); the couple was living in Madrid by 1759, when Hickey appeared on the literary scene (Deacon 1988, 399–400; Pierucci 2006, 16–17). Philip Deacon has identified that Hickey attended Agustín Montiano’s literary *tertulia*, where she met and befriended playwright and poet Vicente García de la Huerta, with whom she maintained correspondence during Huerta’s self-imposed exile in France (1988, 403–405), and also exchanged poetry (1988, 406–408). Her only published collection *Poesías varias sagradas, morales y profanas o amorosas: con dos poemas épicos*, was published by the Royal Press in 1789. It included a translation from French to Spanish of Racine’s *Andromaca*, two epic poems dedicated to military hero Pedro Ceballos, and 49 lyrical poems, many of which treat the injustices of heterosexual love for women. As with Amar and Joyes, Hickey also offered advice to young women about marriage and love. Hickey strongly criticized male oppression of women, portrayed marriage as an undesirable state for women, and defended women’s intellectual abilities as writers in particular.

Throughout the poems, Hickey criticizes men’s actions, and cautions women to beware. Women suffer the injustice of an inferior economic and social position, she complains:

De bienes destituidas,
 Víctimas del pundonor,
 Censuradas con amor
 Y sin él desatendidas;
 Sin cariño pretendidas,
 Por apetito buscadas,
 Conseguidas, ultrajadas,
 Sin aplausos la virtud,
 Sin lauros la juventud,
 Y en la vejez despreciadas.
 (Pierucci 2006, 138)

Unlike Joyes' optimism over the power of women to change society through the example of their virtue, Hickey offers a pessimistic view of a male-dominated society that oppresses women at every turn. Likewise, while Amar saw a certain social utility in marriage, Hickey clearly rejects it. In "Décima aconsejando una dama a otra amiga suya que no se case," the poet urges a friend not to marry:

Conserva libre tu mano
Huye del lazo inhumano
Que el amante más rendido
Es, transformado en marido,
Un insufrible tirano. (137)

Men are not just tyrannical in love; in their rejection of women's talents they also oppress. In a poem directed to a male friend, *Danteo* (identified as saintista Tadeo Moreno González by Pierucci (2006, 285), following Serrano y Sanz), Hickey closes her collection explaining her purpose for writing and her frustrations. She begins with a typically feminine denial of her seriousness of purpose:

Amigo Danteo
Por fin te remito
Estas producciones
De los ocios míos. (285)

She elaborates on the topic of love found in so many of her poems:

Hallarás en ellas
Documentos finos
De amar noblemente
Con afectos dignos. (286)

But although writing is supposedly merely light entertainment for her, she is not afraid to criticize male poets, and begins with none less than Ovid:

No de amar un arte
Como la de Ovidio,
Que más de amor
Es arte de vicio. (286)

María Salgado (2009) points out how Hickey both borrows from and re-works canonical male poetry and poetic themes, highlighting the author's critique of Ovid, of Luís de Góngora and of Lope de Vega, forming a "strategy of validating her voice by placing her poems within a very canonical tradition. She was indeed conscious of the literary context within which she wrote and of the parameters her feminist discourse had to overcome" (Salgado 2009, 64–65). Later in this poem, Hickey addresses her critics:

No dudo, Danteo,
Persuadida vivo,
Que los Aristarcos

y Momos del siglo
hincarán su diente
con audacia y brio,
diciendo, arrogantes
tanto como altivos,
que quién me ha inspirado
o quién me ha metido,
no habiendo las aulas
cursado ni visto . . . (287)

These men expect her to dedicate herself to activities proper for her sex – “la rueca, el huso, / la aguja, y el hilo” (287) – and that women should naturally prefer to speak of fashion, dresses, and hairstyles. To this Hickey declares “que el alma no es hombre / ni mujer, y es hijo / que en entrambos casos / su ser es el mismo” (290). The structure of this collection is significant. Both the Racine translation and the epic poem dedicated to Ceballos have a prologue (see Llosa Sanz 2008 for a discussion of the prologue to the Ceballos poem), but the lyrical poetry does not. Instead, Hickey ends with this poem, a sort of epilogue, defending her work, defending herself, and criticizing, again, the men who would reject or put limits on her.

María Gertrudis Hore y Ley

Another poet, María Gertrudis Hore y Ley (1742–1801), criticized women’s inferior social role as did Hickey before her. Morand points out a possible acquaintance between Hickey and Hore, given their similar family backgrounds, some time that Hore spent in Madrid in 1774 or 1775, and a poem by Hickey addressed to a female friend “Fenisa,” a poetic name Hore used for herself (Morand 2007, 111–112). Also known by her pen name *Hija del Sol*, Hore was born to a wealthy Irish merchant family in Cádiz. Much like Hickey, Hore was well known in her day in important literary and social circles. She participated in the *tertulia* of Antonio de Ulloa in Cádiz, corresponded with members of the Escuela de Salamanca, and published her poems in important contemporary journals in Madrid and Barcelona (Morand 2009, 37 and 44–45). Bolufer believes that, although from different Southern coastal cities (Cádiz and Málaga), Hore’s family and Joyes’ family had social and economic ties, and it is likely they knew each other (Bolufer 2006, 95). Yet despite being well regarded and published during her lifetime, Hore is remembered as much for a mysterious decision to leave her marriage to businessman Esteban Fleming and enter the convent of Santa María in Cádiz at the age of 35 as for her extraordinary poetry. Fernán Caballero romanticized this story in “La hija del sol,” published in 1857 (see Lewis 2004, 62–63). Some of her writings are religious in nature, but many of them also deal with friendship and poetry, and some follow the popular anacreontic style of the day (a poetic form imitating the hedonistic odes by Classical Greek poet Anacreon), seemingly unsuitable topics for a cloistered nun.

While one might think, given that Hore left marriage for a religious vocation, that her poetry would contain a similar indictment of marriage and men as Hickey expressed in her poetry, rarely does Hore even mention marriage, although she does frequently address the subject of romantic love and some of her manuscript poems speak of, or even to, specific lovers by poetic names such as *Mirteo*, *Mirtilo*, and *Ergasto*. But many more of her poems exalt female friendship and contrast a frenetic social life outside the cloister that impedes creativity, to a pleasant and tranquil exchange among friends that encourages it. In one of these light-hearted poems, “La ensalada,” published in May 1795 in the *Diario de Madrid*, Hore presents an idyllic

scene among female friends enjoying a fresh salad together. The poem begins describing the chaos of the outside world: “De riñas y cuestiones / ardiendo está la Aldea, / todas hablan a un tiempo, / y no hay quien las comprenda” (197). She calls her friends to shut out the noise and gather together for a light meal together: “Niña, de la cabaña / Cierra pronto la puerta . . . y en tanto que ellas rabian / tráeme tú Filena, / con agua serenada / la talla portuguesa” (197). Hore takes the traditional hedonistic homosocial anacreontic ode, so popular during her day, especially among poets such as Meléndez Valdés, to an all-female setting, portraying a salad shared with girlfriends as being as sumptuous and enjoyable as any Bachanal gathering (see Irene Gómez-Castellano 2012 for a study of the anacreontic among the poets of the Escuela Salmantina). Her imagery appeals to the senses, with colors, flavors, and fragrance: “el rubí del tomate,” “la Esmeralda bella del pimentillo dulce,” “ambar del pepino” and “el orégano [. . .] fragante” (197).

In another anacreontic ode, published in 1795 in the *Diario de Madrid*, the poet encourages a female friend to leave society life behind: “¿Hasta cuándo Gerarda, / tu peregrino ingenio / en frívolos asuntos / malgastarás conceptos?” (201). Gerarda needs to stop wasting her talents on the “contrario sexo / que solo en nuestra ruina / fabrica sus trofeos” (202). Yet in this poem, it is not just heterosexual romantic love or men’s treatment of women that the poet criticizes, but rather that her friend wastes her poetic talent writing about them. Instead, says the poet, if Gerarda looks to a woman (who is perhaps the Virgin Mary) as her poetic guide – “nuestra común amiga sea tu nuevo Febo” – she will be rewarded by climbing the heights of the “most sacred Parnassus” (203).

Morand (2009) has pointed to the many ways in which Hore, despite being a cloistered nun during the most active time of her poetic career, was very much a part of Enlightenment Spanish society – from the contents of her library to her important male and female contacts. She was well acquainted with many Enlightenment debates and topics of discussion, and did, like many other women writers, translate texts from Italian to Spanish. In one unpublished poem, the long hendecasyllabic “Meditación,” Hore evokes a popular British text, Edward Young’s *Night Thoughts*. Young’s 1742 poem had inspired other Spanish writers, notably José de Cadalso, also from Cádiz, whose *Noches lúgubres* (composed in 1775 and published between 1789–1790) was influenced by Young and which is commonly cited as an example of an early Romantic sensibility in Spain. Hore’s dramatic poem is also in this vein, forming part of an aesthetic shared by numerous *ilustrados* including Jovellanos, who found in English philosophy and sentimental literature an expression of their own frustrations with the failures of Enlightenment reforms (See Yvonne Fuentes 2004). In this poem, again addressed to a female friend, Hore speaks of her attraction to the morbid settings in Young’s poem:

Mas como aquel filósofo del Támesis,
huyendo, sí, sus engañosas dichas
y los vanos objetos que interpone
para que la verdad se nos resista,
se entra por los altísimos cipreses
y con el mayor gusto ve y visita
sepulcrales cavernas a quien solo
de la muerte blandones iluminan. (337)

Well read, and very much a participant in the trends of her times, this cloistered nun found inspiration and delight in the imaginative macabre settings of Young’s poem, which also spoke to her own melancholy:

¡Sí, sí, divino Young! contigo entro:
al ver tu ejemplo, mi valor se anima,
y de ti acompañado sin Recelo,
compararé la muerte con la vida. (337–8)

Frasquita Larrea y Aherán

The youngest of our group of Hispano-Irish women not only participated in the sensibility of her time as Hore did before her, but also is actually credited with influencing it. Francisca Javiera (Frasquita) Ruiz de Larrea y Aherán (1775–1838) was born in Cádiz in 1775, daughter of a Basque merchant father and Irish-born mother. She grew up near Cádiz, in Chiclana, but is thought to have spent time in her youth in England and France, where she met her husband, the German Johann Nikolas Böhl Von Faber. This couple is known for bringing the so-called conservative Romantic movement to Spain, and for being the parents to Spain's great Realist novelist Fernán Caballero, Cecilia Böhl de Faber (Carnero 1978, 1990). Juan Nicolás (as he was known in Spain) and Frasquita were intellectual peers who were intensely interested in literature, philosophy, and culture, which they debated in letters to each other, and undoubtedly in their homes in both Germany and Spain. Their sometimes rocky relationship led to a six-year separation from 1806 to 1812 (Orozco 1977, 73–89). Larrea was well traveled throughout her adult life, and spent time in England, as well as France, Switzerland and, of course, Germany and Spain. She had few publications but maintained correspondence with various important intellectuals of her day, including José María Blanco White, another son of Irish immigrants. Her papers are housed in the Osborne Archives, which Orozco Acuaviva was able to consult and present in his book (1977). We find in these texts evidence of Larrea's literary and political interests – from her frequent citations in English and French of authors as diverse as Shakespeare, Chateaubriand, and Rousseau, to her outspoken criticism of Napoleon and of the Cortes in Cádiz (see Cantos Casenave 2002, 2009). Although Larrea was the best traveled and most worldly of the Hispano-Irish women we have studied, she also was the most nostalgic defender of Spain as her homeland.

One of her early writings, *Ela* (1807), displays some of Larrea's important ideas about nature and love, rooted in contemporary sentimental literature and early Romanticism, and has been identified as somewhat autobiographical, representing her nostalgia for her own childhood in Chiclana (Orozco 1977, 104). The story of the young girl begins with an epilogue in French from Romantic writer Chateaubriand. Ela was close to nature – “Su infancia fue íntima con la naturaleza” (Orozco 1977, 251) – and “la vida campestre fortaleció su físico y purificó sus sentimientos.” She was free, even in her thinking: “Examinaba libremente toda opinión antes de apropiárselo” (251). She meets a young German man, Wilhelm, and their pure love for each other is almost other-worldly: “Tenía el antesabor de otra existencia aun quando gozaban de todas las delicias de ésta” (253). Wilhelm and Ela never marry. Instead, Ela is struck by lightning and killed as she admires the power of nature.

Politics was another frequent topic of Larrea's writings. In an 1808 manuscript text, “Una aldeana Española a sus patricias,” the author forcefully urges women to do all that is in their power to oppose Napoleon and support the Spanish cause against the French: “Y nosotras españolas usémos también las armas que nos son propias. Recordemos a nuestros esposos e hijos sus obligaciones. Pintémosles las dulzuras de una muerte en defensa de su Religión y Patria” (260). She ends by exclaiming “¡Morir o vencer, Españoles! ¡Rogad y persuadid, Españolas!” (260).

Frasquita traveled extensively through Europe both alone and with her family, and in some of the archived manuscripts she describes her many trips north. In the essay “Chiclana,” written from a cold and dreary Brighton, England, in December of 1811, Larrea expresses her nostalgia for her native Andalusia: “entre yelos de otro clima, en la tierra del extranjero, vuestra idea acompaña mi agitada carrera Al través de un velo de neblina miro los desnudos troncos y pienso en los mirtos, naranjos y laureles de la Andalucía, vanos en su días de diciembre” (272). The most cosmopolitan of the women we have studied, Frasquita Larrea was also the most nostalgic and patriotic, yearning for the Spain of her own idyllic and innocent past.

Conclusion

These four Hispano-Irish late-eighteenth-century women were united by the circumstances of their families’ origins, and, as members of a tightly knit and small community, perhaps were even acquainted with one another, at least by reputation. When compared with other Spanish women writers of the period, like Josefa Amar, they were certainly among the most important, most active, and most outspoken women during the late Enlightenment period in Spain and they shared many of the same interests and concerns. Their cosmopolitan and multilingual upbringing – growing up in port cities in families that dealt in international trade – gave them special access to ideas coming to Spain from the outside, notably from England. Their exposure to texts in English also distinguished them from most Spanish women, and they seem to have all reflected in their own writings similar affinities to British philosophy and literature, as well as to ideas about the importance of friendship, of women’s autonomy, and of women’s role in society, even while they decried male oppression and injustice much more forcefully than did writers such as Amar y Borbón. But was there anything particularly Irish about them, or did they bring an Irish Enlightenment to Spain? Given that Ireland too was on the “periphery” of the Enlightenment (Butterick et al. 2008), probably not. But their unique perspectives certainly made an impact on Spanish culture, and through figures such as Fernán Caballero in the mid-nineteenth century, certainly we can say that they helped shape the direction of women’s writing in Spain.

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