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### WITNESS TO THE PENINSULAR WAR: SOPHIA BARNARD'S TRAVELS IN ANDALUSIA

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**ABSTRACT:** Drawing on several critical studies on travel writing, this article analyses the sections that Sophia Barnard devoted to Andalusia in her *Travels in Algeirs [sic], Spain, &c.*, published in London in the mid-1820s. Married to a merchant, Barnard spent over three years of her life abroad. She did not travel extensively in Andalusia, but her narrative is nevertheless a valuable testimony of the situation of the area during the Peninsular War. She visited Cádiz when it was under bombardment by the French in 1811, and a few months later she was in Algeciras on one of her husband's business trips. During her stay in Gibraltar she also recorded her impressions of the refugees in the British colony, being of particular interest her account of the epidemic that took many lives across the area in late 1812. Barnard uses the conventions of travel writing and the discourses of femininity and imperialism to portray Andalusia not as a Byronic Romantic land saturated with pleasurable experiences, but rather as a scenario full of perils and hardships where the Protestant female traveller may test her virtue as mother and wife, demonstrate her unwavering Christian faith, and also assert the supremacy of Great Britain. The same conventions enable her to justify her long residence in wartime Andalusia by fashioning herself before her readers not as a hedonistic female tourist in search of the picturesque but rather as a suffering traveller who has derived a spiritual benefit from her journeys in the area.

**KEYWORDS:** Sophia Barnard, women's travel writings, trope of the suffering traveller, British travellers in Spain, Peninsular War, General Ballesteros, Cádiz, Gibraltar.

#### **UN TESTIMONIO DE LA GUERRA DE LA INDEPENDENCIA: LOS VIAJES POR ANDALUCÍA DE SOPHIA BARNARD**

**RESUMEN:** Este trabajo parte de varios estudios críticos sobre la literatura de viajes para llevar a cabo un análisis de las secciones que Sophia Barnard dedicó a Andalucía en *Travels in Algeirs [sic], Spain, &c.*, publicado en Londres a mediados de la década de 1820. Casada con un comerciante, Barnard pasó más de tres años de su vida en el extran-

jero. No viajó mucho por Andalucía, pero su relato es sin embargo un valioso testimonio sobre la situación de la zona durante la Guerra de la Independencia. Visitó Cádiz cuando estaba bajo el bombardeo de los franceses en 1811 y unos meses más tarde estuvo en Algeciras en uno de los viajes de negocios de su marido. Durante su estancia en Gibraltar también registró sus impresiones de los refugiados en la colonia británica, siendo de particular interés su relato de la epidemia que causó muchas muertes en la zona a finales de 1812. Barnard utiliza las convenciones de la literatura de viajes y discursos femeninos e imperialistas para retratar Andalucía no como una tierra byroniana saturada de experiencias placenteras, sino más bien como un marco lleno de peligros y dificultades donde la viajera protestante puede probar su virtud como madre y esposa, demostrar su inquebrantable fe cristiana, y también afirmar la supremacía de Gran Bretaña. Las mismas convenciones le permiten justificar su larga residencia en Andalucía en tiempos de guerra presentándose ante sus lectores no como una turista hedonista en busca de lo pintoresco, sino como una sufrida viajera que ha obtenido un beneficio espiritual de sus viajes por esa zona.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Sophia Barnard, literatura de viajes escrita por mujeres, la imagen del sufrido viajero, viajeros británicos en España, Guerra de la Independencia, General Ballesteros, Cádiz, Gibraltar.

## 0. INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the 1820s, Thomas Goyder, a reverend of the New Jerusalem Church, used the print shop that he managed near the Strand, in London, to publish and sell a number of books mainly of religious nature intended for the diffusion of the spiritual tenets of his denomination.<sup>2</sup> There Goyder peddled not only translations of works by Emanuel Swedenborg, on whose visions the New Church was founded, but also sermons and treatises on the Swedish philosopher's thoughts that several ministers had penned for their congregations. He too printed a few assorted books and pamphlets on phrenology, child education and charitable conduct. One text, however, certainly differed from such a group of religious titles: a small, undated volume titled *Travels in Algeirs* [sic], *Spain, &c. &c. With a Faithful and Interesting Account of the Algerines*, which unfortunately has passed fairly unnoticed to this date.<sup>3</sup> Its author—whose identity remains hidden from the title page—was Sophia Barnard, a bold woman who relates with a compelling voice not only the journeys that she made abroad with her husband between 1811 and 1814 but also her fateful story as wife and mother. From a strictly chronological point of view, Barnard is a transitional figure in British women's travel writing. Like Hester Lynch Piozzi, Helen Maria Williams or Mary Wollstonecraft she still belongs, on the one hand, to the generation of female travellers who during the long eighteenth century began to travel abroad and adopted a public voice to narrate their journeys. On the other hand, she precedes the rich tradition of Victorian women travellers who a few

<sup>1</sup> This research has been funded by MICINN grant FFI2011-28728.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Goyder (1786-1849) began his pastoral duties in 1815 and for over a decade he held his services in London, combining his religious tasks with his printing activities. Later on, in 1833, he became minister in Norwich. For further information on his life and career, see Abbot (1849) and Goyder (1850).

<sup>3</sup> The only other known book issued from Goyder's press whose title and contents somehow resemble Barnard's travel narrative is Joshua Done's *Sufferings of a British Prisoner Lately arrived from France: with various anecdotes of the cruelty exercised by gendarmes on British captives* (1814).

decades later were to popularise a «Romantic» view of Spain.<sup>4</sup> Drawing on various critical perspectives and scholarly approaches to travel writing, the aim of this paper is to offer an analysis of the sections devoted to Andalusia in her book.

Sophia Barnard experienced what few British women of her age, confined as they were to their domestic spheres, could ever have imagined. She survived gales at high sea, entered places forbidden to western male travellers, saw the evils of slavery, felt the tremors of an earthquake and witnessed a military siege, to name only a few of the episodes dealt with in her book. But she also suffered the absence of her son, whom she had left in England under the care of close relatives, and endured the professional incompetence of her husband, whose business schemes almost invariably failed. It is difficult to ascertain whether her text was received above all as an edifying story redolent with traditional female values, as an adventurous travelogue, or perhaps as both things at the same time, but be that as it may, it illustrates the penchant that readers of Romantic-era travel books had for the pervasive literary trope of the misadventurer or, to use Carl Thompson's terms, «the suffering traveller». Accounts with protagonists that survived shipwrecks, famine, disease and other misfortunes were frequent in Barnard's time and, thanks to their providentialist frameworks, readers «absorbed in diverse ways the lessons that hardships and dangers might be the means by which a traveller was impelled on a spiritual journey far more important than the physical journey being undertaken» (Thompson, 2007: 82).

Barnard's book, though comprising only 140 pages, is full of absorbing information. About one third of it narrates her voyage to Algiers, including brief visits to Cádiz; another contains her observations on the Algerines; and finally the rest is devoted to her residence in Gibraltar and her excursions to the neighbouring towns of Algeciras and San Roque. The sections on Algiers alone would suffice to justify the recovery of her narrative, for she focuses on a country hardly discussed in other contemporary women's travel writings, and describes gendered spaces usually barred to men.<sup>5</sup> The book analyzes with detail the public and domestic position of the local women as well as the daily life of the international residents in Algiers. It also examines the pitiful situation of the foreign sailors captured by Algerine corsairs, the cruel punishments inflicted by the Dey, or the denigrating treatment to which the Jewish community was subjected, among many other aspects. The months Barnard spent in Algiers signified a cultural shock for her and the discovery of things unimaginable to a British woman of her class: «It was in Algiers I first felt the fascinating powers of variety, obtaining an irresistible ascendancy over my astonished mind», she confesses (138). Yet, equally prominent in her narrative is the time she spent in the Peninsula during the Peninsular War, a conflict that, as Diego Saglia has remarked, «brought the country back to the attention of historical, political and cultural commentators in Britain» (2000: 11). It is for this reason that instead of studying Barnard's *Travels* vis-à-vis other contemporary British representations of the Orient, this article will focus on her impressions of Spain, which are fully circumscribed to Andalusia.

Barnard neither travelled extensively there nor wrote profusely about it, but her commentaries are nevertheless especially relevant because they provide an invaluable

<sup>4</sup> This tradition includes such famous travellers as Isabella Romer, Dora Quillinan, Louisa Tenison, Lady Herbert, Annie Harvey and Matilda Betham-Edwards, only to name a few. It has been studied by Egea (2010), López Burgos (2004) and Carrera (2006), but none of them cites Barnard's book. The only monograph that very briefly refers to it is Blanca Krauel's *Viajeros británicos en Andalucía de Christopher Hervey a Richard Ford (1760-1845)*.

<sup>5</sup> Not long after Barnard's *Travels in Algiers*, another account on Algeria written by a British woman was Elizabeth Broughton's *Six Years Residence in Algiers* (1839). Both books do what Meyda Yegenoglu has stated apropos Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's famous Turkish letters, that is, they «supplement the [male] Orientalist's lack» (1998: 69). For more information on British writings on Algeria, women travellers and Orientalism see Bencherif (1997), Lewis (1996) and Nittel (1998).

testimony to the situation of Cádiz and the campo de Gibraltar area during the Peninsular War at a time when few British women ventured into Spain and even fewer recorded their experiences.<sup>6</sup> The journals that Lady Holland kept during her two visits in Spain (1802-1805 and 1808-1809) are certainly better known and infinitely more complete in terms of political information and social gossip, yet they were published in the early twentieth century. By contrast, Barnard's *Travels* came out a decade after the end of the conflict, at a time when «memories of the Peninsular War still functioned as a blueprint for interpretations of Spain» (Saglia, 2000: 24). Barnard's book obviously did not offer the same wealth of information as the memoirs, letters and journals of war veterans, but it contributed to the renewal of British interest in a country that had recently seen how the Hundred Thousand Sons of Saint Louis—the French army corps sent by the Holy Alliance—had crushed its constitutional regime.<sup>7</sup> Any backward glance at the years of the victorious British campaigns in the Peninsula was certainly welcomed, and Barnard's *Travels* had things to tell about it. In June of 1811, she had witnessed the bombing of Cádiz by the besieging French troops, and a year later she saw the destruction caused by the invaders in Algeciras. Moreover, as a resident in Gibraltar between September 1811 and August 1814, she also recorded her impressions of the number of refugees entering the British colony or the arrival of Spanish troops, being of particular interest her account of the epidemic that claimed many lives across the area in late 1813.<sup>8</sup> Barnard's goal, however, was not to portray Spain as a romantic paradise where the British traveller could roam freely, but quite the contrary, to show that the perils and hardships experienced during her years there constituted, on the one hand, trials to test her virtue as mother and wife, and served, on the other hand, to demonstrate her unwavering Christian faith in the face of adversity. Although potentially pleasurable and exotic, the Andalusia represented in Barnard's *Travels* is a place affected by war and disease, a rather dramatic backdrop where the bravery and resilience of the suffering female traveller can be tested and asserted.

### 1. SOPHIA BARNARD: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Before we examine Sophia Barnard's narrative, however, let us first shed some light on her personality. Even though little is known of her life, a number of facts alluded to in her travel narrative make it possible to vaguely sketch her profile. To begin with, neither her maiden name nor her age can be fully ascertained, and it is also difficult to prove whether at some point in her life she was a member of the New Jerusalem Church. Her presence among the list of Goyder's eminently religious authors as well as her openly abolitionist opinions, common to this denomination, might suggest so, but there is no certainty of that.<sup>9</sup> Yet, she affirms that she had three brothers, and that like Lord Nelson—one of the

<sup>6</sup> Barnard's text is surprisingly absent from the surge of publications that commemorated the bicentennial of the Peninsular War. Neither Fletcher (2001) nor Santacara (2005) include her in their surveys of British eyewitness accounts of this conflict, and only Helena Fernández (2009) merely lists her in passing. Likewise, none of the essays dealing with different aspects of the Peninsular War in Andalusia collected in Cuenca Toribio (2009) or Aguilar Gavilán (2008) mention her book.

<sup>7</sup> Ferdinand VII put an end to the Liberal Triennium and restored his absolute power in October of 1823. Barnard's book, echoing some of Ferdinand VII's recent policies, was probably published between 1824-1826.

<sup>8</sup> Two other British travellers that were in Cádiz during the French siege were Frederick William Trench and Edward Hawke Locker. For travellers on Cádiz, see De las Cuevas (1974). The list of British travellers in Gibraltar is certainly long; useful approaches to some of the most conspicuous travellers may be found in Krauel (1984: 403-438), Sánchez Mantero (1985; 1989) and Dorao (1989).

<sup>9</sup> Barnard displays on several occasions her anti-slavery stance. For example, she is shocked by the stories of several westerners captured in Algiers: «I shuddered, as a daughter of freedom must do, on hearing such a tale. It reminded me of an antipathy in childhood [...] I was told, that in every lump of sugar I drank in my tea, I should

British military heroes she praises in her book— she was a native of Norfolk.<sup>10</sup> Although on one occasion she states that she was «reared amongst flocks and herds» (110), she likely resided in or around the coastal town of West Yarmouth, near Norwich, also mentioned in her book. This town was during this period an important commercial port with an influential social class of traders, which could account for her marriage to a merchant. Her beliefs and commonsensical attitude further suggest that she was educated as befitting any young middle-class woman of the Regency era, that is, combining Christian values and domestic skills, whereas her diction and style demonstrate readings of both a pious and sentimental nature. The straight quotations she provides from the Scriptures as well as the allusions to authors like Sterne, Goldsmith, Goethe and Dr. Johnson that she intersperses in her narrative betray this assimilated bourgeois literary background. Yet, no evidence indicates that she ever read any of the British travel accounts on Spain available by then.

In 1803 she married a certain Mr. Barnard, a merchant, with whom a year later she had a son named Davenport, but nothing is known of their early life together. In the spring of 1811, having left her son in the care of relatives, she reluctantly accompanied her husband to Algiers, where they resided for approximately two months. Then the Barnards proceeded to Gibraltar, which was to become their home for three years (1811-1814). In the British colony she lived for many months alone, as her husband temporarily left her to run some mysterious business in Cádiz. We do not know whether the kind of affairs he was involved in were of a sentimental, political or commercial nature. She once laments that «[w]hen he wrote, haste dictated his letters, and mystery sealed them» (101), and on another occasion she observes that whenever she questioned her husband «mystery and equivocation were all that was offered for an apology» (115). Be that as it may, her narrative expresses with sadness and preoccupation her solitary position as a female in a place full of soldiers and would-be adventurers. Sophia Barnard returned to Britain in August of 1814 accompanied by some friends while her husband was on a business trip to Goteborg (Sweden). There is no evidence as to whether he returned to Britain, was lost at sea or simply abandoned them, but from the narrative it may be inferred that during the ensuing years she became gradually poorer, since she dramatically describes herself as «a child of affliction, who has been hurled from the summit of independence to the vale of poverty» (31). A further blow occurred during this period: in 1824 her 20-year-old son died, leaving her in a state of depression from which only the cathartic power of writing could save her. Her friends, she says, «persuasively begged of her to employ her talents in a way best calculated to chase a sorrow that had taken deep root in her maternal breast» (v), and she acquiesced. The result was *Travels in Algeirs [sic], Spain, &c.*, a text that, full as it is of painful recollections and dark thoughts, became nonetheless a therapy to heal her depressed spirits. The rest of her life is shrouded in obscurity: there is no extant information about the circumstances of her death and her place of burial remains unknown.

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swallow the tear of a negro! From that hour to this, I could never prevail on myself to drink it in that beverage. This account of slavery often embittered my comforts during my residence in Barbary» (44).

<sup>10</sup> Near Cape Trafalgar, Barnard exclaims: «Here I thought on England's Naval hero, Lord Nelson! It was here the laurel decked, for the last time, his manly brow! It was here he fell, amidst the shouts of victory! — peace be to his departed brave spirit! A tear bedewed my eye, while I mused upon his lamented fate. Norfolk was the Hero's birth place; it was also mine» (14).

## 2. BARNARD'S NARRATIVE STRATEGIES

Both the Preface and the opening paragraphs provide significant discursive cues to gauge the scope of Barnard's narrative. She opens her *Travels* with a *captatio* where, resorting to some of the rhetorical conventions used by other contemporary women travel writers, she belittles her accomplishments and appeals for leniency (Foster, 1990: 20). For example, she manifests her uneasiness at presenting her «humble work» before the «Enlightened British public» and also —by means of the distance gained through the rhetorical use of the third-person pronoun— she further affirms that she does not have «any aspirations after fame» and that «as an Authoress, she has no pretensions» (III). Leaving aside fame, she instead compellingly claims that she has adopted a public voice for two reasons. Firstly, to praise the glory of God in gratitude for having favoured England and having saved her life in many of the close shaves she experienced abroad.<sup>11</sup> And secondly, to enact a public service by telling «a plain, unvarnished tale» full of information that no other travellers have collected before (III). She explains that in order to do so «she kept a regular journal, from her departure till her return to her native land» where «she culled even *minutia*» (IV). Barnard, who believes that her book lacks elegance, nevertheless asserts that «it boasts for truth for its foundation» and that readers will find in it «morality and amusement» (III). Aware of the «constraints of reception» (Mills, 1991: 110–115) that the patriarchal culture of her time still held over women's travel writings, she does not wish to be regarded as a chatty narrator nor as a travel liar, hence her constant preoccupation with the veracity of her account.<sup>12</sup> Such statements in effect demonstrate that Barnard, despite her not being a professional writer, was cognizant of the main narrative conventions characteristic of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century travel literature (Batten, 1978: 47–81). In addition to moral reflections, truthfulness and entertainment, these conventions above all demanded a delicate balance between personal information and a detailed record of the things seen.

The beginning of Barnard's *Travels* also contains several audience cues that permit us to see how the authoress forges her class and gender identity before the readers. For instance, she clarifies early on that the text was written for «a select few» (VI) composed of «superior and most enlightened countrymen and countrywomen» (IV), to use her own words, and that one of its purposes was to thank them for the psychological and financial support that they had given her under recent dire circumstances. The constant references to domestic and feminine topics that one finds throughout the book, together with the moments of tearful sentimentalism that pervade certain episodes, nevertheless suggest that the implied readers of this travelogue were largely female. The reminders that she addresses to them regarding the propriety of her actions and her strict adherence to the basic codes of feminine demeanour certainly seem to support this. One of the strategies that women travellers adopted to validate their apparently «self-pleasing» sojourns abroad, Shirley Foster claims, was their appeal to proper ends that «could be related to current notions of womanhood», hence the presence in their writings of «pious

<sup>11</sup> She uses a similar strategy to win the readers' approval in the closing sentence of her narrative: «Should the recital of my observations in foreign countries be so fortunate as to meet with the approval or sympathy of my readers, the glow of gratitude would indeed warm the bosom of the humble AUTHORESS» (140).

<sup>12</sup> An excellent example of this attitude is the clear statement of purposes that she provides shortly after her arrival in Algiers: «As my intention is to keep to nature, whatever I advance, may, by the most fastidious, be believed: for I would not commit myself so unwarrantably as to *impose a falsehood* on an enlightened mind — first, because I am aware that although such may never have visited the places I have undertaken to describe, their travelling friends and faithful historians would be able to detect imposition; and secondly, because my favourite motto, "Truth is light", shall never be tarnished by my misrepresentations» (33).

reminders that they are essentially doing what God and family are asking of them» (1990: 9). Following one's husband, even if that involved such an unmotherly action as leaving behind one's son, was definitely for Barnard one of such womanly duties. The words she uses to justify her journeys and long residence abroad at the beginning of the first chapter are quite indicative of the importance that she assigns to her self-representation in her book:

I considered my duty as a wife of such a nature, as to require my attendance, under any and all circumstances, on a husband whose fate I had vowed to share, notwithstanding that his views of the future but ill accorded with my own. His mercantile enterprises were rash as his calculations were fallacious, requiring no prophetic eye to foretell their future failure: still I determined to share his fortune although I foresaw the miseries I must encounter, the recollection of which even now moistens my paper with a tear. But I will endeavour, for a time, to forget my private sorrows, and awaken in my readers feelings of a different kind, assuring them, that I introduce nothing to their notice that I cannot authenticate, and very little that I have not witnessed (1).

Sophia Barnard's book is then on one level one woman's effort to give an accurate account of all the things that she witnessed abroad. But most importantly, on another, it is a literary expression of the struggle of a woman against all the different odds that she has met in her travels, and her attempt to move women to follow her example of dutiful sacrifice in the private and public sphere. Different models of womanhood seem to be at stake in this text, but the role that Barnard adopts, oscillating between the images of the distressed mother and the resourceful wife, is always that of the suffering traveller. That is the reason why in her Preface she presents herself, both literally and metaphorically, as a Christian penitent who has survived «a painful pilgrimage» (III), much in the vein of the narrators of many Puritan spiritual autobiographies who allegorically retold their lives as a journey full of ups and downs on earth leading to a blissful termination in a heavenly paradise.

### 3. CÁDIZ, AN UNEXPECTED DESTINATION

The circumstances that first took Sophia Barnard to Spain were coincidental. She and her husband left England on May 12, 1811, bound for Algiers, on a ship that also carried Mr. Archibald Dalzel, former governor of Cape Coast Castle (Ghana). This elderly man, who was travelling with his family to visit his son, a Vice-Consul in Algiers, struck an immediate friendship with Mrs. Barnard, who during the voyage sometimes treated him almost like a sort of surrogate father.<sup>13</sup> «[B]eing in the society of the venerable Mr. Archibald, the hours passed pleasantly away», she notes, because he told jokes, stories and even «related several anecdotes of Dr. Johnson, to whom, in his early years he had been introduced» (5). However, what originally was meant to be a swift passage to Algiers becomes an eventful voyage. They braved several dangerous storms near Plymouth, in the Bay of Biscay and off the coast of Galicia, and their convoy was scattered twice, increasing the risk of being attacked by hostile French battleships. Further on their ship was becalmed,

<sup>13</sup> For further information on Archibald Dalzel see Akinjogbin (1966). Dalzel was a Scottish slave trader remembered today for his *History of Dahomey* (1793), a pro-slavery work yet full of invaluable data about the traditions of the area now known as Benin. Barnard refers to him as a man with «a liberal education, polished manners, great knowledge of the world, and an inexhaustible fund of interesting and agreeable anecdote» (2).

and a few days later unfavourable winds redressed its course, so that instead of calling at Gibraltar, where the captain expected to make a brief landing, finally the first foreign city that Sophia Barnard would reach after a month at high sea was Cádiz.

Barnard and her companions sighted Cádiz in early June of 1811, just when the city was being bombed, but neither she nor the other passengers landed. Instead, they expectantly contemplated the military operations from the deck of their ship. Barnard's first reaction on seeing the «immense columns of smoke» issuing from Cádiz does not convey, paradoxical as it may seem, an exclamation of distress but rather a feeling of aesthetic enjoyment. Liberated from the constraints of the home, Barnard, instead of assuming the socially sanctioned role of the frail lady in need of security, styles herself as a fearless onlooker. «Nothing, I thought, could exceed the beauties of this midnight scene; we were in a fine climate, weather fair, the moon and stars shining with peculiar lustre, while at every interval of a few minutes we were presented with showers of artificial light hurled with destructive violence and intent towards the bay and town of Cádiz», she exclaims, further adding in a poetical manner that «war's dire messengers were on their errands of destruction. A kind of breathless calm (broken only at intervals by the deep sounds of hostile weapons) rendered the stillness most imposing!» (12). Barnard, as these lines manifest, treats the Peninsular War almost as an imagined rather than as a real affair. Using a vocabulary that combines awe and wonder, she places the scene within the discursive framework of the sublime and demonstrates her capacity to appropriate traditionally male aesthetic categories that, as Elizabeth Bohls has shown, several other women travel writers had also re-examined during the long eighteenth century (1995: 3). Equally important here is the fact that her position as a woman travel writer required what Carl Thompson has said apropos this genre, that is, «not so much academic or factual knowledge, but rather an intensity of personal response» (2011: 185). Emotions and impressions were the trademark of women's travel accounts, but Barnard challenged those boundaries imposed on women, as we shall see, by providing more than mere aesthetic responses.

These first impressions of Cádiz, for all their aesthetic power, become nevertheless a sort of fleeting vision experienced from afar; they have to be contrasted to her account of the real destruction suffered by the city, but she did not set foot on it until many days later. Their ship, in an attempt to move away from the bombing of Cádiz, tried to proceed towards Gibraltar, but unfavourable winds sent it to Cape Trafalgar and then back there. Finally, on June 10, 1811, they dropped anchor in front of the city. Even though the Barnards and the other passengers remained most of the time on their «floating abode» (19), as the author humorously calls it, during the fortnight that they spent there they had the opportunity to visit Cádiz at least on four occasions. Aware that this meant a great opportunity to broaden her horizons, Barnard, with a zest not often expected of contemporary women, affirms:

I too soon learned that in spite of my love for peace, I was fixed in the seat of war, as at Esla, not seven miles from Cádiz, a French army had taken up its abode. This I thought an interesting epoch of my life, for certainly I was not beyond the reach of danger; to wit, a bomb, or a shell, would sometimes whiz over the bay, and fall upon the town, which in its besieged state, had its pavement taken up, and dust, ankle deep, laid plentifully about. Under all these circumstances, a curiosity so natural to woman, created in me a desire to visit that town (16).



There is no doubt that a certain degree of exhilaration and love of risk pervade this affirmation. Yet, since entering the scenario of war could signify treading on masculine ground, Barnard carefully rephrases her statement and assigns her longing for hazardous experiences to «curiosity», a term clearly gendered here, yet one that in Romantic-era travel books could entail, in Nigel Leask's words, the «inclination to knowledge» permitting the «articulation of foreign singularities» (2002: 2). Leo Hamalian has noted that from their travels abroad eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women «brought back a powerful commodity — knowledge» (xi). Barnard's desire to know and discover new things is therefore justified before her readers in spite of the risks she ran in the several visits she was to pay to Cádiz.

The military operations of the Peninsular War in Andalusia were in a sort of deadlock when Barnard visited the bay of Gibraltar. The British Navy controlled the coast, facilitating the deployment of troops, whereas on land many guerrilla units and the army of General Ballesteros kept disturbing the French supply lines. Marshal Soult had retreated to Seville but the siege of Cádiz that Marshal Victor had laid since February 5, 1810, still continued. Barnard mentions that in Cádiz «politics was the rage» and that all the time the men around her talked about «a promiscuous mixture» of subjects that included «Lord Wellington, Bonaparte, French Army in ambush, Spanish grandees fled to Seville; Madrid and Cádiz nearly deserted; the English ships of war waiting a departing order, &c. &c» (16). The confusion raised in her mind by these multiple subjects was so puzzling that, as she observes, «I had not time to call my scattered thoughts home to judge of what was passing; but seeing so many English ships of all descriptions near me, lulled my fears» (17). During this phase of the siege that Barnard witnessed, the French tried to frighten the local citizens by bombing irregularly at night.<sup>14</sup> There were few casualties and in practical terms the everyday life of the city was not affected, especially because the British blockade maintained it open to the sea, thus fostering the presence of political refugees and permitting a constant supply of goods (Solís, 1987: 114). The Cortes, the *de facto* governing body of Spain in opposition to Napoleon's imposed brother, Joseph I, had assembled in Cádiz in 1810 and deputies from all over Spain and its overseas territories drafted the first Spanish constitution in 1812. Unfortunately, Sophia Barnard does not provide any commentaries about this momentous event in her book.

From the secure vantage point that the deck of her ship afforded her, Barnard not only witnessed how the French regularly bombed Cádiz from its suburbs but also imagined a city that occasionally would not match what she found during her trips ashore. The besieged Cádiz she visited was an overpopulated place where the lack of certain supplies had naturally increased prices. It was also a place where spies, refugees, politicians and all sorts of people shared the little space available. In her first visit Barnard was both attracted to and shocked by the market, «the effluvia of which was beyond all description», and the abandoned aspect of many of the houses, including the rich ones, where one could find «even in the front rooms, donkeys, pigs, mules, poultry, dogs and cats, and the people appeared quite at home with such associates» (17). The main street —to which in an attempt to bring closer to her readers she renames the «local Bond Street»— she found equally disadvantaged, since many of the shop windows in it were

<sup>14</sup> Alberto Ramos Santana summarises the effect of the French bombings on Cádiz with the following words: «Sin embargo, pese a la situación de temor vivida en algunos instantes el balance total de los bombardeos llama la atención: del 16 de marzo de 1810 al 25 de agosto de 1812, los franceses lanzaron 15.531 proyectiles, de los que sólo llegaron a Cádiz 534. Hay que concluir, por tanto, que estos proyectiles tuvieron poca influencia en la vida de la ciudad, y menos en los edificios. En cuanto a víctimas, parece ser que, durante los treinta meses y veinte días que duró el asedio, únicamente murieron en Cádiz entre doce o catorce personas a resultas de las bombas francesas» (1992: 175).

«thinly furnished» (17). This overall state of depression into which Cádiz had apparently fallen is also emphasised by her contemplation of two ladies who, in spite of having «an air of style and rank», sat at the balcony of a handsome mansion delousing each other (18). Barnard, unlike the male travel writers of her age, who would have probably represented them as exotic objects of desire, depicts them sympathetically as equals who are suffering and share similar gender concerns with her.

Barnard's portrait of the old Spanish aristocracy she saw in Cádiz is not very favourable and conveys some of the prejudices against the Spaniards long used by the British, for whom the quintessential Spanish, far from being a paragon of industry and taste, was a pompous individual only intent on the proud ostentation of his rank. She narrates, for example, that during her walk «a chariot, English builded [sic], drawn by two half-starved mules» passed near them carrying a postillion, and that she saw «a fat Spanish Lady, a General's wife» who was closely followed by a phaeton conveying a Spanish grandee «dressed in all the pomp of Spanish pride, headed by such a cocked hat as John Bull would stop to laugh at» (18). These opinions would not have sounded altogether strange in a city that in the years prior to the war had boasted a solid commercial bourgeoisie which, apart from controlling most of the local affairs, frowned upon parasitical aristocrats (Solís, 1987: 66). Uttered by a British woman, however, they become particularly meaningful as they evince the author's co-optation of British (masculine) political discourses on foreign lands and peoples. Another aspect of the Spanish aristocracy that Barnard strongly disapproves of is their unpatriotic behaviour in times of war.<sup>15</sup> Of the several unfavourable anecdotes related to the aristocracy that were related to her, she particularly mentions the case of several of its members who passed information about the British troops to their enemies by means of a secret code. «If this is Spanish gratitude, I have no faith in it» (23), she complains. Even though she subsequently clarifies that «[t]his duplicity might, perhaps arise from a desire to soften the rigours of the captive Ferdinand, or to appease the wrath of Bonaparte!» (23), the negative image of the nobility is nevertheless stated, thus indirectly hinting at an idea deeply rooted among the British public, namely, that the liberation of the Peninsula had been above all a British affair rather than the continuous martial effort of the Spanish nobility.

Amusements, customs and religious practices constitute some of the other commonplaces of British travel writing on Spain that Barnard also explores in her account. Early nineteenth-century Protestant travellers often criticised the excessive ornamentation of the Catholic churches and the enormous riches accumulated inside them, which made a striking contrast to the beggars loitering outside. They also frowned upon what they considered to be the superstitious idolatry of images, and attacked the morality of the priests, who were stereotyped as libidinous men with a full control over their parishioners' minds. Barnard is no exception to that. In Cádiz she finds the churches «gaudily decorated» and implicitly denounces the presence of too many priests and confessors on the street, all of them «very handsome men» albeit with «a roving vivacity in their eyes that ill accords with the sanctity of their dresses» (19). Likewise, on a subsequent visit, she and her friends enter a church where a man shows them an image of the Virgin Mary with «velvet, satin gold, silver, and jewels» that looks to her like «an opera dancer» or a

<sup>15</sup> Charles Vaughan, in a letter to Lord and Lady Holland, also criticises the Spanish aristocrats: «I do not think that the nobility of this country have much claim upon the people. They were slow to take up arms and they would have formed the levee of Bonaparte, as they had formed that of the Prince of the Peace, had not the just indignation and noble efforts of the most virtuous people in the world driven them to defend their country» (cited in Holland: 412).

«gew-gaw idol» (24).<sup>16</sup> She also comments on the theatrical life of the city, affirming for example that the Spanish theatre is fine, but the French one is «rather better» and the opera-house is «tolerably good» (20). After the performances she notes how the locals followed the custom of promenading on the alameda till midnight, which provided her with a great opportunity to appreciate the rituals of courtship and serenading that take place «in the still hour of the night» (20). Another local custom that she scrutinises is the way of burying the dead. «The corpse of a grandee is dressed in all the pomp of earthly grandeur; their faces are exposed to the gaze of the followers until arrived at the grave», she remarks, whereas «[t]he common class look more like friars and nuns in their death habiliments» (21). Both the spaces of sociability and everyday rituals that she describes reveal her interest in showing that, despite the war, the civilian population carried on with their normal life and tried to remain as alien as possible to the conflagration that was raging beyond its walls.

The price that Cádiz had to pay for remaining free and open was nevertheless high. She also renders an image of it as an impoverished, melancholy place where unexpected risks lurk behind the feigned calmness the visitors encounter, and she wishes to highlight an atmosphere of permanent risk —no matter how occasional the threats may be— on a dangerous ground, thus vindicating the bravery of the British woman in a land that apart from picturesque scenes also promised bombs, explosions and thrilling experiences. This is true of the following account of one of her trips ashore:

I felt an unusual regret to see this ancient city looking so desolate, so deserted. It stands on an island, and a narrow canal separates it from the continent; over this is a bridge, well fortified. The harbour and bay are fine, and well defended by several forts. Cádiz is the central mart for Spanish American commerce. House rent and provisions were far from cheap. I was astonished to hear, that though this climate and soil were admirable, yet they produced but little grain. The pastures, vineyards, fruit, vegetables and wines were excellent. When the French firing commenced, we hastened to the ship, but not before a bomb fell close by Mr. B. who was at a short distance behind us, in conversation with an English merchant; a splinter touched him without doing any harm» (21).

Another one of the visits that Barnard paid to Cádiz, instead of casting this sense of fear, provided her with a good opportunity to exhibit a jingoistic discourse meant to assert her national identity. Barnard explains that on a certain occasion the city was cheered by the presence of «Admirals Pellew and Legge, General Gwynne and lady, with their officers, chaplains, &c.», a situation that, as she puts it, «brought the principal Spaniards, &c. on the Allameida [sic]» (24).<sup>17</sup> Seeing side by side these dignitaries from both countries, she compares the leading classes of both Britain and Spain, and the outcome offers no doubt to her: «I thought those of my “native land,” appeared to best advantage. The Dons looked queer, when the Donnas involuntarily exclaimed, “*Bravo English!*” “*Good English!*” “*Bonaparte’s fighters, bravo!*”» (24). These nationalistic outbursts are in fact common throughout Barnard’s book and far from being an anomaly evidence

<sup>16</sup> Barnard is equally critical of the Spanish church and the Catholic practices in Gibraltar: «They have at Gibraltar a large Spanish church, but like those at Cadiz, they denote more of pomp than pure religion habiliments» (90).

<sup>17</sup> Sir Edward Pellew became Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet from 1811 to 1814; Rear Admiral Arthur K. Legge acted as Commander-in-Chief of the British fleet at Cádiz in late 1811–1812; Major-General Gwynne was the commander of a cavalry regiment and had fought at the Battle of Corunna.

how women's travel narratives, despite their feminine agendas, also gradually incorporated the rhetoric of male British imperialist discourses into their pages (Mills, 1991: 3). When the Barnards left Cádiz on June 26, 1811, to resume their voyage to Algiers, they made a brief stop at Gibraltar that served Sophia to celebrate again the glories of Britain:

I arose early to take a view of this celebrated spot — it looked beautiful! The garrison was well filled with the military, and no wonder, at this interesting season of the war. Here I thought I should be safe, under the protection of the numerous guns that peeped in every direction, nook, and corner; and with so many guardians of my country, as the town and bay contained, who could fear? (26).

The constant praise of Britain and its cultural and military supremacy is one of the major discourses embedded in Barnard's *Travels*, and it is important because it directly contributes to the writer's self-empowerment. If, as a domestic subject, Barnard must accept a subaltern position, adopting the roles of wife, mother, and daughter, in sum, of a woman, as a British citizen abroad she can take pride in the civilizing role of her nation and the victorious role it played in the Peninsular War.

#### 4. WARTIME RESIDENCE IN GIBRALTAR

When the Barnards returned to Andalusia in early September 1811 after their two-month sojourn in Algiers the Peninsular War was still raging and making travel inland to other parts of Spain unsafe. They found Gibraltar, where they landed, to be more crowded than it had been a few months earlier due to the number of refugees who had fled from San Roque and other neighbouring towns. Barnard's description of what she saw upon her arrival provides her again with a good excuse to praise the British military power:

We came here under similar circumstances to those on our reaching Cadiz, as a *French army* had taken up their station in the suburbs of St. Roque, which pretty little town being evacuated by its inhabitants, accounted for the increase of population under «John Bull's» proudly waving banners at Gibraltar. Those who could not get lodgings on shore, were glad to live in tents, under the protection of our guns. Having a much better view of the enemy here than I had at Cadiz, I had used early and late, to take a peep at them; when the first gun fired at dawn I would rise to watch the movements of the French and Spaniards. About seven o'clock the Dons on the Spanish ground would meet, consult, and mount their horses; then off they would sally towards the mountains just behind St. Roque, from which down towards the sea, were fragments of old walls; these screened alike the offenders and defenders, whose skirmishes generally ended in the return of the unsuccessful Dons (86).

The author, as she had done upon her arrival at Cádiz, describes the skirmishes at San Roque almost as a spectacle or a theatrical affair. From the security that distance provides, she describes the battling troops as if they were antagonistic Lilliputian characters, but her voyeurism soon meets the reality of the war. In one of the occasions during which she accompanied her husband to do business in Algeciras, she found this city badly destroyed, as the following lines reveal:

[...] and a lamentable sight it was, for in every direction were seen the horrors of war. The affrighted families were tottering under their burdens, of bedding, cooking utensils, children, the aged and infirm. I could not stop but to moralize on this scene of havoc and of woe! [...] This place is small, but it has a fine square in which are some handsome houses. The few that had inmates, were either inns, fruit shops, or confectioners. In some of the streets were lying dead dogs and boreekars [sic] (donkeys) which from their swelled state, appeared to have been poisoned. Whilst we were resting at an hotel, a sudden rumour that «the French are coming!» spread alarm, and hurried us on board (87).

In the spring of the following year, however, she would return to Algeciras accompanied by some friends to find that the town had changed considerably. «This place had assumed a different aspect, for the families had returned to it, and it was the favourite resort of the army and navy heroes. A large billiard room was generally filled» (103), she writes. On this very occasion she could also appreciate the beauty and social skills of the Andalusian women, personified by a mother and a daughter who entertained their British guests with songs played to the tune of a guitar and a pianoforte. «They were attired in rich, black silk dresses, with rows of fringe above the knees: a sprig of myrtle decorated their dark, glossy locks; their hands and arms were perfect symmetry», says Barnard. But more importantly, she adds that «[t]heir hospitality was unaffected, their polite attentions sincere», thus evidencing that «[t]he minds of these ladies had been cultivated with much care» (104). Over the next decades, these highly idealised descriptions of the local beauties were to become part of many British romantic travel books on Spain to symbolise the seductive power of the Other; here, however, they stand as an allegory of a country at ease, open to foreigners and capable of putting aside the tragedies of the war.

The chapters of Barnard's *Travels* that cover her residence of nearly three years in Gibraltar do not always focus, however, on war-related episodes, but rather on a mixture of private and public affairs related to her. The Barnards finally managed to obtain accommodation and start a domestic life there in early October of 1811. These new circumstances, combined to the fact that Mr. Barnard's business trips afforded his wife with freedom to investigate the place, temporarily enhance the cheerfulness of the account. The narrative pays attention to a wide variety of subjects ranging from the multiethnic composition of the colony to the women's dresses and hairstyles, or from the religious mores of the residents to the eccentric characters of the colony, but one of the first episodes described is the arrival of General Ballesteros's army, which was there to join a British attack against the French. This moment, another inevitable reminder of the war, provides Barnard with further evidence to charge her book with a strong nationalistic discourse. «Our military heroes were drawn up in a style becoming the British nation: there were several Generals among them» (88), she begins, immediately producing a belittling description of the Spanish troops:

As the foreign army was large, they passed through in portions at a time. A something like national pride swelled in my bosom, as I gazed on the contrast before me: neat as print, in even lines, appeared England's warriors. Then passed by the *motley army* of Spain, headed by their renowned chief: some without shoes, out at elbows and knees, threadbare, front and rear; some bearing *gridirons*, *fryingpans*, *kettles*, &c. For a moment I smiled, but pity checked me, for I ought not to have lost sight of the cause of this grotesque appearance. Ballasteros [sic] and his followers had braved the hardships of a long campaign, and were now destined to fight the

enemy in view. On their descending the steps leading to the place of embarkation, there laid pantaloons, shoes, &c. for their acceptance (88).

Even though, as we can see, Barnard also mildly applauds the resilience of the Spanish troops, the contrast between the poorly outfitted Spaniards and Britain's heroic «warriors» no doubt reinforces the jingoistic discourse of her *Travels*. However, in a text that seems to be committed to presenting the female traveller as a suffering pilgrim, this type of episodes full of self-assurance, optimism and national pride are soon juxtaposed with others where dangers and bad forebodings abound.

Barnard's book relates the hardships suffered in Gibraltar not only by the refugees who were trying to flee from towns and cities ravaged by the Peninsular War but also by local residents like herself. Particularly dramatic is the account she provides of the landslide that took place in November of 1811, during a terrible storm that killed over thirty refugees from San Roque sheltered in tents. Her relation begins with a description of the storm full of romantic diction linked to the aesthetic category of the sublime:

The aspect of the atmosphere was rendered truly horrific! At three o'clock we sat down to take some refreshment; in the midst of which a dreadful flash of lightning burst over our heads, followed by a most tremendous clap of thunder: the electric fluid ran up my knife, which I suddenly covered with the table cloth, and on raising my eyes they rested on the signal tower (facing me) on the top of the rock, which was at that instant struck by lightning and parted, one half rolled down the frightful precipice, and the other stood the shattered memento of the nightly storm. I ran to the windows behind me, the agitated sea was furiously roaring to the vehemence of the terrible tempest: it was a scene sublimely awful and overwhelming. When night came on, its gloom added to the terrors! we dared not go to bed, lest the house might fall: we assembled in one room in dismal silence (90).

Barnard, almost as if she were writing a Gothic tale, builds an atmosphere of horror in which the convulsed feelings of the narrator find a correlate in the tumultuous nature around her. Yet, the storm ceases to be an aesthetically pleasurable event once the reader discovers its tragic outcome:

Next morning [...] a person came to tell us the dreadful effects of the storm; an Officer and his horse were washed down a steep ascent, much hurt, but not killed. An immense piece of rock was loosened from its foundation by the lightning, and fell on the victims below, who had sought a refuge under our guns from the French, and had not returned to St. Roque. Men, women, children, tents and all were buried under the ruins! Such was the magnitude of the event, that it was impossible to ascertain the full extent of the mischief. Thirty-four bodies had been dug out; they were so mangled, that nothing but their clothes could prove they were human: but a great number more must have perished by this catastrophe (91-92).

In the face of such a disaster, the narrator wishes to present herself before her domestic readers not only as a mere eyewitness of the «mangled» corpses but above all as a survivor of deadly natural incidents. Barnard, who had been capable of withstanding several gales at high sea in the earlier chapter of the book, now stoically endures the heavy rains, thus reinforcing her image of a female suffering traveller and preparing the readers for other disturbing episodes.

One of such episodes is the abandonment and neglect that she suffered from her husband. In March of 1812, Mr. Barnard travelled to Cádiz alone on a business trip that would last a year. During the first weeks of his absence his wife used her free time to explore those corners of the colony that she still did not know and produced accurate descriptions to be sent home to her relatives. She visited the galleries excavated for the artillery, climbed the Rock to contemplate the view, observed the endemic monkeys living there, entered some of the natural caves, and visited the Governor's cottage and other spots. The passages that contain all this information reveal once again a great feeling of freedom and independence. However, after two months, she had only received a few letters from Mr. Barnard and vague replies from his untrustworthy business associates in Gibraltar, who continuously plundered the merchandise under their control. «This unpleasant situation», she observes, «naturally cast a gloom over my mind, because I felt as it were alone, in a thickly peopled garrison, and almost a total stranger» (101). Far from capitulating, however, Barnard takes over control of the situation and with the help of some friends devises a plan that uncovers the financial malpractice of her husband's agent, a man who, she laments, «took every advantage of Mr. B.'s desire for me not to appear as a woman of business» (101). With the successful resolution of this unpleasant affair Barnard reinforces her image as a resourceful woman capable of keeping her financial security and, more importantly, presents herself as a female traveller whose lot is to dutifully endure the sufferings caused by her husband's neglect.

During her months alone in Gibraltar, one of the news that cheered her up was the abolition of the Inquisition in Spain by the Spanish Cortes. No other element of Spanish Catholicism lured the minds of the British travellers more than the Inquisition. Its malevolent leaders, secret dungeons and savage autos-da-fe had become part and parcel of the black legend disseminated by the British on Spain, and symbolised the political and religious backwardness of the country. Barnard, on hearing the rumours related to the approaching prohibition of the Inquisition, alludes to the earlier steps taken by Napoleon Bonaparte to abolish it in 1808, noting that «Bonaparte, with all his errors, utterly abhorred this nefarious custom, — a custom so replete with horrors that my veins have felt chilled by the bare recital of them» (103). Much later, when these rumours are confirmed, she again applauds the fact that Bonaparte «caused good to spring from evil», and says that she will «forgive him for detaining Ferdinand» (117). Even though Barnard was not in Cádiz, her text incorporates a brief account of the public parade that took place to celebrate the abolition of the Holy Office:

Mr. B. was at Seville at the time, and saw the ceremony of burying the implements of torture. The procession, headed by the Cortes, was immense — the vehicles that carried the infernal instruments were decorated with black. In sable habiliments were clad the Dons and their horses, and the procession wore a solemn aspect. As the implements were consigned to the condemned pit, they were followed by the execrations of all nations, and well they might. 'In spite of all this,' said I, 'I fear the time will arrive, when Ferdinand will say, *let there be an Inquisition!!* And there will be one. Alas! I was too prophetic (117).

This reference to the Spanish Cortes manifests a *lapsus calami* on Barnard's part — who mistakenly places the ceremony in Seville rather than in the city where her husband was doing business — but nevertheless reveals that as a woman writer she was not afraid to openly express her political opinions. Moreover, it makes an interesting chronological leap by relating her experiences during the Peninsular War to the situation

of Spain in the 1820s, which coincided with the preparation and publication of her book. Ferdinand VII, who had re-established the Inquisition when he regained control of the Spanish crown in 1814, revived it again after the brief liberal triennium (1820-1823) under the shape of the so-called *Juntas de Fe*.<sup>18</sup> These tribunals became notorious because in July 25, 1826, one of them executed in Valencia the schoolmaster Cayetano Ripoll under the accusation that he taught Deist doctrines to his pupils. He was the last official victim of the Inquisition, and perhaps his death has something to do with the «prophetic» events that Barnard is referring to in her text.

In spite of the support that Sophia Barnard received from some of the good friends she made at Gibraltar, the anxiety stemming from her solitude becomes an important element in her *Travels*. The different types of amusement to be found in the colony as well as the occasional excursions she made to the area around Gibraltar became a distraction to her in the autumn of 1812. On one occasion a Spanish lady invited her to travel to San Roque to see a bullfight, but she refused the invitation because on hearing about «this torturing exhibition» she felt «more of dismay than respect, and inwardly thanked God that the sabbath days in England were not so grossly violated» (109). Her narrative also records the arrival at the bay of Gibraltar of the *Invincible*, a 74-gun battleship quite active in the Peninsular War whose officers and crew amused the garrison with performances of several popular plays. Another evident source of entertainment for her was the attendance to garrison balls where Spanish dancing could be seen alongside card-playing. Her rather solitary life, however, would come to an end with the return of her husband after his long mysterious sojourn in Cádiz.<sup>19</sup> The restoration of her marital life signified too the renewal of excursions in the area, and one of the first places that the Barnards visited together was San Roque. The French troops had withdrawn from it on August 2, 1812, and a Spanish division had occupied this town a few days later. «We went to St. Roque to witness some of the devastations of war. The *Monsieurs* when they had cleared that nice little town of its inmates, caroused and led a jolly life; they found the Spaniards were fond of large handsome looking-glasses», she says, «[and] as these were not portable for pockets, they laid them down, danced upon them and lighted the fires with their frames» (119). Following the custom of some travellers on sacred sites or scenarios fraught with historical significance, Barnard feels compelled to keep a souvenir of her visit, and thus she announces that she collected «some fragments as a memento of those awful times» during which the French «treated some of the dignitaries of the church so unceremoniously, that they also gladly fled “for safety and for shelter,” to the banners of *George the Third*» (119). This protection, however, would not be necessary for much longer in the area, since towards the end of August of 1812 the French troops lifted the siege of Cadiz and began the evacuation of Andalusia.

Apart from her allusions to the Peninsular War, one of the most interesting episodes of Barnard's stay in Gibraltar is without a doubt her account of the plague that affected the garrison and the bay area in the autumn of 1813. Other minor outbreaks had already taken place in 1811 and 1812, but the yellow fever of 1813 definitely claimed many more

<sup>18</sup> According to Gérard Dufour, from a strictly legal point of view the Cortes de Cádiz did not totally abolish the Inquisition (2005: 99-104) but merely reformed it. The Inquisition was definitively abolished by Queen Maria Cristina on July 15, 1834, while she was Regent of the kingdom for her daughter Isabella II.

<sup>19</sup> During his journey from Cádiz to Gibraltar, Mr. Barnard almost drowned at sea, and that is the reason why his wife says that this incident «totally disarmed the resentment I thought I would feign, at his long neglect and absence. Oh, woman! What a mysterious nature is yours, if ye be subject to the rough caprice of man! That man your husband, and see him bowing beneath the pressure of affliction, with Spaniel-like affection, you will forget your own grievances, and, smiling through your tears, will speak comfort to his harassed soul!» (117).



lives.<sup>20</sup> The outbreak apparently began after the arrival of a diseased family who had been making a tour of the eastern Mediterranean, and it did spread at such an unexpected speed that it made it impossible for the local authorities to stop the rising death toll. Barnard describes a desolate scenario where «people lay sick in every direction» and «*dead carts*, day and night, were hourly passing and repassing to collect the dying and the dead», also adding that «Windmill Hill was appointed the rendezvous for the army invalids, and a Lazaretto below the town, for the civilians and strangers» (124). She notes too that «[t]he medical men did not all escape, and the two clergymen, got at last so much afraid that the *burial service* was scarcely heard» (124). Mr. Barnard was one of the men who earlier contracted the disease, suffering terrible bouts of high fever, delirium and black vomit, and the same was true of some of Sophia's closest friends. She successfully nursed them back to good health despite the high risk of being afflicted herself by the malady, and as she did not fall ill her fame as a nurse spread in such a way that many residents of Gibraltar called upon her for help. «I issued a *general order* for any one to send to me day or night, and I would obey their summons», she says (125). Thus, in a strong gesture of female empowerment, Barnard achieved control of private and public spaces, asserting her angel-in-the-house role and establishing herself almost like a forerunner of Florence Nightingale.

The plague of 1813 finally subsided towards the end of November, although not without a significant death toll.<sup>21</sup> Barnard notes that as a precautionary measure the authorities built «[a]n encampment [...] on the southern point, for those who had been attacked» (127), but all the fears definitively disappeared when the heavy rains of December restored the cleanliness of the air. Aware that she is a lucky survivor, her voice emerges once again from the text as that of the suffering traveller. «My wonderful escape, ensured me the epithet of the 'Invincible Lady,' as I had exposed myself to the danger of some of the worst cases», she reflects (127). The epidemics had been a blow to Gibraltar and its surrounding area, for in addition to the victims and the number of refugees it produced, there was a noticeable exodus of many others who left the Rock and went to England in search of better sanitary conditions.<sup>22</sup> Barnard's summary could not be more demolishing: «The year 1813 left a mournful gloom at Gibraltar. Wherever the eye could look the sable vest and the crape band betokened the ravages of death. Nothing but sadness reigned around; almost every survivor had lost a friend, every family a member, or some dear relative» (130). The tragic events of 1813 also affected her personally, as one of her

20 In the summer of 1811 Cádiz, Cartagena and Puerto de Santa Maria suffered an epidemics of yellow fever, and in February 1812 there was an outbreak of measles. However, the worst took place in 1813 with a new epidemic of yellow fever that claimed more lives. There was a political interest in trying to hide the extent of the outbreak because the Cortes were still holding meetings in Cádiz and a general alarm would have deserted the city by then free from the French siege (Solís, 1987: 354-357).

21 The total figures are unclear. According to Martin R. Montgomery (1837: 77), the 1813 outbreak caused 889 deaths (391 military and 508 civilian), whereas another one caused 246 in 1814. Jason R. Musteen, on the other hand, affirms that «[b]y the end of the year 883 civilians and as many as 461 soldiers were dead of the disease» (2011: 227).

22 While many people feared that the arrival of infected travellers or goods in England might spread the contagion of the malady at home, others mocked these hysterical panics and even questioned the nature and extent of the epidemics abroad. This is true, for example, of a certain «No Alarmist», who in November 2, 1813, signed a brief article in *The Public Ledger* where he stated the following: «One day we are told that the plague has appeared at Cadiz, or Gibraltar, or Malta, or any where else. — The next day, perhaps, we have an account of the numbers (not the persons) who have died of it. Then we are told, that it was not the plague, but some kind of infectious fever; and this comfortable news is again heightened by accounts, that it was not an *infectious* fever, and that very few died —perhaps no more than usual in certain seasons; but just as we have begun to rejoice, and think our fears at an end, another bulletin comes with the plague *actually* appearing— and with this, either in the shape of plague, yellow fever, or black vomit, we have been tantalized for nearly the last two months, without, as far as I have been able to discover, one single authentic report from the faculty residing on the spot» (cited in *Spirit of the Public Journals*, 1814: 325).

best friends —Mrs. Raymond— who for months had been a sort of surrogate mother to her, died. From a narrative point of view these losses also foreshadow the most terrible loss of all, namely, the death of her son several years later, and endow Barnard's travel book with a distinctive dismal tone. To make matters worse, Mr. Barnard embarked upon a new speculative venture involving the export of a salt cargo to Sweden that failed on account of the treachery of the captain. This makes her exclaim: «This, alas! was but a sad confirmation of the storms and quicksands, which began in my connubial career in 1803; no impediments, no losses, no crosses, could allay Mr. B.'s thirst for speculation: but "a wife has no right to interfere or to feel, or to think in opposition to a husband's will;" so, right or wrong, I tamely submitted» (136). Exhausted and tired of being alone, nearly six months after the departure of her husband for Sweden, she finally decided to return to England.

Barnard left Gibraltar on August 9, 1814, with much regret. She explains that two days later their ship touched at Cádiz «to take up some ships waiting convoy and then proceeded on our voyage» (137), a clear reminder that security at high sea was still needed. She arrived in England on August 24<sup>th</sup> and once the prescribed quarantine was over she finally rejoined her son and relatives. «[A]gain and again, I pressed my beautiful blooming son to my throbbing heart», she exclaims, «and when I could with calmness gaze upon him, I was delighted at his improvement in mind as well as person. [...] Oh then I forgot that I had ever been in trouble» (137-38). The two strands of a Romantic-era travel book like Barnard's fittingly coalesce in this homecoming scene. The rhetoric of adventurousness and suffering finally give way to the discourse of emotions and a sentimental type of prose closely connected to the moral standards that her *Travels* sought to endorse.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The restoration in «health and safety» (138), to use her own words, that Barnard experiences upon her arrival in England affords her an extraordinary opportunity to recapitulate and look back upon her adventurous life abroad. As in the spiritual autobiography, she offers a providentialist explanation of all her tribulations, assigning their occurrence to a superior design. Barnard, as the following lines suggest, presents the years she spent in the Peninsula almost as a conversion experience, as a sensitive hiatus in her life from which several lessons could be learned:

During my residence in Andalusia, my existence was alternatively gratified or embittered by circumstances, so mixed with what was imposingly *awful, wonderful, vexatious, and strange*, as to preclude me from the possibility of calculating on settled repose. If the aspect of joy gladdened my heart for a short season, the scythe of time would follow, and, with its cutting edge, mow close enough to wound. [...] And when I reflected on my peculiar case, I felt those pangs that a wife without her husband —a mother without her child— and as a beloved daughter, without her revered parents, may be supposed to feel. Oh it was in this sad season of separation and trial that religion pointed to the promised heaven, and bade me, by patience and duty merit an entrance there. A remembrance of the valued few I left in their silent graves on the rock of Gibraltar, sometimes calls forth the sigh and tributary tear (139).

The journeys and sojourns that Barnard made in Algiers and the south of Spain no doubt afforded her with a world of experiences that few women of her time and age could have imagined. They broadened her domestic horizons, dismantled many of her preconceived ideas on foreigners, and tested her capacity to endure traumatic events. Furthermore, they convinced her more effectively of the military, cultural and economic superiority of her country, especially during the period she lived in Gibraltar. Sara Mills has affirmed that when women writers produce travel texts they engage with three major discourses: the conventions of travel writing as a whole, the discourses of colonialism and imperialism, and the discourse of femininity (Mills, 1991: 71-72). As we have seen, Sophia Barnard's *Travels* is no exception to that. Set in a unique historical scenario as the Peninsular War and functioning within the framework of the Romantic travel book and its characteristic trope of the suffering traveller, this book resorts to the performative nature of travel writing to display a series of narrative roles —submissive wife, helping nurse, faithful Christian— that stress the author's womanliness. At the same time, it often embraces the official masculine discourse of nationalism and imperialism. This is particularly true of the penultimate paragraph in the book, a strong patriotic anthem where Barnard passionately seeks to please her readers' implicit sense of superiority:

To thee, England, my birth place, my home! I now take leave to turn my thoughts, which never lost sight of thy superiority. Thou favoured land! thou observer and promoter of religion, charity, education, arts, and sciences! Thy unrivalled excellencies fame glories in proclaiming throughout the world. Why art thou the grand *rendezvous*! when foreign nations, hostilely contending, or visited by other dire calamities, drive away their oppressed and dismayed sons and daughters, why do they flock to you? Why? — are not the favourite attributes of the Deity, love and mercy? and are they not, from early tuition, the prominent characteristics of England's enlightened children? Oh my beloved country! I owe you much, and as you witnessed my first breath, may fate decree that you should receive my last sigh! (140).

Barnard, who openly played the cards of nationalism in her book, showed nevertheless little interest in topics often discussed by other male British travel writers who had also visited Andalusia (Carter, Dalrymple, Townsend, Swinburne, Hervey, Twiss). There is no room in her *Travels* for economic analyses, statistics of agricultural yields, assessments of the state of the roads, or descriptions of local antiquities. She neither established a dialogue with other travellers nor sought to redress the misconceptions of other travel books. Writing a travel account of all her haps and mishaps became for Sophia Barnard a personal cathartic act, a way of understanding and accepting her role as a wanderer, suffering traveller or afflicted pilgrim in a community chiefly ruled by religious principles. It also helped her to achieve a deeper awareness of cultural difference. The sketchy Andalusian episodes that we have discussed in this article might then be viewed not as parts of a huge canvass full of historical and cultural information but rather as small pieces of a mosaic that tries to recover Barnard's representation of Spain in early nineteenth-century Britain. If this essay also helps to relocate her figure in the panorama of British women's travel writing, then its goals will have been more than fulfilled.

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