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**THE CULTURAL ELEVATION OF WOMEN IN THE THOUGHT AND  
RECEPTION OF JOSEFA AMAR Y BORBÓN**

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**Abstract:** *The advent of the Enlightenment and the cultural shift from the France of the Bourbons resulted in significant changes for Spanish women. The changes in their ways of life turned Enlightenment women into subjects who were conscious of the new ideas and of their own capacities, which they asserted in various spaces. This study centres on Josefa Amar y Borbón, a highly educated woman and a pioneer in joining cultural societies, who created a body of work related to the education and worth of women. Based on the historical-educational method, we analyse its impact and reception in the Spanish press from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We point to Josefa Amar y Borbón's qualities as a translator and to the vindication of her figure as a feminist in Spain, starting in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.*

**Keywords:** *Josefa Amar y Borbón, history of education, women's education, press, Enlightenment, Spain.*

## 1. Introduction

The 18<sup>th</sup> century in Spain was a period of minor changes in the situation of women in their domestic and social spheres. Women's everyday lives started to undergo a momentous shift as they occupied public spaces that had generally only belonged to men, such as restaurants, cafés and societies, among others. These changes were not uniform and, given the period, did not enjoy widespread support. It was a century of demands and polemics given some women's desire to join social settings which they were barred from entering, where important conversations and encounters took place, and which represented centres of socialisation and intellectual enrichment.

One of the most emblematic cases was the Madrid Economic Society of Friends of the Country. Founded in 1775 during the reign of Charles III and initially directed by the enlightened Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, its objective was to disseminate the foremost theories and knowledge in the intellectual environment around three axes: agriculture, the arts and commerce. Its statutes of 1816 also show an interest in public instruction, seeking to foster “the creation of rustic primers suited to the intelligence of the labourers and the circumstances of the country” (Real Sociedad Económica Matritense de Amigos del País, 1816, p. 6, translated).

The debate about whether to accept women also reached such settings of cultural and educational effervescence. In the case of the Sociedad Matritense, there were two clearly marked and opposing positions, represented by two enlightened men: Jovellanos, who was mentioned above, and Francisco Cabarrús. Jovellanos not only favoured women joining societies like the Matritense, but also supported them being able to work with men in tasks that were considered *appropriate to their sex*, such as the education of women or beneficence (Negrín Fajardo, 2011). In contrast, Cabarrús—a reputed economist, who went on to become the minister of finance at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century—firmly rejected the idea of accepting women as members, arguing that if a woman was not a friend of her household, she could not be a friend of the country. He believed, therefore, that the presence of women in these circles would subvert the natural order of society and the fundamental role of women.

This fierce debate was recorded in the *Memorial literario, instructivo y curioso de la Corte de Madrid* in August 1786. This edition—the thirty-second—reflected the debate “about whether the Real Sociedad Matritense de los Amigos del País should accept women as

members” (Memorial literario, 1786, p. 399, translated). It is apparent that the importance of the argument resonated with the press of the time, thanks to the discourse and renown of the woman who broke the *glass ceiling* that kept women out of these settings:

It seemed that with a matter as contentious as this considered by such illustrious pens, nothing else remained for this argument to be finished and decided; but the party that was the object of the dispute was yet to be heard; it remained for the fair sex to speak and be heard. The defence was undertaken by a woman of letters already known in the literary realm for her industry, talent and works, as well as other gifts that have made her worthy of being admitted among the members of one of the Royal Societies, who have proposed to make the Kingdom of Aragón happy: Doña Josefa Amar y Borbón. (Memorial literario, 1786, pp. 399-400, translated)

The reference to Amar illustrates the assertion of women as individuals with rights and the decision-making capacity to choose their own destinies, and as subjects in the cultural and intellectual sphere. Her joining this society resulted in an essay in defence of the aptitudes of women and their contributions to society, in this case the Spanish one. In her *Discurso en defensa del talento de las mujeres y de su aptitud para el gobierno, y otros cargos en que se emplean los hombres* [Discourse in Defence of the Talent of Women and their Capacity for Governance, and Other Roles Undertaken by Men], she expressed her indignation at the subordination of women in the cultural and professional spheres, criticising the visibility and recognition that men had traditionally received in society. Her lengthy and reasoned essay built upon the claims made by Father Feijóo at the start of the century, as Martínez notes (Martínez Medina, 1995). In his work, *Teatro crítico universal* [Universal Critical Theatre], Feijóo set out to examine in depth the most intimate feelings of women, those that ultimately shaped their personal—and as such important—decisions.

The Madrid Economic Society of Friends of the Country society eventually accepted women. This social victory in 18th-century Spain enabled the emergence of discourses and perspectives that asserted women’s rights in other spheres. It was a victory that would give visibility to women who, like Amar, believed that they should form part of the social and cultural life of the country. To achieve this, it was necessary to start with women’s education. Providing women with access to an education that went beyond knowledge of caring and the domestic sphere required a transformation of society that would redress their radical inequality.

In this context, our article will present and discuss the biography of Josefa Amar and her contribution to the cultural elevation of women and analyse her impact and representation in the Spanish press during that period and in subsequent decades. The first objective is not unprecedented. This intellectual's biography has been widely discussed by Spanish academic literature in recent decades. The most comprehensive work about her to date is *Condición femenina y razón ilustrada* [The Female Condition and Enlightened Reason] by María Victoria López Cordón (López Cordón, 2005), which exhaustively covers her biography and work as well as the thought of Amar herself and of her contemporaries. This eminent Aragonese woman has inspired other general studies of her biography (Bel Bravo, 2002; Bolufer Peruga, 2017; Martínez Medina, 1995; Palacios Fernández, 2002; Roig Castellanos, 1989; Trueba Mira, 2005), her family origins (Royo García, 2010), ideological positions and literary expression (López Cordón, 2006; Sullivan, 2005), specific analyses of her works (Vicente Pedraz & Brozas Polo, 2014), her representation in the female canon (Viamonte Lucientes, 2005), her contributions in the context of the Enlightenment (Franklin, 2019; Onandia Ruiz, 2020; Pérez Sarrón, 2003) and debates about women in the context of the Enlightenment and their contributions (McCoy, 1993; Morant Deusa & Bolufer Peruga, 2001; López Cordón, 2014). However, it seems that the aspect of her life that has been studied the most is education and the importance she gave to it throughout her work (Chaves McClendon, 1992; Labrador, 1993; López Torrijo, 1984; Marrero Marrero, 2006; Viñao Frago, 2003). The main contribution that the present work sets out to make is a study of her representation in the Spanish press from her time and beyond, up to the start of Franco's dictatorship, which started in Spain in 1939 and is regarded in the history of women as a period of regression and silence in relation to rights and liberties, and, ultimately, as a paradigm shift in the female models and references used until then.

We will use secondary literature review and, for the analysis of the press, the historical-pedagogical method, developed by authors such as Ruiz Berrio (1976) or Tiana Ferrer (1988). This method consists of the heuristic phase—finding primary sources, in this case the Spanish social and cultural press in the 19<sup>th</sup> and first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century—, the hermeneutic or interpretative phase in the analysis of the sources and, finally, the preparation of a final report of the results, as can be seen in the work presented here. In conjunction with this method, content analysis will be used as a specific technique, based in this case on a search for all

available information about the author in some of the most important national newspapers. The different issues of the journals consulted were located in the newspaper library of the Biblioteca Nacional de España in Madrid.

## **2. The life, work and thought of Josefa Amar y Borbón. Towards the vindication of women as capable intellectual subjects**

Josefa Amar y Borbón was born in Zaragoza in 1749. She was the daughter of the famed doctor José Amar y Arguedas, who was a professor of medicine, and of Ignacia de Borbón Vallejo de Santa Cruz, who was the daughter of Miguel Borbón, the chamber physician of Ferdinand VI. Her father is known to have had an incipient cultural and intellectual curiosity, which led him to acquire a sizeable library and to publish various books on illnesses such as measles, typhus and smallpox. As Márquez observes, “he was a Christian influenced by new ideas, and he dedicated part of his estate to improving the hospital of Borja, the town where he was born” (Márquez Plata y Ferrándiz, 2017, p. 15, translated). On his death, Ignacia de Borbón—who also took an interest in medical questions—took on the guardianship of their children.

The family soon moved to Madrid, as a result of the good position of their maternal grandfather. There, José Amar worked as a physician in the Royal Chamber of Ferdinand VI and Charles III and was also vice-president of the Royal Academy of Medicine of Madrid (Vicente Pedraz & Brozas Polo, 2014). Once there, the educational context in which Amar developed oscillated between two settings. On the one hand, there was the court nobility, represented by her parents, who created a culturally rich and elevated atmosphere in their home thanks to their prestige, with meetings of doctors and scientists of the period, and who wanted Josefa to “see reality through other eyes than those of a woman who had not had the opportunity to know the theoretical and intellectual world and the social life of the elites” (Márquez Plata y Ferrándiz, 2017, p. 16, translated). On the other hand, there was the erudite setting of the people who debated and commented on the principal novelties in academic debates or in their own homes. It was an atmosphere that revolved around the idea of the *salonnières*, the French women who were the epitome of Enlightenment France (Marrero Marrero, 2006).

Amar also had two tutors—coincidentally both from Aragón—who were directly in charge of her education. The first was Rafael Casalbón y Geli, who was a Hellenist, Jesuit and doctor of theology, as well as a librarian at the royal palace in Madrid. Her other tutor was Antonio Berdejo, a member of the Economic Society of Zaragoza and an expert in classical

languages. Thanks to them, as Márquez Plata y Ferrándiz (2017) notes, Josefa became an avid reader with a solid humanistic training. She read works by authors such as Bacon, Diderot, Fénelon and Locke, among many others. As well as this education, she had a gift for modern languages, and cited Greek and Latin authors as well as classical Spanish ones, especially Erasmists, and she handled with ease contemporary authors from the English-speaking world and French and Italian ones, which, especially in the case of the last group, she read in their original language (Trueba Mira, 2005). In addition, as Bel notes, she also took an interest in mathematics, a field in which she published her work *Aritmética conomía* [Spanish Arithmetic] (Bel Bravo, 2002), which is a less known aspect of her trajectory.

At the age of 23, Josefa married Joaquín Fuertes Piquer, who was 47. Fuertes, who was the nephew of the Aragonese doctor Andrés Piquer, studied at the college of San Ildefonso de Alcalá de Henares and the Universidad de Alcalá; he was a reputed and well-connected lawyer in Madrid, and was a member of the Royal Aragonese Economic Society of Friends of the Country from its foundation in 1776, becoming its second director (Márquez Plata y Ferrándiz, 2017). Following their marriage, the couple left the court to move to Zaragoza in 1772, where Amar continued her intellectual activity as an essayist and translator through the last decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century until the death of her husband, in 1798, which put an end to her public life, given her position as a widow. This was not the only misfortune that befell her, as her only child, Felipe—also a lawyer, like his father—tragically died before her (López Cordón, 2005). Nonetheless, as we will see, and despite this series of misfortunes, this eminent Aragonese woman was already well-known by then.

The principal milestones in her trajectory include joining the *Real Sociedad Económica Aragonesa de Amigos del País* in 1782, the *Junta de Damas* [Board of Ladies] of the Economic Society of Madrid in 1787, and, finally, the Medical Society of Barcelona in 1790. She was admitted to the Aragonese society without debate, as it was understood that her intellectual standing was reason enough to allow her to join. As some authors, such as Bel Bravo (2002), Roig Castellanos (1989) and Serrano (2013) note, the key to her joining was her translation from Italian of the *Ensayo histórico apologético de la literatura española* [Historical Apologetic Essay on Spanish Literature] by the Spanish cleric Lampillas (1789), and, subsequently, of the *Discurso sobre el problema de que corresponde a los párrocos y curas de las aldeas el instruir a los labradores en los buenos elementos de la pttitude campestre*

[Discourse on the Problem that Instructing Farm Labourers in the Good Practices of Rural Economy Falls on Village Priests] by Grisellini (1783), also originally written in the language of Dante. Finally, she also translated works from English, such as the *Diario de Mequinez* by Stewart, which was not finally published, as López Cordón (2002) asserts.

Although she joined the Aragonese society without barriers, this was not repeated in other cities. As noted above, in the case of the Madrid society, it was the cause of an intense debate, shaped by the positions of Jovellanos and Cabarrús, among others. Between 1775 and 1787, Amar was the only woman to participate publicly in this debate. Her contribution, as Bolfuer Peruga & Morant Deusa (1998) observe, may have been shaped by her being the first woman accepted into an economic society of this type. In the debate, she was able to swaysome members, who came to agree that these *noble ladies* “could contribute tasks fitting their sex to help with foundling hospitals, hospices, hospitals, to promote the cultivation of land, beautifying their country houses, making them real physiocratic experiences” (Martínez Medina, 1995, p. 103, translated), as did the Duchess of Osuna, Arcos and the Duchess of Infantado with the Alameda, the Quinta del Pardo and Chamartín de la Rosa, respectively.

Eventually, as noted above, women were admitted to the societies of *Amigos del País*. This victory was the start of a tentative presence of women in Spain’s cultural and intellectual settings, which Amar viewed as “the only possibility to emerge from this long-standing indifference to knowledge” (Martínez Medina, 1995, p. 106, translated), and she believed that the opening of the society of Madrid could result in the same effect in other Spanish societies (Roig Castellanos, 1989). Accordingly, she also joined the Madrid society, in 1787, with her intervention *Oración gratulatoria* [Congratulatory Speech], and to which she sent her *Discurso en defensa del ptitu de las mujeres y de su ptitude para el gobierno y otros cargos en que se emplean los hombres* [Discourse in Defence of the Talent of Women and of their Aptitude for Governance and Other Roles in which Men Are Employed] later published in the *Memorial literario*. This work won her fame and secured her position as a pioneering woman. Organized in thirty-four points, it condemned men for their deliberate ignorance of women and criticised the society of the time, “that closed off to women the paths to exercise their social duties with dignity” (Bel Bravo, 2002, p. 153, translated). The work ends with her arguing for equality between women and men, and with her response to the arguments against women joining these societies.

In this essay, Amar already reveals the importance she gives to education in the debate that originated in this society. As Viñao Frago (2003) observes, she exposes the male contradiction of denying women instruction and then complaining that they lack it, as well as the privileges reserved for men in the exercise of public and useful functions, which inevitably condemn women to ignorance. According to this author, she focusses on three fundamental arguments: women's innate curiosity, using the biblical story of Adam and Eve to illustrate it; the limited presence of intellectual women, given their scant options to demonstrate their aptitudes; and, finally, the fact that comparisons between men and women should be made by a criterion of equality, according to their intellectual talent, arguing that women would benefit from it.

Her first consideration of pedagogical principles took shape a few years later in the publication of her second major work, the *Discurso sobre la educación física y moral de las mujeres* [Discourse on the Physical and Moral Education of Women]. This contains a moderate line of thinking, one that is less combative than that of her first text, sharing the pedagogical optimism typical of the Age of the Enlightenment and featuring the preoccupation with science, a characteristic of the Bourbons (López Cordón, 2005). It is a line of thinking that starts with the complaint about the scant interest stirred by the education of women, a claim that she sets out with clarity and which, in her view, has serious consequences in the men's lives:

The education of women is seen as a matter of little importance. And how many errors and mistakes result from this? For example, if in marriage, there cannot be good harmony between an educated man and an ignorant woman, then there will be no peace, nor union. (Amar y Borbón, 1790, p. 188, translated)

On this occasion, Amar's pedagogical discourse features commonplace positions such as "the regenerative capacity of education, its role in the development of urbanity or civility, attention to health as support for moral education or increased happiness" (Bel Bravo, 2002, p. 155, translated). To this end, she based her work on two postulates: the existence of numerous works on education that do not consider the question of women; the absence of works considering what she regarded as essential points in education: its physical and moral aspects. She also uses two arguments that, as Viñao Frago (2003) explains, respond to a reasoning about public or private interests. She starts from the connection between public and private happiness, which would lead to marital harmony and peace—as Amar herself indicates in the fragment

cited above. It is a link that transfers the family setting to the public sphere, conditioning it. Therefore, she argues that, if conjugal happiness is to exist, there must be a situation of equality in instruction. For that purpose, she also advocates private obligations of a religious and civil nature as well as those allocated specifically to the female sex, such as the running of the home—the government of a *mini-state*— (Bel Bravo, 2002), childcare and, again, conjugal harmony. Consequently, the private sphere is condensed into care for the family, understood as a particular task of the woman. In this way, equality in education can ensure a married life that publicly reflects equality in intellectual development.

In short, for Amar, providing education for women would have a favourable effect on the marital setting, the maternal function of women and the cultivation of their own personal interest. Promoting knowledge and learning in women ensured the promotion of equality within the family, which in turn had consequences on their public life. However, we should not lose sight of the orientation of her work and its transversal elements. Through these, we can observe a representation of a model of an enlightened woman, learned and affluent, who does not renounce the duty of care in the family setting. We witness thus a respect for traditions that is not necessarily in opposition to her vision of the future (Bel Bravo, 2002), and which she skilfully uses to argue in favour of educating women as a resource to consolidate happiness and ensure a good cohabitation with men.

Josefa Amar developed her intellectual activity more intensely within the cultural and intellectual settings previously mentioned, an activity that started to dwindle in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At the time, in addition to the deaths of her husband and son, mentioned above, Zaragoza was especially affected by the Peninsular War (1808-1814). Historical works offer various dates for her death after the struggle against Napoleon. As Palacios Fernández (2002) observes, her headstone in the Hospital de Nuestra Señora de Gracia, in Zaragoza, states that she died in 1813, although various sources put it in the 1830s, and so some scholars refer to 1833.

In any case, we can state that her thought, in her defence of women's aptitudes and of their education, included arguments that were ahead of their time—such as arguing for the equality of men and women to concern themselves with public matters, without dismantling the hegemonic thought of her social and cultural context:

...it could be said that, without knowing it, Josefa Amar participated in the construction of the new relationships of power: she collaborated in defining the relationships of domination that—under the Foucauldian perspective—shaped the new forms of domination; she participated in the slow but unrelenting process of legitimation of the disciplinary social order where power was defined by an intimate relationship between utility and somatic docility and where the woman, as female body, would be especially involved as the object of policies of equality anchored, still, in the division of classes of the old regime. (Vicente Pedraz & Brozas Polo, 2014, p. 801, translated)

She was an unusual woman for her time, especially considering her education and her prolific intellectual activity in a period when women were just starting to claim a space in public life. Their claim took shape in the setting of economic societies, where women, thanks to arguments such as that made by Amar, started to have a voice.

We should now ask what impact the thought of women like Amar had in their domains of activity. In this sense, the reception of Amar's ideas has been considered in the field of education in relation to the curriculum, and the conclusion reached is that there was a generalised silence in the pre-war (1936-1939) textbooks and a minor and superficial presence in the subsequent period (Viñao Frago, 2003). In relation to the press, it is important to note the comparative study by Roig of the French, Italian and Spanish press between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, albeit centred exclusively on the female press (Roig Castellanos, 1989). Therefore, in the final part of the present work, we set out to determine what presence the figure, life and work of this eminent Aragonese had in the Spanish press from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century until the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in order to establish how her legacy was treated in the circulation of ideas about women and their education.

### **3. The reception of Josefa Amar y Borbón in the Spanish press (1784-1939)**

As has been established, the trajectory of Josefa Amar resulted in a large number of notable activities and ideas that made her prominent throughout Spain's history. It is therefore necessary to study the transmission and impact of her ideas in order to understand the depth of her thought in the immediately subsequent periods in Spain's history.

In light of this situation, we ask how this intellectual was received by the specialized press, given that this is one of the principal tools for the circulation of ideas. Amar featured in

the Spanish press until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century in a variety of journals and other publications from the cultural, literary and educational fields, as well as in publications aimed specifically at a female readership. These publications were chosen for several reasons: firstly, because of their influence on the literary analysis of the period, especially *Memorial literario* (1784-1790), *Revista Contemporánea* (1875-1907) and *Semanario pintoresco* (1836-1857), which have been analysed in detail from this point of view; secondly, because of their commitment to female culture, as in the case of *Correo de la Moda* (1853-1864) and *Ellas* (1932-1934); and finally, because of their work in spreading new pedagogical trends, *La escuela moderna* (1892-1934) and *La lectura* (1901-1920).

As noted above, one of Amar's most recognised aspects was her work as a translator of works into modern languages such as Italian. Her translation work was praised in her lifetime in the Spanish press. Towards the end of the 18th century, the *Memorial literario, instructivo y curioso de la Corte de Madrid*—a literary journal which cultivated an Enlightenment ethos and was one of the most representative of the period in Spain— noted her translations of Italian literature handbooks (*Memorial literario*, 1784). Some years later she again featured in this publication—as explained in the previous section—following the publication of her *Discurso en defensa del talento de las mujeres y de su aptitud para el gobierno, y otros cargos en que se emplean los hombres* (Amar y Borbón, 1786). As stated in the introduction, in the debate between Jovellanos and Cabarrús, the *Memorial literario* published Amar's position in defence of female talent, which was well received by the Real Sociedad Matritense de los Amigos del País. In the introduction to her essay, it is mentioned how Amar y Borbón read her texts “animated by a true spirit for the glory of her sex”, proposing to “compile admirable examples of heroines in letters, arms and politics”, in order to vindicate the value of women in civil matters and solid knowledge, from which “they try to keep them away in education and in some branches of the State” (*Memorial literario*, 1786, p. 400, translated).

This being so, a few years later, the *Memorial literario* reproduced the aforementioned *Discurso sobre la educación física y moral de las mujeres*, understanding that “public and private happiness depend” on such education (Amar y Borbón, 1790, p. 187, translated). On this occasion, her *Discurso sobre la educación física y moral de las mujeres* was reproduced. In her work, as noted above, she argues for the need for a good education—and a good body of teachers to carry this out—and finally centres on the education of women. In this sense, the

reflection in this publication on the author's claims/essays makes it possible to understand the very poor situation of girls and their teaching in Spain, a matter that was given little attention.

The publication of these essays in the *Memorial literario* contributed to the movement of the institution —the Real Sociedad Matritense de los Amigos del País— towards the cultural and educational approaches of Amar in support of women's education and aptitudes. Such approaches revolved around two basic pillars: knowledge of religion and knowledge of the laws of the land and their obligations, a task for which education is crucial. It is also argued that education should represent a relationship between private and public life, even though distinctions are made according to social class, understanding that this is all the more necessary in those women who are part of an enlightened society, since they “will marry cultured and educated men in order to secure better the perpetual union and harmony” (Amar y Borbón, 1790, p. 189, translated). Finally, there is a disquisition on education and its physical and moral components.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Amar's work as a translator continued to be mentioned in Spain's cultural press,<sup>1</sup> an aspect that by then had combined with her specific contributions to feminism in Spain.

The literary press explicitly recognised the legacy of this intellectual from Zaragoza. In 1853, the *Semanario pintoresco español* —founded by Ramón de Mesonero Romanos and published between 1836 and 1857— included an article with the title of *La doctora Guzmán y la Cerda* (Neira de Mosquera, 1853), about the work and the person of María Isidra Quintina de Guzmán y la Cerda, the first woman to be awarded a doctorate in philosophy and the humanities, following a petition by her father, Diego de Guzmán —Marquis of Montealegre— to the King (Márquez Plata y Ferrándiz, 2012). The text, by the journalist Antonio Neira de Mosquera, started with a categorical sentence: “It is a common defect among people to close

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<sup>1</sup> This could be seen in the *Revista científica y literaria* in 1848, which included Amar's translation of the work by Lampillas (*Revista Científica y Literaria*, 1848). At the end of the century, this work was still being mentioned in the framework of literary history in Spain, as the article *Reseña general de la poesía castellana de la Edad Media* [General review of Castilian poetry from the Middle Ages] shows, in reference to the review of the German book *Historia de la Literatura Española* [History of Spanish literature] by Bouterwek in the journal *La España Moderna* (Wolf, 1894), or in the bibliography on Spanish literature in Castilian (Elías, 1899). In the same year, the *Álbum Iberoamericano* published the article *Escritoras españolas en otros tiempos* [Spanish female writers in other times] which alludes to her work as a translator “of great elegance” (Casa-Valencia, 1899, p. 260).

the doors of classrooms and academies to women, as though from birth they were condemned to be indifferent witnesses to our first habits, or impassive companions to our last disillusion” (Neira de Mosquera, 1853, p. 188, translated). Such ideas reflect Amar’s physiological and moral pedagogy of women:

Intelligence does not choose between the sexes. The literary realm focusses not on the author but on the work. Since it has been observed how history divides between writers of both sexes the mutual share of glory of which their writings have proven them worthy, the most indifferent and the least propitious spirit will have been obliged to relent. Aime-Martin, the philosophical mentor of the mother, was preceded by Josefa Amar y Borbón, the physiological and moral pedagogue of the woman. (Neira de Mosquera, 1853, p. 188, translated)

Neira y Mosquera also elaborates on the philosophical studies by Spanish literary figures in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which “correspond to the strict Enlightenment [norms] that spread through the different classes of society” and he goes on to state that it is “the second crisis of the Renaissance; the examination will take advantage of the comparisons that antiquity evokes in the peristyle of the modern institutions” (Neira de Mosquera, 1853, p. 189, translated). Finally, and before considering Guzmán y la Cerda, he reviews the principal works that preceded her, such as that of María Antonia Fernández de Tordesilla and her translation of *Instrucción de una señora cristiana* [Instruction of a Christian Lady], Juana Inés de la Cruz, Rosa Gálvez and Amar herself with the work mentioned above (Neira de Mosquera, 1853). Once again, Josefa Amar is placed in the *pantheon* of eminent women in female education.

Nonetheless, perhaps one of the most important acknowledgements of her cultural and intellectual legacy came from the *Correo de la moda*, one of Spain’s longest-lasting women’s periodicals of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which covered literature, education, music, theatre and fashion. On 8 March 1857, just six months before the publication of the Public Education Act, the first article was in the education section, and was titled *Instruction. Sobre la educación de la mujer* [On the Education of Women]. The author of the article was almost anonymous—only the initials A. P. appear, corresponding to a man. It started thus: “Some years ago, an eminent woman published a book called *Discurso sobre la educación física y moral de las mujeres*, considering Xenophon’s precept, which states ‘that good education teaches us to make good use of the laws, and to speak of what is just, and to listen’ (P. A., 1857a, p. 65, translated). In it, the importance of paying greater attention to the education of women was argued for once

again, and a detailed descriptive analysis of the work was given, ending—in the following month’s issue—with the role a mother should play in the education of her children, with women providing education and instruction in schools (P. A., 1857b).

Along the same lines, the *Revista Contemporánea* (1875-1907), one of the most highly regarded titles of the period in the dissemination of general and literary culture, published an interesting article entitled *Antigüedad e importancia del periodismo español* [The antiquity and importance of Spanish journalism], which alluded to the importance that the *Memorial literario* gave to the work of Josefa Amar, among other women such as Doña María Josefa de Pimentel y Téllez Girón, countess of Benavente, and Doña María Isidra Quintana Guzmán de Lacerda, marchioness of Guadalcazar (Criado y Domínguez, 1891).

The 20<sup>th</sup> century started with the explicit recognition of Amar in the pedagogical press. It came from no less than the journal *La Escuela Moderna*, one of the leading education periodicals in Spain at this time. Specifically, her name appeared in the section on school anniversaries in May 1900, as one of the leading figures who, through the contribution of her thought and work, deserved recognition in national pedagogy.

The article about her, the fourth, listed her main biographical details, emphasising that “she was an extraordinary woman thanks to her talent and the series of works she wrote, all of them important” (La Escuela Moderna, 1900, p. 389, translated). The review article goes further, commenting in more depth on the quality of her works, “notable for the lucidity of her arguments, the depth of her thought and the vigour of her phrasing,” and it goes on to praise Amar and her “near-encyclopaedic knowledge” (La Escuela Moderna, 1900, p. 389, translated). Similarly, the article underlines her joining the *Real Sociedad Española de Amigos del País de Zaragoza*, the *Junta de Damas* and the *Sociedad Médica de Barcelona*. Finally, the journal lists Amar’s works and her achievements as a translator.

This recognition was also apparent in the cultural press. The journal *La lectura*, associated with the Institución Libre de Enseñanza [Free Teaching Institution], used to have a dedicated section, *El libro del mes*, which comprised an in-depth review of a significant work of the moment. In January 1903, the work *Apuntes para una biblioteca de escritoras españolas desde el año 1401 al 1833* [Notes for a library of Spanish women writers from 1401 to 1833], by the Americanist historian Manuel Serrano y Sanz, which had been awarded a prize by the Biblioteca Nacional, was reviewed (Navarro y Ledesma, 1903). The review directly mentions

the importance that the author attributed to the Aragonese intellectual, identifying her as the first Spanish feminist:

Pushed in a jumble by the force of alphabetical order, we see the first Spanish *feminist* appear, Doña Josefa Amar y Borbón, a writer of royal blood and the author of *Defensa del talento de las mujeres*. (Navarro y Ledesma, 1903, p. 448, translated)

In 1913, this eminent woman's contributions to Spanish pedagogy were again mentioned.<sup>2</sup> The *Suplemento a La Escuela Moderna* featured an article on her pedagogical lectures at the Ateneo, by Rufino Blanco (1913), an important educationalist from the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, thanks to his reform of teacher-training schools.<sup>3</sup> Its contribution to the dissemination of Amar's legacy is significant as it places her in the framework of feminist pedagogy in Spain, extolling her and positioning her alongside other earlier and later eminent women. In this article, Rufino first states that feminist pedagogy is that "of women and for women". This, the article states, "has a glorious precedent in the psychophysical studies by Doña Olivia Sabuco de Nantes, entitled *Nueva filosofía del hombre*, continued by the *Discurso sobre educación física y moral de las mujeres*, by Doña Josefa Amar y Borbón, and continued to date by two leading contemporary writers: Doña Concepción Arenal and Doña Emilia Pardo Bazán" (Blanco, 1913, p. 339, translated).

Finally, in the period of the Republic, a last reference to Josefa Amar for her work as a translator can be found. The weekly *Ellas. Semanario de las mujeres españolas*—with a clear conservative, monarchist and anti-Republican tendency—dedicated an article to Javier Llampillas, author of the *Ensayo histórico-apologético de la Literatura Española*, translated by Amar. With the title *El feminismo de un jesuita desterrado* [The feminism of an exiled Jesuit], José Artero defined Llampillas as "an exiled Jesuit, a patriot, a centralist and a Catalan, a poet

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that Amar's work in favour of the Hospital de Nuestra Señora de Gracia, in Zaragoza, in 1808, during the Peninsular War, was mentioned in 1907. The article, published in the *Revista Aragonesa* by Félix Cerrada, a professor from the Faculty of Medicine, described her "distinguished lineage and great moral energy", emphasising her "conduct in those most difficult circumstances", which was "grounds for admiration given her extraordinary zeal owing to the truly evangelic charity that inspired her" (Cerrada, 1907, p. 303, translated).

<sup>3</sup> The *Gaceta de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes* also featured the same position by Rufino a month after its publication in the *Suplemento a la Escuela Moderna* (*Gaceta de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes*, 1913).

who was a ‘singer in his youth of the monarch Indo and of the Ibero’, and then a fierce champion in Italy of Spain’s glories, he is now a suggestive and likeable figure” (Artero, 1932, p. 7, translated). In a patriotic tone—even embracing Iberism—the author takes care to underline that the review of Llampillas is innovative because it displays feminist features. In so doing, Artero presents a gallery of eminent women, preceding his argument by introducing the translator, Josefa Amar:

Far from his homeland, and in its defence, he wrote in an Italian that to Gallerani seemed inconceivable from a foreigner, and it was a noble Spanish lady who translated this fervent eulogy into Spanish and had it published: “Doña Josefa Amar y Borbón, residing in the city of Zaragoza, a worthy member of the Real Sociedad Económica Aragonesa de Amigos del País”. (Artero, 1932, p. 7, translated)

Amar y Borbón’s work was, therefore, a constant up to the end of the period considered here, with explicit references to her work as a translator even in the period of the Second Republic (1931-1936). The works she translated into Spanish became landmarks, without necessarily eclipsing her figure and her own work. Indeed, as shown above, her profile continued to be in the limelight, and after a century and a half her pedagogical activity was explicitly reviewed.

#### 4. Conclusions

The advent of the Age of the Enlightenment brought with it a change in the mentality and ways of life of women in Spain. Women’s concern with their own aptitudes and capacities allowed them to demand access to spaces of cultural exchange and stimulation. The women of the Enlightenment fought against the exclusionary and silencing discourse of the period to assert their capacities and called for an education that would cultivate their intellectual interests.

This was the case of Josefa Amar y Borbón, a woman with a humanistic education and with a family setting concerned with giving her an education that went beyond merely domestic or caring knowledge. Her gift for translation developed from her voracious reading and earned her the regard of the *Real Sociedad Económica Aragonesa de Amigos del País* and pioneering acceptance into this society. Moreover, and while her acceptance was exceptional, she did not settle for this and took part in debates to open these spaces to women. Her essays asserting the

rights of women, drawing attention to their aptitudes and their need for instruction, transcended her era.

This study has considered her impact and has shown how the cultural, educational, literary and particularly women's press covered this eminent woman during and after her lifetime, until at least the 1930s. Her presence could be noticed with some consistency over time, although it cannot be described as habitual or frequent; indeed, nor were there sections the press dedicated to eminent women and their cultural and literary production and pedagogical needs. This may be mainly due to their early disappearance from public life, which may have limited their presence and influence. Nonetheless, it has been possible to demonstrate that her name did appear in cultural and educational publications alike, as well as in literary ones and in publications for women. And this happened both thanks to her oeuvre, her work as a translator and, especially interestingly, her contributions to women's education.

The life, work and thought of Amar therefore make her one of the principal names in the struggle for the rights of women in Spain. This fact underlines her intellectual abilities, given her contact with reference works and contributions of a distinctly educational nature—as in the case of Grisellini—which she translated. In addition, some of the periodicals analysed, as described above, celebrated her work as a cornerstone for feminist pedagogy in Spain, and recognised her as a notable figure in national education, and as a woman who combined well-argued and reflexive thought with arguing for the rights of women.

Scholars who have studied Amar have noted that history had forgotten her, something partially demonstrated in the case of the press, if we think of the significance of her writings and ideas. If we consider her own ambition for the cultural elevation of women, the recurring question of the inclusion of important female figures in teaching should be asked today. In recent years, academic literature has drawn attention to this absence, and there have been didactic proposals, especially in secondary and university education, that have pursued an inclusive curriculum that adopts the gender perspective. It is a fact that is particularly important in the case of education courses such as teacher training, pedagogy and social education, where the student body is mainly female and where it is vital to make visible the women who marked a 'before' and an 'after' in the conception of and approaches to teaching. In short, her works are reference points that make those who will be responsible for education in the future aware

of the importance of their work and of their capacity to contribute to the social changes happening nowadays.

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