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## Luisa Carnés: the recovery of a female voice from the early 20th century by the academy and editors.<sup>1</sup>

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### Luisa Carnés: the recovery of a female voice from the early 20th century by the academy and editors.

**Abstract:** Luisa Carnés was one of the Spanish intellectuals who, like many others, had to go into exile after the Civil War and the victory of Franco's troops in 1939. Carnés had published several works in Spain, continuing to write in Mexico. However, her texts were forgotten even after the return of democracy in 1975. In the 21st century the academic and publishing universes rescue this important figure in Spanish literature, integrating her or at least bringing her closer to the *Nuevo Romanticismo* or *Generación del 27*, seeking to properly highlight it in contemporary culture. I approach this mediation process in this paper, analyzing the relevance today of Carnés' perspective on the condition of women.

**Key words:** Spanish literature; academia; Luisa Carnés; literature written by women; censorship. XX century. XXI century.

### Luisa Carnés: la recuperación de una voz femenina de principios del siglo XX por parte de la academia y los editores.

**Resumen:** Luisa Carnés fue una de las intelectuales españolas que, al igual que otros, se exilió después de la Guerra Civil y de la victoria de las tropas de Franco en 1939. Carnés había publicado varias obras en España y sigue escribiendo en México. Sin embargo, sus textos fueron olvidados incluso después de la vuelta de la democracia en 1975. En el siglo XXI, la academia y las editoriales rescatan esta importante figura de la literatura española, integrándola o al menos acercándola al *Nuevo Romanticismo* o a la *Generación del 27*, buscando incluirla debidamente en la cultura contemporánea. Analizamos este proceso de mediación en este artículo, en particular la pertinencia hoy en día de la perspectiva de Carnés sobre la condición de la mujer.

**Palabras clave:** Literatura española; academia. Luisa Carnés; literatura escrita por mujeres; censura; siglo XX; siglo XXI.

### Luisa Carnés: a recuperação de uma voz feminina do início do século XX pela academia e pelas editoras.

**Resumo:** Luisa Carnés foi uma das intelectuais espanholas que, tal como muitos outros, teve de se exilar depois da Guerra Civil e da vitória das tropas de Franco em 1939. Carnés tinha publicado várias obras em Espanha, continuando a escrever no México. No entanto, os seus textos foram esquecidos inclusive depois do regresso da democracia em 1975. No século XXI os universos académico e editorial resgatam esta importante figura da literatura espanhola, integrando-a ou pelo menos aproximando-a do *Nuevo Romanticismo* ou da *Generación del 27*, procurando incluí-la devidamente na cultura contemporânea. Abordamos este processo de mediação neste artigo, analisando a relevância nos dias de hoje da perspectiva de Carnés sobre a condição da mulher.

**Palavras-chave:** Literatura espanhola; academia; Luisa Carnés; literatura escrita por mulheres; censura; século XX; século XXI.

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I begin with a kind of *mise en abyme*, by referring a paper at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Lisbon, in September 2019, during the 41th ACIS Conference, by Purificació Mascarell, a researcher and professor at the Universitat de València, with the title *Ampliando el canon hispánico moderno con mirada feminista. Análisis de la recuperación contemporánea de las mujeres de la Generación del 27* [Expanding the modern Hispanic canon with a feminist perspective. Analysis of the contemporary recovery of women from the generation of '27]. Mascarell said that a large number of female writers – who produced texts as important as their male counterparts of the *Nuevo Romanticismo* [New Romanticism] or the *Generación del 27* [Generation of '27] – should be integrated into the canon of Spanish literature:

The study of these women calls into question the modern Spanish canon and the term *Generación del 27* as it has been studied and disseminated until now, with a central and emblematic consideration of that generation's male figures. [...] Many of these women were wives or partners or friends of the key men of the *Edad de Plata* [Age of Silver]. [...] in the manuals they have always been presented as mere companions of the literary movement's protagonists: they travelled with them, accompanied them to cultural meetings and *tertulias*, they helped edit or correct proofs before printing, gave the men moral and intellectual support in their creative activity...

Until now, these women had never been considered autonomously as novelists, poets, painters, sculptors, composers, intellectuals, editors, playwrights, activists, politicians, cultural managers, pedagogues... Despite having their own work, having published and received critical attention during the Republic, the political commitment of most of them led them into exile and oblivion during the Franco regime. [...] Only in the 21st century have they been considered again... (MASCARELL, 2019).

Luisa Carnés<sup>2</sup> is among these forgotten writers, only recently recovered for the general public, although she holds a particular position, as she did not frequent intellectual circles and was

2 The issue of integrating Carnés' work within literary history is not consensual. Some critics associate her with the *Generación del 27*, along with Nuria Azancot, Marta Sanz, Inés Martín Rodrigo, Carmen Morán Breña and Antonio Plaza Plaza. However, given the specificities of Carnés' work, she may more appropriately be integrated within the *Nuevo Romanticismo*. In the article *El compromiso de la literatura: la narrativa de los escritores de la Generación del Nuevo Romanticismo (1926-1936)* [Literature's commitment: the narrative of writers from the generation of New Romanticism], María Francisca Vilches de Frutos analyses the *Nuevo Romanticismo*, a parallel movement to the *Generación del 27*, "which achieves an extraordinary success in its time, but that until recently has been disregarded in most histories of Spanish literature, when not judged negatively" (VILCHES de FRUTOS, 1982, 31). This specialist identifies as causes of this silencing during the dictatorship, on the one hand, the themes and ideological perspectives of the literary works and, on the other, the change in artistic tastes. Presented for the first time by Gil Casado, the designation *Nuevo Romanticismo* includes texts marked by the appreciation of feelings, a recognition of love's universality, a political vision of life, and a recognition of ideological struggles in social changes. As indicated by Vilches de Frutos, these authors analyse the social and cultural problems of their contexts, seeking "to reflect upon the reach of all transformations, with the purpose of stimulating the action of all who feel the gravity of events" (VILCHES de FRUTOS, 1982, 34). He presents precisely the example, among others, of the *novela Tea Rooms. Mujeres obreras*, by Luisa Carnés.

forced to comply with the strict and demanding schedules of the professions she exercised: Carnés worked in a hat shop and a coffee shop, but was also a typist in the editorial group Compañía Iberoamericana de Publicaciones (CIAP) and a journalist for several publications. Carnés was part of the wave of Spaniards forced into exile after the Civil War and the victory of Franco's troops over the government elected in 1939. The writer had published several works in Spain and later continued to write in Mexico. Iliana Olmedo indicates that, before the war, “Luisa Carnés was far from being an unknown author, in fact, she was part of an emerging female group, a notable thriving minority” (OLMEDO, 2014, p.14). However, her texts fell into oblivion, and remained forgotten even after the restoration of democracy in 1975. In the late 20th century, there were some studies, largely ignored by the general public, but in the 21st century the editorial, academic and journalistic worlds rescued this important figure of Spanish literature for a wide group of readers. The paper by Purificació Mascarell in 2019 is an unequivocal example of this recovery. We will address this process, analysing the present relevance of Carnés' perspective on the condition of women. We will resort to the theory of polysystems, the concept of *subaltern* and the considerations of Edward W. Said in *Culture and Imperialism*, as well as articles and other texts by contemporary writers, critics, journalists and academics.

### Polysystems and institutions

Polysystem theory is known for its representation of the polysystem as a multiple and open system, composed of several systems and networks of relations, in a multiplicity of intersections and complex structure. Within the polysystem, there are hierarchies, with centre-periphery relationships or a dynamic stratification. The centre of the polysystem is identified with the most prestigious canonized system. The group governing the polysystem determines the canonization of repertoires. When canonization is determined, this group adheres to the canonized properties (giving them control over the polysystem) or changes the repertoire of canonized properties in order to maintain control. Regarding the polysystem *Spanish literature*, the political and economic power that won the Civil War imposed in the centre those authors and works that were in line with their convictions and interests, removing and seeking to silence all others, especially those positioned on the opposite pole. Fernando Larraz, in *Censura, exilio y canon literario [Censorship, exile and literary canon]*, states:

While censorship and exile imply the exclusion and marginalization of certain authors and texts – erasure, proscription, ostracism, annihilation, silencing... these are their semantic fields –, the canon supposes a will to integrate, to approximate a centre; implies elevation, recognition and visibility (LARRAZ, 2017, p. 50-51).

Larraz underlines that censorship is a device used for monitoring and control, which, in the case of Francoism, had at least two objectives: first, avoid dissemination of political, social, and moral ideas clearly not in harmony with those supporting the regime and its institutions (including the army and the Church); and, second, allow a specific literary historiography that excludes certain authors, among them the exiles: “Facing the present, it is a matter of preserving the orthodoxy of the messages spread through literary discourse; looking to the future, it is a matter of transforming the concept of literature, negating and discarding those products and producers not identified with it.” (LARRAZ, 2017, P. 53)

However, polysystem theory recognizes that, if these procedures are unsuccessful, the group and its canonized repertoire are pressured by another group displacing them. This is what happened with the recovery, during the Transition, of writers associated with the *Nuevo Romanticismo*, the *Generación del 27*, the Second Republic and exile and, in recent years, of female writers also linked to these movements and contexts. Such an evolution of the system, Itamar Even-Zohar explains, is determined by a struggle within the system, between primary and secondary options and between the upper and lower strata. Thus, peripheral authors progressively approach the centre or, at least, move slightly away from the margins. Writing specifically about Luisa Carnés, Iliana Olmedo underlines that the study of her work “creates a crisis for the canon's validity, understood as the history of literature's constructive axis” (OLMEDO, 2014, p. 18) and proposes the author's recovery “suggesting she become a catalyst to transform literature's canonical architecture” (OLMEDO, 2014, p. 18)

One of the most important elements recognized by polysystem theory is the *institution*. In the present case, we find several institutions involved, foremost from academia, mainly Antonio Plaza Plaza, author of several studies on Carnés (articles, conferences, books, etc.) and who compiled *Cuentos completos [Complete Stories]*; and the aforementioned Iliana Olmedo – namely with her doctoral thesis *Compromiso, memoria y exilio. La narrativa de Luisa Carnés (1926-1934) [Commitment, memory and exile. The narrative of Luisa Carnés (1926-1934)]*, defended in 2009 at the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, and *Itinerarios del exilio. La obra narrativa de Luisa Carnés [Itineraries from exile. The narrative work of Luisa Carnés]*, published in 2014 by Editorial Renacimiento, in the very important collection *Biblioteca del exilio [Library from exile]*. Other academics involved in the study of Carnés include María Francisca Vilches de Frutos, Fulgencio Castañar, Susana Cavallo, Cristina Somolinos Molina, Sabela Pena García, Natalia Calviño Tur, Ángela Martínez Fernández and David Becerra Mayor, among others. Naturally, the studies on Carnés are part of wider research on the intellectuals of the 1920s and 1930s, associated or not with

the Residencia de Señoritas and the Lyceum Club de Madrid (such as Carmen Conde, Concha Méndez, Ernestina de Champourcin, Josefina de la Torre, María Teresa León, Maruja Mallo, and Rosa Chacel), by researchers such as Shirley Mangini, Nuria Capdevila-Argüelles; but are also part of more extensive projects such as *La otra Edad de Plata [The other age of silver]*, coordinated by Dolores Romero López (Universidad Complutense de Madrid) or the Grupo de Estudios del Exilio Literario (GEXEL) in the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

Another institution involved in this process is the editorial universe. There was certainly a bridge between universities and publishers. For instance, the aforementioned Becerra Mayor, a professor at the Université Catholique de Louvain (Belgium), introduced Luisa Carnés to one of her 21st-century editors, Daniel Álvarez Prendes. His publishing company – Hoja de Lata – reissued the most impactful of Carnés' titles, *Tea Rooms. Mujeres obreras*<sup>3</sup> [*Tea Rooms. Working-class women*] (2016), soon joined by *Trece cuentos [Thirteen stories]* (2017). This small publishing company arose recently, after the economic crisis, when the bookseller became unemployed and decided to found a publishing house, a generic context related with some of the themes in Carnés' books. The first recovery of the writer's work took place when Renacimiento published *El eslabón perdido* (2002) [*The missing link*]. More recently, this publisher printed *De Barcelona a la Bretaña francesa. Memorias* (2017) [*From Barcelona to the French Bretagne. Memoirs*], *Cuentos completos* (two volumes, 2018) and *Natacha* (2019)<sup>4</sup>. *Cuentos completos* is, undoubtedly, a fundamental milestone.

There were other noteworthy institutions in this process, such as the Ayuntamiento de Madrid and its project *Plan Memoria de Madrid*. Created in 1990, its objectives included placing commemorative plaques in buildings to remember historical facts and figures. By early 2017, 367 plaques had been placed, but only 32 were related with female figures and most were religious or noble figures. The municipality then announced the placement of new plaques dedicated to the writers of *Generación del 27*: Lyceum Club Femenino, María Lejárraga, Ernestina de Champourcin, Maruja Mallo, Victoria Kent, Margarita Nelken and Luisa Carnés. This was recognition by the capital's political system, promoting these authors. “We will pay homage to the women who changed the city's history”, claimed Celia Mayer, City Councillor for Culture and Sport, to the newspaper *El País*.

Another institution with great impact was the periodical press and literary criticism, with news about the publication of Carnés, such as *Luisa Carnés cuenta los brioches [Luisa Carnés*

3 The book had already been reissued in 2014 by the Asociación de Libreros de Lance.

4 Other publishers have reissued titles by writers associated with the Second Republic, such as Cuadernos del Vigía, Editorial Comba, Ediciones Torremozas, Renacimiento, Espuela de Plata and Publicaciones de la Residencia de Estudiantes, among others.

*counts the brioches*], by the writer and critic Marta Sanz (*El País*, September 29, 2016); *Luisa Carnés, la escritora que no salía en la fotografía de la Generación del 27* [*Luisa Carnés, the writer left out of the photograph of the Generation of '27*], quoted in the cover flap of *Trece cuentos*; *La edición de todos sus cuentos salda otra deuda con Luisa Carnés* [*The edition of all his stories settles another debt with Luisa Carnés*], by Carmen Morán Breña (*El País*, April 26, 2018); or *España en su corazón* [*Spain in her heart*], by writer and critic Elvira Lindo (*El País*, June 3, 2018)<sup>5</sup>.

In the *media*, one should highlight the project that most contributed to publicizing the Second Republic authors among the general public, the *Las Sinsombrero* [The hatless women] project, which included a television program, an internet page and two books. The first volume, by Tània Balló, reached the ninth edition in three years (from 2016 to 2018) and in 2019 was published as a paperback. The second volume was released in 2018. The subtitle of the first volume echoes the words of Purificació Mascarell: *Sin ellas, la historia no está completa. [Without them, History is incomplete]*. Balló begins the presentation of the project, the book and, therefore, the women themselves precisely by referring the silence to which they were condemned by the Francoist censorship:

During the forty years of dictatorship that followed the Civil War, most of the illustrious names of those young intellectuals and artists who steered that boom of freedom and creativity, culminating in the proclamation of the Second Republic (1931-1939), were silenced (BALLÓ, 2018, P. 17).

Therefore, this is an essential issue. The starting point of a new beginning for these artists, almost a hundred years after their appearance, in an attempt to reconstruct the Spanish collective memory. As commented by Balló, the recovery of democracy opened the possibility of “finally transforming the collective imaginary and iconography about the victory ... But the history of the Transition in Spain ... was re-written only in male terms” (BALLÓ, 2018, p. 18). Women were practically excluded from anthologies, studies, biographies and memoirs, remaining forgotten. This is, therefore, also a historiographical question: who writes History, which versions and protagonists are presented, what is the underlying political and social perspective, etc. To impose a certain memory is also to allow the existence of certain actors, and not others. Pablo Sánchez León, in *‘Esa tranquilidad terrible’: la identidad del perpetrador en el ‘giro’ victimario. Memoria y narración* [*‘That terrible tranquility’: the identity of the perpetrator in the victimizing ‘shift’. Memory and narration*], addresses the actions of fascist intellectuals in the “machinery that produced crimes against humanity” (SÁNCHEZ LEÓN 2018, p. 181) and which “in general strived to maintain

5 The publisher Hoja de Lata's website has links to more than seventy newspaper articles that refer to the book.

citizens clouded within an institutional amnesia” (SÁNCHEZ LEÓN 2018, p. 181). In contrast, María Carmen África Vidal Claramonte underlines that “history will be all the more complete the more voices are incorporated in its construction” (VIDAL CLARAMONTE, 2018, p. 70). In line with concepts and theories such as new historicism and 'translational turn' (by Bachmann-Medick), Vidal Claramonte argues that History must be continually re-written, integrating ever more points of view, a permanent construction of the most pluralistic version possible, integrating those agents silenced in the various previous versions, particularly the working class, women, minorities and those defeated in political and/or military conflicts. Political and economic power also implies the power to narrate and record a version of the past (presented as the only *true* version) that cements the most convenient social structure, while outlining a future according to its specific interests.

Among the institutions *erased* by Francoist historiography, as highlighted by Tània Balló, is the Lyceum Club Feminino, a space built by an important group of Spanish intellectuals and artists in 1926 with the purpose of increasing the cultural level of women. Its activities had unparalleled relevance, as the writer María Teresa León recalls in *Memoria de la melancolia*:

The Residencia de Señoritas had already been created ... But women couldn't find a meeting hall until the Lyceum Club appeared. ... The Lyceum club gradually became the hard nut to crack of female independence. There were famous conferences... These were the times when subversion and mockery ran through the streets of Madrid. The capricious monarchy of the time sustained its merry dictator [Primo de Rivera] to bar what was coming. The Lyceum Club was no gathering of women to fan their faces and dance. It aimed to advance the clock of Spain (LEÓN, 2020, p. 419-420).

Tània Balló points out that this space was occupied by the Falange in 1939: “the desire to erase its work and memory was such that most of the centre's documentation was destroyed” (BALLÓ, 2018, P.31-32). This Phalangist action should therefore be understood as an attempt to control the information projecting a certain version of History and control the present and the future.

### **Dynamism and the condition of woman**

Noting the relationship between historical periods, Edward W. Said wrote, in *Culture and Imperialism*: “even as we must fully comprehend the pastness of the past, there is no just way in which the past can be quarantined from the present. Past and present inform each other, each implies the other and [...] each co-exists with the other” (SAID, 1994, p. 2). The present is a result of the past, so it is essential to know it. Therefore, female writers, intellectuals, activists and anonymous women in Spain today feel a need for references from other generations, recovering

empty areas, such as the authors from the *Edad de Plata* or *Nuevo Romanticismo*. Purificació Mascarell explained, in her paper at the 41st ACIS Conference, that these authors are interesting today because they provide references, on the one hand, for “the new feminist generations in Spain, following the purple wave in the latest March 8th's” (MASCARELL, 2019); on the other hand, for “the contemporary female writers and artists, who are searching history for a genealogy from which to launch forward, a genealogy denied them for a long time” (MASCARELL, 2019).

Polysystem theory explains this situation by the *law of dynamism*, considering that it is a necessary condition for a polysystem's functionality and that, responding to concrete needs, a system resorts to a growing inventory of alternative options, i.e., the aforementioned search for genealogy by today's activists and writers. Another aspect this theorization considers is the conditions of the market, which are central to the success of a new repertoire. And the conditions of the Spanish market nowadays favour these recoveries, there is a public interested in works such as those by the “Sinsombrero” and Carnés.

Marta Sanz wrote, in the aforementioned article about *Tea Rooms. Mujeres obreras*, published in 2016, that Carnés is one of the most important narrators of the *Generación del 27*, an “essential voice of the pre-war social novel” (SANZ, 2016). Praising the novel from the political and literary point of view, she outlines links with the present. For example, she mentions that Carnés does not make the apology of poverty and humble origins and comments: “from that lesson, the writers of crisis should learn that sometimes we transform social scourge into a slogan” (SANZ, 2016). In conclusion, she quotes the final sentence of *Tea Rooms* (“¿Cuándo será oída su voz?” [When will their voice be heard?]) to conclude: “Carnés is referring to proletarian emancipation. We readers suspect that, given the latest national and international events, we have never stopped being deaf.” (SANZ, 2016).

What themes do we find, then, in the narrative of Luisa Carnés? Among others, the condition of women, sexual harassment in the workplace, low wages, long hours, difficulty in transportation between home and work, precarious labour ties and job insecurity, the relationship with children and the physical and intellectual imprisonment that motherhood represents, access to education, abortion and prostitution. But also the prevailing male chauvinist prejudices and mind-sets. Antonio Plaza Plaza, in the postface to *Tea Rooms. Mujeres obreras*, summarizes that Carnés addresses the situation of most working women:

They are forced to reconcile their care for home and their children with an external professional activity, which condemns them for their low qualification by subjecting them to harsh working conditions, far below those of men. A situation that leads them, in most cases, to precarious and poorly paid jobs (PLAZA PLAZA, 2019, p.



222).

Any woman from the low and middle classes of our day can easily recognise herself in this description and therefore identify with the book's characters. Hence, the novel's commercial success: between 2016 and 2019 nine editions of *Tea Rooms* were printed. The editor of Hoja de Lata, Daniel Álvarez Prendes, commented in 2017 to *ABC*: “Many of the people who send us comments are young girls, 21st century *sinsombreros*” (MARTÍN RODRIGO, 2017B). Statistics show that Spanish women receive 15 percent less salary than a man in the same job, that only one in four women share household chores, that the unemployment rate and long-term unemployment affects women more than men. The Spanish (and, in general, European) universities themselves are marked by deeply unstable labour ties, high workloads and low wages. This element is surely another explanation for why the 21st century's academia recovered the work by Carnés and other writers of the time, for they feel these problems deeply, in a country also marked by very strong demonstrations and strikes, in the last decade, on International Working Women's Day.

However, this is not the only issue. As stated by Cristina Somolinos Molina in her doctoral thesis *Mujer, trabajo y escritura. Representaciones culturales en la narrativa española contemporánea* [*Woman, work and writing. Cultural representations in contemporary Spanish narrative*] (defended in 2020 at the Universidad de Alcalá in Spain), there are specific issues in Carnés' work that draw the attention of both her contemporaries and present readers. Especially because she presents a perspective from within the working class itself (also indicating the difficulties of collective organization), and not the most usual intellectual's view of the disadvantaged. This is closely linked to another fundamental aspect: in the early 20th century, while among the middle-class, paid employment for a women implied greater emancipation from her family and social context, among the working classes women's work represented the continuation of poverty, exploitation and submission, due to low wages (and lower than those paid to men), a subordinate position in the working universe's hierarchy and exposure to constant male persecution. Thus, Carnés broadens the issue and targets the system itself, showing that what is at stake is the social and economic structure itself. In summary, the author “questions the contradictions intrinsic to women's work at the time [...]. With this analysis, Carnés formulates the approaches of a second feminist wave that revealed the double exploitation of women (inside and outside the home)” (SOMOLINOS MOLINA, 2020, p. 99).

Edward D. Said argues that writers are not mechanically determined by ideology, class or economic history, but are part of the history of their societies, their product, but also forming and defining them: “shaping and shaped by the history and their social experience in different measure.

Culture and the aesthetic forms it contains derive from historical experience.” (SAID, 1994, p. xxiv) Belén Gopegui, another contemporary Spanish writer, in the article “Three necessary, albeit not sufficient, conditions for a literature of the lefts”, emphasizes that writers have this ability to intervene socially, not only through their stories, but also, through their texts, through the narratives they prevent from forming:

That is, bear in mind that the literary work of authors does not arise from an infinite space, where everything exists, where some narratives do not displace others, but instead where all unfold in equal conditions in the so-called literary field, which in the hegemonic manuals recalls an immense plain. [...] stories matter for what they tell, but also for what they displace; [...] stories that sound different, stories that [...] soften the clamour of the dominant ideology (GOPEGUI, 2011, p. 281).

### The voice of the *subaltern*

Let us now recover the concept of *subaltern*, defined by Ranajit Guha as the general attribute of subordination, in terms of class, age, sex, profession, etc. John Beverley clarifies that this includes “the distinction between educated or not (or partially) educated that apprenticeship in academic or professional knowledge confers” (BEVERLEY, 2004, p. 54). Luisa Carnés did not have an academic background nor was she part of the intellectual milieu of the time. In addition, she was a lower class woman, forced to work from a very young age. However, as David Becerra Mayor notes, the writer “embodies the voice of a subaltern subject who takes the floor to tell her own story and the story of her class” (MARTÍN RODRIGO, 2017a). In other words, the subaltern herself speaks, not another in her stead. This matches Gayatri Spivak's view when she argues that the subaltern cannot speak in a way that reflects authority or meaning without also changing the power/knowledge relations that make her a subaltern. Carnés tries to do it – and succeeds. Becerra Mayor states:

[...] she does not recount, from her privileged position, the life of the subaltern classes, she doesn't attempt to provide a voice for the voiceless; she herself represents the subaltern subject who – precisely because the possibility of expression was denied, because the turn to speak was stolen – has decided to take the floor and tell her own story and that of her class. Perhaps that is why her obscurity was even greater than that suffered by other women from the (ill-)named *Generación del 27*: her discourse was a double transgression, subverting in terms of class and gender (MARTÍN RODRIGO, 2017a).

Edward W. Said wrote: “[...] *they* were not like *us*, and for that reason deserved to be ruled.” (SAID, 1994, p. xii) This consideration regarding the colonial system and the literature at its service is applicable to many other relations of power, between those who hold and exercise power and

those who are subjugated by that power, namely in terms of social class and gender. In a large part of her work, Luisa Carnés expresses the life and voice of the dominated, in particular a group at least doubly dominated: the poor working class women of Spain in the early 20th century. Perhaps we should add at least one more level of domination, making them *triply dominated*: they are often young women, which makes them, in the eyes of a sexist and paternalistic society, even more *diminished*, without even a possible authority coming from *experience*. Triply dominated, triply subjugated, because they are not fully recognized as human beings by the society they are part of – that is, by men but also by women, so often equally sexist. Triply dominated within everyday Spain of the Second Republic, but in a context of social progress and attempts to change legislation and mentalities – incidentally, as is represented in *Tea Rooms. mujeres obreras*, in the development of the class consciousness of some characters, in the strike and demonstrations.

All the works of Carnés were expelled from the history of Spanish literature by the fascist regime (the power that dominated the polysystem's centre and imposed its canon) after the Civil War. From the point of view of Francoism and recovering Said's conception, Carnés and other women and men with the same profile deserve to be dominated and annihilated because they are different from the winning *us*, a retrograde, conservative, classist, sexist and racist *us* with very clear economic, political and social objectives: to impose the power of the upper classes and submit all others, placing them at their service. However, this silencing is not eternal. On the one hand, Republican writers continued to be read and published outside peninsular Spain (despite the very adverse conditions that survivors faced, namely in exile). On the other hand, after 1975 and the country's democratization, several of these ostracised names were recovered, both their works written before 1939 and those produced in exile. However, some names remained in obscurity. In *Escribir desde el exilio, escribir el exilio [Writing from exile, writing the exile]*, the introduction to *Los restos del naufragio. Relatos del exilio republicano español [The remains of the shipwreck. Tales of the Spanish Republican exile]*, published in 2016, Fernando Larraz and Javier Sánchez Zapatero wrote:

[...] there has been a tendency to identify the history of the Spanish narrative with the history of the Spanish narrative written or published in peninsular Spain, relegating exiled production as complementary material to the appendix or a scholarly note, as if its location within the map of the national literature was so problematic it could only be object of a minor and partial integration. After the dictatorship was overcome, the persistent ignorance around narrative in exile in the present is due to a secular tendency towards nationalism within literary history (questioned by the hybridity of exile) and certain historiographical inertias initiated during Francoism that tended to postpone, if not silence, the cultural works written by the exiled, a situation perpetuated by the sluggishness of many researchers and the tendency to repeat common places that become

fossilized (LARRAZ, SÁNCHEZ ZAPATERO, 2016, p. 10).

Txetxu Aguado, em *Modelos emocionales de memoria: el pasado y la Transición* [*Emotional models of memory: the past and the Transition*], considers that “the Spanish Transition, despite its virtues, did not offer a satisfactory response to memories that reclaim presences, mainly republican and anti-fascist” (AGUADO, 2011, P.51), defending the need to “articulate memory paradigms that are an alternative to the Transition's more conservative paradigms” (AGUADO, 2011, p. 52).

Among the male and female authors in obscurity is Luisa Carnés, only recovered in the 21st century. While earlier we noted that Carnés' female characters and their real corresponding figures in society were triply dominated, we can now say that the author herself, along with others, shares that feature. In the newspaper *ABC*, Marta Sanz presented two additional elements: her militancy in the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) and the type of narrative she writes:

A communist militancy that for a long time has been distortedly considered incompatible with the possibility of having a literary style or ‘quality’, and the fact she wrote certain very risky texts, generically unclassifiable, hybrid, such as the reportage novel *Tea Rooms*, congealed from lyrical fragments (MARTÍN RODRIGO, 2017).

For John Beverley, subaltern studies should also be ways of intervening politically, from the subaltern's perspective (BEVERLEY, 2004, p. 56). Academic studies on Carnés do just that. Beverley writes:

Subaltern studies registers rather how the knowledge we construct and impart as academics is structured by the absence, difficulty, or impossibility of representation of the subaltern. This is to recognize, however, the fundamental inadequacy of that knowledge and of the institutions that contain it, and therefore the need for a radical change in the direction of a more democratic and non-hierarchical social order. (BEVERLEY, 2004, p. 70-71)

Purificació Mascarell also spoke about this issue, in a reflection on academia itself and the recovery of the *Nuevo Romanticismo* or *Generación del 27* writers:

[...] something has to change in society, in the primary, secondary and high school education system, in the university academic system and its research projects, in literary criticism and the press, in all cultural institutions (which includes everything from municipal libraries to the Spanish Royal Academy [...]) (MASCARELL, 2019).

Iliana Olmedo notes that today the study of Carnés arises from her near invisibility in literary history “to understand this absence, we need return to when she wrote and review the authors who surrounded her. [...] Incorporating Carnés into literary history is a first approach to this transformation” (OLMEDO, 2014, p. 18-19). This process is undoubtedly in motion.

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