

An exploration of female identity in textbooks from the Spanish transition to democracy. Between continuity and change¹

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Abstract: School textbooks constitute an important tool in terms of the transmission of models of social behaviour, values and cultural norms among the school-age population. This article aims to analyse the process of constructing female identity in secondary school textbooks during the Spanish transition to democracy (1975-1982). In order to achieve this objective, a sample of thirty textbooks corresponding to History, Geography, Language and Literature in the BUP (High School Education) and COU (University Foundation Course) stages established by the General Education Act of 1970 has been selected. To facilitate their study, we have employed a combination of historical-educational methodology from a perspective of gender and critical discourse analysis by way of the implementation of the qualitative software Nvivo version 12. The results obtained demonstrate two contrasting models of female identity that underpin the school textbooks corresponding to this period: one traditional and one modern. Both models – based on discourses, images and cultural representations, outlined and articulated the identity construction among the school population. With the arrival of democracy, minor progress can be observed in relation to visibility and the active presence of women. However, sexist stereotypes associated with traditional gender roles that are presented more subtly as a result of the requirements of the political, social and educational context, persist.

Keywords: School textbooks; Spanish Transition; secondary education; female identity; gender.

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1. Introduction

Over time, textbooks² have represented the main teaching resource employed en masse in classrooms. Their pages condense content that dominant groups from each period wish to transmit, thus legitimising the socio-cultural, political and economic system of the time (Tiana, 2000; Viñao, 2015). Consequently, they proved a valuable tool in terms of the construction of the imaginary of the school-age population, developing the collective and individual national identity, in one way or another (Badanelli, Mahamud, Milito, Ossenbach & Somoza, 2009; Ossenbach, 2010).³ Among other reasons, as school textbooks are instruments that intervene in the socialisation process of the school-age population, they have a decisive influence on the development of ideological, sexual, physical and social roles and stereotypes. They therefore undertake essential socialising functions among peers, thus confirming their influence on identity construction.

Based on these fundamental assumptions, the aim of this study is to analyse both the roles and spheres assigned to women in secondary school textbooks during the Transition to democracy.⁴ This period is one of the most crucial and convulsive in the contemporary history of Spain, and the reasons for choosing it are based specifically on the transcendence of the changes that occurred during this time. Despite the resistance of the most fundamentalist sectors of the Franco dictatorship, the State was able to undertake important transformations that gradually penetrated society.⁵ These transformations included the various educational reform projects

² *Manualistic*, a term coined by professor Agustín Escolano, is understood as the field of research within which, from an analytical and epistemological dimension, the object of study is the school textbook (Escolano, 1998, 2001 y 2013). In recent years, its field of study has been consolidated in three main analytical areas: content and ideological influence, textual nature and production (Viñao, 2006).

³ Identities are acquired from childhood and are not innate. In fact, they gradually undergo both change and transformation throughout life (Hernández, 2020). Additionally, for Ricoeur (1996), identity implies a narrative associated with the influences that social agents have exerted on the personal perception of the individual. It is, therefore, a shared mental representation constructed by way of discourse and other inputs.

⁴ The periodisation of the Spanish Transition has given rise to debates among academics. The most generalised interpretation references this period as running from the death of dictator Francisco Franco (1975) to the first democratic general elections (1982), with the triumph of the PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero Español). This period is divided into two stages that coincide in terms of significant political milestones. The first, from 1975-1978, runs from the death of Franco to the approval of the Constitution; and the second, from 1978-1982, including the successive UCD (Unión de Centro Democrático) governments, heirs of Francoism, to the victory by absolute majority of the socialists. In order to engage further with this topic, the following can be consulted, among others: Chaput, Marie-Claude & Pérez Serrano, Julio (Eds.) (2015). *La Transición española. Nuevos enfoques para un viejo debate*. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva; Sánchez, Mariano (2010). *La transición sangrienta (1975-1983)*. Barcelona: Planeta; Tusell, Javier (2010). *Dictadura Franquista y Democracia, 1939-2004*. Barcelona: Crítica; Preston, Paul (2001). *El triunfo de la democracia en España*. Barcelona: Grijalbo; Soto, Álvaro (1998). *La transición a la democracia. España 1975-1982*. Madrid: Alianza; Prego, Victoria (1997). *Así se hizo la Transición*. Madrid: Plaza & Janés.

⁵ An unstable period as a result of the coup, terrorist attacks, social protests and the 1973 global oil crisis with its inflationist impact, among other causes. Similarly, other significant events

that moved away from the old conception of education as both a social and gender barrier, and enabled the construction of new social identities.

In this context, General Law 14/1970 of 4 August on Education and Funding of the Education Reform (hereinafter LGE) modified the realms of education in Spain during the seventies, introducing innovative elements that confronted the demands of the transition from a traditional society to an industrial society consisting of employees and consumers (Puelles, 1992; Viñao, 2020). Within the realms of the LGE, school textbooks played a key role in achieving these goals and introducing «the concept of progress with development and justice with equality» (Ramírez & Meyer, 2011, p. 110). Textbooks therefore reoriented much of their discourse towards the notion of a Spain renewed by the 1978 Constitution, capitalism, social welfare and the development of citizenship (Delgado-Granados & Guichot, 2013). This posed a political challenge that, as highlighted by Tussel (2010, p. 19), aimed to demonstrate «[...] that complicated political engineering that led us to move from dictatorship to freedom without significant social traumas», was possible. However, in this vision of social democratisation, female identity was excluded as both a social and cultural referent.⁶ The textual and iconographic discourses of school textbooks very much silenced its presence, thus making evident the degree of gender discrimination that was present in the educational system, in addition to wider society. The arrival of democracy gave rise to slight progress as regards the visibility and active presence of women in the textbooks belonging to the period analysed, although the transmission of stereotyped and differentiated gender roles persisted.

Firstly, this article makes an approximation in terms of school textbooks as a source of historical-educational research. It then proceeds to delve into the political and educational context in Spain during the time frame analysed. Lastly, it addresses the complex relation between the education system, by way of its textbooks, and the economic environment of the time, from a perspective of gender,⁷ in order to detect those sexist stereotypes and prejudices that occupied first-order functions in the construction of female identity. Thus, an analysis is undertaken of the social processes that both produce and reproduce inequalities between women and men, based on the notion that societies are constructed by way of the establishment of masculinity as hegemonic and femininity as subordinate (Delgado de Smith, 2008).

Ultimately, it involves a hermeneutic understanding of the different social relationships, means of power, strategies and practices that underpin female identity in textbooks from the period studied. In other words, what are the implications of the content, images and symbols transmitted in school textbooks from the Transition as regards female identity construction? The results obtained bring to light the existence

took place, such as the Moncloa Pacts and the Amnesty Law, both in 1977, the legalisation of the workers' unions, etc. (Soto, 2005).

⁶ Female identity understood as a social construction that is based on the concept of otherness, relationships and social interactions, roles and the way in which they are narrated and represented, conditioning their own narration (Fargas, 2020).

⁷ This type of focus facilitates the understanding of the difference between the terms *gender* and *sex*, the first being understood as a social and cultural creation that generates a socially-constructed characteristic; and the latter, referring to a reductionist expression that focuses exclusively on a person's biology (Amorós, 1997; Mc Dowell, 2000).

of two contrasting models of female identity: one traditional and one modern, constructed based on discourses, images and cultural representations that outlined and articulated the perceptions and behaviours of the school-age population, thus constructing their identity within society. The textbooks analysed therefore begin to identify active women by way of values such as independence or autonomy, despite persisting, in accordance with the patriarchal order of the time, and stereotyped traditional roles such as subordination, passivity or dependence.

2. Political and educational framework during the Spanish transition to democracy

At the beginning of the seventies, the LGE was approved under the mandate of Minister for Education, José Luis Villar Palasí, considered by the OCDE as «the beginning of the significant development of mandatory education in Spain, both in quantitative and qualitative terms» (1986, p. 51). The new education reform, which aimed to provide a response to the accelerated economic and social change the country was experiencing at the time, implied «the first trial of the regime's transition in its attempt to survive» (Ortega, 1992, p. 31). The construction of the new educational system was reflected in its previous diagnosis, that is to say, in the 1969 *White Paper*, and in the education reform process itself, which proposed a less memory-based learning style (Viñao, 2020).

One of its key new features was the universalisation of education in order for the entire population to participate, adapting the education process to fit the demands of a more industrialised economy (Delgado-Granados, 2021). This resulted in an increase in the presence of women, in particular in general studies, namely basic and intermediate educational levels, to such an extent that not only was numerical equality achieved, but the number of women enrolled in secondary education was comparatively higher. In the 1981-1982 academic year, the presence of women at BUP and COU reached 54% of the total enrolment, according to data from the National Institute of Statistics (INE, 1982). Additionally, the academic results recorded were marginally higher than those of their peers. For Isabel and Inés Alberdi (1984), the problem regarding women's access to higher education was due, in part, to the sexed image of their education and the «female» or «male» professions. Motherhood as a primordial function of women was then added to this, acting as a constitutive element of their identity and family obligations (Delgado-Granados & de-las-Heras-Monastero, 2022).

In this context, manualistics also underwent a transformation as regards approaches to teaching and pedagogy, adapting to the economic and educational boom at the time. The modernisation of new editorials underwent a change in economic and sales model similar to that which was experienced in media companies and the culture industry (Santos, 2013). Some of these editorials included Anaya, Santillana, Vicens Vives, Everest and Teide, of which the majority were consolidated during the process of the Transition to democracy (Hernández, 2018). It was therefore necessary to remodel the discourse presented in the school textbooks, rendering obsolete those which already existed. In order to do so, editorials were assessed by specialists from the university field, as they understood that these teaching resources were an essential part of the modernisation process underway

in the country (Beas, 2000). Gradually, new teaching styles related to achievement and effective education were introduced, and content was organised by subjects and teaching units (Tiana, 2000, p. 272).

As regards the more traditional editorials, initially they maintained a discourse centred on the spirituality and indoctrination of the Franco regime. However, over the following years their production system became obsolete, and the majority disappeared due to being unable to adapt to the new demands of the sector. Few, such as SM, Bruño or Edelvives, survived thanks to the supplies provided by religious centres (Castillejo, 2009).

3. The female sector and labour market. Imbalances and tensions

Without embarking on a detailed study of the gender inequality present in the world of work, different studies determine that the labour market has been socially constructed based on unequal and asymmetrical relations of power in which men have been associated with physical strength and women with their natural reproductive condition (De Beauvoir, 1949; Martín, 2000; Cebrián & Moreno, 2018).⁸ According to this model, the sexual divide in terms of work would be based on the biological differences of each sex. This is an entrenched structural phenomenon that has implied an unequal distribution of work and salaries among men and women (Barberá, Dema, Estellés & Devece, 2011; Jiménez, 2017).⁹

During the Franco dictatorship, a gender policy was imposed, controlled by a civil regulation that denied women their individual and social autonomy (Ortiz, 2006).¹⁰ In accordance with this patriarchal and androcentric policy, the female sector was separated from the labour market in order to undertake its functions in the domestic space, as mothers and home organisers.¹¹ This position of inferiority with respect to men was further accentuated in marriage, which was governed by unequal treatment between spouses (domestic power and the husband's license for the administration of her own economic interests, limitation of her legal capacity, etc.). A female archetype based on the construction of a triple identity: mother, wife and housewife, which continued until the seventies (Ruiz, 2007).¹²

⁸ Understood as the unequal distribution of women and men in the different sectors of economy and different occupations (Anker, 1997).

⁹ In the labour market, gender segregation can occur either horizontally or vertically. When horizontal, it refers to the clustering of women in activities that are generally considered female, according to the sexual division of labour. When vertical, it refers to the invisible barrier, known as the «glass ceiling» (Morrison, 1987), which ultimately prevents women from ascending the pyramidal structure within companies or institutions, even in feminised professions.

¹⁰ The *Fuero del Trabajo* (or Employment Code) (BOE, of 10 March 1938) was responsible for regulating labour relations and social protection, in addition to reflecting the ideological programme of the regime itself, until the creation of the Workers' Statute, now in a democracy.

¹¹ This principle of female inferiority is demonstrated, for example, by the fact that until 1975, married women required permission or consent from their husbands in order to access work.

¹² Among the measures employed, Law 15/1961 of 22 July on Political, Professional and Labour Rights, provided for equal rights for both women and men, in addition to equal pay, provided there was equal performance.

The Transition period created a framework conducive to the introduction of progress as regards women, both in socio-occupational and legal terms (Folguera, 2012). An examination was undertaken of the precepts of the Civil Code and the pre-constitutional laws of 24 April 1958, 22 July 1972 and 2 May 1975, the latter being of particular importance as it modified various articles within the Civil Code, specifically those linked to the legal capacity of married women and their matrimonial property regime. Additionally, article 35.1 of the Constitution guaranteed, more in terms of law than practice, «that all Spaniards have the duty and right to work, to freely choose their vocation or profession, to promotion through work and sufficient payment in order to satisfy both their needs and those of their family, without being discriminated against for their sex». Thus, the demand for equal rights and freedoms for women began to hold space in the work and social environment. As highlighted by Guarinos (2007, p. 58), «the modern woman of the Transition is no longer the «ye-yé» woman. Modern girls are young, urban, working, carefree and self-sufficient». Economic progress and the need for a workforce that is qualified and in line with the professional work were identified by way of the configuration of a professional self-identity for women. They were predominantly young and single, with a small active female population between the ages of 25-54 years old, which accessed the labour market, later abandoning it as soon as she married or had her first child (Report by FOESSA, 1976).

As regards the female labour participation by economic sectors, the third sector gained strength, in detriment to the primary and secondary sectors, with the services sector being the area with the main female occupation (table 1). However, with higher levels of precariousness and instability than in the case of men. In general, women occupied low-skilled, low-responsibility, low-paid jobs.¹³ These jobs tended to have little social value, despite the fact that women obtained higher academic results than men, especially in secondary education (Flecha, 1989).¹⁴

Table 1. Percentage of feminine activity by economic sectors

Economic sectors	1976	1982
Agriculture	21.36%	16.14%
Industry	32.67%	18.63%
Construction	0.84%	0.63%
Services	54.13%	64.61%

Source: Guichot-Reina & De la Torre-Sierra (2020, p. 108).

¹³ Predominantly in healthcare, social services, education, public administration and retail sale sectors (Rubio, 2008).

¹⁴ The percentage of women who completed BUP studies was one point higher than that of men. As regards COU, the proportion of women passing was marginally higher: a 68,62% female success rate compared to 68,18% in the case of men (Flecha, 1989).

The 1970s feminist movement was another crucial political factor as regards equality policies, as it was an opportunity to demand social and working rights for women, who had been silenced during Franco's dictatorship. On a global scale, the United Nations (UN) declared 1975 as the *International Women's Year*, in response to the drive of feminism around the globe.¹⁵ In virtue of this, the UN became guarantor of rights for women and of the platform for feminist agendas. This then gave rise to the organisation of several campaigns and acts, in addition to two international congresses. The first took place in Mexico City, and the second in Berlin, becoming a milestone in the history of feminism.

Faced with this panorama, and as it could be no other way, Spain, a member of the UN since 1955, oriented its political discourse by incorporating women into public life in order to recover the influence it had lost internationally. Aware of the global impact that would arise from this event, the Franco regime entrusted the Women's Section with the preparatory work for its participation in the Mexico Congress, in addition to assuming responsibility for the organisation of various propaganda activities.¹⁶ It was therefore a question of showing both society and the outside world that the regime could adapt to the new times, employing the use of a renewed discourse and turning the situation of women into a political objective. However, the military coup of 23 February 1981 shook the foundations upon which the incipient democracy was being constructed. This was partly due to the fact that, deep down, a sector of society was anchored in the religious ideas sedimented in the Francoist past and rejected any form of social transformation (Rabazas & Ramos, 2006; Telo, 2009).

In any case, the feminist movement legitimised gender discrimination, constructing new discourses and making visible the new gender identities that contributed to the development of a collective identity (Martínez, Gutiérrez & González, 2009). Within the realms of art, it demanded the review of traditional female representation as regards its patriarchal definition of body-object or body-desired, and the underpinning messages of glorification of beauty, passivity, sacrifice, etc. (Pastor & Bonilla, 2000; Martínez, 2004; Nuño, 2020). Therefore, the aim was to move towards a new form of self-identity, without the need for male references.

4. Methodology

The main objective is the analysis of female identity as presented in school textbooks from the Spanish Transition, from two different focus points: text and images.¹⁷ In order to do so, the *codification* technique has been employed (Gibbs,

¹⁵ By way of General Assembly Resolution No. 3010, during the course of the 27th session, on 18 December 1972.

¹⁶ The Women's Section was an organisation that belonged to the fascist party – Falange Española – and the Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista, generally known as Falange Española de las JONS (or Spanish Falanx of the Councils of the National Syndicalist Offensive) which aimed to propagate the feminine ideal of submission to men. See Estatutos de la Sección Femenina de Falange Española de las J.O.N.S. (January 1937).

¹⁷ In the *texts*, aspects related to the content, language, place and representativeness of women are analysed, and in the *illustrations*, the place they occupy and the way in which they are represented (adapted from López, 2015).

2012), in addition to content analysis (Berelson, 1952; Rabazas, 2001; López, 2002), by way of the software Nvivo version 12, in accordance with a system of categoric units comprised of: 1) *Language*, referring to the linguistic strategies employed in the texts and annexes (generic masculine, inclusive language, explicit female gender and sexist adjectives); 2) *Presence and protagonism of the female figure*, which implies the analysis of the degree and means by which she is represented; and 3) *Spaces and spheres of action* of female figures and their different occupations, both in the public and private space. Lastly, an analysis, comparison and interpretation of the information extracted from the categoric units established previously was undertaken.

According to table 2, a sample of 30 school textbooks pertaining to the Social Sciences in the subject areas of History, Geography, Language and Literature, corresponding to the secondary school stage and published during the democratic transition,¹⁸ has been selected. The criterion for the selection of publishers has been mainly those of greater diffusion and repercussion at a national scale, such as: Anaya, Santillana, Vicens Vives and SM. Although, others of a lesser national projection have been included.¹⁹

¹⁸ Of the nine that correspond to the subject History of Civilisations of 1º BUP, six to Human and Economic Geography of 2º BUP, six to the subject Geography and History of Spain and Hispanic Countries of 3º BUP, four to Contemporary World History of COU, one to Spanish Language of 1º BUP, two to Spanish Literature of 2º BUP, one to Spanish Language and Literature of 3º BUP and another to Spanish Literature of COU.

¹⁹ The identification of primary sources has been undertaken predominantly via CEINCE (International Centre of School Culture), located in the province of Soria, in the bibliographic fund of the Faculty of Education Sciences and in the Pedagogical Museum at the University of Seville, in addition to private donations.

Table 2. Sample of school textbooks

Nº	SUBJECTS	YEAR	PUBLISHER	YEAR
1			Anaya	1977
2			Bruño	1978
3			Didascalía	1976
4			Edelvives	1976
5	History of Civilisations	1º BUP	Magisterio	1978
6			Santillana	1975
7			SM	1982
8			Teide	1975
9			Vicens Vives	1979
10			Anaya	1979
11			Casals	1976
12	Human and Economic Geography	2º BUP	Magisterio	1981
13			Santillana	1976
14			SM	1978
15			Vicens Vives	1982
16			Alhambra	1978
17			Anaya	1981
18	Geography and History of Spain and Hispanic Countries	3º BUP	Edelvives	1977
19			Santillana	1977
20			SM	1982
21			Vicens Vives	1977
22			Anaya	1978
23	Contemporary World History	COU	Bruño	1975
24			Edelvives	1978
25			Vicens Vives	1980
26	Spanish Language	1º BUP	Anaya	1981
27			SM	1976
28	Spanish Literature	2º BUP	Vicens Vives	1979
29	Spanish Language and Literature	3º BUP	Bruño	1977
30	Spanish Literature	COU	ANAYA	1982

Source: created by author.

5. Female identity and its representation in school textbooks

5.1. Language

In its plethora of formats – written, verbal and iconographic – language represents one of the main channels in terms of the interpretation of reality within the educational context. Upon analysis of the sexist values present in textbooks, Galarreta & Careaga call out the difficulty caused by «the omnipresence of everything masculine, which is not that obvious upon first glance [...] subtly penetrate into pupils, who incorporate the permanent message of the primordial valuation of the masculine» (1987, p. 35).

As regards the school textbooks analysed, a distorted reality can be observed, in which the generic masculine tends to be employed indiscriminately as a means by which to describe people and things, ultimately making women invisible. This sexist dimension is at an all-time high in Geography and History textbooks as a result of the use of common expressions such as «the bourgeoisie», «the servants» or «the peasants» in order to refer to either people or collectives. This is demonstrated in the image of five female workers and the caption of the illustration, «the workers» (Sánchez, Centeno, De la Iglesia, Parrondo & Pedreño, 1975, p. 310). This means of identifying masculinity with humanity entails a series of significant consequences in terms of the construction of personal and social identity.

Figure 1. Use of the generic masculine



Source: Sánchez *et al.* (1975, p. 310).

Along the same lines, Language and Literature textbooks tend to use the generic masculine, and inclusive language appears exclusively in cases in which it is part of the topic content (Lázaro & Tusón, 1981, pp. 10 y 79). Occasionally, semantic incoherence can be observed between the combined use of the generic masculine and female gender in the same paragraph. This is evident when the role of women in

the development of agriculture during the Neolithic period is emphasised, and then the following is mentioned: «Man conditioned a series of animals to live with him [...]» to refer to the process of animal domestication (Rodríguez, Lazo, González & Bendala, 1978, p. 12). In this case, the concealment of female identity is revealed by the constant use of masculine voices in a generic sense.

On the other hand, the complementary description of the images also reflects the gender gap, as is the case with the use of sexist adjectives that stereotype certain behaviours as being naturally feminine. This conception is defined in an eighteenth-century illustration that depicts several bourgeois women shopping in an establishment while noting: «Female life, in the street; luxury [...] which allows «shopping» (Valdeón, González, Mañero & Sánchez, 1977, p. 213). There is therefore an association of female figures with consumerist activities in the public space, stereotyped according to the period analysed. In other descriptions, the sexual objectification of the female body by way of ontological dualisms such as mind/body or subject/object is noted. A type of sexist discrimination in which women are minimised and devalued (Puleo, 2015). This is the case in the description of the painting of *Venus* by painter Tiziano, as it states: «Venus, finely erotic, presents a secular femininity, far from the severe conceptions of religion» (Valdeón *et al.*, 1977, p. 213). The expression «finely erotic» is used as a means by which to attribute, on the one hand, the meaning of sexual object to the naked body of a young women – a condition of both inferiority and vulnerability -; and, on the other hand, male carnal desire – a condition of both superiority and domination. In addition to linking secularism with sexual freedom that reflects, as highlighted by Molina (2015), the complicity of a philosophical tradition with misogynist overtones that reduces women’s bodies to reproductive/sexual functions. Ultimately, female artistic representation becomes the object of the male gaze, both in terms of the figures and the viewer, whereby «the male vision of the world is defined as the universal norm» (Rodríguez, 2012, p. 5).

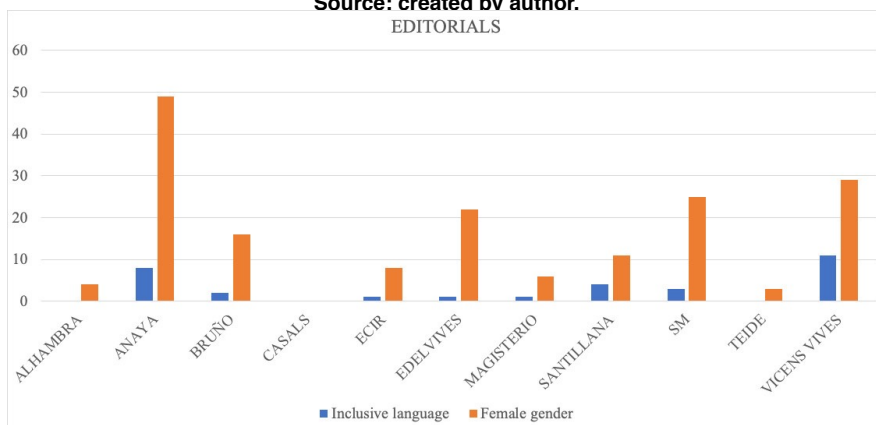
Figure 2. Use of sexist adjectives



Source: Valdeón *et al.* (1977, p. 213).

In accordance with the information represented in graphic 1, to a larger extent, emergent editorials employed the use of linguistic strategies as a means by which to make women visible. A clear example of these contributions is that of Vicens Vives (11), who incorporates inclusive language – «bourgeois life» or «working classes» (Fernández, Llorens, Ortega & Roig, 1979). As regards the use of feminine terms, the editorials Anaya (49) and Vicens Vives (29) include these in the educational curriculum by way of female references such as queens or members of aristocracy (Valdeón *et al.*, 1977, p. 156). Meanwhile, traditional editorials, such as SM (25), Edelvives (22) or Bruño (16), do so to a lesser extent. That said, the specific use of the female gender does not always fulfil the function of perceptibility and empowerment of women. Occasionally it reproduces those female activities that receive positive social valuation according to Catholic morals. This becomes evident when, for example, the figure of Martin Luther is discussed, as his wife’s profession as a nun is valued (*Ibidem*, p. 162). The latter involves the recognition of the ideal inherited from the Franco period, that is, the model of the wife as linked to the religious vocation (González, 2014).

Graphic 1. Inclusive language and female gender in editorials
Source: created by author.



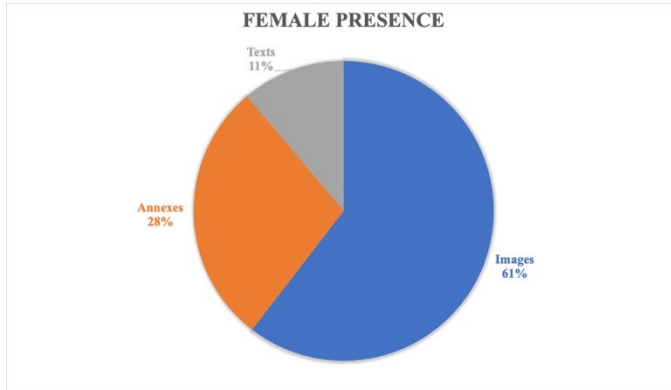
In short, the discourse of textbooks from the Transition period focused predominantly on figures identified using generic masculine language. Thus, a stereotyped version of the feminine was transmitted, in which the male mental construction predominated over that which they really thought and felt. This implied a greater possibility of identification for men than for women.

5.2. Presence and protagonism of the female figure

During the Transition period, a significant change occurred in terms of the organisation of educational content. With a view to neutralise the ideological load of the messages given, it moved from linguistic dominance to an iconographic aesthetic (Hernández, 2018; Milito, 2021). As can be observed in graphic 2, with a

greater percentage of female presence in *images* (61%), followed by *annexes* (28%) and *texts* (11%).

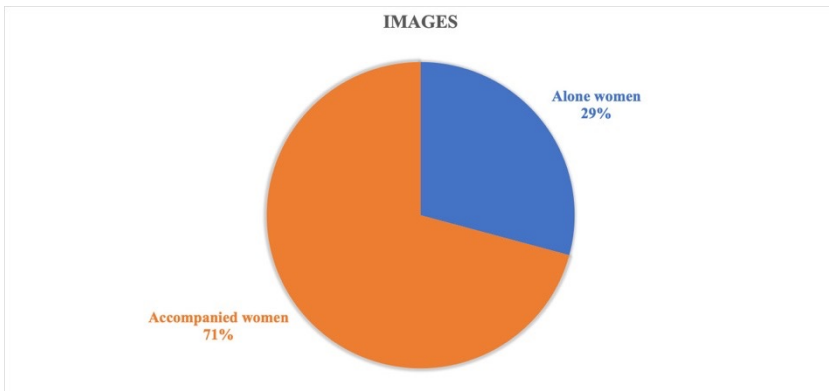
Graphic 2. Degree of female presence



Source: created by author.

When focusing on *images* as a teaching resource, we can observe the way in which they play a key role in revealing the message to be transmitted and, above all, in converting this iconographic information into knowledge (Miralles, Gómez & Arias, 2013; Gómez & López, 2014). However, as indicated by Pozo (2006), we must ask whether female images respond to the concept they have of themselves or, rather, reflect the social construction of the feminine prevailing in each historical moment. Assuming this idea, in the school textbooks we have analysed, women *accompanied* by men or as couples predominate (71%), as shown in figure 3, and *alone*, to a lesser extent (29%).

Graphic 3. *Images* subcategory



Source: created by author.

Figure 3. Accompanied woman



Source: Valdeón *et al.* (1977, p. 187).

The results demonstrate a scarce female presence to comprise the contents exposed in the text and, in most cases, these are artistic female figures that tend to be repeated throughout the different textbooks. This is the case in the works of art from this time, such as *La Gioconda* or *Monna Lisa* by Leonardo Da Vinci, *Las Meninas* by Velázquez or *Liberty Leading the People* by Eugène Delacroix. This produces a partial information of female identity that is mainly limited to an artistic and pictorial dimension. Something similar can be observed in the *graphics* featured in Geography textbooks, where the presence of women is residual, despite being a common resource, together with maps. In the case of *population pyramids*, demographic factors of both genders are included (Iglesia & Parrondo, 1976, p. 27), although in most cases the female sex is only mentioned in the graphic and is obviated in the text itself (Cano & García, 1978, p. 333). As regards Literature textbooks, images of women are scarce, with their presence limited to the *subfront* pages as a means by which to introduce the topic. The function of the female image therefore tends to be merely figurative or symbolic, as opposed to acting as a support to the discussion or learning.

In the annexes, female representations reach 28% of the total, however, information regarding their identification is not generally provided. This is a contrast to the case of male figures, who are identified by their name or the collective to which they belong. Additionally, in the scarce examples in which their function is to complement the information, they are assigned stereotyped or patriarchal roles. This can be observed when the political management of the empress Teodora (6th century A.D.) is highlighted, but as occupying the role of faithful wife to the emperor Justinian (Burgos & Navarro, 1976, p. 129). This is a subtle form of subordination and inferiority of the female figure constructed from the male figure.

As regards female presence in the **texts**, it constitutes less than 11%. In History textbooks, reference is made to representative political or monarchical figures – such as Queen Isabel I and Isabel II of Spain, the Byzantine empress Theodora and the Egyptian queen Nefertiti-, or religion – such as the prehistoric *Venus*, the *Lady of Baza* or Saint Teresa of Jesus-. Language and Literature textbooks delve

into figures from literary works such as *La Celestina*, or figures such as the medieval lady or allegories such as death and time. We can also observe biographical notes on women writers, despite these not being particularly extensive. In line with the information provided, the images continue to transmit an androcentric vision of the world that reinforces dominant values and sexist prejudices.

Lastly, significant differences can be observed among the subjects analysed, with Geography and History textbooks ensuring greater visibility of women than those of Language and Literature. This is due, in part, to the fact that certain concepts or historical facts can only be understood from iconographic resources (Gómez & López, 2014). The editorials also demonstrate variations as regards the degree of female representation. There is a greater number of appearances in those that adapted their pedagogical content to a more commercial and modern model. This is the case in the main editorials Anaya, Vicens Vives and SM, with the exception of Santillana, which has fewer allusions and illustrations of women than the more traditional editorials such as Edelvives and Bruño.

5.3. *Areas and spheres of actions*²⁰

Spaces, whether public or private, are other aspects associated with the development of gender stereotypes and sexist attitudes. Their differential use has been conditioned by a social construction of gender that has established a division of roles between women and men throughout history.²¹ The public sphere is thus often associated with masculinity, power and rationality, while femininity is often associated with aspects of private life, passivity, dependence and obedience (Ferrer, 2013). In the case of the Transition to democracy, this appreciation had different connotations that altered the stereotyped vision that arose during Franco's dictatorship.

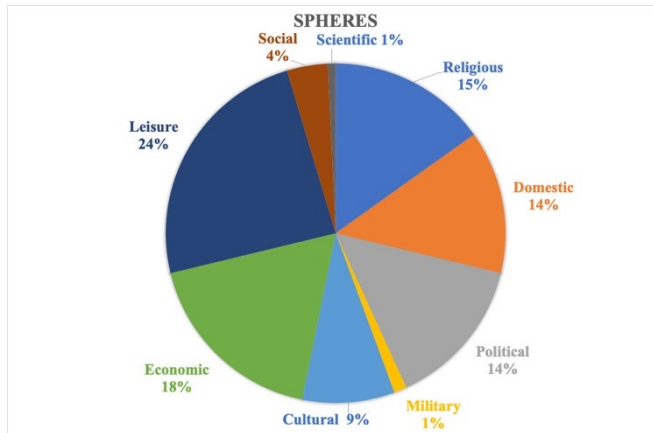
The new educational, economic and political context gave rise to the introduction of equality criteria by editorial teams and, in parallel, a progressive presence of women in the public sphere. As demonstrated in graphic 4, the female presence becomes greater in areas related to the public context than the private context. The occupations of the female figures are predominantly referenced in Geography and History textbooks, in addition to in the editorial Anaya, leader in the textbook market, and followed by Vicens Vives. The fact that the most-represented sphere is *recreational* (24%) demonstrates the slight shift that occurred during the Transition as regards the binomial private space – men and public space – women, incorporating women into the sphere that was traditionally assigned to them.

²⁰ The following *spheres of action* in which female figures develop different occupations have been analysed (adapted from Blanco, 2000): 1) *religious* (religious and spiritual world), 2) *domestic* (kinship relations and household activities), 3) *political* (government and legislative activities), 4) *military* (war and the army), 5) *scientific* (the production of scientific knowledge), 6) *cultural* (cultural and artistic production), 7) *economic* (professions in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors), 8) *leisure* (leisure activities) and 9) *social* (social action and protection, immigration, etc.).

²¹ The *theory of differential socialisation* states that from birth, as a result of the influence of different socialising agents, people acquire differentiated gender identities that entail cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural styles, axiological and moral codes, in addition to stereotypical behavioural norms assigned to each gender (Walker & Barton, 1983).

However, the persistence of sexist stereotypes that construct female identity from a gender model in transition can be observed.²² Whereas most women appear in outdoor leisure activities (shopping, taking a stroll), attending social gatherings or party environments, they tend to do so while accompanied by one or several men. It is thus perceived that when women try to perform in public spaces, they do so under the behavioural model legitimised by the patriarchal order (Moreno, 2000). As a result, leisure activities frequented by women are deemed unattractive, lacking in fun and creativity, in addition to social admiration.

Graphic 4. Spheres of action



Source: created by author.

The next most pronounced area is that which corresponds to the *economic* (18%) sphere, located predominantly in the subject of Geography. In certain professions, a horizontal segregation can be observed, which tends to be more pronounced depending on the sector. In the *third sector*, commercial and cleaning occupations stand out, although healthcare and service sector occupations are also present. However, in contrast to the study undertaken by Rubio (2008), there are barely any references or illustrations made in terms of other feminised sectors, such as education or public administration. As regards the *secondary sector*, this is the area where the greatest horizontal segregation can be observed, as the most-represented occupations are those which correspond to the textiles industry; a sector associated with domestic tasks associated with women. To a lesser extent, images of female workers in the electronics industry can be observed. Lastly, in the *primary sector* they are predominantly shown undertaking agricultural tasks, such as harvesting rice and mowing.

As regards the professions that require leadership, intellectual or creative skills, a clear vertical segregation can be observed. Within the *political* sphere (14%)

²² This encompasses psychosocial traits such as autonomy, independence, cultural level and participation in wider public life. Within the context of the Spanish Transition, with the incorporation of women into education, formal employment and public space, the traditional gender roles will coexist with the new gender roles (Velasco, 2009).

female figures can be observed predominantly in History books. However, for the most part, leadership comes hand-in-hand with a man: either shared (Isabel *La Católica*), or as queen consort, or as mother during the period in which the heir to the throne is underage (for example, María Cristina de Borbón). On the other hand, the professions most frequently represented in the *cultural* sphere (9%) correspond to *women writers* present in Literature textbooks - Gabriela Mistral, Fernán Caballero, among others - (Bonín & Comas, 1979, pp. 19 y 344), although the number of monographs dedicated to their male counterparts continues to dominate. Similarly, in the *scientific* sphere (1%), the only two mentions of female scientists of significant academic prestige in History textbooks stand out. More specifically, the anthropologist Margaret Mead (Sánchez *et al.*, 1975, p. 419) and the famous physicist and chemist Marie Curie (Palomares & Almuíña, 1978, p. 365), who is shown together with her husband. Therefore, although some textbooks present women in professions in which rational thinking is an essential requirement – and one generally attributed to male professions -, the vertical segregation is patent due to the fact that the proportion between both sexes is of great significance.

In the *social sphere* (4%), the international feminist movement, which was driving our country with force during the seventies, or social denunciations are made towards certain collectives. As examples, we highlight the criticism that the philosopher Lucía Duplín made regarding the romantic model of the woman in her time (*Ibidem*, p. 247). Or, it warns of the smear campaign that was promoted by the US, which denounced the Spaniards for having «assaulted American ships and stripped women naked under the pretext of undertaking a search» (Valdeón & González, 1981, p. 326).

As regards the private space, there is a *traditional identity model* based on occupations linked to the *domestic* (14%) and *religious* (15%) worlds. Women are represented as mothers, wives, goddesses of fertility, saints, virgins or muses. These figures transmit stereotyped roles that are justified, on the one hand with reproductive work,²³ which is viewed as something natural as a result of their biological condition; and, on the other hand, with the Catholic spiritual prototype that is related to values of submission and surrender. This idea of the traditional wife is visualised, for example, in an illustration that depicts the visit of several friars to a bourgeois house. The annexe explicitly demonstrates the model of the helpful wife who undertakes domestic activities such as cooking and cleaning, highlighting that: «they are cared for solicitously by the owner of the house» (*Ibidem*, p. 293). However, as reflected in figure 4, when the male figure is illustrated in the private sphere of the home, as father or husband, he maintains a passive role in domestic and family tasks (Sánchez *et al.*, 1975, p. 15). A female identity is therefore perpetuated, which is related to the traditional androcentric model in accordance with patriarchal principles, and the private space is established as «the space of non-recognition», assigned predominantly to women (Amorós, 1994, p. 5).

²³ Encompasses biological reproduction and all the activities necessary in order to guarantee the wellbeing and survival of the home.

Figure 4. Domestic sphere



Source: Sánchez *et al.* (1975, p. 15).

We can therefore conclude that a dichotomy between the female archetypes is produced in the social imaginary, representing two opposing identity models as regards occupations: on the one hand, a traditional model that follows patriarchal norms of assimilation of a role imposed in terms of the activities considered as pertaining to women, and is therefore not shared by men; and, on the other hand, a more open model, related to the emerging professions that, in some way, challenge the sexist stereotypes by introducing values such as independence or autonomy (Coronado & Galán, 2017). Thus, a female work identity is created based on opposing binaries – tradition/modernity – which is born as a result of processes of gender segregation – vertical/horizontal – developed in the labour market.

6. Conclusions

From the perspective of this study, we can affirm that school textbooks constitute an important tool as regards overcoming or consolidating stereotypes, and that editorials are responsible for their creation. In this task, textbooks play an active role in the identity dimension of the school-age population. The overall results demonstrate that during the Spanish Transition, education and, therefore, textbooks, were required to adapt their content to the new economic, pedagogical and cultural circumstances of the county. The changes introduced as a result of the LGE, with greater or lesser success, modified the Spanish educational panorama of the seventies and mid-eighties, and the textbook content was treated more objectively and critically.

Although we can state that within this context of reform, a timid advance as regards to the gender perspective did occur, sexist stereotypes remained present, reflecting an androcentric conception of discourse and thus, the world. It is therefore no coincidence that there is little connection between the language used and the

position held by women in society. The dominant tone, regardless of the subject, is the use of the masculine gender as neutral, thus demonstrating a distorted reality in the contents and creating a barrier in terms of the construction of the female identity. Aside from linguistic discrimination, this lack of accuracy or ambiguity in language has led to a simplification of reality in which the collective imaginary has been built by way of male references and unequal professions according to gender.

It is common to observe that the scarce representation of women is reduced to certain figures that are repeated across almost all editorials. This diminishes the prominence of their contribution, in contrast to the degree of prominence given to the exploits of the male figures, who are in fact identified by name. The professions of male and female figures also appear clearly differentiated in the school textbooks analysed. Men are attributed autonomy, authority and strength (as engineers, doctors, politicians, administrators, drivers, etc.), whereas women are assigned passive roles that are almost always subordinate to them (as nurses, saleswomen, textile workers, cleaners or housewives). This implies that the adolescents of the Transition barely had productive and active female role models with which to feel identified. The scarce presence of women actively participating in politics or scientific and cultural creation meant that their specific contribution to the construction of knowledge was almost nil. When they did appear, they were anonymous women named collectively, despite having certain predominance in the images themselves.

However, it is noticeable how the widely established editorials such as *Vicens Vives* and *Anaya* are progressively modifying their content in order to adapt to the new socioeconomic context. By way of more commercial, modern policies than those observed in more traditional editorials, they tend to employ a discourse that makes a timid attempt at making women visible by way of the use of inclusive language and the female gender as a means by which to highlight a contribution, activity or occupation, among other resources. However, this integrated vision is challenged with the use of sexist adjectives – euphemisms – that try to normalise certain behaviours – consumerist or erotic – simplifying the social perception of female identity. This is an identity that, on many occasions, is characterised by its biological qualities – a sexed, female body -. The preponderance of the presence of male figures over female figures can be added to this, producing the near invisibility of women who are camouflaged with both stereotyped and sexist images. This lack of protagonism is asserted by prioritising the aesthetic function of the images over the explanatory function, thus enhancing the symbolic load around women. In the case of works of art of male authorship, these contribute further to an androcentric vision.

Upon observation of the data obtained as potential references of identification of the student population for whom the school textbooks were written, we can state that two opposing female identity models can be identified: one traditional and one modern. The new context that began to consolidate at the end of the seventies, associated with an economic model that values the democratic project and the modernisation of Spain, invites the female presence to identify more with the public sphere than with the private sphere. This therefore contributes to the constitution of an active subject based on a new feminine ideal far removed from the traditional model of wife-mother. However, the persistence of sexist stereotypes in social activities, the evident vertical and horizontal occupational segregation, in addition

to the few textual incursions that ultimately question sexist prejudices and claim new female identities, perpetuate an unreal and biased image of women based on androcentric parameters. This facilitates the configuration of a female identity linked to relationships of dependence and lack of autonomy with respect to men who tend to assume roles related to management responsibilities.

In conclusion, in the light of this study, there is in fact a correlation between identity and discourse that reveals the underlying androcentric and polarised ideology existing in the school textbooks we have analysed. Consequently, this is also the case in the way in which the school population perceives the reality that is transmitted, and constructs their identities by way of the discursive representations present in the textbooks from the Spanish Transition.

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