No Shrinking Violets but Tall Poppies: Ambition, Glory, and Women Writing in Spain's Mid-Nineteenth Century

Christine Arkinstall
(UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND)
c.arkinstall@auckland.ac.nz

"¡[U]na mujer erudita, que se mete a escribir libros, ni sirve para nada, ni sabe conducirse. Se mete como los que escriben, a ambicionar *gloria*!"
(*Fernán Caballero* 1905: 198; qtd. Rabaté 2007: 279)

(recibido agosto/2019, aceptado novembro/2019)

RESUMEN: Este estudio enfoca la expresión culturalmente indecorosa de las ambiciones literarias de escritoras españolas en los foros solidarios de revistas editadas por y para las mujeres que aparecían entre 1851 y 1852: *Ellas: Órgano Oficial del Sexo Femenino*, sus reincarnaciones en *Ellas, Gaceta del Bello Sexo* y la *Gaceta del Bello Sexo: Revista de Literatura, Educación, Novedades, Teatros y Modas*, y *La Mujer*. En la hermandad lírica que tales revistas fomentaban, dedico una atención especial a la figura y a la obra de María Tadea Verdejo y Durán (1830-1854), colaboradora asidua de editoriales y poemas hasta su muerte prematura del cólera. Sostengo que estas escritoras de mediados del siglo XIX no sacrificaron sus deseos de gloria literaria en el altar de una feminidad isabelina prescrita. Al contrario, sus poemas y ensayos demuestran su reticencia hacia, si no total rechazo de, una ideología de domesticidad que impediría que alcanzaran la inmortalidad cultural. Amapolas altas que se erguían por encima de otras flores cultivadas por mano del hombre, sus escritos no sólo atestiguan su búsqueda de un igual reconocimiento literario dentro de un mundo cultural dominado por los varones sino que invitan unas comparaciones valiosas con la creación literaria femenina contemporánea fuera de España.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Escritoras españolas de mediados del siglo XIX, ambición, gloria, María Verdejo y Durán, canon isabelino.

ABSTRACT: This essay focuses on the culturally indecorous expression of Spanish women's literary ambitions in the supportive fora of women's periodicals that appeared between 1851 and 1852: *Ellas: Órgano Oficial del Sexo Femenino*, its reincarnations as *Ellas, Gaceta del Bello Sexo* and the *Gaceta del Bello Sexo: Revista de Literatura, Educación, Novedades, Teatros y Modas*, and *La Mujer*. Within the literary "sisterhood" or "community" that such periodicals promoted, I focus especially on the figure and works of María Tadea Verdejo y Durán (1830-1854), an assiduous contributor of lead articles and poems to the press until her untimely death from cholera. I argue that these mid-nineteenth-century female writers did not sacrifice their desire for literary glory on the altar of a culturally prescribed Isabelline femininity. Rather, their poems

and essays demonstrate their reluctance toward, if not downright rebellion against, an ideology of domesticity that would inhibit their attainment of cultural immortality. Tall poppies who rose above other husbanded flowers, their writings not only stand as testimony to their quest for equal recognition in a male-dominated cultural world but also invite valuable comparisons with contemporaneous women's literary production beyond Spain.

KEY WORDS: Mid-nineteenth-century Spanish female writers, ambition, glory, María Verdejo y Durán, Isabelline canon.

Ambition is still considered a questionable, if not unhealthy, aspiration for women in our twenty-first century. Ambitious women must regularly contend with labels such as "overly assertive" and "power-hungry." Few museums and art galleries, let alone literary academies and the canon, admit women's creative production into their material and virtual spaces[1]. Invisible glass ceilings, gender salary gaps, unconscious biases and outright discrimination continue to seek to keep women "in their place." Unsurprisingly, in nineteenth-century Spain women's desire to write their own lives and texts in pursuit of literary glory met with many barriers. After 1850, as Susan Kirkpatrick notes, in an attempt to preserve traditional class and gender hierarchies under threat, the Spanish bourgeoisie promoted the ideal of the Virtuous Woman or Angel in the House, in whom desire, imagination and conflict were officially absent (1991: 270-271). Yet despite the threat of sociocultural censure, women increasingly articulated their ambitions for literary glory in female-edited periodicals from the mid century onwards.

This essay focuses on the culturally indecorous expression of women's literary desires in the supportive fora of women's periodicals that appeared between 1851 and 1852: *Ellas: Órgano Oficial del Sexo Femenino* (1 Sept.-15 Sept 1851), its reincarnations as *Ellas, Gaceta del Bello Sexo* (8 Oct.-8 Nov. 1851) and the *Gaceta del Bello Sexo: Revista de Literatura, Educación, Novedades, Teatros y Modas* (8 Dec. 1851-23 Jan. 1852), and *La Mujer* (mid 1851-17 Oct. 1852)[2]. Within the literary "sisterhood" or "community" that such periodicals promoted, I focus especially on the figure and works of María Tadea Verdejo y Durán (1830-1854), an assiduous contributor of lead articles and poems to the press until her untimely death from cholera[3]. Not only does these writers' oeuvre cogently illustrate the multiple ways in which they negotiated a sociocultural minefield poised between Romanticism's iconoclastic individualism and the feminine domesticity privileged in Spain during the reign of Isabel II (1843-1868). Particular compositions, as I develop, also draw

[1] In the art world, the feminist activists known as the Guerrilla Girls have been calling on art galleries and creative industries since 1985 to feature more female creators. See https://www.guerrillagirls.com/.

[2] For an overview of these periodicals, see Christine Arkinstall (2018) and Inmaculada Jiménez Morell (1992: 82-100). For an excellent analysis of their precursors in the 1840s, see Mónica Burguera (2011).

[3] On the *hermandad lírica*, see Marina Mayoral (1990a) and Susan Kirkpatrick (1990, 1991: 87-88). On the term "comunidad lírica," see Colette Rabaté (2007: 277).

on the religious and poetic implications of Enthusiasm, which, as in Britain and North America, gave women greater opportunities for creative expression[4].

In nineteenth-century Spain concepts pertaining to creative practice and production drew on currencies of gendered differentiations common to Europe, Britain and America[5]. Within cultural environments that aligned genius and originality with the masculine, the feminine represented both the hoped-for purity of the male writer's creation and also his fear that his work might not be seen as sufficiently original. The increasing democratization of the literary marketplace also meant that the writer's corpus, perceived as a seductive, feminized body, circulated among readers. Hence the polarized metaphors of the pure woman and the prostitute characterized the Romantic writer's relationship with his work and reading public (Hofkosh 1988: 98, Ross 1988: 33). Even the imagination, Alda Blanco highlights, was considered the source of sexual feelings, which made its artistic expression culturally inappropriate for "decent" women (2001: 74)[6]. Hence women's idealized physical and symbolic chasteness rendered problematic their participation in a Romanticism that masculinized desire (Kirkpatrick 1991: 99, 268). This ascription of legitimate desire solely to male subjects also justified women's exclusion from the public sphere. Considered to lack reason and thus the ability to curb bodily passions, qualities deemed necessary to become civil individuals, women were perceived as naturally subversive of sociopolitical order and restricted to the domestic sphere (Pateman 1988: 94, 96, 100).

Consequently, from the mid-nineteenth century onward, as Blanco explains, the ideal promoted to Spanish women was that of "un ser doméstico, virtuoso y relacional" (2001: 26). Nevertheless, many female writers did not unquestionably reproduce this paradigm but inflected it with transgressive ambiguities and paradoxes. Without renouncing their fragile identity as writers, they strove to merge what they perceived as their writerly mission with their mission as Woman (2001: 27, 79-80). The challenge for this younger generation of writers, who drew inspiration from their Romantic "sisters," was how to make the two compatible[7]. Many resemble their American contemporaries, who, culturally prohibited from embracing the ideal of the "individualistic author" rooted in a masculine European Romanticism, represented themselves as serving others as "educators and moral inculcators" (Boyd 2004: 2-3). As I will develop, I consider that the mid-century writers

---

[4] Studies on women's literary ambition such as Elena Brit Olsen's on eighteenth-century British poets and Anne E. Boyd's on mid-nineteenth-century American authors reveal that Spain's contemporary female writers shared common challenges and preoccupations.

[5] See, for example, Sonia Hofkosh (1988) and Anne K. Mellor (1988).

[6] As Hofkosh observes, citing Catherine Gallagher: "When women entered the career of authorship, they did not enter an inappropriately male territory, but a degradingly female one. They did not need to find a female metaphor for authorship; they needed to avoid or transform the one that was already there" (qtd. Hofkosh 1988: 98).

[7] According to Kirkpatrick's generational model of nineteenth-century female writers, the contributors to *Ellas* and *La Mujer* sit within a second generation who commenced publishing between 1850 and 1868, when the normative paradigm for femininity, the Angel in the House, became even more dominant. Kirkpatrick argues that this second generation did not resist this paradigm as the previous generation had done (1998: 57-58). Similarly, while Alda Blanco sees female writers born between 1826 and 1837 as the "hermanas menores" of the female Romantic poets, she too considers that they backtracked on fashioning the autonomous subjectivity that their predecessors had initiated (2001: 74-75).

analyzed in this essay take their bearings from early feminist voices of female Romantic writers while frequently modulating their voices according to the intersecting Isabelline discourses of domesticity and religious devotion. They thus provide a telling window on a moment of transition in Spanish society and culture in their quest to frame desire and ambition, seen as inappropriate for women, within more acceptable molds. In particular, many would sanction their creative ambition by drawing on a rhetoric of religion in which *gloria* signified both personal fame and divine glory.

Female contributors to the weekly *Ellas* walked a cultural tightrope between bold demands for women's emancipation and the need to seemingly uphold a prescribed femininity[8]. Its initial editor, Alicia Pérez de Gascuña, penned many lead articles, which consistently proclaimed women's equality with men, if not their superiority, and denounced the calamitous state of their education[9]. Her manifesto, "Cuatro palabras," which opens the first issue, reflects her contributors' desire to match men as intellectual equals and wield authority over their lives: "¿Acaso hemos podido creer que sólo ellos son capaces de figurar en el mundo intelectual, de ejercer la autoridad sobre todas las cosas y de mantener bajo su exclusiva dependencia cuantos elementos constituyen las sociedades? ¡Cuán lejos estamos de pensar de ese modo!" (1-9-1851: 1)[10]. Although Pérez declares that she and her contributors do not claim to be writers –"nosotras ni blasonamos de escritoras"– her concluding paragraph asserts their desire to become famous: "[N]o tenemos nombre, pero... deseamos conquistarle" (2). In the same issue, Emilia Pallares makes public her literary ambition, contravening the dictum of modesty that governed women's conduct: "[E]stoy muy contenta al ver cumplidos mis deseos de dar mi nombre a luz y publicar mis pensamientos: tengo ambición de gloria."[11]

Vicenta García Miranda (Campanario 1816-1877), whom Carolina Coronado mentored, unashamedly proclaims her desire for literary fame in her long poem, "Entusiasmo y Desaliento," published in *Ellas, Gaceta del Bello Sexo* in October 1851[12]. I posit that the term "entusiasmo" and the ensuing content of the poem speak to the concept of Enthusiasm, which Jon Mee considers was both "displaced" and "desired" during Romanticism (2003: 1-2). Seen as grounded in the passions and bodily experience as opposed to reason,

---

[8] See Arkinstall (2018: 114-118). María Pilar Martínez Latre signals that *Ellas* and *La Mujer* reveal how women were beginning to demand a space in the social sphere (1986: 41n14), while Rabaté assesses the first issue of *Ellas* as clearly feminist in its pretensions (2007: 267-268).

[9] Kirkpatrick notes that Emilia de Tamarit also edited *Ellas* (1991: 84). In Tamarit's lead article, "Nosotras a los hombres," published in the *Gaceta del Bello Sexo*, *Ellas*'s reincarnation, women's desire for equality is paramount: "Animadas por el deseo de llegar a ver algún día colocada la mujer en el lugar que le corresponde por su misma naturaleza y facultades" (1851: 10).

[10] In all quotations I normalize nineteenth-century spelling.

[11] One column in *Ellas* on the lives of notable contemporary female cultural producers was entitled "Glorias del bello sexo." In issues 1, 4, and 6, for example, Luisa Núñez wrote on the Andalusian actor, Rita Luna (Málaga 1770-Madrid 1832) to affirm that, thanks to Luna, virtue is not incompatible with outstanding artistry (45).

[12] García Miranda also contributed to Madrid's *El Eco del Comercio*, *El Lirio de Vitoria*, *El Celtíbero*, *El Alicantino*, *El Genio* and *El Guadiana*, and published her only book of poetry, *Flores del valle*, in 1855 (Fernández-Daza Álvarez 1997: 300n2, Sánchez Álvarez 2015: 145). On García Miranda, see also Kirkpatrick (1990: 29-30), Mayoral (1990a: 44-51), and María del Carmen Simón Palmer (1991a).

Enthusiasm, as in Samuel Johnson's eighteenth-century definition, was associated with an over-active imagination and a suspiciously self-sufficient direct communication with the divine (Mee 2003: 10, 12-13)[13]. Enthusiasm's implicit contestation of nineteenth-century bourgeois formations was considered to require careful regulation because it was "haunted by the fear of the combustible material within both the individual and the body politic" (Mee 2003: 3, 5). Constructed as the Other of feminine and lower-class excess to an allegedly rational, hegemonic masculinity, Enthusiasm, as Shaun Irlam puts it, presented a way of "encountering and negotiating the limits of form and the confines of... the Self" (1999: 8). Similarly, Elena Brit Olsen affirms that "enthusiasm –in its religious and its literary sense– suggests psychological and spiritual reordering of understanding, relying upon and highlighting inner knowledge" (2004: 6-7). Like the earlier mystics, female writers who rebelled against the constraints of bourgeois society undoubtedly recognized Enthusiasm's subversive potential for reshaping conservative paradigms of female subjectivity, as exemplified in García Miranda's poem.

The poem opens with the writer's apostrophe to her creativity, symbolized in the "lira," and her expression of her desire to roam beyond the lyrical notes considered appropriate for women –"lánguidos" and "dolientes"– to embrace unrestrained all facets of the world:

¡Venga mi lira! Con ella,
cual errante trovador,
de ese mundo seductor
quiero el ámbito cruzar.
¡Venga mi lira…! Sus ecos
ya lánguidos, ya expresivos,
ya dolientes, ya expansivos,
se unirán a mi cantar. (30-10-1851: 42)

The reference to her poetic expansiveness evokes the pursuit of transcendence associated with Romanticism, with Hans Eichner alluding to the "expansive effect that romances exerted upon the imagination of their readers... affording the boundless freedom of wild nature" (1973: 18).

In the following two stanzas the verb "quiero" appears ten times: a striking proclamation of a desire that seeks to create utopian worlds: "Sí; quiero ver ese mundo / que en mis sueños he creado" (García Miranda, 30-10-1851: 42). The poetic subject's quest to reach the heights of literary fame, connoted by the mountain peaks, the mythological home of the Muses and also identified with a masculine autonomy and vision, is evident in the ensuing

[13] In *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), Samuel Johnson defines Enthusiasm as "1. A vain belief of private revelation; a vain confidence of Divine favour or communication... 2. Heat or imagination; violence of passion... 3. Elevation of fancy; exaltation of ideas" (qtd. Mee 2003: 10). Similarly Hobbes, as Irlam remarks, perceived Enthusiasm as the "figure par excellence of sedition, insurgency, and unreason" (1999: 45).

proclamation: "[Q]uiero la cima del monte / con mi lira trasponer" (43)[14]. In stanza 4 her desire for literary glory becomes still more explicit, taking on the Promethean resonances paradigmatic of masculine Romantic subjectivity: "[Q]uiero elevar mi pupila, / como el águila, hasta el sol" (43)[15]. In her desire to contemplate fame, symbolized in the sun, her ambition does not meet with divine retribution like Prometheus's daring. Rather, the poetic subject identifies with the eagle, the agent of divine will, rather than with Prometheus, whose liver the eagle daily consumed.

Demanding equality with men –"Dejadme pasar do el hombre / disfruta de su albedrío"– García Miranda's poetic subject vindicates her right as a cultural explorer to appropriate a virgin territory, a terra incognita connoted by the desert: "¡Paso…! Dejadme poner / en el desierto mi planta, / allí do altiva levanta / la palma su oreada sien" (43). Here, I suggest, García Miranda's election of an exotic, wild space does not so much mirror patriarchal constructions of femininity according to those same premises of exoticism and wildness. Rather, what is more relevant is the association of the desert with a space of revelation and withdrawal into the self to refigure the world. As quoted above, García Miranda's poetic subject, an "errante trovador," can be read as symbolic of Irlam's "vagrant signifier that wanders from its proper signified into the terrain of metaphor," deviating into an uncharted, tropical "space of passion" (1999: 55)[16]. Instead of the colonization of a feminized space, the scene arguably relates the potential liberation of a feminized self into cultural practice. In this space, echoing Coronado's recourse to the palm in "A la palma," symbolic of literary honor (Kirkpatrick 1991: 207), García Miranda's subject dreams of claiming a wreath of fame hitherto reserved only for men: "Que tal vez junto a su tronco / tanto mi acento se eleve, / que sus ramas muy en breve / ciñan mi frente también" (30-10-1851: 43).

The final five stanzas address the implications of the second word in the title, "desaliento," which suggests society's suffocation of the Muses' breath or "aliento" of inspiration. Although men have permitted women poetic expression, they have banished them from an Eden of poetic exploration beyond domestic boundaries and limiting genres: "Que si es cierto que los hombres / nuestra lira nos dejaron, / los canceles nos cerraron / de ese mundo, de ese edén" (43). Prevented from flying like the cossetted canary in its gilded cage –"y le llaman compañero… / mas no le dejan volar" (43)– the female writer who aspires to literary glory cannot, as Boyd puts it, "ris[e] above her sex" (2004: 132), to liberate her poet's soul and mind from societal constraints:

---

[14] Marlon B. Ross notes that "climbing mountains... perfectly emblematizes the poet's charge of self quest and world conquest... It is another metaphor of masculine potency, which... invests the poetic vocation with power and influence" (1988: 44).

[15] On Promethean desire in Spanish Romanticism, see Kirkpatrick's discussion of José de Espronceda. She remarks that Prometheus represents the admirable desire to break the limits that an authoritative order had imposed and to impact on reality (1991: 121-130).

[16] Irlam also notes: "[B]ecause the persona of the poetic Enthusiast claims to make possible a dithyrambic or rhapsodic intellection, the poet is empowered to explore modes of knowledge outside the empirical and rationalist agenda set by the Enlightenment and is able to map remoter peripheries than a language of denotation and representation" (1999: 38).

Más triste de la que sola,
en sus prisiones sujeta,
con un alma de poeta
la gloria llega a entrever.
El ruiseñor en la jaula
solamente vive un día…
así pues la mente mía
se muere opresa en mi ser. (García Miranda, 30-10-1851: 43)

The result is the death of the poet to preserve Woman, transforming the poem from a celebration of female genius into an elegy for its death.

Among mid-nineteenth-century female writers flight was a common trope for literary inspiration and desire. As Adriana Craciun insists regarding British women's Romantic poetry, flight referred to a forbidden and ultimately frustrated ambition (2004: 714). The concept of soaring, as Anne E. Boyd indicates with respect to female American writers, was particular to the imagination, necessary for genius. Women's appropriation of this notion was equivalent to their defiance of a cultural proscription that categorized women as copyists rather than imaginative inventors. The trope of flight represented not only escape from sociocultural restrictions but also a feminized genius conceived of as a superior spirituality (Boyd 2004: 132-133). Thus the wings of the bird, symbolic of the flights of the imagination, also connoted an angel's wings to apparently concur with, but also subtly undermine, the dominant icon of the contained Angel in the House[17].

García Miranda's poem, "A las españolas," reminiscent of Coronado's composition, "Cantad, hermosas," calls on women to look after their superior intelligence: "Y cuidéis el tesoro, / más preciado que el oro, / de vuestra superior inteligencia" (15-12-1851: 11). The poetic subject affirms women's natural capacity for inspiration –"de vuestra mente, / cual rápido torrente, / brota la inspiración pura y sublime"– to warn that men's prohibition of women's creative gifts contravenes God's will: "Mil derechos sagrados / os negaron en mengua de Dios mismo" (11). These verses engage with a theme expressed in Coronado's letter to introduce García Miranda to the readers of *El Defensor del Bello Sexo*: the female poet as part of a divinely created nature, not a social aberration (Kirkpatrick 1991: 91)[18].

[17] The bird as representative of poetic subjectivity was a Romantic topos on which both male and female poets, such as Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, Keats, Shelley and Musset, drew, while Spanish male critics represented the emerging ideal of the female Romantic poet as a domestic angel that sang (1991: 176-177). Verdejo y Durán challenges this representation in her posthumously published poem "Cantoras y aves," dedicated to her "querida amiga la señorita Amalia de Casa-Treviño." Although she likens their composition of verses to the songs of birds –"Y… así como las aves tenemos en el mundo / Una misión hermosa, que es ¡ay! La de… *cantar*"– she indicates the disjuncture that exists between the public perception of their poetic works and the reality that these represent: "Y así como las aves, nosotras las cantoras / Suspiros exhalamos que juzgarán de… *amor*, / Cuando de nuestras liras dolientes y sonoras / Las brisas solo arrancan acentos de… *dolor*" (1855a: 220).

[18] In "Las mujeres literatas" Verdejo y Durán similarly justifies women's writings: "Nace el ruiseñor y lanza un raudal de armonía; bulle el arroyo y exhale su murmullo; crece la rosa y vierte su perfume; ¿y nosotras hemos de ser de peor condición? [¿]A nosotras, seres racionales en cuyas frentes brilla el sello de la divinidad, nos ha de ser vedado lo que le es permitido a un ave, a un río y a una flor?" (11-7-1852: 5). What she stresses is an expansive movement into an unlimited space, a transcendence of a determining corporeality.

Knowledge, García Miranda's poem continues, is the star that leads to virtue: "Que es el saber la estrella, / a cuya luz la bella / sigue tras la virtud y huye del vicio" (11). In British women's poetry in the 1820s and 1830s the star was often synonymous with fame and identified with a fallen angel and Eve (Craciun 2004: 707-708). Reworking a framework of virtue centered on the domestic Angel and on Catholic precepts regarding God's creation and will, García Miranda transforms this traditional story of female perdition into one of virtuous salvation. The final six stanzas exhort women, as in the following verses, to fly to the literary arena so as to fulfil their sacred calling and achieve fame:

> Las que el fuego sintáis del númen santo
> Elevad vuestro canto
> Con tanta majestad que el mundo asombre,
> Y alcanzaréis la gloria
> De que un lugar la historia
> En sus fastos conceda a vuestro nombre.
> . . . . . .
> Volad a la contienda
> Las que para vencer tengáis aliento;
> Y adornen vuestras frentes
> Los lauros reverentes
> Con que la sociedad premia el talento. (15-12-1851: 11)

The use of the trope of flight in the context of women's ambition reappears in a poem by Manuela Morant, Marquise del Surco, titled "La violeta." On the one hand, the poetic subject identifies with the violet's symbolic modesty on affirming her own inadequacy to emulate male poets, in accordance with the convention of feminine false modesty:

> Mas yo humilde no intento
> Seguir de los sublimes trovadores
> Las huellas por el viento:
> Que mi débil acento
> Llegar no puede a tan preciadas flores[.] (30-12-1851: 27)

On the other hand, however, the violet is likened to God, who similarly hides His greatness from humanity. Not only "tierna y primorosa," the flower is also portrayed as "bella y seductora" (27): contradictory images that invoke both Woman's virtuous innocence and also her feared seductive powers and self-promotion. Despite the violet's association with humility, its perfume invisibly ascends to the heavens on wings, a concept reiterated twice in the poem: "Y hasta los cielos, / del viento en alas / muy puro asciende / tu grato olor" (27). Disdaining other flowers, the stream acclaims it as the star and glory of nature: "[T]ierno te aclama, / del campo estrella / su gala y prez" (28).

The compatibility of women's virtue with literary genius is a dominant theme in *La Mujer*[19]. The concept of creative genius was etymologically masculine, founded on notions of an "explosive" sexuality that self-seeded in the mind (Boyd 2004: 129)[20]. The appropriation of such a notion for women's creativity is implicit in the 1852 poem, "Quintillas improvisadas en obsequio de mi sexo," by María Francisca Díaz Carralero (*La Ciega de Manzanares*), where she refers to the genius that inhabits women's minds. Affirming women's resolve to write –"Y así nos determinamos / A escribir, y nos lanzamos / Al mundo de la ilusión" (25-4-1852: 3)– the poem avows the compatibility of domesticity with literary genius:

Bien que viva destinada
Al doméstico cuidado;
Pero nunca separada
Del genio que sublimado
Vive en su mente exaltada.

The poetic persona thus exhorts women to demonstrate their talent through their writing, which will not only prove their intellectual and moral virtue but also bring them fame, inferences present in the double meaning of "honor":

Ea! escribid sin temor,
. . .
Dando a la mujer honor
Y al talento preferencia. (1852: 4)

That same year Rogelia León's poem, "Una flor y una trova: A mi amigo el joven y distinguido poeta, D. Juan de la Rada y Delgado," affirms that the poet is genderless: "El nombre de poeta es dulce nombre /... / Y aquel que le conquista ya no es hombre, / Es espíritu solo de sí mismo" (11-7-1852: 3)[21]. Although the composition avers that the poet is equally ruled by two noble passions, glory and love, the concept most emphasized is glory:

[19] Extant issues of *La Mujer* comprise numbers 32 to 52 in Year 1 and all twelve, numbers 1 to 12, in Year 2. According to Martínez Latre, it had ninety-nine female subscribers, of whom nine were from the Rioja (1986: 41n14). Contributors were Natalia B. de Ferrant, Ángela Grassi, Vicenta Villaluenga y García, Robustiana Armiño de Cuesta, Cecilia González, *La Ciega de Manzanares* (María Francisca Díaz Carralero), Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, Ana María, Ángela Morejón de Masas, Rosa Butler, Venancia López Villabrillo, Josefa Moreno Nartes, Enriqueta Lozano, María Verdejo y Durán, Rogelia León, Elisa Gutiérrez Soriano, Eloisa G. de Santa Coloma, María de Mar Salas y P., Elena Cánovas de Freyre and Clara del Valle.

[20] French naturalist Julien-Joseph Virey, for instance, linked "genius with sperm, from the roots *genialis* (relative to genius) and *genitalis* (relative to generation),... making poetry a male creation" and also compared the tongue to the phallus, "making semen the source of fertile thought" (Paliyenko 2016: 11-12). Byron equated poetry with "the lava of the imagination whose eruption prevents an earthquake" (qtd. Hofkosh 1988: 93). According to such an image, Hofkosh remarks, "[w]ords explode from the writer, subject only to the laws and limits of his own physiology" (1988: 93).

[21] In the nineteenth century, as Boyd signals, "[s]ome claimed that genius itself was sexless, drawing on Enlightenment theory of sexual equality and the romantic idea that genius was androgynous" (2004: 133). On Rogelia León, see Simón Palmer (1991b).

La gloria y el amor, divino emblema
Que marcha unido por igual camino;
Amor es fuego que su pecho quema,
La gloria endulza su azaroso sino.
¡La gloria!, sí, luchemos por la gloria;
Ella es el porvenir, ella la suerte[.] (3)[22]

On 18 July 1852 the anonymous lead article, "Si las mujeres son susceptibles de las virtudes militares," affirms that women desire glory as much as men, thus implicitly arguing for equality, and explicitly represents the female writer's imagination and desire as sacred:

> Y si el deseo ardiente de la gloria arma el poderoso brazo... del hombre de ideas claras y elevadas... no menos arde en el corazón de la mujer este voraz deseo, esta santa llama que acrecentando el poder de su imaginación, y prestando nuevas alas a su fantasia, más de una vez la ha empeñado en hechos grandiosos que han servido de pábulo a la admiración del mundo entero. (1852: 2)

Likewise the unsigned lead article from August 1852, "Si las mujeres son capaces del heroísmo," vindicates women's desire for immortal fame, equal to men's, so as to fulfil their potential for perfection as sanctioned by divine authority: "[L]a carrera del honor está abierta del mismo modo para los unos que para los otros, y el deseo de la gloria es de igual naturaleza en ambos sexos... y todos hemos sido llamados por el Criador a la perfección y al engrandecimiento" (22-8-1852: 1). Like exemplary women from other nations and historical contexts, women thus can forge a patrimony of science and letters –"haciendo un patrimonio de las ciencias y de las letras" (2)– that crosses national boundaries to serve all humanity[23].

The insistence on the compatibility of women's public distinction with Isabelline feminine ideals continues paramount in other contributions, such as in North American writer Anita George's biography of Carolina Coronado published in issues 32-36 of *La Mujer*. Although George notes that, in Madrid's Lyceum Society, this "ya famosa estrella literaria" was crowned with "una corona de hojas de oro y laurel," she offsets what could be seen as a culturally inappropriate manifestation of female fame by emphasizing that regardless of her tireless efforts to progress in her career, Coronado dedicates time daily to helping her younger siblings in their studies (28-3-1852: 6). In this sense her representation

[22] On 25 July 1852 the anonymous lead article states that "a cada momento están apareciendo en sus columnas los nombres de multitud de jóvenes escritoras, que llenas de mérito, esperanza y ardientes deseos de gloria, ofrecen con generosidad el rico producto de sus tareas y vigilias" (2).

[23] In *La Mujer* n° 51 (18-7-1852), there are numerous instances of women affirming their sex's brilliance, from the article on "Brillantes oposiciones en la escuela normal de Salamanca" (4-5), to praising the poet, Enriqueta Lozano and "su privilegiado talento" (5), to Cecilia González's sonnet dedicated to Verdejo y Durán, which urges the latter to continue to write: "Seguid, María, el comenzado intento / Con entusiasmo noble, y emulando / Las bellas ninfas del castalio bando / Vuestra mágica voz lanzad al viento" (1852: 6). Issue 34 leads with a review of Ángela Grassi's poetry, "Poesías de la señorita doña Ángela Grassi," which glosses a review from the *Heraldo* to affirm that Grassi's poems are of such merit that "bastarían para darle fama a cualquier poeta" (21-3-1852: 3).

of Coronado conforms to a conventional femininity of selfless relational domesticity to become the kind of hybrid model that María del Pilar Sinués saw in the poet Antonia Díaz y Lamarque: an example of virtuous abnegation both in the home and in her writings (Rabaté 2007: 286)[24].

The sociocultural prejudices that female writers confronted are the subject of María Verdejo y Durán's substantial article, "Las mujeres literatas," published in July 1852. There she elaborates a powerful defence of female writers, positing that not only do they fulfil a duty to their sex by supporting women's interests. Their writings also form part of a divine natural plan that it is their duty to effect: "Nada en el vasto imperio de la naturaleza nace sin objeto: todo está previsto por su Creador" (11-7-1852: 4)[25]. In October 1852 she returns to this theme in her lead article, "Talento, ciencia y gloria," a delicious vindication of women's literary aspirations. Remarking that talent is the only path that can lead women to fame, she notes that it is "inculta y áspera" due to their deficient education, despite their possessing a capacity for reason comparable to men's (10-10-1852b: 1). Just one generation earlier, she eloquently declares, women who founded periodicals and wrote plays and novels were labelled mad and banished to the home, forced to abandon the pen for the needle:

> Se las hubiera calificado de locas, hubiéranse recogido sus obras, y las fatales autoras de tan nefandos escritos, relegadas a hilar lana y hacer calceta en el último rincón del hogar doméstico, hubieran tenido tiempo sobrado para llorar con las lágrimas del más sincero arrepentimiento tamaño desacato... nuestras mamás han conocido esa época, y la han alcanzado todavía algunas de las literatas que son harto conocidas del público. (1-2).

Positioning her argument within Isabelline precepts, Verdejo y Durán justifies women's literary production by stressing its didactic function within the home, its connection with women's sanctioned province of the heart, and its moral benefits for a healthy society and nation (2).

Nevertheless, she counters this more conservative message on reflecting that it is incumbent on women to cultivate the genius that nature has bestowed on them not only to spread a divinely inspired knowledge but also to immortalize their names in history: "[E]levándose en alas de su genio puede aproximarse a la divinidad, difundir por todas partes como un astro brillante los destellos divinos del saber, y dar un nombre inmortal a la historia" (2). Verdejo y Durán strengthens her claims on referring to Isabel II, whose crown bears jewels redeemed from their "rústica corteza" through cultural knowledge or artisanship (2). In what is both autobiographical revelation and a conventionally expected

[24] Such biographical sketches of writers were important for inspiring other women. In the American context Boyd notes that the publicizing of successful female European writers' personal lives made their literary successes appear more feasible to their transatlantic counterparts (2004: 26).

[25] Women's authorization of their poetic voice by representing it as a natural phenomenon is a Romantic topos that originated in Lamartine's 1823 "Le poéte mourant," and was reproduced by Coronado and Gómez de Avellaneda (Kirkpatrick 1991: 90-91, 175).

false modesty, she justifies the need to educate women appropriately by citing her own difficulties on entering the literary arena, couched in masculine terms as a chivalric jousting: "Yo que sobreponiéndome a mis escasas luces salgo a la palestra sin armas ni esperanzas de vencer; yo que no he recibido una educación literaria, y he pasado mi niñez en un colegio y mi adolescencia en el oscuro rincón de una provincia" (2-3)[26]. The essay concludes that if God has given women talent, it is their duty to acquire an enlightened education and attain glory, ambigously framed as both worldly and divine: "[S]i debisteis al cielo un despejado *talento* adquirid *ciencia* y alcanzaréis *gloria*" (3).

Ambition and the obstacles with which aspiring female writers had to contend come center stage in Verdejo y Durán's poem from September 1852, "La infancia y la adolescencia." The composition opens with a description of the poetic subject's first ten years, when her ambitions appear unconstrained by gender limitations. Recalling García Miranda's poetic persona as intrepid explorer, she envisages ships that successfully cross stormy seas, and refers to the markers of female ambition consecrated in Coronado's poetry: huge roses and majestic palm trees (1852a: 2). On entering early adolescence, however, her innocent dream of such a reality vanishes: "Miré perderse en la nada / Aquel sueño o realidad" (3). Nevertheless, she adapts to the more rigid expectations placed on her as a young girl: "Con mis gustos en acuerdo / La nueva vida empezaba, / Que encantos nuevos prestaba" (3). In this new reality of restricted domesticity lagoons replace the formerly imagined boundless seas, birds substitute ships, and cultivated orchards, the palm forests.

Recognizing the constraints placed on her desire, the poetic subject questions them: "¿Y de ese mundo tan bello / Las encantadas regiones / Las mil soberbias naciones / Jamás cruzará mi pie?" (3). Developing natural imagery and establishing a dialogue with Romantic predecessors, she describes her rebellious soul in terms of a fish that desperately seeks to escape contained waters, a trapped bird that rails against the bars of its cage, a star whose light cannot break through dark clouds, and a flowerbud that withers within a room: "Pez, ave, flor y astro oscuro / Era al par el alma mía" (4)[27]. Moreover, like García Miranda previously, her ambition rejects the limits of a feminine poetry only sanctioned to exalt nature:

Ya a mi ambición no servían
Arroyos murmuradores,
Aves, céfiros y flores,
Fuentes de limpio cristal,
. . .
Todo estaba sumergido
Para mí en vapor letal. (4)

[26] As Ross explains, the Romantic paradigm of the artist relied on concepts of conflict, conquest and self-empowerment. Conquest was dependent on using language effectively and writing became a new form of "chivalric jousting" (1988: 31).

[27] Here Verdejo y Durán arguably draws, as did Coronado's 1846 poem "Último canto," on Espronceda's unfinished 1842 poem, *El diablo mundo*, where the protagonist compares his frustrated desire to a fish imprisoned in its bowl (Kirkpatrick 1991: 217).

Instead, fuelling her desire for glory is her discovery that women have attained literary fame in foreign lands:

Y un libro que en un estante
De libros nuevos escaso
Halló mi mano al acaso,
Me reveló que en aquel
Mundo lejano y distante
Alcanzaban las matronas
Y las doncellas coronas
De flores y de laurel.
Ardió agitada la mente,
Ardió el pecho en sed de gloria... (4)

Here Verdejo y Durán employs the same tropes of fire as Romantic male poets to express a desire that disregards boundaries, an ambition that inflames both reason –"la mente"– and emotion: "el pecho."

As in Coronado's 1845 composition, "La poetisa en un pueblo," an important aspect of the poem are the voices of conventional society: "'[¡]Tente! gritó furibundo / Mi implacable y ruin destino; / No te apartes del camino que debes siempre seguir'" (4). These censure her desire, declaring that her gender and "feminine" fragility demand that she conform to deterministic norms and maintain a decorous silence:

"Olvidaste por ventura,
. . .
Que es débil tu frágil ser?
No alces un solo murmullo,
Resígnate con tu suerte;
. . .
Pero has nacido mujer." (4)

Nevertheless, the poetic subject's definitive rebellion in pursuit of artistic freedom becomes manifest in the final verses, which draw on the natural symbols deployed earlier to express her creative self-fulfilment in the company of other female writers or "flowers." They have similarly denied their culturally defined roles as objects of adornment to live on their own terms ("a su albedrío") in the "pensil" or garden of intellectual cultivation:

Y en que el pez pudo quebrando
El cristal lanzarse al río,
Y en que el ave a su albedrío
Rompió la jaula y voló,
Y de la estancia escapando
La flor cobró sus colores,
Y entre peregrinas flores
En el pensil se meció. (4)

Whereas Coronado's "Último canto" used the image of the imprisoned insect in a bell-jar to denounce society's suffocation of women's creative life (Kirkpatrick 1991: 217), Verdejo y Durán's emancipatory discourse liberates from domesticated confines an innate creativity symbolized in the fish, bird and flower by returning them to their original natural worlds. Kirkpatrick observes that female Romantic poets often narrated their life history in terms of the loss of a childhood paradise that nature and the imagination enriched (1998: 53). In Verdejo y Durán's poem, the pursuit of literary ambition returns her to that paradise.

The conflict for nineteenth-century female writers between what Alison Booth calls the "ambition" plot and the "marriage plot" (1991: 114) and Verdejo y Durán's ultimate affirmation of ambition are implicit in her assuming the pseudonym of Corina, with which she signed various compositions[28]. Inspiration for this pseudonym undoubtedly came from Germaine de Staël's protagonist in her novel on female genius, *Corinne; ou, L'Italie* (1807), as intimated in an obituary for Verdejo y Durán, which refers to her as "herida en sus más dulces afecciones, como la heroina de Mma. Staël" ("Necrología," 1855: 224)[29]. As Adrianna M. Paliyenko notes, Corinne symbolized the integration of femininity with creativity in an age that believed the two incompatible (2016: 9, 15). For Craciun, Corinne represents the female artist who elects fame over love and "grounds women's genius in the fictional tradition of Sappho" (2004: 708)[30]. In Staël's work Corinne falls in love, only to be rejected by her lover because her artistic ambitions allegedly make her less of a woman. Her death from a broken heart highlights that for women love is the undoing of their ambitions (Boyd 2004: 83).

In her choice of her occasional pseudonym Verdejo y Durán not only inserts herself into a literary lineage of famous Spanish female writers –specifically her role models, Coronado and Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda– who similarly engaged with Staël's Corinne, emblematic of the sensitive soul, to authorize women's poetic voice[31]. She also subtly proclaims her own literary worth, a fact not lost on female contemporaries such as García Miranda, whose 1854 poem, "A mi querida hermana la señorita Dª María T. Verdejo

[28] For poems signed as Corina and published posthumously, see "Cantoras y aves" (Verdejo y Durán 1855a), "La modestia" (Verdejo y Durán 1854b), "La soledad en el campo" (Verdejo y Durán 1857) and "Mi alma anhela remontarse al cielo" (Verdejo y Durán 1855). For an example of a poem that addresses the conflict between love and ambition, see "Gloria y amor" (Verdejo y Durán 1853e).

[29] Corinna was also a Greek poet, born in Boeotia in the fifth century BC. Insights into her significance for Verdejo y Durán's contemporary context can be gleaned from A. Pirala's 1853 lead article in the *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda*. Besides highlighting the discrimination that Corinna's success provoked among envious male peers, it affirms that poetic inspiration is natural, thus legitimating women as literary creators: "¡[C]ómo si la poesía se enseñara, cómo si la imaginación se prestase!... el que presenta el diamante limpio y perfecto no es el autor de la piedra... el poeta nace y el orador se hace" (209).

[30] Corinne was the subject of several compositions by female British Romantic poets, such as Felicia Heman's "Corinne at the Capitol" (1827) and Letitia Elizabeth Landon's "Corinne Crowned at the Capitol" (1832) (Craciun 2004: 712). Sappho was the subject of an anonymous lead article, "Sapho," in *La Mujer* n° 12 (17-10-1852), which stated that she deserved to be called the tenth muse and possessed an exquisite sensitivity. As a representation of female sensitivity and love, Sappho was important for the *hermandad lírica* (Kirkpatrick 1991: 84-86).

[31] See Kirkpatrick 1991: 136, 214-215. Regarding American female writers Boyd indicates that "the artist narratives by European women, particularly de Staël's *Corinne*... gave them the pre-texts they needed not only to envision themselves as artists but also to create their own works of art" (2004: 82).

y Durán," compares Verdejo y Durán to Sappho and Teresa of Ávila, and exalts her as a genius on the path to literary glory: "Se alza un genio con busto de diosa, / Y de un vuelo la senda escabrosa / De la gloria se apresta a cruzar" (75). Although that path presents many difficulties García Miranda predicts, in a discourse rich in religious overtones, that Verdejo y Durán will shortly attain the glory that she seeks: "[A] su extremo la aurífera puerta / Que da paso a la gloria, verás" and "[L]a palma por ti suspirada / Ya tus sienes se apresta a ceñir" (75)[32].

Apart from her prominent role in *La Mujer*, Verdejo y Durán also contributed to the *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda*, and *El Fanal de la Mujer*[33]. The author of a book of poetry, *Ecos del corazón: Ensayos poéticos* (1853) and the subject of a *Biografía* (1855) that friends published posthumously, Verdejo y Durán declares in the prologue to her 1854 didactic work, *La estrella de la niñez*, that she formed part of two societies of young female writers who among them in 1852 edited three periodicals in Madrid and Logroño: *El Álbum de Señoritas*, which became *El Correo de la Moda*, *La Mujer*, and *El Fanal de la Mujer*[34]. Their goal as editors, she affirms, was to "give our sex an enlightened education" (1854c: vii). As well as essays and poems, Verdejo y Durán authored a novel, *Elena la traductora o Nueva Lucrecia Borgia*, and at least four now vanished plays: *Catalina Cornaro* (1854), *Dos reyes rivales o la conquista de Sevilla*, *Las tres gracias* and *Una Corona o la gloria de una mujer*[35].

Biographical details on Verdejo y Durán are tantalizingly few. Autobiographical glimpses afforded in her poetry or essays aside, what we know is documented in the *Biografía* (1855:

---

[32] As Marina Mayoral notes, this poem was reproduced in León's 1855 collection, *Flores del valle: Poesías*. Mayoral also indicates that León's 1857 *Auras de la Alhambra* demonstrates more interest in literary glory than friendship and cites Adela García, who invites Robustiana Armiño to achieve fame with her: "Ese mundo crucemos / Donde un nombre se alcanza / Y ambas a dos formemos / Un porvenir de gloria y de esperanza" (1990a: 45-46, 53, 59).

[33] The *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda* records Verdejo y Durán's collaborations in issue 39 (24-10-1853): 312. There she published "Cantoras y aves," "El otoño," "La modestia" and "Mi alma anhela remontarse al cielo." Her *Biografía* notes her association with *El Fanal de la Mujer*, stating that she contributed three pieces to this periodical: the poems "A las Rosas de Mayo" and "A una Flor," and the article "La galantería del siglo XIX." She also published one composition in *La Libertad* (*Biografía* 1855: 7, 10).

[34] According to Martínez Latre, the few details available on *El Fanal de la Mujer*, one of four Logroño periodicals at the time, come to us through *El Zurrón del Pobre* (Logroño, 1851-1852), whose founder and director, Antero Gómez, also ended up assuming the editorship of *El Fanal* (1986: 38, 41). I have not been able to locate extant issues of *El Fanal*, and Martínez Latre indicates the impossibility of finding it and other contemporaneous Logroño periodicals, given their short run and life (1986: 38, 42). She notes that *El Fanal*, with four female contributors from the Rioja, was initially not well received in Logroño, although Madrid's already established *La Mujer* encouraged it to follow its example (1986: 42).

[35] Verdejo y Durán's *Biografía* provides a list of these and other publications of hers, as well as of poems dedicated to her. Especially interesting is the record of Verdejo y Durán's composition of a poem dedicated to María del Pilar Sinués, "Cien coronas," published in the periodical *El 17 de julio*, which Sinués reciprocated with "Una corona a Corina en su improvisación al Duque de la Victoria" (see *Biografía* 1855: 6-9). The *Biografía* also contains extracts from Verdejo y Durán's historical plays in verse, *Catalina Cornaro* and *Dos reyes rivales o la conquista de Sevilla*; the latter denounces the discrimination of both Muslim and Christian women (see 29-33). Catalina Cornaro refers to the Venecian noblewoman, Caterina Cornaro (1454-1510), Queen of Cyprus, Jerusalem and Armenia. In the 1840s two operas on this figure were written: Fromental Halévy's *La Reine de Chypre*, performed in Paris in December 1841 and Gaetano Donizetti's *Caterina Cornaro*, staged in Naples in January 1844.

3-15)[36]. The third of six children born in Cascante, Navarre, to an army engineer, Nicolás Verdejo, and Agueda Durán y Casalbon, the writer lived her early years in Cartagena and Palma de Mallorca. Although her father's promotion to brigadier in 1838 destined him to Aragón, a paralysis forced him to accept a position back in Cascante. There the family resided from 1839 until 1851, when they moved to Zaragoza, which allowed Verdejo y Durán to further a literary career begun one year earlier. In 1854, however, the anticipated performance of her drama, *Catalina Cornaro*, on 21 February could not take place, due to political events in the city the day before, while in March she suffered another grave blow with her father's death[37]. That same year in November Verdejo y Durán accompanied her mother and two younger sisters to Madrid, where her mother unexpectedly died a month and a half later. Consequently the writer and her two siblings returned to Zaragoza, where she contended with a maelstrom of domestic responsibilities and overwhelming grief, both of which undermined her health and her ability to write[38]. On 16 July 1854 she succumbed to cholera.

Verdejo y Durán's death ended a dazzling but short literary career, which Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda commemorated in her elegy, "Dos palabras en recuerdo," published in her *Álbum cubano de lo bueno y lo bello*[39]. Describing Verdejo y Durán as "destinad[a] a brillar... entre los [nombres] más ilustres de las poetisas españolas," Gómez de Avellaneda reveals that she met her in Madrid. Admiring the established writer's work, Verdejo y Durán had travelled from Zaragoza to present her with poems that she had published in provincial periodicals. Encouraging her to continue writing, Gómez de Avellaneda received several months later a copy of Verdejo y Durán's *Ecos del corazón* and later still, *La estrella de la niñez*. After the death of Verdejo y Durán's mother, the two exchanged letters (Gómez de

[36] For synopses of this biography see Kirkpatrick (1992: 197-198) and Simón Palmer (1991c).

[37] In Zaragoza on 20 February 1854 Democrats led by Brigadier José de Hore and university professor Eduardo Ruiz Pons rebelled against the Moderate government. Although the rebellion was temporarily repressed, that summer Zaragoza would become the bulwark of the Progressives during the 1854 revolution, which resulted in the Liberal *bienio* (1854-1856) (see http://www.enciclopedia-aragonesa.com/voz.asp?voz_id=20275&voz_id_origen= [consulted 17-8-2019]).

[38] Verdejo y Durán's intense grief from her parents' death is evident in "Mi alma anhela remontarse al cielo," a poem signed in May 1854 that is both an elegy for her progenitors and her dreams of poetic glory. There she states that, "[t]ransida el alma de mortal quebranto," she has ceased writing—"Oscuro el númen que a la mente inspira, / Rota mi pluma ya… muda mi lira!.."—despite the fact that the inspiration for the poem itself is her grief. Before her parents' passing the poet had dreamed of literary glory: "[E]l alma mía / ... / Soñó, ¡inocente! remontarse al cielo!"; afterwards, she laments, "[m]is soñadas coronas se secaron" (Verdejo y Durán 31-5-1855: 156). See also "A la memoria de mi querida mamá" (Verdejo y Durán 1855b).

[39] Avellaneda's *Álbum Cubano* appeared fortnightly in twelve issues from 18 February until August 1860. According to Nina M. Scott, she published her elegy for Verdejo y Durán in an early issue and in subsequent numbers, some of the latter's poems (1995: 58-60). Indeed, these poetic pieces were "La modestia" (*Álbum cubano* 1860: 78), "Virtud y ciencia" (170), "La azucena y la amapola" (311-312), and Verdejo y Durán's prologue to *La estrella de la niñez*, now retitled "Educación de la mujer" (134-136). According to Gómez y Avellaneda, the republished poems had also been reworked since their first appearance in *Ecos*: "Igualmente conservo en mi poder otras varias producciones de María, limadas por su propia mano con posterioridad a su publicación en el libro..." (1860: 79).

Avellaneda 1860: 78-79)[40]. Similarly acknowledging Verdejo y Durán's reputation was the unsigned "Necrología" published in the *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda*: "[T]enía señalado un puesto brillante entre las celebridades literarias de nuestra época" (1855: 224). In this same periodical Dolores Cabrera y Heredia de Miranda published an elegy: "A la malograda y distinguida poetisa la señorita Dª María Verdejo y Durán." Both the obituary and elegy represent Verdejo y Durán's death as due more to grief than cholera, which positions her in suitably "feminine" terms as both embodying Romantic suffering and Isabelline self-sacrifice[41]. Cabrera y Heredia de Miranda's depiction continues to describe the deceased poet according to parameters of Isabelline femininity: virtue, beauty, modesty and a talent appropriately tempered by tenderness: "Porque al mismo tiempo uniste / A la virtud, la hermosura, / Al talento, la ternura, / A la modestia, el saber" (1856: 226). Her verses ultimately define Verdejo y Durán as an angel in a world unworthy of her pure intelligence: "... El suelo / Tal ángel no merecía: / [¡] En él coronas no había / Dignas de tu casta sien!" (227). Thus whereas before her death Verdejo y Durán's female contemporaries had privileged her literary ambition and brilliance, afterwards they seem more concerned with fashioning an image of female creativity that conforms to sociocultural conventions, perhaps to protect her name and legacy from defamation.

Many of Verdejo y Durán's poems were republished in *Ecos del corazón*, a volume of fifty-five compositions dedicated to her aunt, Doña Joaquina Lapeña, baroness of San Vicente[42]. All compositions are signed in Zaragoza except for the last five, signed in Madrid. Preceding the poems themselves is Verdejo y Durán's "Nota de la autora," where a conventional false modesty tussles with a more rebellious desire to emulate a masculine Romanticism despite the risk of social opprobium. Although Verdejo y Durán first describes her work as "Ecos de un corazón que nunca ha abrigado pretensiones de que sus cantos pudieran ocupar la prensa," she immediately declares: "[H]e cantado . . . sin que me haya detenido el temor de que digan, que las que ahora dirigimos nuestra planta al santuario de las Musas respiramos la atmósfera que con su aliento envenenaron

[40] Gómez de Avellaneda reproduces a fragment from one of Verdejo y Durán's letters: "[M]e asalta a cada instante en estos días el deseo febril de hacer versos:... me parece que deberían ser mejores que cuantos he escrito hasta ahora... Además, dicen que el cisne, mudo durante su vida, canta admirablemente en la agonía ¿y quién asegura que yo no encontraré también melodías desconocidas para enviarte mi postrer adios, querida Tula?" (1860: 79).

[41] Indeed Cabrera y Heredia (1856: 226) prefaces her composition with an epigraph from one of Verdejo y Durán's letters, where the latter portrays herself in terms of a tragic Romanticism: "Tengo, Dolores, el corazón herido de muerte, y un cadáver galvanizado no puede volver a la vida!"

[42] According to the "Necrología," most poems first appeared in the *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda*. The publication of *Ecos del corazón* was noted in Madrid's *La Época*, which described Verdejo y Durán as "la inspirada poetisa tan conocida en la capital de Aragón" (n° 1,431 [8-11-1853]: 3), although an earlier advertisement placed more emphasis on Verdejo y Durán's beauty than on her poetry (see *La Época*, n°1,422 [28-10-1853]: 4). The most extensive review of *Ecos*, published in the *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda*, was derived from the *Zaragozano*, because the Álbum wanted to avoid any suspicion of cronyism due to Verdejo y Durán's collaboration with it. The review stresses that while her poetry is "valiente, altiva y heroica" on writing on Iberia's history, it is conventionally "sensible, tierna y apasionada," "galana y espresiva," and "profundamente cariñosa" when writing on topics considered more appropriate to female poets: love, flowers, her mother and the Virgin ("Bibliografía" 1853: 312).

los Larras y los Espronceda*s*" (1853h: IV)[43]. Here Verdejo y Durán both upholds her and her female contemporaries' right to write and also distinguishes their work from the allegedly pernicious Romantic excesses of male predecessors, in keeping with liberal bourgeois morality.

In comparison, Rafael García y Santesteban's prologue exhorts Verdejo y Durán to write provided that she not abandon her ostensibly more important duties within the home: "Prosiga la joven cantora como hasta aquí sin olvidar los sagrados deberes de su sexo cultivando en sus ratos de ocio tan brillantes disposiciones, segura de que antes de mucho será una de las poetisas que más honren la literatura patria" (1853: VI). In keeping with the modesty and chastity that Isabelline feminine virtue demanded (Blanco 2001: 83), Verdejo y Durán's poems express her creative ambition through a discourse that reflects a "masculine" Romantic passion coupled with a "feminine" Catholic devotion.

The composition "A los sabios," signed in Madrid in 1852 and dedicated to Verdejo y Durán's mentors, explicitly turns on the theme of women's literary ambition. The first stanza opens with a topical analogy that likens the awakening of the poetic subject's genius to the spontaneous flowering of a lily beyond the constraints of a domestic "garden" or culture: "Como el lirio silvestre el genio mío / Del esmaltado abril una mañana / Entusiasmada, con orgullo, ufana / La frente levantó" (Verdejo y Durán 1853a: 175). Due to obstacles placed in her way, however, her "flower" of creativity withers and dies: "[C]ercado mirándose de abrojo / Con la tarde espiró" (175). In the second stanza she calls on male mentors to come forward to support their literary sisters –"¿Dónde estáis los cantores eminentes / Que las liras templáis de las hermosas?"– (175), and begs them in Stanza 3 to give her protection and hope so she might fulfil her desire for literary glory: "[¡]Oh! los que genio atesoráis y ciencia / Prestadme protección, dadme esperanza, / Yo entreví una corona en lontananza / Y la quiero alcanzar!" (176)[44]. The poetic voice disregards the symbolic flowers that life's garden offers her to seek instead the laurel, emblematic of literary glory, a concept reiterated in Stanza 8.

Stanzas 4 and 5 further develop the theme of ambition. The poetic voice describes her ambition as "altiva," her thinking as daring, and her restlessness as a "llama activa" and an "[e]léctrico sentir": phrases respectively connotative of masculine Romanticism and modern innovation. Forgetting that she has been born a woman, she declares that she does not seek wealth or love but glory: "La sed que me consume, sed de gloria… / Pero [¡]ay! echó en olvido mi memoria / Que he nacido mujer!..." (176). In Stanza 7 she couches literary glory in terms of an Eden beyond earthly confines: "¡Porqué soñó mi mente pobre, oscura / Remontarse al Edén en raudo vuelo! / ¡Porque juzgó mezquino el ancho suelo /

[43] In honor of Espronceda Verdejo y Durán composed "A la memoria del eminente y malogrado poeta D. Jose de Espronceda" (1855c).

[44] Due to the repetition of these last three verses in Stanzas 8 and the final Stanza 12, the poem assumes the structure of a litany or religious invocation. In her poem dedicated to Verdejo y Durán, "A mi querida hermana," García Miranda also praises their male mentors as follows: "[L]os sabios te alientan, / Que los sabios no son ya tiranos / Con las bellas, de quienes hermanos, / Mas que amigos, se quieren llamar; / Y en su carro triunfal las asientan; / Y los lauros que alcanzan potentes, / Se complacen mirando en las frentes / De sus dulces hermanas brillar" (16-3-1854: 75). On the importance of male mentors for the emergence in Spain of nineteenth-century women's literary voices, see Kirkpatrick (1991: 95-96).

Mi joven corazón!" (177). Stanzas 9, 10 and 11 legitimize the poet's desire for glory by representing it as reflecting God's glory and fulfilling His will: "Sublime inspiración, noble destello / Del Creador, tu gloria lisonjera / En sus vivos reflejos reverbera / La gloria del Edén" and "Mas el Creador con su saber sublime / Hirió del hombre la altanera frente / Y sobre ella trazó con rasgo ardiente: / 'El genio es inmortal'" (178)[45].

In "A su nombre," signed in Zaragoza in 1852, the poetic subject pronounces that God fashions her poetic voice: "¡Cuya es la dulce voz, mágico acento / Que arrullador el viento / Modula en suaves tonos a mi oído!" (Verdejo y Durán 1853b: 39). She invokes Nature, God's creation and the realm with which Woman is associated, to inform her voice with masculine tones so as to sing his praises:

Para cantarlo y que lo escuche el mundo,
Al piélago profundo
Yo le pido sus ecos de bravura;
Y sus voces sonoras a los vientos,
Y todos sus concentos
De armonía simpática a Natura. (40)

In order to do so, she affirms, she will scale the home of the Muses, Mount Parnassus, in emulation of great male and female poetic predecessors:

Yo me alzaré a la cumbre del Parnaso,
Para imitar el cántico sonoro
De las arpas de oro,
De Homero, de Camoens y Garcilaso;
De Teresa, Sigea, Safo y todos
Los que de varios modos
Lograron tanto lauro y gloria tanta;
Y al oírme cantar absorto el mundo
Con asombro profundo
Preguntará: "¡Quién es la que así canta!" (41).

This intimation of a masculine Promethean ambition and pursuit of fame is countered, however, in the ensuing attribution of her poetic excellence to God:

Y yo contestaré: "No es, no, mi nombre
Quién merece renombre
Por los vibrantes ecos de mi lira;
Que si elevo del cielo a las regiones
Tan sentidas canciones,
Es porque él con su amor me las inspira." (42)

[45] Similarly Verdejo y Durán's "La vida," signed in Madrid in 1852, exalts the life that God has created. Stanzas 18, 19 and 20 specifically address the theme of ambition: "¿Quieres renombre? ¿Un triunfo te ilusiona? / ... / Ve a buscar en la lid noble corona" and "¿Sientes el estro sin igual, divino / Que a Natura a su imperio la sujeta? / Alza tu dulce canto peregrino / En la dorada lira del poeta" (1853g: 161).

Religious inferences intensify in the final two stanzas, which, addressing God, privilege the rapture of the poetic subject and her identification with the triumphant Christ of Palm Sunday:

¿No (sic) tampoco te basta que en mi amante
Corazón delirante
Se haya grabado con cincel de fuego?

Dímelo: que yo haré logre mi alma
Del martirio la palma;
Y cuando cruce las regiones bellas
Del cielo, irá grabando no te asombre,
Tu idolatrado nombre ... (42)

Such mystical overtones are also present in the poetic subject's earlier reference to Teresa of Ávila, her previous allusion to God as her "dueño del alma" (39) and her descriptions of an experience both transcendental and embodied: "Y ese tu nombre que mi pena encalma / Se ha grabado en el alma / Con tan profunda huella enardecida, / Que ya no cabe en la abrasada mente / Ni en este labio ardiente" (40). On the one hand, these representations are clearly sexualized in their depiction of passionate possession through images of heat and fire. On the other, the mystical subtext reworks the conventional association of the imagination with sexual desire, anathema to the paradigm of virtuous femininity, to reframe imagination and desire as necessary for virtue[46]. Indeed, throughout the entire poem the poetic subject stresses, in her insistence on the verb "grabar," that if she writes it is because she is written by God. This mutual authorship serves to sanction her literary ambition given that she, His creation, fulfils through her writings His will by serving as a vehicle for his Word: "Y ese tu nombre que mi pena encalma / Se ha grabado en el alma" (40), "Y yo del aire en la región vacía / Tu nombre grabaría," "Lo grabara en los picos de las aves" (40), and "Y [para que] grabara tu nombre en los aceros" (41)[47]. Such a concept transforms the poet, like the Virgin Mary, into a bearer of the Word, an image to which nineteenth-century female writers resorted to legitimize their artistic endeavors, as Margaret Homans has developed (1986: 29-32).

In the enigmatically titled poem "A…," signed in Zaragoza in 1852, Verdejo y Durán exhorts her fellow poets and artists, male and female, to honor her namesake, the Virgin Mary, the figure that the composition exalts: "Bellas, tended guirnaldas aromosas, / Tejed coronas, enlazad laureles; / Vates, pulsad las arpas armoniosas, / Pintores[,] preparad vuestros pinceles" and "Llegad sensibles, dulces poetisas" (1853: 145). The prize for so doing is the crown that genius bestows: "¿Queréis del genio la sin par corona / Y en sus

[46] Kirkpatrick alludes to the "often mystical poetic idiom" as a prominent feature of Spanish women's poetry at the end of the 1840s (2000: 414).

[47] Similar strategies appeared in the American mid-century context: "For many women writers... the way to assuage one's guilt for 'growing ambitious' was to fall back on the argument that it was her duty to develop her God-given talent" (Boyd 2004: 135).

fulgores entrever el cielo?" (145). The object of their adoration is Mary as quintessential mother: "Llegad artistas ante la matrona / A vuestra inspiración noble modelo" (145) and "[P]ara dedicar a esa matrona / Una diadema digna y esplendente / Colocar debe el mundo por corona… / ¡El rojo sol sobre su blanca frente!" (146). Verdejo y Durán's allusion to crowning Mary with the sun, derived from the Book of Revelations, also implicitly argues for the Virgin's equality with Christ, one of whose symbols is the sun. In that this vision is an apocalyptic one, it also foretells the end of one world and the advent of another[48].

In other compositions, however, Verdejo y Durán rejects her ambition for literary glory for a supposedly more appropriate glory within the domesticity of familial relationships. "La Gloria: A mi hermana de este nombre," signed in Zaragoza in 1852, denies her ambition for artistic glory, declaring that a kiss from her sister suffices to crown her with glory:

> Mas yo que ni poetisa
> Ni pintora, ni amazona,
> Ni reina tu dulce risa
> Quiero Gloria por corona;
> [¡]Envíame entre la brisa
> . . .
> Un beso de amor memoria
> Que será toda mi gloria! (1853f: 131).

Similarly, in "Una corona a mi pequeña hermana Gloria," signed in Zaragoza in 1852, Verdejo y Durán declares that instead of the crown of laurel leaves, representative of "genio y gloria," that her sister has placed in her poetry album she would prefer one of flowers (1853i: 32), due to her perception of her present unworthiness and fear of social censure: "Pues al verla brillar sobre mi frente, / Niña, ¡qué dirá el mundo!" (31). Nevertheless, she continues, she one day hopes to deserve such a wreath:

> Si algún día que miro, en lontananza
> Viera realizarse mi esperanza
> Y la suerte importuna
> Que oscurece mi numen, sonriente
> me presta aliento; entonces en mi frente
> Tú Gloria, pondrás una. (33)

Thus Gloria, Verdejo y Durán's younger sister, represents the future recognition that the writer's ambition craves.

The last of Verdejo y Durán's works that I examine, *La estrella de la niñez* (1854a), is a ninety-seven-page work in prose and verse that exemplifies the conduct manual designed

[48] As Marina Warner notes, the Book of Relevations describes "a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun" (12: 1), an image of the Virgin of the Apocalypse (Warner, 1985: 93). On the equation of Christ with the sun, see Warner (1985: 257).

to produce the virtuous woman exalted in Isabelline society. Publishing it for her sister, Gloria, after becoming the symbolic mother of their family due to their mother's death, the author and by extensión, her book, effect the maternal, didactic mission with which Isabelline writers were charged[49]. Structured in twenty-four themed "lessons" to privilege desired feminine qualities such as obedience, modesty and industriousness, the text follows a similar format to the later 1862 conduct manual of Isabel II's confessor, Father Claret, who stated that the moral education of young women should teach them the seven virtues[50].

Nevertheless, in her prologue Verdejo y Durán clearly perceives woman's mandated role as exceeding the domestic sphere. Like other Isabelline writers, she deploys the liberal stress on woman's educative role within the family to justify improving her education, so that she might be "*bondadosa, cristiana, virtuosa, fuerte e ilustrada*," because national greatness depends on her: "[D]e ella depende el engrandecimiento o decadencia de las naciones" (1854c: XII). The essay steers a delicate course between apparently conforming to conventional constructions of femininity and challenging them, as evident in the barely disguised sarcastic truculence with which Verdejo y Durán attacks men for their deliberate neglect of women's education: "Al elevar mi voz ahora, me propongo dos objetos: primero; recordar a los hombres que por su posición están obligados a velar por la educación y la suerte de la mujer, cosas que de puro *sabidas* deben estar ya… *olvidadas*" (XII). The negatives through which Verdejo y Durán couches her argument become, through their tone, affirmatives, transforming a seeming acceptance of limits into their opposite: "No se crea por cuanto llevo dicho, que trato de producir un trastorno social ni que sueño con la irrealizable quimera de convertir en un edén el mundo: nada menos que eso, pues nunca he delirado con imposibles" (XII).

The struggle between personal ambition and sociocultural convention is foregrounded in Verdejo y Durán's ambiguously titled "Dedicatoria: A mi Gloria," which refers both to her younger sister and also to her obliquely expressed desire for glory: "Si en una de las trovas de mis poéticos ensayos dejé consignado que un beso tuyo sería toda mi gloria, más ambiciosa hoy, exijo de ti que procures que La Estrella que pongo ante tus ojos, al paso que te guíe por el camino de la virtud al reino de la eterna gloria, te haga ser en el mundo el más dulce consuelo de nuestra excelente madre, la más rica joya de nuestra familia y el más bello adorno de la sociedad" (1854: VI). Despite explicitly measuring her glory in terms of her sister's love and preparing the latter for her sociofamilial roles, Verdejo y Durán's passage implicitly equates the writer, María, with her divine namesake, the Virgin Mary, the lodestar for humanity. Although apparently Verdejo y Durán now restricts her ambition to satisfaction within the domestic sphere, the subtext of the passage indeed

[49] As Blanco affirms, "los perniciosos actos de escribir y leer se transforman en la piedra angular de la virtud doméstica... el corazón de la joven es la página en blanco a la espera de ser escrita por la madre, ahora transformada en escritora de la virtud, o en su sucedáneo, el libro" (2001: 86, 100).

[50] On Claret's work, *Instrucción que debe tener la mujer para desempeñar bien la misión que el Todopoderoso le ha confiado*, see Blanco (2001: 57-59).

reveals her as "más ambiciosa hoy" in claiming for her literary creation a transcendence beyond earthly realms[51].

The content of most of the book, however, constantly privileges the concept of a self-sacrificing virtue grounded in religious faith (1854a: 9, 21) and women's roles as "buena hija," "buena esposa" and "buena madre" (42), reflecting the moralizing didacticism characteristic of what Íñigo Sánchez Llama terms the Isabelline canon (2000: 14). In the section on industriousness, for instance, Isabel I's historical greatness is represented, although with difficulty, as secondary to her exemplary wifely devotion: "[A] pesar de ocuparse de contínuo en empresas que no tienen iguales en la historia, pudo jactarse de que su esposo *el rey no se había puesto una camisa que no la hubieran hilado y cosido sus manos*" (1854a: 41). The care of the family, Verdejo y Durán later affirms, yields greater rewards than fulfilling ambition: "[E]l cuidado de la familia, que es nuestro primer deber, nos hace gozar las dulzuras que nunca podrán compensar dignamente... los brillantes triunfos de la gloria" (84).

Thus in a very short space of time Verdejo y Durán's defiant proclamation of her literary ambition in much of her oeuvre becomes increasingly corralled within more conventional paradigms, undoubtedly due to personal tragedies that see her turn to the divine[52]. Rather than the palm of literary glory, it is now "la eterna palma, / cual justo premio" that takes center stage. Knowledge or "ciencia," which enables "una ancha carrera de gloria y prosperidad," must be coupled with virtue, which provides the strength to bear Providence's misfortunes (43). Only on few occasions, such as in Lesson 14, "La confusión del mundo," is there a wistful affirmation of the joy of artistic creation:

¡Cuán hermoso es, el robar
sus colores al vergel
y hacer sus flores brotar
con inspirado pincel!
Y ¡cuán grato, ir con la mente
a un mundo de poesía,
y de amor y de armonía
y luz verter un torrente!... (54-55)[53]

In the final lesson, "El ramo," Verdejo y Durán refers to the virtues that she offers her young readers as flowers that she has gathered: "Una por una yo las he cogido / de la virtud en el jardín fecundo, / para formarte un ramo ..." (97). From previously representing herself as

[51] It is relevant that a preceding note (Verdejo y Durán, 1854a: iv) informs that the Madrid bookshop that sells *La estrella de la niñez* also stocks Verdejo y Durán's *Ecos del corazón* in what is a covert promotion of a volume where many compositions explicitly turn on the theme of literary ambition.

[52] As Lesson 13, "La resignación en la desgracia," declares: "La muerte arrebata de nuestros brazos la persona que nos es más querida, y nos desesperamos tal vez" (1854a: 52).

[53] Similarly, in Lesson XIX, "La vanidad," Verdejo y Durán states: "El artista que ejecuta una obra maestra, el sabio que hace un descubrimiento importante... son los que pueden estar... ¡sí satisfechos!" (1854a: 78-79).

a self-sown flower, the author of her own creativity, the writer now merely harvests what divine law has determined.

Not all mid-nineteenth-century female writers sacrificed their ambitions for literary glory on the altar of a culturally prescribed domesticity. The poems and essays of contributors to the periodicals featured in this study, and especially the impressive corpus of María Verdejo y Durán, demonstrate their reluctance toward, if not downright rebellion against, an ideology of domesticity that would inhibit their attainment of cultural immortality. Tall poppies who rose above other husbanded flowers, their writings not only stand as testimony to their quest for equal recognition in a male-dominated cultural world but also invite valuable comparisons with contemporaneous women's literary production beyond Spain. A powerful vehicle for legitimizing literary ambition within an apparent conformity to Isabelline virtue was their representation of their literary activity as their dutiful development of God-given talents. With literary glory and divine glory ostensibly becoming one and the same, writing now does not lead to moral perdition but to salvation, because it constitutes an act of worship and self-affirmation.

BIBIOGRAPHY

Álbum cubano de lo bueno y lo bello: Revista quincenal de moral, literatura, bellas artes y modas, dedicada al bello sexo (1860): Alicante, Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, 2018. [En línea]. http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra/album-cubano-de-lo-bueno-y-lo-bello-revista-quincenal-de-moral-literatura-bellas-artes-y-modas-924758/ (accessed 24-4-2019). Orig.: Habana, Imprenta del Gobierno y Capitania General.

Anon (18-7-1852): "Si las mujeres son susceptibles de las virtudes militares", *La Mujer*, n.º 51, Year 1, pp. 1-3.

____(22-8-1852): "Si las mujeres son capaces del heroísmo", *La Mujer*, n.º 4, Year 2, pp. 1-2.

____(17-10-1852): "Sapho", *La Mujer*, n.º 12, Year 2, pp. 1-2.

____(31-7-1855): "Necrología", *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda*, n.º 124, pp. 223-224.

Arkinstall, Christine (2018): "A Feminist Press Gains Ground in Spain, 1822-1866", *A New History of Iberian Feminisms*, Silvia Bermúdez and Roberta Johnson (eds.), Toronto, U of Toronto P, pp. 111-125.

"Bibliografía" (24 Oct. 1853): *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda*, n.º 39, p. 312.

Biografía de la distinguida poetisa señorita Dª María Verdejo y Durán (1855): Zaragoza, Antonio Gallifa.

Blanco, Alda (2001): *Escritoras virtuosas: Narradoras de la domesticidad en la España isabelina*, Granada, U de Granada/Caja General de Ahorros de Granada.

Booth, Alison (1991): "Incomplete Stories: Womanhood and Artistic Ambition in Daniel Deronda and Between the Acts", *Writing the Woman Artist: Essays on Poetics, Politics, and Portraiture*, Suzanne W. Jones (ed.), U of Pennsylvania P, pp. 113-130.

Boyd, Anne E. (2004): *Writing for Immortality: Women Writers and the Emergence of High Literary Culture in America*, Baltimore/London, The Johns Hopkins UP.

Burguera, Mónica (2011): "Historia e identidad: Los lenguajes sociales del feminismo romántico en España (1844-1846)", *Arenal*, n.º 18.1 (Jan.-June), pp. 53-83.

Caballero, Fernán (Cecilia Böhl de Faber) (1905): *Una en otra*. *Obras completas*, vol. 6, 17 vols., Madrid, Sucesores de Rivadeneyra.

Cabrera y Heredia de Miranda, Dolores (24-7-1856): "A la malograda y distinguida poetisa la señorita Dª María Verdejo y Durán", *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda,* n.º 171, pp. 226-227.

Coronado, Carolina (1991): "A la palma", Carolina Coronado: *Poesías*, ed., intro. and notes Noël Valis, Madrid, Castalia/Instituto de la Mujer, pp. 83-86.

____(1991a): "La poetisa en un pueblo", Carolina Coronado: *Poesías*, ed., intro. and notes Noël Valis, Madrid, Castalia/Instituto de la Mujer, pp. 369-370.

____(1991b): *Poesías*, ed., intro. and notes Noël Valis, Madrid, Castalia/Instituto de la Mujer.

____(1991c): "Último canto", Carolina Coronado: *Poesías*, ed., intro. and notes Noël Valis, Madrid, Castalia/Instituto de la Mujer, pp. 198-200.

Craciun, Adriana (2004): "Romantic Satanism and the Rise of Nineteenth-Century Women's Poetry", *New Literary History*, n.º 34.4, pp. 699-721.

Díaz Carralero, María Francisca (*La Ciega de Manzanares*) (25-4-1852): "Quintillas improvisadas en obsequio de mi sexo", *La Mujer*, n.º 39, Year 1, pp. 3-4.

Eichner, Hans (1973): "Germany/Romantisch-Romantik-Romantiker", *"Romantic" and its Cognates: The European History of a Word*, Eichner (ed.), Manchester, Manchester UP, pp. 98-156.

Fernández-Daza Álvarez, Carmen (1997): "El mundo poético de Vicenta García Miranda, o la inspiración de Carolina Coronado", *Revista de Estudios Extremeños*, n.º 53.1, pp. 299-313.

García y Santesteban, Rafael (1853): "Prólogo", Verdejo y Durán 1853c, pp. v-vi.

García Miranda, Vicenta (30-10-1851): "Entusiasmo y Desaliento", *Ellas, Gaceta del Bello Sexo*, n.º 6, Year 1, pp. 42-43.

____(15-12-1851): "A las españolas", *Gaceta del bello sexo: Revista de Literatura, Educación, Novedades, Teatros y Modas*, n.º 2, pp. 10-12.

____(16-3-1854): "A mi querida hermana la señorita Dª María T. Verdejo y Durán, autora de *Los ecos del corazón*", *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda*, n.º 58, pp. 74-75.

George, Anita (28-3-1852): "Carolina Coronado", *La Mujer*, n.º 35, pp. 5-6.

Gómez de Avellaneda, Gertrudis (1860): "Dos palabras en recuerdo de la autora de los anteriores versos", *Álbum cubano de lo bueno y lo bello*, pp. 78-79.

González, Cecilia (18-7-1852): "Soneto a la distinguida señorita Doña María Verdejo y Durán, por su artículo titulado *Las mujeres literatas*", *La Mujer*, n.º 51, Year 1, p. 6.

Hofkosh, Sonia (1988): "The Writer's Ravishment: Women and the Romantic Author-The Example of Byron", Mellor (ed.), pp. 93-114.

Homans, Margaret (1986): *Bearing the Word: Language and Female Experience in Nineteenth-Century Women's Writing*, Chicago/London, The U of Chicago P.

Irlam, Shaun (1999): *Elations: The Poetics of Enthusiasm in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Stanford, Stanford UP.

Jiménez Morell, Inmaculada (1992): *La prensa femenina en España (desde sus orígenes a 1868)*, Madrid, Ediciones de la Torre.

Kirkpatrick, Susan (1990): "La «hermandad lírica» de la década de 1840", Mayoral (ed.) 1990, pp. 25-41.

____(1991): *Las Románticas: Escritoras y subjetividad en España, 1835-1850*, Madrid, Cátedra.

____(1992): *Antología poética de escritoras del siglo XIX*, Madrid, Castalia/Instituto de la Mujer.

____(1998): "La tradición femenina de poesía romántica", *Breve historia feminista de la literatura española (en lengua castellana)*, vol. V, *La literatura escrita por mujer (Del siglo XIX a la actualidad)*, Iris M. Zavala (ed.), Barcelona, Anthropos, pp. 39-73.

____ (2000): "Modernizing the Feminine Subject in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Poetry", *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*, n.º 34.2, pp. 413-422.

León, Rogelia (11-7-1852): "Una flor y una trova: A mi amigo el joven y distinguido poeta, D. Juan de la Rada y Delgado", *La Mujer*, n° 50, Year 1, p. 3.

____(1855): *Flores del valle: Poesías*, Badajoz.

Martínez Latre, María Pilar (1986): "Un capítulo de la historia de la prensa riojana: *El Zurrón del Pobre* (1851-1852)", *Berceo*, n.º 110-111, pp. 33-62.

Mayoral, Marina, ed. (1990): *Escritoras románticas españolas*, Madrid/Fundación Banco Exterior, 1990.

Mayoral, Marina (1990a): "Las amistadas románticas: confusión de formulas y sentimientos", Mayoral 1990, pp. 43-71.

Mee, Jon (2003): *Romanticism, Enthusiasm, and Regulation: Poetics and the Policing of Culture in the Romantic Period*, Oxford, Oxford UP.

Mellor, Anne K. (ed.) (1988): *Romanticism and Feminism*, Bloomington, Indiana UP.

Morant, Manuela (30-12-1851): "La violeta", *Gaceta del Bello Sexo: Revista de Literatura, Educación, Novedades, Teatros y Modas*, n.º 4, pp. 27-28.

Olsen, Elena Brit (2004): "«Alone I Climb the Craggy Steep»: Literary Ambition and Metaphysical Identity in Eighteenth-Century Women's Poetry", PhD diss., U of Washington, UMI 3139518.

Paliyenko, Adrianna M. (2016): "Un / Sexing Genius", *Genius Envy: Women Shaping French Poetic History, 1801-1900*, Penn State UP, pp. 9-39.

Pallares, Emilia (1-9-1851): "Revista", *Ellas, órgano oficial del sexo femenino*, n.º 1, Year 1, p. 8.

Pateman, Carole (1988): *The Sexual Contract*, Stanford, Stanford UP.

Pérez de Gascuña, Alicia (1-9-1851): "Cuatro palabras", *Ellas, órgano oficial del sexo femenino*, n.º 1, Year 1, pp. 1-2.

Pirala, A. (24-7-1853): "Instrucción: Historia de la Mujer. Corina", *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda*, n.º 27, Second Epoch, pp. 209-210.

Rabaté, Colette (2007): *¿Eva o María? Ser mujer en la época isabelina (1833-1868)*, Salamanca, U de Salamanca.

Ross, Marlon B. (1988): "Romantic Quest and Conquest: Troping Masculine Power in the Crisis of Poetic Identity", *Romanticism and Feminism*, Mellor (ed.), pp. 26-51.

Sánchez Álvarez, José Luis (2015): "La poeta Vicenta García Miranda: Siete cartas entre la ilusión de sentir y el dolor de vivir", *Alcántara*, n.º 82, pp. 141-159.

Sánchez Llama, Íñigo (2000): *Galeria de escritoras isabelinas: La prensa periódica entre 1833 y 1895*, Madrid, Cátedra.

Scott, Nina M. (1995): "Shoring up the 'Weaker Sex': Avellaneda and Nineteenth-Century Gender Ideology", *Reinterpreting the Spanish American Essay: Women Writers of the 19th and 20th Centuries*, Doris Meyer (ed.), Austin, U of Texas P, pp. 57-67.

Simón Palmer, María del Carmen (1991): *Escritoras españolas del siglo XIX: Manual bio-bibliográfico*, Madrid, Castalia.

____(1991a): "García Miranda, Vicenta", Simón Palmer 1991, pp. 295-296.

____(1991b): "León, Rogelia", Simón Palmer 1991, pp. 384-388.

____(1991c): "Verdejo y Durán, María Tadea", Simón Palmer 1991, 712-713.

Tamarit, Emilia de (15-12-1851): "Nosotras a los hombres", *Gaceta del Bello Sexo: Revista de Literatura, Educación, Novedades, Teatros y Modas*, n.º 2, pp. 9-10.

Verdejo y Durán, María (11-7-1852): "Las mujeres literatas", *La Mujer*, n.º 50, Year 1, pp. 3-5.

____(19-9-1852a): "La infancia y la adolescencia", *La Mujer*, n.º 8, Year 2, pp. 2-4.

____(10-10-1852b): "Talento, ciencia y gloria", *La Mujer*, n.º 11, Year 2, pp. 1-3.

____(1853): "A…", Verdejo y Durán: *Ecos del corazón: Ensayos poéticos*, Zaragoza, Antonio Gallifa, 1853, pp. 145-146.

____(1853a): "A los sabios", Verdejo y Durán: *Ecos del corazón: Ensayos poéticos*, Zaragoza, Antonio Gallifa, 1853, pp. 175-179.

____(1853b): "A su nombre", Verdejo y Durán: *Ecos del corazón: Ensayos poéticos*, Zaragoza, Antonio Gallifa, 1853, pp. 39-42.

____(1853c): *Ecos del corazón: Ensayos poéticos*, Zaragoza, Antonio Gallifa.

____(8-11-1853d): "El otono", *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda,* n.º 41, pp. 322-323.

____(1853e): "Gloria y amor", Verdejo y Durán: *Ecos del corazón: Ensayos poéticos*, Zaragoza, Antonio Gallifa, 1853, pp. 15-16.

____(1853f): "La Gloria: A mi hermana de este nombre", Verdejo y Durán: *Ecos del corazón: Ensayos poéticos*, Zaragoza, Antonio Gallifa, 1853, pp. 129-131.

____(1853g): "La vida", Verdejo y Durán: *Ecos del corazón: Ensayos poéticos*, Zaragoza, Antonio Gallifa, 1853, pp. 157-163.

____(1853h): "Nota de la autora," Verdejo y Durán: *Ecos del corazón: Ensayos poéticos*, Zaragoza, Antonio Gallifa, 1853, p. iv.

____(1853i): "Una corona a mi pequeña hermana Gloria", Verdejo y Durán: *Ecos del corazón: Ensayos poéticos*, Zaragoza, Antonio Gallifa, 1853, pp. 31-34.

____(1854): "Dedicatoria: A mi Gloria", Verdejo y Durán: *La estrella de la niñez: Compendio de moral escrito para la educación de las niñas*, 2nd ed, Madrid,1854/1865, pp. v-vi.

____(1854a/1865): *La estrella de la niñez: Compendio de moral escrito para la educación de las niñas*, 2nd ed, Madrid.

____(1854b): "La modestia", Verdejo y Durán: *La estrella de la niñez: Compendio de moral escrito para la educación de las niñas*, 2nd ed, Madrid,1854/1865, pp. 23-25. Republished in the *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda* (16-8-1855), n.º 126, pp. 234-235.

____(1854c): "Prólogo", Verdejo y Durán: *La estrella de la niñez: Compendio de moral escrito para la educación de las niñas*, 2nd ed, Madrid,1854/1865, pp. vii-xiv.

____(31-5-1855): "Mi alma anhela remontarse al cielo", *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda*, n.º 116, pp. 156-157. Republished in *Biografía* (1855), pp. 34-36.

____(31-7-1855a): "Cantoras y aves", *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda*, n.º 124, p. 220.

____(1855b): "A la memoria de mi querida mamá", *Biografía*, pp. 37-38.

____(1855c): "A la memoria del eminente y malogrado poeta D. Jose de Espronceda," *Biografía*, pp. 23-24.

____(1855d): "Una tumba cubierta de laurels o un ciprés: A la memoria de mi querido padre," *Biografía*, pp. 16-20.

____(31-3-1857): "La soledad en el campo", *Álbum de Señoritas y Correo de la Moda*, n.º 204, pp. 92-93.

Warner, Marina (1985): *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary*, London, Picador.

Retrato de María Tadea Verdejo y Durán, tomado da súa obra Ecos del coraón (Zaragoza, Antonio Gallifa, 1853. Biblioteca Nacional de España.