

POETIC SCHOOL CANON AND LITERARY PEDAGOGY IN BACCALAUREATE. THE INVISIBLE WRITERS IN THE LITERATURE MANUALS

CANON ESCOLAR POÉTICO Y PEDAGOGÍA LITERARIA EN BACHILLERATO.
LAS ESCRITORAS INVISIBLES EN LOS MANUALES DE LITERATURA

ESCOLA POÉTICA CANON E PEDAGOGIA LITERÁRIA EM BACALAUREATO.
OS ESCRITORES INVISÍVEIS NOS MANUAIS DA LITERATURA

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<p>KEY WORDS: Literary canon Spanish poetry pedagogical manipulation female poets 20th century</p>	<p>ABSTRACT: For the first century and a half in the existence of the model of literary education, the school textbooks allotted to the different stages from primary education to baccalaureate have provided to the student body a minimum basis of the history, biographies and major works of Spanish literature. However, the detailed analysis of the textbooks demonstrates a remarkable shortage of female writers (mainly poets), creating a fake canon which does not correspond with the reality of the literary quality. Throughout the present article, we conduct an analysis of three different textbooks used in Baccalaureate in order to prove through its outcome that the absence of women in their pages is result of a biased and patriarchal interpretation of the literary pedagogical canon that, as a ideological product, is still being transmitted to new generations omitting the cultural and equality values that social pedagogy and objective literary criticism stand for.</p>
<p>PALABRAS CLAVE: Canon literario poesía española manipulación pedagógica mujeres poetas siglo XX</p>	<p>RESUMEN: A lo largo del siglo y medio de existencia del modelo de educación literaria han elaborado manuales escolares que, desde la etapa de educación primaria al bachillerato, han pretendido aportar al estudiantado una base mínima de la historia, biografía y obras principales de la literatura española. Sin embargo, el análisis detallado de dichos manuales evidencia una notable carencia de escritoras (fundamentalmente poetas) creando un falso canon que no responde a la realidad de la calidad literaria. A lo largo del presente estudio realizamos un análisis de tres manuales de Bachillerato para</p>

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	constatar en sus resultados que la ausencia de mujeres en sus páginas continua siendo el fruto de una interpretación sesgada y patriarcal del canon literario pedagógico que, como producto ideológico, se sigue transmitiendo a las nuevas generaciones obviando los valores culturales y de igualdad que defiende la pedagogía social y la crítica literaria objetiva.
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Canon literário Poesia espanhola manipulação pedagógica poetas mulheres Século XX	RESUMO: Ao longo do século e meio de existência do modelo de educação literária baseado nas histórias da literatura foram desenvolvidos livros escolares, que desde o ensino primário ao bacharelado procuraram fornecer ao aluno uma base mínima de história, biografia e grandes obras de literatura espanhola. No entanto, a análise detalhada desses manuais revela uma notável falta de escritores (principalmente poetas) criando um falso código que não responde à realidade da qualidade literária. Ao longo do presente estudo, realizamos uma análise de três livros didáticos de Bachillerato para verificar em seus resultados que a ausência de mulheres em suas páginas continua sendo resultado de uma interpretação preconceituosa e patriarcal do cânone literário pedagógico que, como produto ideológico, continua sendo transmitido. às novas gerações, ignorando os valores culturais e de igualdade que a pedagogia social e a crítica literária objetiva defendem.

1. Introduction. Canon and literary education

For the past few decades, a heated debate has questioned the implications of the construction of a canon that meets (keeping in mind some limits, given that it is not possible to read every work that has been published) the reality of literature, in this case, Spanish literature. Not so many years ago, Harold Bloom opened a can of worms with his book *The western canon* (1994) and, in view of its sales success, is still nowadays a benchmark for researchers and scholars. In that canon, consisting in twenty-six authors from the 14th century onwards, the controversial critic chose one single Spaniard, Cervantes -due to Don Quixote- and one single woman, Virginia Woolf. This gives us the idea of to what extent the patriarchal education has an impact on the aesthetic taste and readings for youth chosen by teachers in that educational stage. Talking about canon means talking about the aesthetic taste of some experts of a given time that will condition posterity choosing the texts that will go down in history as reference works of a specific historical moment. Tabarovsky warned us:

It is hard to discuss about literature. And it is not because of taste, boredom or bad faith, these are mere details; instead, it is because literature opposes to consensus, dialogue and reasoning. That literature is act, imposes, behaves as revolutionary terror: dissolving hierarchies and, being truly revolutionary, getting dissolved every time that somebody discovers its secret. I never discovered the secret, and if I did, I forgot it. I barely remember the motto: transforming contingency into need (2004: 60).

Now, how could we define canon from the most objective stance, including every aesthetic and trend? We all likely share the idea of the need to establish some kind of mechanism to select texts within the wide and heterogeneous aesthetic

corpus of each literary period. In my opinion, the canon is constituted by works that keep raising interest over time; these works should be a sort of representation of the aesthetic of a specific literary moment (synchronous canon) and therefore belong to the traditional canon (diachronic canon), which is the canon that must and can remain through time, according to Sánchez García (2015 and 2017). Considering all the above mentioned, an intermediate approach capable of defining canon is given by Sullá, which understands it as “a list or lineup of works that are considered valuable and worthy of study and comments” (1998: 12), that can be, thus, be compiled in a formative educational canon.

However, to the initial difficulties regarding the people who actually make the choices, we can add another one, which is by the way not a trivial matter: how can a work be considered as valuable or worthy? The approach, made by Mignolo, is justified: “questions about who chooses and why should a specific list of texts be read will take the place of questions about what should be read” (1991: 256). This takes us to the original question: it is decided by the critic, the anthologist, the researcher who is writing a textbook, but the criterion selection remains the main problem, especially when the absence of criteria turns anthologies into whims and textbooks into a dangerous weapon that destroys the enthusiasm of readers or, even worse, into a pedagogical manipulation of literary education.

Addressing the need for an agreement on the construction of a rich and heterogeneous canon of the 21st century, we should begin interpreting the implications of the need of a proper literary education, starting from the point that Even-Zohar states:

School and canon organizes social life basically through the creation of a list of semiotic models whereby “the world” is explained using a set of

stories, *inter alia*, to obviously please dominant groups (1994: 359).

That is exactly where the main issue lies: if the teenage world (so brief regarding literature) is organized according to textbooks, which give information under the guide of the teacher, the responsibility of the construction of these textbooks is essential, among other things, because the works that are not included are considered nonexistent and the textbooks are still being compiled using patriarchal criteria that display a lack of appreciation of the female poetic production.

The task of turning literary education into something more than a mere syntagma belongs to the didactics of literature, which has to set as a priority objective the ability of students to re-frame in their self the multiple communications of literary texts, to get impregnated by them, to transform them in ways to understand the world, to structure conducts, feelings, personal tastes, to use their literary education as a tool to be identified as a part of the cultural society that has elaborated and transmitted them, to also participate and transmit their heritage. In other words, the ability of turning literature, in the wider sense, into social pedagogy, so that it can reach every sector of society. Didactics of literature should consider that the essential and generic objective of literary formation and education of students of a certain school level has a double nature: learning how to interpret and assess the aesthetic literary creations. For that purpose, Mendoza Fillola suggests that the essential competences that students should develop are aimed in two directions:

- 1) The first one tackles the competences that enable the understanding and identification of the specific conventions to organize and communicate the experience of literature and, consequently, the training in literary poetics and rhetoric.
- 2) The second addresses the set of knowledge that allows us to pay attention to the historicity of the text, required task in order to be capable of establishing our own interpretative assessment (1998:70).

The common past and the present are registered, maybe a little more subtly in literature than in history, given that the latter is written by the victors while literature is written by victors but conditioned by the -not always fair- interests of literary criticism (Sánchez García, 2018).

Starting from the premise that there must be an educational canon compiling authors, stages and main work of each period, didactics of literature must develop the abilities of the student

body to be capable of understand it (which necessarily implies an accurate interpretation), assess it, enjoy it and (re)create it; the final purpose is to communicate, represent and regulate, and for this to happen it is necessary not only to read, but also to dramatize, recite, sing, write, compose and, of course, study, assess, enjoy using active methods with which the subject is in charge of their own learning, given that, as Steiner states, "literature is language relieved of their supreme responsibility for information [...] since the supreme responsibilities of literature, its ontological *raison d'être* is beyond its immediate utility and verifiability" (2003: 6).

C. Goolidge said that education consists in teaching people not what to think, but to think. From our perspective, this sentence precisely shapes the faculty of didactics of literature in their need to use methods that promote the formation of opinion, critic, ethical commitment and participation from a significant learning, which manages what is already known and starts from that point in the pursuit of new competences. In sum, methods that provide strategies to read, interpret and communicate different types of texts (Cooper, 1990). In this regard, Núñez Ruiz already studied the predominant models of literary education for secondary education in Spain: "the rhetorical model, the historical model and, finally, the considered institutionalist model" (2007:109). Núñez Ruiz also refers to the often negative value of textual comments. On this issue Jover notes:

the adoption of sophisticated mold and inextricable jargons turned the student into a kind of a disabled person that needed the mediation of the technical expert that the teacher had become. The fear of teenagers about not the text itself but the text commentary neutralized for life their potential taste for literature (2007: 25).

López Valero and Martínez Ezquerro agree on that too when they assert something of radical importance, in our opinion concerning the implications of literary education in the mentioned stage:

Literary education is defined as the set of abilities and skills to proficiently read the significant literary texts of our cultural environment and properly interpret them. The pleasant experience that in primary education was the re-reading and recreation of literary texts allows now to consolidate and adapt the new needs of symbolization of the experience and the expression of feelings, to systematize the observations regarding the literary conventions and to establish, likewise, the relationship among works, authors and their social and historical contexts (2012:33).

This is the capital base on which to build baccalaureate education over the life of students. In other words, using different methodologies and tools, from education in general, we must build literary education which, according to Colomer, entails the guarantee of “the learning of written culture to all citizens” (1991:26) from the perspective of teaching equality values (meaning that we will give the same value to works with the same aesthetic quality) and selecting texts that on the one hand have an obvious literary interest and on the other are adapted to the formative needs of students that we are training as future competent readers. Quiles Cabrera, Palmer and Rosal Nadales explain this very clearly:

What should not be missing when we address literary education? Obviously literature, considering it as the works themselves, not the readings that others make [...] We do not need a cryptic language enclosing readings in boxes of strange theories that do not allow the works to talk by themselves nor students to question about the text that they are going to read (2015: 86)

To properly understand how to perform this task in the classrooms we should check the book by Gloria García Rivera (1995) or the manual by Amando López Valero and Eduardo Encabo (2002) where they give us the precise keys to promote the development of the literary competence, understood as the vertebral axis of culture from a perspective of transdisciplinary collaboration in classrooms. Without a proper literary education culture is not sustainable. However, our approach is not that; instead, we aim to verify whether the poetic canon that has been elaborated through time and the arrangement mentioned by Sullá (the list of works that must be studied) to develop the literary competence stated by Mendoza (2003) actually matches the heterogeneous reality of the history of literature, instead of other approaches of patriarchal legitimation that steal their places to many worthy female poets in every period. In particular, we will focus on female poets in the 20th and 21st centuries.

2. Justification and objectives. Presence of female poets in literary education (Second year of baccalaureate)

Once the first problem, which was to define the canon and its use for a proper literary education, has been partially solved, we will tackle the second issue, referred to education and formation of the recipient readers of the literary selection used within the classrooms and that should respond to

an aesthetic and ethical plurality. We could only find an answer bringing up some questions that Pozuelo Yvancos has previously inquired: “What should we teach? How could we make literature remain alive in our societies? How could we engage ideology and aesthetics?” (1996: 3).

The answers to those questions should start, in my view, when a publishing house edits a language or literature textbook or poetic anthology (and chooses certain authors at the expense of others). In order to educate critical citizens capable of knowing their ethical and aesthetic tradition, we should firstly provide them all the information, and not only a part of it, which can bias their future interpretative and critical ability to assess what they learn.

Logically, (and this is what Bloom criticized, what he considers highly damaging), to the aesthetic criteria are now added ethical epochal criteria linked to the desire to satisfy alleged literature of gender, race, etc., that overly condition the construction of the canon, according to their criteria. In other words, the overused issue of aesthetics (the Muse, according to Bloom, “always takes the sides of the elite” [1994: 44], a view I do not share) in contrast to ethics, associated in many occasions with political correctness and with the fact that nobody should stay outside the canon, excluded by the absence of aesthetic values, if it belongs to a minority group. Unless the author is a woman, of course.

This means a step forward the total canon, and this is an absolute fantasy given that we would be talking about an encyclopaedia or compilation. Maybe there is a halfway point where contemporary critics should work, knowing that electronic advances are the keys to the dissemination of literary works and the enlargement of the market. Whether we like it or not, literature is a polysystemic reality (explained by Even-Zohar, 1999) and an increasing multimedia market that responds to the new mindsets in the sense that Martos Núñez and Campos Fernández-Fígares (2012) referred to; a consumer good, resulting from a plural ideological reality which is, after the author finishes the writing, given by the market (with all that implies) to readers capable of interpreting the text using their perception of the world, usually through a common social code, if we talk about contemporary literature. The literary event creates a shared world, according to Luis García Montero (2014:14).

Regarding the anthologies on the different literary generations published in Spain, do they actually respond to an exclusive criterion of literary quality? How about the textbooks used to train students, which have basic ideas about literature? We will start with the analysis of the textbooks

published between 1927 and 1980, taking into account that there were historically sexist factors determining the consideration of women as inferior, as a complement of men (“the angel at home” was a term born in the 18th century that has been used until the mid 20th century). The anthologies published in this country have strengthened the canon which was expected to be predominant, with varying degrees of success. The problem is that anthologies have been an example of discrimination in many cases. Balcells, author of a valuable anthology completed with a preliminary study on female poetry, noted that:

We could talk about discrimination when an anthology is presented as “open” and then it actually is not, practicing exclusion not only without recognizing it, but also bragging that they were inclusive. In other words, it claims to be general and it is obviously biased when including only male poets or an irrelevant quantity of female authors in the summary of authors of a certain period when many women indubitably proved the quality and importance of their literary works. If there are complaints about the abusive use of the concept “gender” due to its unilateral character, there should also be about anthologies that, even when they do not use the term, they first and foremost reflect the male gender, putting on airs because of their universality in many cases (2006: 720).

Anyway, we are going to analyze the construction of the poetic canon in Spain during the 20th century that, obviously, is based fundamentally on the anthologies that contributed to this literary approach in a country where the reading and publication of poetry is minor compared to narrative. In my opinion, the pedagogical canon is built over that general canon. The former is understood, according to Teixidor (2007) and especially to Cerrillo Torremocha (2013) as it follows:

“The educational canon should be the result of a broad and detailed debate on which literary works are more appropriate according to their literary quality and historical meaning, their suitability to the reader, their empathy with readers and their taste (considered as the response to their reading expectations), and their ability to train competent readers and their literary education [...] The works that are listed in the educational canon will contribute to the formation of the literary competence of students, while bringing together styles, authors and representative moments in our history of literature” (2013: 26).

This is the way it should be. But in many occasions, those people responsible for textbooks

in the different educational levels have not deepened into poetry, and this forces them to trust in the selection of well-known authors, whose works are compiled in significant anthologies or published in relevant publishing houses. In other words, they go the easy way without understanding that students need a literary education as complete and heterogeneous as possible, paying attention to the aspects already mentioned by Cerrillo:

For that reason, it is essential that the selection criteria are objective and unbiased; we should find among these criteria at least these requirements: literary quality of texts and suitability of the texts to the interest and abilities of readers (2013: 27).

For this reason we will start tackling the essential aspect in the construction of the literary identity of our country, which is guiding the approaches of textbooks: for the anthologies of the century and the presence of female authors. Taking a look at some of the most important anthologies published between 1927 and 1980, we note that the role of female writers ranges from a shameful absence to the mere testimonial presence. Regarding the most significant generation of the past century, the Generation of ‘27, the most important manual (currently used in educational centers) was published in 1976 (with subsequent reprints), by Vicente Gaos. In this textbook we can find poems by Salinas, Guillén, Gerardo Diego, García Lorca, Alberti, Doménchina, Dámaso Alonso, Aleixandre, Cernuda, Prados and Altolaguirre. Any poetess of the same generation is included: Concha Méndez, Rosa Chacel, Ernestina de Champourcín, etc.

Afterwards, the anthology on the Generation of ‘50, entitled *Una promoción desheredada* by its author, the critic and poet Antonio Hernández in 1978, compiles information about Ángel González, Mariscal, Caballero Bonald, Gil de Biedma, Goytisolo, Cabañero, Mantero, Quiñones, Brines, Mariano Roldán, Claudio Rodríguez, Sahagún and Soto Vergés, omitting Gloria Fuertes, or Ángela Figuera. Moving forward, Jiménez Martos, in his book *Nuevos poetas españoles* (1961) more effectively enlists Manuel Alcántara, Eladio Cabañero, Gloria Fuertes, María Elvira Lacaci, Manuel Mantero, Mariscal, Pilar Paz Pasamar, Claudio Rodríguez, Carlos Sahagún and J. Á. Valente. Two years later, Ribes talks about Eladio Cabañero, Ángel González, Claudio Rodríguez, José Ángel Valente and Carlos Sahagún in the book *Poesía última* (1963). Again, only male writers.

Later on, José Batlló writes his *Antología de la nueva poesía española* (1968), conformed

by Barral, Brines, Caballero Bonald, Cabañero, Gloria Fuertes, Gil de Biedma, Gimferrer, A. González, Goytisolo, Grande, Marco, Claudio Rodríguez, Carlos Sahagún, Rafael Soto Vergés, Valente and Vázquez Montalbán. Ten years later, García Hortelano vindicates some writers from the Generation of '50 in his book *El grupo poético de los años 50* (1978), including Ángel González, Caballero Bonald, A. Costafreda, J. M. Valverde, J. A. Goytisolo, Carlos Barral, J. Gil de Biedma, J. A. Valente, F. Brines and Claudio Rodríguez.

The last anthology we will mention was compiled by Concepción G. Moral and Rosa María Pereda, and entitled *Joven poesía española* (1982). There we can find poems by Martínez Sarrión, Jesús Munárriz, José María Álvarez, José Luis Jiménez Frontín, Félix de Azúa, José Miguel Ullán, Pere Gimferrer, Marcos Ricardo Barnatán, Antonio Colinas, Vicente Molina Foix, Jenaro Talens, José Luis Jover, Guillermo Carnero, Leopoldo María Panero, Luis Alberto de Cuenca, Jaime Siles and Luis Antonio de Villena. Note that this anthology was written by women, and still does not include poetesses. This is fairly devastating, given that Blanca Andreu, Ana Rossetti or Ángeles Mora were then just starting their artistic careers.

In other words, between 1927 and 1982, there is only one female poet and researcher that seriously tackles the dissemination of female poetry in Spain. We are talking about Carmen Conde and her works *Poesía femenina española viviente*, published in 1954, *Once grandes poetas americanas* (1967), *Poesía femenina española* (1939-1950) in the same year (which is a review of the anthology published in 54), and finally *Poesía española (1950-1960)*² in 1971. In this anthologies Conde focuses on female writers, which had been omitted systematically from the official canon because they did not participate in the kind of male poetry of the time. According to Carmen Conde, it was, moreover, a gender issue:

Today they cannot use the adjective “female” to deprecatorily describe the poetic work written by women, but none of us would either feel flattered by being told that we write as men; instead, we would feel offended because of the lack of understanding. No, not as men; we write as women that fully feel as women (1967: 14).

As José María Balcells explained, “Carmen Conde is obviously suitable for the compilation of an anthology that do not subordinate women to men, a fact that, in that context, was as bold

as useful was her work” (2006: 635). In fact, the extraordinary work by Conde lights the shadows and voices the inexcusable silence. Regarding the textbooks, we will not specifically tackle this period since the results are quite similar, being in line with the ideological approaches of the abovementioned anthologies; we will not perform a quantitative analysis because the presence of women is scarce if not nonexistent. We can say that with this biased and patriarchal ideology displayed in the educational textbooks, the presence of women was practically zero. Nowadays, in the 21st century, it should not be that way, according to LOE (educational organic law in Spain.)

The aim of this study is to analyze a sample of manuals that are being used to train Spanish students in the second year of baccalaureate, in the theoretical society of equality, at an age when they are mature enough to interpret the main ideas of Spanish literature in the 20th century. The ultimate goal is to verify that the patriarchal ideology that excluded female authors in the different literary periods and generations do not prevail.

3. Methodology. Analysis of the textbooks used in 2nd year of baccalaureate

Our research, once analyzed the anthologies in the previous section, will focus on the presence of female poets in three different textbooks used in the second year of baccalaureate belonging to three Spanish publishing houses (Anaya, Oxford University Press and Algaída) that have been recently published (2016); so that we can understand that they comply with the current regulations and the predominant aesthetic literary and pedagogical approaches. The three manuals are widely known and have been used in high schools in Andalusia for the past decades, being this edition ranked the most used by the faculty of secondary education centers and, a priori, respond to different ideological principles regarding the editorial line, belonging to publishing houses that are well ranked in SPI (2018). On the basis of the analysis, unit by unit, we will conduct a quantitative and descriptive study on the presence of poetesses mentioned, even when the mention is only a small extract of their work, in comparison to male writers. We aim to contribute with an objective and reliable analysis that reveals whether a commitment to equality actually exists or if the obligation is only the mere fulfilment of legal regulations with no actual effect in the literary education of students in baccalaureate.

4. Results. The control of the patriarchal structure over poetics

Once that we have performed the study, we present the obtained outcome regarding the statistical analysis of the data:

Publishing houses	Algaida	Anaya	Oxford
Male authors	85 (86,73%)	80 (87,91%)	83 (87,36%)
Female authors	13 (13,26%)	11 (12,08%)	12 (12,63%)
Total	98 (100%)	91 (100%)	95 (100%)

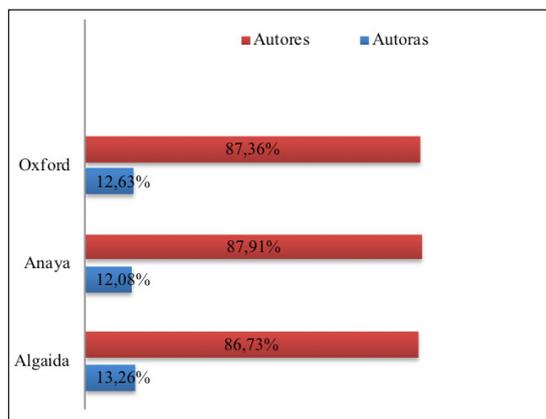


Figure 1. Male and female authors mentioned in textbooks.

Publishing houses	Algaida	Anaya	Oxford
Male authors	26 (89,65%)	17 (94,44%)	29 (96,66%)
Female authors	3 (10,34%)	1 (5,55%)	1 (3,33%)
Total	29 (100%)	18 (100%)	30 (100%)

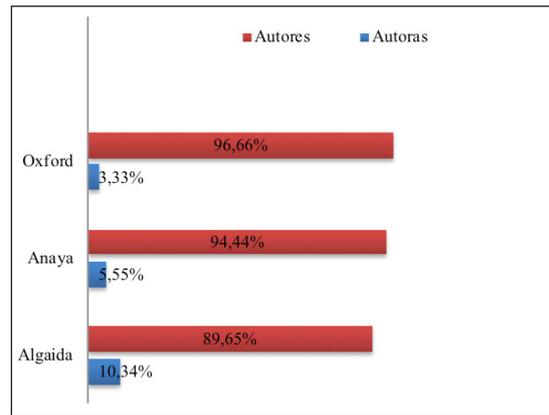


Figure 2. Included texts of male and female authors.

5. Discussion and conclusions

According to the objectives set in our research, that aimed to investigate a significant presence of female poets in the textbooks used in the second year of baccalaureate, we noted that equality is not respected at all, and not only that; neither do we find a reasonable presence of women after applying a criterion of similar quality in works. The investigation has been confined to baccalaureate, to set a limit, but we are aware that the same happens with the rest of textbooks of other educational levels (compulsory secondary education and the first year of baccalaureate), and that can open a line of investigation for future researches. However, the evidence is clear: the National Poetry Prize have been rewarding authors in Spain since 1924, and from that year to 2003 only two women won the award; specifically Alfonsa de la Torre (in 1951 with her work *Oratorio de San Bernardino*) and Carmen Conde (with *Obra poética* in 1967). In the past few years, other women have been awarded: Julia Uceda (*En el viento, hacia el mar*, 2003), Chantal Maillard (*Matar a Platón*, 2004), Olvido García Valdés (*Y todos estábamos vivos*, 2007), Francisca Aguirre (*Historia de una anatomía*, 2011) and Ángeles Mora (*Ficciones para una autobiografía*, 2016). In total, only seven women won the award in eighty-nine years. Some might say that the best wins, but the detail, purely factual, is curious, to say the least. Only three of the seven women are listed in the textbooks (all published after 2016 by the way): Carmen Conde, Olvido García Valdés and Chantal Maillard. The rest remain unknown. Maybe there are still a few that think as the anthologist José Luis Martínez Redondo, who explained in his compilation *Poesía femenina* (Female poetry):

These simple women wrote simple poetry in simple provinces in Spain, which is great for two reasons.

The first, because the person writing these lines thinks women are particularly friendly and pleasant; the second, because it is great to check that in our country women keep on trying to show the world that they can find a balance among the enchanting melody of slippers, the desire to have a child, the darning of a sock and writing poetry, breathing the fresh air which will knock down the walls of old prejudices (1953: 7).

This is the only explanation, given the similar proportions found in every publishing house studied: Algaida mentions eighty-five male poets and thirteen female poets (13,26% of the total), Anaya mentions eighty male poets and eleven female poets (12,08% of the total were women, when 87,91% were men) and Oxford University Press mentions eighty-three male poets and thirteen female poets (87,36% were men and 12,63% were women). In this list, we included the section published by Anaya titled "Poetry written by women", which includes Ernestina de Champourcin, Carmen Conde, Concha Zardoya, Gloria Fuertes, Clara Janés in an isolated list, apart from the authors of their generation. Oxford University Press also published the section "Women in the Generation of '27: Concha Méndez, María Zambrano, Ernestina de Champourcin, Josefina de la Torre", to hide the fact that they only use for women one tenth of the space in the textbook, exposing: "in the digital version of the book we include the texts of these female authors, often unfairly overshadowed by the coetaneous male writers" (2016: 205).

We can then talk about discrimination, because a textbook is supposed to be open but it actually is not. They exclude women, not only without recognizing it, but also bragging that they were inclusive. In other words, it claims to be general and it is obviously biased when including only male poets or an irrelevant quantity of female authors in the summary of authors of a certain period when many women indubitably proved the quality and importance of their literary works. The data is hardly justifiable.

At this point, it only remains to note that the path to equality in a pedagogy that matches the actual literary reality has barely begun. We still need researches on poetry written by women because female poets still do not have a place in textbooks and manuals that the canon, the new canon of a non-totalitarian and non-patriarchal ideology should provide them. And not because of gender, but because of quality. The predominant culture still keeps the status establishing

differences or objections, and difference leads to exclusion, condemning one pole of the dual confrontation to silence and social enclosure. The solution to achieve balance should be enhancing the role of the female poets that have the same quality as their male peers and have been building the identity of the current Spanish poetry. For this reason, I totally agree with Fokkema:

My favorite canon will be guided by the possibility of changing the code (the opposite to identity politics), putting the emphasis in contradictory values, in different among traditions, in the criticism of the predominant ideologies and in the diversity of models of moral behavior and private life. It will include complex literary texts of the main cultures around the world, and not only contemporary works, but old works as well, believing that it is more rewarding to try to understand difficult texts than assuming that simpler texts are understood. However, my decontextualization methods and surely my attribution of presentism (recontextualization) will be different from the methods used by my colleagues; therefore, my canon will be different than theirs [...]. Consequently, it is useless to give a list of preferred texts, given that any final list adopted by a department of comparative literature will ever be result of an arrangement settled by diverse convictions, the specific culture that we live in and the convenience of the moment (for instance, textbooks availability) (1993: 65).

For too long, this literature has remained submerged, as a vessel full of valuable materials sunken in the ocean of contemptuous ignorance of critics and teachers. Ideological, cultural, social or even educational reasons caused the almost generalized exclusion of female poets during the last century (not to mention the previous periods). Now, in the 21st century, it is time to give visibility to this cynically concealed reality and to abandon the radical positions loaded with intransigence, which should not be typical of the pedagogical canon of educational textbooks. It is time for a serious and rigorous study, alien to the predominant viscerality, to be the axis on which literary studies on Spanish poetry can be built as a result of the collaboration of teachers, pedagogues and experts on literature. Only then will new and young readers recognize and value the work done in order to enhance the educational system, from the field of literary criticism, in the (re) construction of a canon that is as authentic and objective as possible and that responds to the literary education deserves

Notes

- ¹ The compilation included María Alfaro, Ester de Andreis, María Beneyto, Ana Inés Bonnín, Carmen Conde herself, Mercedes Chamorro, Ernestina de Champourcin, Beatriz Domínguez, Ángela Figuera Aymerich, Gloria Fuertes, Angelina Gatell, Clemencia Laborda, Chona Madera, Susana March, Trina Mercader, Pino Ojeda, Pilar Paz Pasamar, Luz Pozo Garza, Josefina Romo Arregui, Alfonsa de la Torre, Josefina de la Torre, Montserrat Vayreda, Pilar Vázquez Cuesta, Pura Vázquez, Celia Viñas and Concha Zardoya.
- ² To the above, she adds Aurora de Albornoz, Elena Andrés, María Victoria Atencia, María Nieves F. Baldoví, Gloria Calvo, María Teresa Cervantes, Josefa Contijoch, María Luisa Chicote, Carolina d'Antin Sutherland, María de los Reyes Fuentes, Amparo Gastón, Pilar Gómez Bedate, Carmen González Mas, Cristina Lacasa, María Elvira Lacaci, Adelaida Las Santas, Concha Lagos, Concha de Marco, Elena Martín Vivaldi, Marisa Medina, Eduarda Moro, María Mulet, Carmen Ontiveros, María Eugenia Rincón, Amelia Romero, María José Sánchez-Bendito, Felisa Sanz, María Antonia Sanz, Mercedes Saorí, Teresa Soubret, Julia Uceda and Acacia Uceta.

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