

# EARLY SPANISH FASHION JOURNALS FOR WOMEN AS CATALYSTS OF *AFRANCESAMIENTO* AND FEMALE SUBORDINATION

*Las primeras revistas de moda españolas para las mujeres como catalizadores del afrancesamiento y la subordinación femenina*

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**Abstract:** *This article comments on the double effect of afrancesamiento on Spanish society through two Spanish fashion journals for women—the ‘Periódico de las Damas’ and ‘Correo de las Damas’. Afrancesamiento was a highly deteriorating and perilous phenomenon for Spanish national identity, but also a beneficial tool for the preservation of domesticity and a limited role for women. We discuss how French fashion, propagated through these journals, created an appearance of progress and*

*emancipation for Spanish women, while making their social and domestic position even harder: besides the expectation of being perfect mothers and ‘ángeles del hogar’, women were expected to be the epitomes of elegance and ladyhood, just like their French models, when attending public events with their husbands. Laboring under impossible expectations, real female emancipation was doomed.*

**Keywords:** *afrancesamiento, French fashion, domesticity, illusion of progress, imitation*

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**Resumen:** *Este trabajo comenta el doble efecto del afrancesamiento en la sociedad española a través de dos revistas de moda españolas para mujeres—el ‘Periódico de las Damas’ y ‘Correo de las Damas’. El afrancesamiento fue un fenómeno altamente perjudicial y peligroso para la identidad nacional española, pero también una herramienta beneficiosa para la preservación del ideal de domesticidad y el papel limitado de la mujer. En el artículo discutimos cómo la moda francesa, propagada a través de estas revistas, creó una apariencia de progreso y emancipación para las mujeres españolas, al tiempo que hacía aún más difícil su posición social y doméstica: además de la expectativa de ser madres perfectas y los ángeles del hogar, se esperaba que las mujeres fueran epitomes de elegancia y nobleza, como sus modelos franceses, cuando asistían a eventos públicos con sus esposos. Con tales ideales, imposibles de satisfacer, la emancipación femenina real estaba condenada al fracaso.*

**Palabras clave:** *afrancesamiento, moda francesa, domesticidad, ilusión de progreso, imitación*

## Introduction

This article explores the dual influence of *afrancesamiento* in Spain in the nineteenth century, as effected through early fashion journals for women<sup>1</sup>, while at the same time commenting on the restraining influence on women of this kind of press. Journals for women were allowed at this time and even encouraged by governmental structures, as long as they kept their focus on trivial things related to women’s limited domestic existence. This was the case with fashion journals of the period, which, besides offering advice on clothing and appearance, contained information relating to family and better management of the household. Fashion was considered one of those “safe”, trivial female things that could occupy and entertain women and increase women’s attractiveness to their husbands.

However, as we comment further, in the nineteenth century Spanish fashion was predominately French. Spain was highly influenced by French culture and customs; this phenomenon is known as *afrancesamiento*. As we elaborate further, fashion was one of the main tools of the functioning of *afrancesamiento* in the nineteenth century. Not

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<sup>1</sup> In this article, under the term “early fashion journals”, we refer to the span from 1804-1839. For different categorizations of Spanish journals for women see María F. Sánchez Hernández (2009).

only did Spanish women try to imitate their fancy French idols, but they tried to identify with them and become them superficially through their appearance, behavior, language and general mannerisms. This was a paradoxical situation because, in the nineteenth century, Spanish women were still enslaved by rigid laws of domesticity and unable to reach the level of emancipation that French women enjoyed.

The disparate imitation of the superior French female model, which was allowed and encouraged by patriarchy, kept Spanish women confined by the masculine power structure, while creating an illusion of progress and emancipation. This demonstrates the dual influence of *afrancesamiento* on Spanish culture, society and politics—one highly deteriorating and perilous for Spanish national identity and another, in the case of fashion and female imitation of French fashion, beneficial to the Spanish patriarchy and for its preservation of the gender-power balance.

## 1 Objectives and Methodology

A significant amount of research has been done on the topic of women's press and fashion journals of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some of the canonical works are: María F. Sánchez Hernández's "Evolución de las publicaciones femeninas en España. Localización y análisis"; Inmaculada Jiménez Morell's *La prensa femenina en España (desde sus orígenes a 1868)* (1992); Mercedes Roig Castellanos's *La Mujer en la historia a través de la prensa: Francia, Italia, España siglos XVIII-XX* (1990); Adolfo Perinat and María Isabel Marradas's *Mujer prensa y sociedad en España (1800-1939)* (1980).

In our study, we recount conclusions of previous research and propose a different and original approach to the study of fashion journals for women that centers around *afrancesamiento* and the role of the studied journals in its diffusion. This novelty in our approach and analysis is especially important for avoiding redundancy and repetition because some of the above works, and the other ones cited in this paper, elaborate on the same two journals that are discussed here (for example, González Díez and Pérez Cuadrado's or Sánchez Hita's articles).

This article discusses some practical examples of *afrancesamiento* as presented in *Periódico de las Damas* (1822-1823) and *Correo de las Damas* (1833-1836), as well as propaganda surrounding domesticity and the ideal of the *ángel del hogar* to be found in them. Further, it comments on strategies employed by the male editors<sup>2</sup> of these

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<sup>2</sup> Both journals discussed here had male editors, as well as majority of other early journals for women, for example, *Diario de las Damas* (1804), *Liceo general del bello sexo* (1804), *El Amigo de las Damas* (1813), *La Moda o Recreo semanal del Bello Sexo* (1829-1831) and *El Buen Tono* (1839).

journals to keep women entertained and engaged through the content offered, while at the same time contributing to their enslavement at the hands of domesticity and patriarchy.

The first section of our article offers a brief description of the nineteenth-century Spanish female ideal—the domestic *ángel del hogar*. We discuss the mechanisms of its functioning, one of its primary characteristics being a division between private and public spheres. Only the former was considered a proper space for women and only on rare occasions and for special events was a woman's going out into the public sphere considered appropriate. One element that linked the two spheres was French fashion, which we further discuss.

In the second part we comment on the phenomenon of *afrancesamiento* from a historical perspective. We discuss its origins and effects on Spanish national identity in the nineteenth century. Also, we comment on the connection between *afrancesamiento* and Spanish fashion in the nineteenth century, as well as the development of *casticismo* in clothing and culture as a counterpoint to French influence.

In the third part, before beginning our discussion of the journals selected, we elaborate on the history of journals for women in Spain. We explain the difficulties around and conditions necessary for their publication, which were all related to a patriarchal fear of change in the gender balance and of female emancipation. We underline some common characteristics of these journals, the content of which can be summarized as mostly non-political, entertaining and trivial.

The fourth part focuses on an analysis of the two selected journals: *Periódico de las Damas* ('*Periódico*') and *Correo de las Damas* ('*Correo*'). The reason for focusing on these two journals specifically is because *Periódico* was a pioneer of Spanish fashion journals for women and *Correo* was one of the most popular journals for women of the time. Here we comment on their structure and content, with the purpose of demonstrating their imposing domestic effect on women. Through analysis of different content in these journals, we demonstrate how their ultimate effect is one of continuous subordination of women to the home and to men. In this process, French fashion and its promotion have the most significant role.

To achieve the goals of this paper, we employ a textual analysis of the source journals, discussing their content in relation to domesticity, femininity, patriarchy and *afrancesamiento*.

## 2 Domesticity and the Ideal Spanish Woman in the Nineteenth Century

The dominant bourgeois ideal of femininity in nineteenth century Spain, the *ángel del hogar*, perpetuated the masculine idealized vision of woman as domestic, maternal, gentle and submissive to men. This subordination and control of women in the nineteenth century, as commented on by Bridget A. Aldaraca, was possible due to the control of feminine sexuality and the assertion that sexual desire does not exist outside of maternity for normal women (1992:19). The categorization of women as normal/abnormal or good/bad based on their sexuality and social behavior made possible the construction of two feminine concepts by the masculine imagination—the domestic ideal of the *ángel del hogar* and its counterpart, the *fallen angel*. As Aldaraca points out, “nineteenth-century society identified women, valued them, and judged them by their performance as daughters, wives and mothers” (1992: 234).

The family was idealized as a place that protects woman and makes her queen of the same: “The family, as an institution, has taken the place of the physical fortress, the house. Now it is the family which protects woman from the arduous tasks of public life, and at the same time provides a private kingdom over which she can rule” (Aldaraca, 1992: 32). In order to preserve this ideal, domestic life was elevated to an altitude of mysterious and complex specialty, which required the complete dedication of a woman (Geraldine Scanlon, 1976: 59).

The vision of the ideal woman was, then, one of a domestic and selfless housewife, whose main tasks in life were the satisfaction of the physical and emotional needs of men and children. She was always inevitably related to the home, family, motherhood and the so called “private, domestic sphere” of life (Aldaraca, 1992: 20). The public—intellectual and political—spheres of life were reserved exclusively for men. As commented on by Susan Kirkpatrick, this is how woman was represented in literature, behavioral manuals and feminine magazines in the nineteenth century (2003: 30).

The only time when women’s presence in the public sphere was expected and desirable was during public events, ceremonies and concerts, when they would have the opportunity to wear their fashionable dresses and make their husbands proud.

There were, of course, examples of exceptional Spanish women like Emilia Pardo Bazán, Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda and Concepción Arenal, who propagated and fought for female emancipation through their works and articles published in the press. However, the position of Spanish women would not change significantly in the nineteenth century, unlike in other European countries, most notably France.

A significant role in Spanish women’s tardy emancipation was played by their lack of education, even among the aristocracy, while emancipation was already a matter in

progress in France. Laura González Díez and Pedro Pérez Cuadrado mention a study from 1803 which shows that in Spain 90% of Spanish citizens were illiterate. This number decreased to 75% around 1860, which was still high in comparison to France where in the same period illiteracy fell to 32% (2009: 57). Besides this, there were other unfavorable social conditions that impeded progress of Spanish women, for example, lack of culture, hygiene conditions and inequality in the labor sphere.

The majority of press for women in the nineteenth century did not pay attention to those hindering issues, but instead focused on the representation of women as ideal angels of men's dreams. These journals' "leit-motiv es una cierta mujer ideal que responde a una representación social (al mismo tiempo que la forja) arraigada en las mentes soñadores masculinas y cuyos rasgos están extraídos del fondo de esa memoria colectiva que asocia estrechamente Beatrices, Dulcineas y Julietas" (Perinat and Marrades 1980:121).

### **3 A Short History of *Afrancesamiento* and its Belligerence**

The cultural and political phenomenon of *afrancesamiento* and its effects on Spanish culture and national identity are mostly discussed in relation to the nineteenth century<sup>3</sup>. However, its origins in Spain were in the previous century when the first Spanish Bourbon ruler, Felipe V, came to the throne (Federico Suárez, 1958:44). The term "afrancesado" was recorded in the Dictionary of the Real Academia Española in the 1770s as referring to a person who "imitaba con afectación las costumbres francesas" (Lara López, 2016: 246). Lara López observes that: "El Siglo de las Luces será genuinamente francés, lo que fomentará la galomanía entre la nobleza y la burguesía, un afrancesamiento de estirpe ideológica que se explicitará en la literatura, el arte, el teatro, la vestimenta, el mobiliario, la gastronomía, el urbanismo, el arte de la guerra..." (2016: 245).

By the year 1808 French presence in Spain was already vast, as Napoleon had around one hundred thousand soldiers positioned in the country. This made overtaking of the Spanish throne much easier. After Carlos IV's abdication in favor of his son Fernando VII in 1808 and his later appeal to Napoleon for help in regaining his throne, Napoleon forced both of them to abdicate. At this time, he installed his brother, Joseph

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<sup>3</sup> French influence and mimicry was an important factor that contributed to the crisis of Spanish national identity in this period, caused by the loss of the Latin American colonies and the decay of the Spanish empire. In addition, Spain was partially occupied by French forces during the Peninsular War, a.k.a. the War of Independence (1808-1813).

Bonaparte, as King Joseph I of Spain (Miguel Artola, 1976). This motivated increased resistance towards French fashion and everything French.

The imitation and appropriation of French culture, customs and fashion caused big divisions in nineteenth-century Spanish society. Its followers and supporters of Joseph I, people who wanted change and reform of the country—the aristocracy, bourgeoisie and intellectuals— were labelled traitors, while its opponents, represented by the *pueblo* and the *majismo* movement, were labelled patriots and saviors of Spanish tradition and national spirit. The goal of the traditionalists was to preserve Spanish customs, language and clothing (fashion) in the face of the French surge.

*Majismo*, an expression of *casticismo* and aristocratic affection for traditional Spanish fashion and customs, formed as a reaction against foreign/French influence around the mid-eighteenth century: “Contra la cursilería y el amaneramiento de petimetres surge el majismo, aplicado indistintamente a hombres y mujeres, como movimiento y respuesta a profundos cambios sociales y como reacción xenófoba a cualquier manifestación extranjerizante” (María Ángeles Gutiérrez García, 2005). Even though this traditional resistance would progressively subside throughout the nineteenth century, the interest for traditional style vs. foreign remained. Nonetheless, the Second French Empire (1852-1870) established the ultimate prestige of the French fashion in Spain (Ana María Velasco Molpeceres, 2016: 171).

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the French language started to gain presence and importance in Spain, all the while becoming a sign of prestige and “buen tono”:

Aprender ese idioma era algo de buen tono, lo que explica la profusión de manuales y gramáticas para el estudio de la lengua y también el enorme interés por leer determinadas obras sin necesidad de ser traducidas. No era de extrañar que, al principio del reinado de Carlos IV, la nobleza cortesana adoptase «un tono exclusivamente francés», y que en sus casas se hablase ese idioma de manera habitual. (Lara López, 2016: 247)

French fashion in the nineteenth century was also overtaking Spain, as Spanish bourgeois and aristocratic women considered dresses *a la francesa* to be the ultimate symbol of nobility and good taste. Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda criticized the *afrancesamiento* of Spanish women in her ironic essay “La dama de gran tono”, which was written for the *Álbum del bello sexo o Las mujeres pintadas por sí mismas* publication that she launched. She describes this emerging, seemingly empowered feminine figure based on imitation of the French models as completely unnatural, awkward and non-Spanish:

Verdad es que ese nuevo molde el tipo parisién pierde la mayor parte de sus gracias ligeras y naturales, y que ninguno conserva el tipo septentrional de

aquellos rasgos distintivos de su cándida belleza; pero bastante queda para el gran tono madrileño, si *las telas son extranjeras, extranjeras la forma, extranjeros el gesto y los modales, y extranjero el andar y la mirada. Sábelo así la bella que nos ocupa y que al llegar al estribo de su carretela (extranjera también por supuesto) lleva ya determinada la postura elegante que ha de tomar ella, la cual ha aprendido por la mañana en una novela de Balzac o de Eugenio Sué.* (emphasis added, 1843: 6)

The destabilizing effect of *afrancesamiento* is best articulated in Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo's comment on *afrancesados*, where he expresses his rancor for their anti-patriotism, but at the same time recognizes their glory and importance as intellectuals and writers: "A muchos de estos afrancesados los defiende hoy su bien ganada fama literaria, pero no conviene alargar mucho la indulgencia y caer en laxitudes perjudiciales cuando se trata *de tan feo crimen como la infidelidad a la patria; infidelidad que fue en los más de ellos voluntaria y gustosamente consentida*" (emphasis added, 1992: 941). Many of those writers and intellectuals, the *afrancesados*, had to flee into exile during Fernando VII's "ominous decade" (1823-1833), due to the hostile environment in Spain. Among the hundred thousand people exiled were intellectuals such as José Espronceda, Duque de Rivas and Mariano de Larra y Langelot (Mariano José Larra's father) (José Álvarez Junco, 2001).

The Spanish press had a particularly significant role in the diffusion of French political influence in Spain. The *Gazeta de Madrid*, the official journal of Carlos IV's monarchy, and the *Gazeta de Barcelona* were examples of those media that propagated French political hegemony:

Dicho periódico [*Gazeta de Madrid*] ensalzará a partir de 1804 la Francia imperial fabricando los gacetistas una imagen casi idílica de Francia debida a una suma de factores: el genio militar de Napoleón, su política regeneracionista (capaz de limar los excesos revolucionarios y de restaurar el orden), el ideario de promoción personal de los más capaces, la abolición de los residuos feudales, la defensa de las nociones de libertad e igualdad y el entusiasmo popular que suscitaban los viajes del emperador. (Lara López, 2016: 251).

In such circumstances of open French political and cultural invasion, the early Spanish fashion journals were a significant contributor to the spreading of French influence in Spain. Before we begin discussion of the journals we have chosen, we will provide a short history of journals for women in Spain.



## 4 A Short History of Spanish Journals for Women

The first journal for women was published at the end of the eighteenth century. It was *La pensadora gaditana* (1763-1764) edited by a woman, Beatriz Cienfuegos. Velasco Molpeceres explains that this publication “surge en un contexto propicio, favorecida por Carlos III quien, imbuido de un espíritu ilustrado, ve en la prensa la herramienta para instruir al pueblo y mejorar, aunque sin ir más allá, la situación femenina” (emphasis added, 2016: 2). This journal was largely influenced by the British journal *The Spectator* which was dedicated to the customs, manners, morals and bad habits of different social classes (Velasco Molpeceres, 2016: 2).

*La pensadora* was cancelled after one year of existence in 1764. It was not a journal dedicated to female fashion, like many others in Europe of this period, for example the *Journal des Femmes* (1759) or *Lady Journal* (1775) in France or *Giornale della donna galante ed erudita* (1780) in Italy (González Díez and Pérez Cuadrado, 2009: 54). The fact that *La pensadora* was influenced by a very popular and persuasive foreign journal was not an advantage. In a time of liberal revolution, every bit of political influence or challenge seemed threatening for Spanish imperial/patriarchal governing structures, which is why Carlos IV prohibited the publication of all journals in 1791, except for the official ones such as the *Gazeta de Madrid* and *Gazeta de Barcelona*.

After this prohibition, there would be several attempts, both legal and illegal, at creating journals for women. In 1795, the proposal for publication of the *Diario del Bello Sexo* was rejected. In 1804, the same happened when Antonio Marqués y Espejo attempted to publish *El Lyceo general del bello sexo o Décadas eruditas y morales de las damas*. In 1804 Juan Corradi tried publishing the *Diario de las Damas* and failed. In the same year, the Baron of Bruere began to publish illegally the first nineteenth-century journal for women—*Correo de las Damas* (Velasco Molpeceres, 2016: 5).

Bruere’s *Correo* was published from 1804 to 1807 and the fact that it was prohibited is not surprising. This first journal for women was quite different from the ones that followed. It didn’t marginalize women by offering content that was not intellectually challenging and easy to comprehend. It treated them as equals to men. This is confirmed by the serious content that can be read by readers of any gender. The sections of this journal were quite different from the ones we further discuss, for example: “Sátira contra los malos poetas”, “Humanidades-reflexiones sobre el espectáculo de la naturaleza”, “Ciencia política”, “Medicina”, “Lógica” or literary works, anegdoted and short stories that talk about Voltaire and Greek mythology.

Beatriz Sánchez Hita, in her article about the early women’s press in Spain, talks about the proposal and petition for the publication of *Correo* and its official rejection. The

journal was presented as a resource of ideas that would aid women in improving their domestic roles:

[E]n un documento firmado el 3 de julio de 1801, advierte sobre el suplemento que éste ‘puede ser muy útil el periódico que propone en su plan una o dos veces por semana con el título de *Correo de las Damas*; en el que puede inspirar a esta parte interesante de la sociedad todas las ideas y ejemplos útiles para hacerlas buenas ciudadanas, fieles esposas y tiernas madres de familia’ (González Palencia, 1935: T.III, 67). (Sánchez Hita, 2003: 115)

However, the written rejection of publication of *Correo de las Damas* questioned and expressly denied this instructional quality of the journal for its female readers: “El escrito fechado el 23 de abril de 1802: ‘Dice: Que no debe permitirse *Correo de las Damas* por no ser estos papeles propios para su instrucción; ser expuestos a muchos perjuicios políticos y morales y porque si quiere publicarse como continuación del que se llamaba *Postillón* no debió haber salido al público con la autoridad que se hizo” (Sánchez Hita, 2003: 115).

The quality of “acceptable” journals for women is expressed through the words of the censor of *El Lyceo general del bello sexo*, Pedro Estala: “[U]n periódico de esa naturaleza [for women] ‘sería útil si con él se logra que las mujeres se apliquen a leer y aprender las cosas que les sean necesarias para mejor desempeño de las obligaciones que tienen y pueden tener en la sociedad’ e insiste en lo que será una máxima de las publicaciones femeninas, también las de moda, que es divertir al tiempo que se instruye” (Velasco Molpeceres, 2016: 4). *Correo de las Damas* obviously did not fit into this frame, and neither did other rejected and censored publications, for example, *Diario de Bello Sexo* (1795), *Diario de las Damas* (1804) and *Lyceo general del bello sexo* (1804).

Hence, acceptable female journals were supposed to focus on topics considered frivolous in comparison to politics and national matters, such as fashion, domestic duties and motherhood. In other words, they were not supposed to provoke any agency or independent thinking in women but keep them confined to the home and the ideal of the *ángel del hogar*. Sánchez Hernández comments on this quality of early journals for women: “Observamos en las primeras publicaciones femeninas, cómo la gran mayoría de estos medios reflejaron los roles asignados a las mujeres, siendo su temática principal la moda, la belleza y/o la educación” (2008: 219). All of these characteristics would be present in the *Periódico de las Damas* and *Correo de las Damas* that we further discuss, and other early journals for women, for example, *El Amigo de las Damas* (1813), *El Té de las Damas* (1827), *La Moda o Recreo semanal del Bello Sexo* (1829-30) and *El Buen Tono* (1839).

These “good journals”, adequate and suitable for women, free of any political content and implications, seemed benevolent and non-threatening to the patriarchy, as their content was supposed to help women be better wives and mothers. However, most of the fashion journals for women also presented and propagated French fashion, which, as previously mentioned, had very serious political implications for, and an effect on, the Spanish nation and national identity.

French fashion, as we explain further, had a dual influence and effect. First, it culturally colonized Spanish women through imitation, hence preventing them from establishing their own traditional/national identity, and second, it created a vision of their progress and emancipation, which was surface-deep, that is to say, in appearances only. Instead, it contributed to the maintenance of the *status quo* of their domestic position. In this sense, early female journals served as one of the patriarchy’s tools for the control of gender roles and perpetuation of masculine dominance over the public sphere.

#### **4.1 *Periódico de las Damas* (1822-1823)**

The journal *Periódico de las Damas* was published from 1822-1823. Its editor, León Amarita Reverte, is considered to be the person who introduced female fashion journals to Spain. Models such as *The Ladies Journal* and *Le Journal des Dames* already existed in London and Paris respectively (González Díez and Pérez Cuadrado, 2009: 56).

In the first issue of the journal, the editor confirmed its status as a “good journal” by saying that it would be dedicated to the state of women, not the state of politics in Europe like many other journals (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, p. 1). In accordance with its aims, the journal described woman as partner to a man, but a weaker and gentler one that was “sensible, sufrida, sumisa a tu [man’s] voluntad” (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, p. 8). In addition, marriage was depicted as a woman’s natural state as predetermined by God and a woman’s most important task was to satisfy a man and to make herself perfect for him: “La muger no es otra cosa, que una segunda alma de un mismo cuerpo: carne de la carne del hombre, y hueso de sus huesos [...] Así pues, en el estado social la mujer se debe perfeccionar para el hombre” (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, p. 6).

This journal included articles, which were instructive for women, about good and moral behavior. Some of the articles were of religious content, for example “Artículo 1” in the first issue. This article emphasized woman’s place in the world and her obligations as prescribed by God, which could be summed up as being a devoted mother and wife who prays and maintains her connection to God (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, p. 14).

Articles were written in a very persuasive tone that, supposedly, was intended to convince women that domestic life was the best and purest one. Often the editor spoke directly to his readers, for example in the article in issue 3 entitled: “Sobre el deseo de agradar y parecer bien de las mugeres” when he said: “Véanme ustedes aquí, señoras, empeñado en una cuestión bien delicada...” (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, p. 1)<sup>4</sup>.

A majority of journal issues had a section dedicated to the letters of a mother to a daughter who is about to get married— ‘Cartas de una madre a su hija que va a contraer matrimonio’. In these letters a mother gave domestic advice to her daughter about how to be a good wife and how to satisfy her husband. For example, in issue 6, the mother said: “El autor de la naturaleza destinó a la muger para esposa, y para madre, y tú vas a entrar en el ejercicio de este digno ministerio, del que depende tu felicidad temporal si sabes conducirte con prudencia” (“Cartas de una madre”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, p. 2).

In issue 5, the editor again emphasized the importance of a good woman, as “[n]ada hay tan prejudicial a la sociedad [...] como una mujer mala, y un mal sacerdote” (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, p.1). Further he stated that women had acquired a major influence on society in the civilized world, in comparison with barbaric nations, where women were still treated like objects or animals. One example offered in issue 5 was that of Dalmacia where a man, when talking to a woman, used the expression “con perdón de usted como si nombrara un animal inmundo” (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, p.3). Nonetheless, just when it seems that the editor despised men for such uncivilized treatment of women, later in the same issue he blamed women and their unattractive appearance for such behavior: “Advierte, no obstante, que según el sucio y asqueroso aspecto de aquellas mugeres, no es de extrañar el desprecio con que las tratan los hombres” (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, p.3).

Civilized countries, among which, undoubtedly, the editor counted Spain, offered a completely different image of the treatment of women, as they achieved equality with men:

[E]l bello sexo conociendo que lo que le faltaba de fuerzas físicas podía suplirlo con el ingenio, con la virtud, y con la amabilidad, ha adquirido un influjo poderoso sobre las costumbres, y aun sobre el hombre mismo; y le ha obligado a que la respete como a igual, y a que la ame como a esposa; así ha venido a suceder, que para juzgar exactamente del grado de civilización en la vida social de un estado, basta el averiguar la urbanidad y atención que se observa con las mujeres. (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, issue 5, p. 6)

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4 The exact publication date is not preserved for issues 1-8. This is why the date 01-01-1822 will be used for those issues.

The editor continues to mention many great and important women in history, for example, Veturia, the wife of Lavallete, or Roman women. However, towards the end, the editor explains authoritatively: “Pero, señoras, no todos podemos aspirar al heroísmo, ni a todos se les pueden exigir aquellos grandes esfuerzos que están reservados para ciertas almas privilegiadas” (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, issue 5, p. 13). Not surprisingly, then, women should not aspire to achieve heroic acts in their lives, but should focus on being virtuous keepers of the domestic life and home which was “la escuela de las buenas costumbres, y como el taller donde se forma, el buen ciudadano, el juez recto, el prudente y esforzado militar [...] y veremos siempre a la mujer siendo el alma de esta escuela primaria de las costumbres sociales y religiosas” (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, issue 5, p. 13).

The editor informs the reader that, as a man is looking for a “compañera decente en su manejo, pura en su conducta, moderada en su adorno, atenta a la educación de sus hijos, bienhechora con todos, y paciente en los trabajos” (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, issue 5, p.14), a woman should have all of these most valuable characteristics, while, I would add, maintaining and increasing her attractiveness.

In order to be a perfect wife, a woman was supposed to take care of her appearance too. This is why many articles in *Periódico* propagated the female need for fashion and beauty—because a woman should remain attractive to her man, who had initially been conquered by her beauty and good looks: “¿[C]ómo podríamos inculpar a las señoras ligadas con el matrimonio, el que procurasen conservar aquel buen aspecto que les ha ganado el corazón del hombre que ha de hacer su vida feliz?” (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, issue 3, p. 10). A little later the editor warns about the dangers for women of not keeping up a good appearance, again speaking directly to his female readers:

No duden ustedes, señoras; que si para muchas es el matrimonio el sepulcro del amor, y el principio de conexiones ilegítimas y perturbadoras de la paz conyugal, se debe en gran parte al desorden y abandono que hacen las mujeres de sí mismas, con respecto al hombre a quien han asegurado ya bajo su yugo. Vienen a ser a manera de las actrices, que después de haber representado sobre la escena el papel más lisonjero que les ha podido inspirar el deseo de parecer bien, suelen causar tedio en sus casas. ¿Y extrañarán ustedes, que este voraz e insaciable animal del hombre, vaya a buscar en otros teatros los objetos que enamoraron en otro tiempo, y de que ustedes al presente les privan? (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, issue 3, p. 11)

The article underlined that men did not fall in love with the prettiest women, but with the nice, sweet domestic angels who knew how to fix their physical disadvantages to make themselves more beautiful (“Artículo 1”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, issue 3, p. 12). Therefore, it is no surprise that fashion became such an important element of the domestic sphere in the nineteenth century.

Every issue had the essential section on fashion, “Moda”, which openly acknowledged France and Paris as models and ideals in this matter: “Paris les está sirviendo de modelo del buen gusto en los trajes, y demás adornos” (“Artículo 4”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, issue 1, p. 34). The entire section on fashion was dedicated to the then current fashion trends in France, on which Spanish women should base and style their appearance. For example: “En Paris continúan los talles siendo muy bajos y los cinturones muy anchos; más aquí como allí, se advierte que las señoras de *mejor gusto* observan un medio razonable y gracioso” (emphasis added, “Artículo 4”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, issue 1, p. 35).

Later on, the article described the practicality of capes called *pellizas*, which can accommodate women’s many different social engagements:

Las *pellizas* se hacen de colores fuertes como amaranto, carmesí, verde esmeralda, pistacho, y en fin de los colores que hacen mejor efecto con la luz artificial [...] No lleva esta más adorno porque es de mera utilidad; por tanto cuando una petimetra le lleva al teatro, al entrar da una o dos vueltas en el palco en ademan de colocarse, se asoma a mirar los circunstantes, como olvidándose de que está cubierta, y cuando piensa que ya la han observado bien, se la quita, y descubre a los ansiosos observadores un elegante traje de tela de invierno, lo que hace un efecto maravilloso. *Más en el caso de tener que asistir a algún baile después del teatro, debe llevar debajo de la pelliza el traje ligero que conviene a estos casos, como es el vestido à la Terpsicore.* (emphasis added, “Artículo 4”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, issue 1, p. 36)

Female outings were presented as a spectacle and women’s appearance in public as a performance planned down to the smallest detail, as if it was women’s only concern and duty. This was the absurdity of the imitation of the French models, because such behavior was not common or natural for Spanish women, as they were principally mothers and *ángeles del hogar*. They were followers of French fashion only, who remained as trapped and as enslaved by domesticity as ever. In addition, they were now also slaves to French fashion and social expectations. This impossible position of a woman in nineteenth century Spanish society is commented on by Gómez de Avellaneda as follows: “La dama de gran tono, víctima de la vanidad, no se pertenece á sí misma, ni á su familia ni á sus afecciones. La exigente sociedad la reclama sin cesar, como el teatro á la actriz que ha contratado” (1843: 10-11).

Between their domestic duties and their efforts to maintain the appearance of a “dama de gran tono” in public, Spanish women had no time to think about anything else. This aided the preservation of the patriarchal *status quo* in gender relations. French, impeccably fashionable ladies were depicted as the female ideal in society and objects of masculine fantasy. This is well presented in issue 10 of *Periódico*, when the editor talks about the woman of his dreams and describes her as “alguna de las más

elegantes y cumplidas damas de Paris [que] se ha retirado de los Campos Eliseos, después de haber sido una tarde su más hermoso ornato” (“Modas”, *Periódico*, 11-03-1822, p. 21). Articles and images like this motivated women to be more like “them”, French examples of elegance and style.

In issue 3 the editor gave a report on what colors are the absolute trend at that moment and singles out black, saying that black is an absolute winner: “El vestido debe ser de terciopelo negro liso con volantes de gasa o tul negro, y mangas correspondientes: zapato de raso negro [...] Las plumas de *Marabout* siguen estando en boga, y hacen muy buen efecto con el negro” (“Artículo 4”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, p. 30). Due to French influence, it was impossible to talk about fashion in nineteenth-century Spain without using French words. In fact, French fashion and Spanish attempts at imitating it caused the influx of many French words into the Spanish language. A literary example of this French “cultural colonization” of Spain is offered in Galdós’s *La de Bringas* in which Rosalía and Milagros often employ French words when talking about their new fashion ideas.

Given the substantial number of illiterate Spanish women in the nineteenth century, *El Periódico* included images of fashion models for those women who couldn’t read but still wanted to remain up to date. These so-called “figurines” represented the latest French fashion and were to be found at the end of each issue.

Besides all of this, there was a section dedicated to entertainment in the journal, called “Charadas y acertijos”. Women were supposed to guess the secret concept presented in a poem and send their answers in to the press. As González Díez and Pérez Cuadrado comment, the “Charadas” served to demonstrate that women were also intelligent (2009: p. 57). When the same woman solved the riddle twice in a row, the editor could not hide his surprise that she, *a woman*, was able to do so: “Confieso, amada favorecedora nuestra, que aunque la primera charada no era difícil, estaba yo distante de que todas las Sibilas juntas pudiesen descifrar la segunda cuyo pensamiento es todo original, y que a nadie había yo comunicado” (“Artículo”, *Periódico*, 01-01-1822, issue 3, 32). Such comment reiterates a patriarchal vision of woman as being of lesser intellectual ability than a man.

With all this said, it can be concluded that *Periódico de las Damas* tried to provide a variety of content for women—besides sections on fashion and domestic life, it offered content that would seem challenging, while respectful and could make women feel like they mattered and were an equal member of society (with men). However, most of the content was limiting for women and it kept them under the patriarchal mechanism of control. As discussed, *afrancesamiento* through French fashion had one of the most key roles in this process.

## 4.2. *Correo de las Damas* (1833-1836)

*Correo de las Damas* was first published in 1833 by editor Ángel Lavagna and would last until 1836. Just like *Periódico de las Damas*, *Correo's* main focus was providing information about fashion (above all French) to its readers:

[*Correo de las Damas*] Se dedicaba fundamentalmente a la *moda*, a la *literatura de entretenimiento*, *facilitaba información sobre teatro y otro tipo de espectáculos*. No desestimaba los artículos de opinión sobre la función esencial de las mujeres y se mostraba partidario de una educación más esmerada que le capacitara para ser educadora de sus hijos y sustentar el buen funcionamiento de la sociedad y de la familia. (emphasis added, González Díez, 2009: p. 58)

As stated in the “Prospecto” for the journal, Spain was lacking in journals for women at the time when *Correo* began to be published. There were many public journals that discussed serious matters that reflected and supported ideas of “Gobierno sabio y paternal” and which “si bien no iguales en mérito o importancia, rivalizan todos en el loable empeño de difundir las luces y propagar las sanas ideas, que son las bases de la felicidad y bien estar de una Nación” (“Prospecto”, *Correo*, 03-06-1833, p. 1). However, that content was deemed too serious, overwhelming and unnecessary for women. What was missing was a light and entertaining journal for the *bello sexo*: “[U]n periódico que así huyese de la larga compilación de datos de todas especies, como de la aridez de los largos artículos científicos o literarios: un periódico ameno, ligero, florido, propio en fin de las BELLAS a quien se consagra” (“Prospecto”, *Correo*, 03-06-1833, p. 2). *Correo de las Damas* was meant to fill this gap specifically.

Standard sections in each issue were ‘Amena Literatura’—a selection of short stories and anecdotes—, “Modas” and “Noticias varias”. As explained in the “Prospecto”, the content published under “Amena literatura” was to be light and entertaining: “[A]rtículos ligeros y burlones de costumbres, anécdotas picantes, cuentos cortos, alguna brevísima composición poética” (“Prospecto”, *Correo*, 03-06-1833, p. 2). Being “entertaining and light” was mentioned several times, as the most important characteristic of the texts offered to women, as if those were the qualities that were supposed to justify the journal’s existence and attract female readers: “Siempre seremos festivos, siempre ligeros: siempre al mismo tiempo decorosos, considerados y llenos del respeto y de las delicadas atenciones que se deben a la hermosa porción del género humano, para quien escribimos” (“Prospecto”, *Correo*, 03-06-1833, p. 3).

Besides entertainment through its content, the journal would provide information about public spectacles, like *corridos*, dances, balls and important gatherings, to its female readers, together with reports on the most fashionable clothing of the moment (“Prospecto”, *Correo*, 03-06-1833, p. 3).



The section “Avisos interesantes” would be dedicated to women’s domestic interests and tasks and would offer “noticias curiosas acerca de las aguas olorosas, aceites etc., que suelen las señoras emplear en su adorno; composiciones químicas que se aplican a las manchas, manera de conservar las ropas, etc., dándose noticia asimismo de las tiendas y almacenes donde lleguen los géneros más de moda” (“Prospecto”, *Correo*, 03-06-1833, p. 3).

“Modas” was a section dedicated to fashion trends in France in which the editor gave advice to women on how to dress and in what to dress. Also, this section presented “los figurines”, three female and one male, and described their styles and the materials with which their clothing was made. González Díez and Pérez Cuadrado comment on this section and its French influence: “Todos estos grabados eran de excelente calidad y aparecían con el pie ‘Modas de París’ y en las páginas siguientes se explicaban los figurines con todo detalle: el color que tenía cada uno de ellos, el tipo de tela, los complementos que se podían añadir, etc. Casi todas estas ideas provenían de dos revistas francesas: *Petit Courier* y *Journal des Dames et des Modes*” (2009: p. 59).

Every issue had a subtitle “Paris” under “Modas”. This was, again, an acknowledgment of the highest authority in fashion and, indirectly, of French superiority. In the section of the journal’s 3<sup>rd</sup> issue dedicated to fashion, entitled “Paris 5 de julio”, the editor offered a first-hand report about summer fashion in Paris: “Los *chalets* más de moda este verano son de seda doble, brillante y flexible” (*Correo*, 17-07-1833, p. 21). Soon after he added “Los *echarpes* de mejor gusto son los estampados sobre gasa o muselina [...] En las *capotas* se usa mucho *tisú* de la India [...] Las muselinas rayadas mate se emplean en los vestidos de *negligé*” (“Paris”, *Correo*, 17-07-1833, p. 21). In issue 2, there was a similar presentation: Las *ruches* ó guarnicioncitas alrededor del ala no se usan sino en las *capotas* de *negligé* (“Paris”, *Correo*, 10-07-1833, p. 13). The same section in issue 9 similarly discussed French fashion trends: “Vense en casa de las modistas *capotas* de linón, no forradas, y sostenidas solo por medio de jaretones con ballenas ó pajas finas por dentro. Son muy frescas, muy ligeras y muy convenientes para los *negligés* de campo. También las hay muy lindas de percal blanco *glacé*” (“Paris”, *Correo*, 28-08-1833, p. 68). All the other issues were no different, full of French words and expressions related to fashion.

As previously commented, discourse about fashion in nineteenth-century Spain was highly influenced by France and its language, customs and culture. These fashion reports were full of words in French, which were then used by Spanish middle class and bourgeois women when they talked about fashion at their *tertulias*. This use of French language contributed to French influence on Spanish society, and, paradoxically, to concepts of Spanish national identity and hegemony.

In issue 3, there was another section dedicated to fashion entitled “Madrid” which describes fashion items made in Spain, for example, a very unique cane:

Hemos visto un bastón hecho en Madrid, cuya originalidad y buen gusto no han podido menos de llamar nuestra atención, y le describiremos por si nuestros elegantes quisiesen adoptarle entre sus objetos de moda. Es hecho de trozos pequeños de marfil unidos entre sí por medio de roscas, é imitando los nudos del *bambú*: muy delgado y ligero: puñito de oro cuadrado: contera sutilísima de plata: una trenzilla corta de seda negra pasa por sus ojos sencillamente. Es bastón delicado, pero puede lucir mucho en visita ó en *suaré*. *Nada hemos visto más elegante, y tiene la ventaja para nosotros de no haber venido de París.* (emphasis added, “Madrid”, *Correo*, 17-07-1833, p. 22)

Obviously, consciousness about French influence and dominance over Spanish fashion existed in Spain, as confirmed by the last sentence. However, the fact that even this article, which talks about Spanish fashion made in Spain, uses French terms to describe the cane, for example “*gros ...jocós...suaré*” demonstrates that *afrancesamiento* was a political and cultural phenomenon that was hard to resist and control.

This need for French finery was explained by the editor under the same section (“Madrid”) in issue 6. He stated how hard it was to write about Spanish fashion, which was monotonous, boring and impoverished:

En Madrid apenas se puede llamar voluble a la moda [...] la moda en fin que conocemos por acá nada tiene de loca ni de inconstante. Siempre los mismos vestidos, siempre los mismos sombreros [...] Nada hay por lo tanto más difícil que pretender llenar las columnas de un periódico todas las semanas con nuevas observaciones de nuestras modas”. (“Madrid”, *Correo*, 07-08-1833, p. 46)

Even when there was something original and fresh seen on the streets of Madrid, it was characterized as “old fashion” that was already *passé* in Paris. In the same issue, the editor also gave tips about fashionable behavior, for example whispering about events in Portugal or “hacer ascos de la ópera” (“Madrid”, *Correo*, 07-08-1833, p. 47). Or “[p]ara los que hayan de salir a bañarse fuera de su casa no será malo advertir que están en voga *pour les gens comme il faut* los baños de la calle del Caballero de Gracia” (emphasis added, “Madrid”, *Correo*, 07-08-1833, p. 47).

The “Espectáculos públicos” section was one of the regular sections, which kept female readers informed about public spectacles in the city—*corridos*, theatres and other events. These were important, not only because of their cultural content, but above all because these were the events at which women were able to shine in their stylish Frenchified creations.

Obviously, *Correo de las Damas*, like *Periódico*, tried to offer a variety of content to its readers. This is confirmed by the articles on different topics such as local and foreign cultural events. However, as commented by Inmaculada Jiménez Morell, throughout its existence, *Correo* never diverged from its mission exposed in the first issue, which was the one of being “una típica revista de modas, frívola e intrascendente, dirigida a las señoras para amenizar su crónico aburrimiento” (1992:35). The section of the journal that surely influenced female readers the most—that they recapped on with their friends over tea or coffee—was the one about fashion. This was because the patriarchal societal structure emphasized and promoted fashion as safe content that women should embrace, so that there was no danger of women stepping into the male territory of power—those intellectual aspects of the public sphere, politics and the governing of the country. Fashion alone was supposed to satisfy a woman’s need for agency and self-fulfillment and keep her in the loop of domesticity. And to a certain point it did. However, there are literary examples that demonstrate otherwise, for example Benito Pérez Galdós’s *La de Bringas* (1884) and *Tormento* (1884). Galdós was one of the most famous critics of *afrancesamiento* and the influence of French fashion on Spanish middle-class women. His famous work *La de Bringas* offers an example of the moral degradation of women in its protagonist Rosalia de Bringas. Rosalía’s obsession with French garments, even though superficially liberating her from patriarchy and domestic control by her husband, leads her into prostitution and she loses the honor that she has so highly valued and fought for<sup>5</sup>.

## 5 Conclusions

In this paper we discussed the effect of Spanish fashion journals on diffusion of *afrancesamiento* and on women’s emancipation and progress in the nineteenth century. Even though the fact that women had their own kind of press could indicate a certain degree of progress, we commented on how the majority of journals for women had male editors and were carefully designed not to incite female agency or critical thinking. Instead, they explored light topics, mostly related to fashion and women’s domestic roles.

We focused on the influence of French fashion and customs as effected through the Spanish female press, which is a topic that had not been sufficiently researched before. We discussed how even though the imitation of French models allowed women a certain degree of freedom and creativity, it only deepened their enslavement to domesticity. Spanish women’s imitation of French models was superficial only. Women

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<sup>5</sup> See Marina Cuzovic-Severn’s article (2017) for more information about Galdós’s critique of *afrancesamiento* of fashion and customs in *La de Bringas*.

were still tied to the household and expected to be perfect mothers and wives; their new “hobby”, which consisted in following French fashion, creating outfits *a la francesa* and talking about it with their friends, did not contribute to their emancipation or personal growth. Instead, it created a new social expectation that needed to be met by women—to reproduce French high fashion impeccably in public. Therefore, it is not surprising that Spanish patriarchal structures supported and permitted the *afrancesamiento* of Spanish women through the press—as we point out, it became their ally in the preservation of control over women.

Our discussion was based on two fashion journals—the *Periódico de las Damas* and *Correo de las Damas*. The journals discussed are representative of typical fashion journals in Spain in the nineteenth century. This is confirmed by the similar content and structure of other early fashion journals for women, which also propagated French fashion and domesticity (for example, *El Té de las Damas* (1827), *La Moda o Recreo semanal del Bello Sexo* (1829-1831) and *El Buen Tono* (1839)) Therefore, even though this article is not based on an analysis of all early fashion journals of the period, our conclusions can be expressed in a comprehensive form.

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