

# Eugenics shaping Spain: Marañón's ideas of masculinity and femininity in his envisaged society (1922-1933)<sup>1</sup>

Ezequiel Varela VÁZQUEZ

**Abstract:** *Gregorio Marañón y Posadillo (1887-1960) was a beloved Spanish physician who can be considered a Latin eugenicist. This article analyses the societal expectations Marañón had for Spanish men and women between 1922, his discourse at the RNAM and 1933, the death of Hildegart Rodríguez Carballeira (1914-1933). To gather primary sources, the author visited the Spanish National Library (Madrid) and the Senate House Library (London). Therefore, this article uncovers certain unknown Latin eugenics ideas discussed in Spain; a country not usually included in eugenic studies. Regarding the structure, this article presents two sections. On the one hand, the first section will explain the "biological problems" which men could face before succeeding in society. Marañón identified inappropriate marriages and donjuanismo as the main obstacles which men should overcome. The latter obstacle refers to a lifestyle according to which men have multiple women as sexual partners, a behaviour interpreted by Marañón as equally concerning as homosexuality. On the other hand, the second section will disclose how the perfect role for women shifted for this Spanish physician. A younger Marañón conceived women solely as wives and mothers, whose main activities should be domestic chores (ángel del hogar). However, the dawn of the Second Spanish Republic (SSR), a political system which lasted between 1931 and 1936, led an older Marañón to defend the empowering of women (mujer moderna). In this context, Hildegart Rodríguez Carballeira, a Spanish leftist and feminist activist, learnt some of Gregorio Marañón's notions and promoted them in her works and speeches. She also interpreted Francis Galton's ("the father of eugenics") definition of eugenics and adapted it to the Spanish scenario.*

**Keywords:** *eugenics, Latin, Marañón, donjuanismo, mujer moderna*

## The Family's Breadwinner and the Problem of *Donjuanismo*

In the search for his envisaged society, Marañón attempted to clarify the "biological reasons" behind traditional gender roles. To explain his inquiries, this section examines the "roles of men" concerning family, physical and psychic attributes and marital expectations. Next, the section discusses the issue of *donjuanismo*. The methodology in this passage involves the historical analysis of some of the works in which Marañón discussed men and *donjuanismo* in *Amor, Conveniencia y Eugenesia; El Deber de las edades; Juventud, Modernidad, Eternidad* (1931); *The Evolution of Sex and Intersexual Conditions* (1932); *Obras Completas. Tomo I: Prólogos* (1966); *Obras Completas. Tomo II: Discursos* (1971) and *Obras Completas. Tomo III: Conferencias* (1973). Additionally, this section examines several newspaper articles to ascertain Marañón's thoughts on convenience in marriages in relation to his own life. The connection between homosexuality and *donjuanismo* is the main new finding of this part.

In Marañón's theory of original bisexuality and intersexuality, he stated that becoming as "virile" as possible was the goal of all people. As he stated at the conference *Biología y feminismo* (1920), "Men are made to resist; that is, to fight adversities in the external sphere"<sup>2</sup>. Subsequently, in the speech at the Royal National Academy of Medicine (1922), Marañón asserted that men's "ability to fight adversities" would help justify their

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<sup>1</sup> This article is derived from my Oxford Brookes award-winning master's dissertation *Neither Here Nor There: 'Latin Eugenic Notions in Gregorio Marañón's Work 1920-1942*, supervised by Professor Marius Turda.

<sup>2</sup> Gregorio Marañón, "Biología y feminismo," in *Obras Completas. Tomo III: Conferencias*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1972, p. 11. The author made all the translations of the quotations from the works which Marañón or Hildegart wrote in Spanish. Additionally, Marañón's theory of original bisexuality and intersexuality basically established that every human was "bisexual" at birth, and only problems during one's biological development could provoke homosexuality.

important social roles, including household defence, which were deeply ingrained for "biological reasons"<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, Marañón explained that men matured differently than women, asserting that men did not reach complete virility until thirty or thirty-five<sup>4</sup>. Prior to this point, most men underwent an intersexual degree of feminisation (during puberty, at thirteen or fourteen)<sup>5</sup>. In his book *Amor*, Marañón wrote, "A man who is aware of his sexual responsibilities should be more preoccupied with having a family than with enjoying his sex: he should be thinking about the future of his lineage"<sup>6</sup>. Next, he stated that men who married women solely based on their wealth were cynical, acting contrary to the eugenic instinct<sup>7</sup>. Thus, marriage between a high-status woman and a lower-status man could be justified only if the man did not profit economically from his new father-in-law's wealth or position. Additionally, this hypothetical man should respect the *conveniencia eugenésica*<sup>8</sup>. This defence of marriages of convenience could be related to Marañón's biography; that is, he entered a marriage of convenience with a woman of high status<sup>9</sup>. This woman, Dolores Moya Gastón de Iriarte (1888–1976), was the daughter of the director of the Spanish Publishing Society and Press Association (SPS-PA), Miguel Moya Ojanguren (1856–1920)<sup>10</sup>. This marriage fulfilled Marañón's theorisations of proper convenience marriages for men because, although newspapers such as *El Imparcial* mentioned the prominence of Marañón's father-in-law, they also identified Marañón as a "reputed doctor"<sup>11</sup>. Thus, he did not profit economically or socially from the marriage. Generally, Marañón expected men to protect their households and to be their families' breadwinners once they were mature enough to have appropriate marriages.

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<sup>3</sup> Gregorio Marañón, "Estado actual de la doctrina de las secreciones internas," in *Obras Completas. Tomo II: Discursos*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1971, p. 42.

<sup>4</sup> Gregorio Marañón, *The Evolution of Sex and Intersexual Conditions*, trans. Warre B. Wells, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1932, pp. 263-269.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>6</sup> Gregorio Marañón, *Amor, Conveniencia y Eugenesia; El Deber de las edades; Juventud, Modernidad, Eternidad*, third edition, Ed. Argis, Historia Nueva, Madrid, 1931, p. 53.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 58-59.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 63-64. *Conveniencia eugenésica* is a notion coined by Marañón which refers to the priorities both men and women should follow when they choose a partner. He mainly refers to their "duty" to select an appropriate husband or wife to give them "fit" children.

<sup>9</sup> "De Sociedad", *Heraldo de Madrid*, June 25, 1911, p. 3; "Noticias de Sociedad: Capítulo de Bodas," *La Época*, June 25, 1911, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> "Boda de la señorita de Moya," *El Imparcial*, July 18, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*.

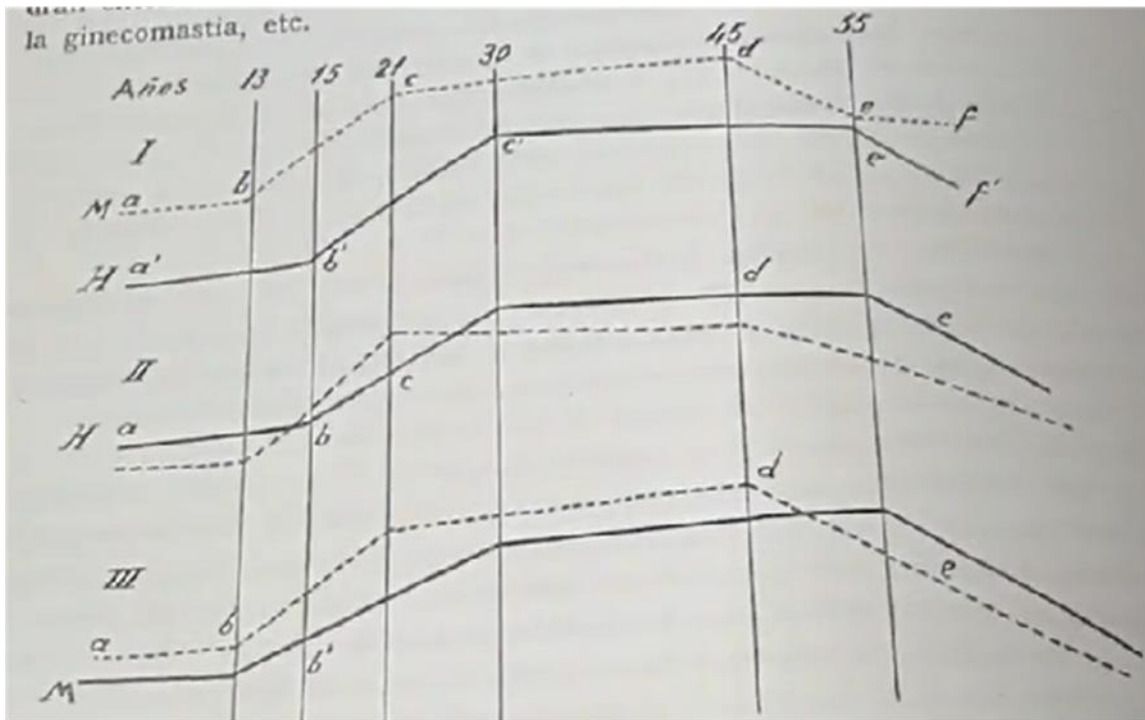


Figure 1: Marañón's scheme on age and gender.

The solid black line represents virility, and the dashed line represents femininity. The first case is an example of the evolution of virility in a man labelled "H" (*hombre*, man) and of femininity in a woman labelled "M" (*mujer*, woman). The second case corresponds with an average man, who undergoes a phase of femininity during puberty, while the third one corresponds with an average woman, whose virility 'wins' after menopause.

Gregorio Marañón, "Capítulo XVII: Asincrónica de las sexualidades masculina y femenina," in *Obras Completas. Tomo VIII: Ensayos*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1972, p. 674. Senate House Library, print.

Nonetheless, men could also have problems during their development, including homosexuality or *donjuanismo*. Marañón illustrated his definition of *donjuanismo* in his conference *Psicopatología del donjuanismo* in 1924. He explained, "This way, don Juan is just a man who devotes his life exclusively to love women... because when men only love, they are just half-men... men of lower mental condition and whose moral structure is despicable"<sup>12</sup>. Additionally, Marañón stated in the 1933 prologue which he wrote for Manuel Villaverde's *Más sobre don Juan*, he believed *donjuanismo* would eventually disappear due to the evolution of the feminine instinct<sup>13</sup>. Following the theorisation of the "chronology of genders", Marañón argued that in advanced societies, women would achieve the dignity of their sex, avoiding the "tricks" of *donjuanismo*<sup>14</sup>. This psychosexual problem, *donjuanismo*, which affected some men, had a cure: empowering women. Moreover, Marañón portrayed *donjuanismo* and homosexuality as equal.

<sup>12</sup> Gregorio Marañón, "Psicopatología del donjuanismo," in *Obras Completas. Tomo III: Conferencias*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1972, p. 78.

<sup>13</sup> Gregorio Marañón, "Más sobre don Juan," in *Obras Completas. Tomo I: Prólogos*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1966, 556.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*.

In 1952, he discussed the following in the prologue he wrote for Jean Vague's (1911–2003) *El instinto sexual*: "Even abnormal modalities of habitual love have in their peculiarity their reason to exist; this is what happened in the *donjuanismo* that Jean Vague interprets, according to my own point of view, due to the virile undifferentiation of men. This virile undifferentiation of men is a frontier situation of intersexuality which is different from homosexuality, but at the same time close to it"<sup>15</sup>.

In summary, for Marañón, *donjuanismo* embodied a pathology closely linked to homosexuality. Notably, Marañón's theorisations attempted to confine men's sexual lives to a monogamous husband's role, a "campaign" that the Catholic Spanish Church would support. Overall, Marañón advocated the traditional Catholic family, with men as breadwinners and women as mothers. However, as the next section discusses, his thoughts on women evolved (at least during the SSR).

### ***Ángel de la Casa or Mujer Moderna? Seeing Marañón's Ideas in Hildegart***

Again, Marañón expected men to be breadwinners, but his expectations of women shifted over time. To begin, this section examines the idea of maternity through the "Latin" eugenic notion of *maternidad consciente* and endocrinology. It also answers Vandebosch's question. Next, this section analyses the "chronology of feminism" for Spain and the lack of sexual education in this country from Marañón's perspective. The "chronology of feminism" is an application from the author based on Vandebosch's findings regarding the "chronology of genders". In closing, this section explains Hildegart's biography, highlighting the influence of Marañón on her work. The methodology employed to investigate these findings involved gathering information related to women, maternity and sexual education in Marañón's works *Amor, The Evolution of Sex, Tomo I, Tomo II* and *Tomo III*. The methodology for examining Hildegart's work involved analysing her citations of Marañón and searching for certain Latin eugenic notions, such as the pre-marriage certificate in her monographs *La Eugenesia* and *El problema Sexual* and comparing Hildegart's definition of eugenics with Galton's in his work *Inquiries into Human Faculty*. Additionally, this section uses the notions *ángel del hogar*, *maternidad consciente* and *mujer moderna*, combining these ideas in new ways.

Furthermore, the link drawn between Hildegart and Marañón is new, as well as the comparison between Hildegart's and Galton's definition of eugenics.

The roles of women were less evident than those of men in Marañón's envisaged society. For instance, in the 1920s, Marañón believed that women needed to "save" their energy for themselves and their children, focusing on being good mothers<sup>16</sup>. This idea corresponded Marañón's theorisation of *maternidad consciente*. At the conference *Biología y feminismo* (1920), Marañón expressed concern regarding Spain's high infant mortality rate (especially among proletarian mothers)<sup>17</sup>. As previous findings shown, he

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<sup>15</sup> Gregorio Marañón, "El instinto sexual," in *Obras Completas. Tomo I: Prólogos*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid 1966, p. 828.

<sup>16</sup> Gregorio Marañón, "Biología y feminismo," in *Obras Completas. Tomo III: Conferencias*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1972, pp. 10-13; Gregorio Marañón, "Estado actual de la doctrina de las secreciones internas," in *Obras Completas. Tomo II: Discursos*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1971, p. 42; Gregorio Marañón, "Breve ensayo sobre la intersexualidad en la clínica," in *Obras Completas. Tomo I: Prólogos*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1966, p. 54.

<sup>17</sup> Gregorio Marañón, "Biología y feminismo," in *Obras Completas. Tomo III: Conferencias*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1972, p. 15.

expected women to be responsible enough to take care of their children, a slight departure from the notion of *puériculture*, in which doctors should intervene more than mothers in matters such as women's education and parenting<sup>18</sup>. At this conference, Marañón made the following statement: "Women should not submit to their husbands only following the dictate of love, as it is currently happening... No one is teaching the couple that while it is true that the arbitrary and willing limitation of birthing from maternity damage society considerably, unconscious motherhood... is negative for both mother and children and even for humankind"<sup>19</sup>.

Therefore, the difference between *puériculture* and *maternidad consciente* involved Marañón's trust in women. They were expected to be mothers, an idea which "biology" supported. Even so, Marañón conceived maternity as subsidiary to femininity and not strictly related to it (maternity "scapes" the theorisation of the "chronology of genders")<sup>20</sup>. Marañón believed that women should receive a proper education to be mothers and to select their husbands, although they themselves knew best how to raise their offspring. Still, Marañón's ideas of women's roles would be considered misogynistic by current standards (women do not need to be mothers), these theories were more progressive than the French views of that time. That is, Marañón trusted women more than he trusted men because the former matured first. Similarly, Marañón did not seem to have considered the health and social conditions of the parents (as Pinard did for *puériculture*) as an element of *maternidad consciente*<sup>21</sup>. The findings of Chapter Three demonstrate that Marañón endorsed parenting selection in his concept of *conveniencia eugenésica*, not in *maternidad consciente*. Women were the focus of *maternidad consciente* because they were mature enough to be parents at twenty-one or twenty-two (unlike most men)<sup>22</sup>. In his book *Evolution of Sex* (1932), Marañón asserted that women reached the peak of success in social life once they experienced the *climaterio*, the stage in their lives in which they would become virile<sup>23</sup>. This idea supported his theory of original bisexuality and intersexuality because he understood the final goal in life for both men and women was to reach virility. In contrast, femininity was a temporal phase for the teen boy, and virility was the final stage for both men and women<sup>24</sup>. Next, he explained that menstruation generally occurred around fourteen in Spanish women, who were able to conceive between twenty or twenty-one and usually had their *climaterio* at approximately forty-five<sup>25</sup>. In summary, Marañón regarded women in the 1920s as mothers who sustained

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<sup>18</sup> Marius Turda and Aaron Gillette, *Latin Eugenics in Comparative Perspective*. Bloomsbury Publishing, London, 2014, p. 33; Marius Turda, "Unity in Diversity: Latin Eugenic Narrative in Europe, c. 1910s-1930s", *Contemporanea*, no. 1, 2017, pp. 5-6. *Puériculture* is a notion designed by French eugenicists (particularly, the obstetrician Adolphe Pinard) according to which maternity should be protected, emphasising the role that state or clinics could play in protecting or improving motherhood.

<sup>19</sup> Gregorio Marañón, "Biología y feminismo," in *Obras Completas. Tomo III: Conferencias*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1972, pp. 20-21.

<sup>20</sup> Gregorio Marañón, *The Evolution of Sex and Intersexual Conditions*, trans. Warre B. Wells, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1932, pp. 257-263. In this theory, each gender has a chronology to follow, in which both will reach virility (the goal) at different times.

<sup>21</sup> Marius Turda and Aaron Gillette, *Op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>22</sup> Gregorio Marañón, "Breve ensayo sobre la intersexualidad en la clínica," in *Obras Completas. Tomo I: Prólogos*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1966, p. 54.

<sup>23</sup> Gregorio Marañón, *The Evolution of Sex and Intersexual Conditions*, trans. Warre B. Wells, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1932, p. 239.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>25</sup> *Idem*, pp. 257-263.

their children and society. They were biologically designed to be mothers, even though maternity was not a direct consequence of femininity<sup>26</sup>.

Obras completas

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**UNA LEY ATERRADORA: LA FECUNDIDAD DE LAS MADRES ESTA EN RELACION DIRECTA CON LA MORTALIDAD DE LOS HIJOS**

Mas preguntémoslas ahora cuántos hijos viven de los que dieron a luz, y es seguro que nuestro optimismo se trocará en terror, porque de esos hijos, engendrados en pleno trabajo, paridos con tanto dolor, amamantados exprimiendo hasta la médula el organismo exhausto, no quedan ni la mitad; muchas veces, menos; quizá, sólo, uno o ninguno. Parecerá que exagero; pero voy a copiar una estadística macabra, que nos probará que no es así.

Número de hijos por familia	Número de familias	Total de hijos	Hijos muertos	Tarifa por ciento de mortalidad
0	137	—	—	—
1	143	143	37	25,8
2	123	246	70	28,4
3	140	438	128	29,2
4	156	624	191	30,6
5	135	675	211	31,2
6	154	944	315	33,3
7	145	1.015	360	35,4
8	106	848	294	34,6
9	56	504	203	59,1
10	81	810	346	42,7
11	41	451	219	48,5
12	33	396	217	54,8
13	22	286	183	63,9
14	22	308	175	56,9
15	7	105	54	51,4
16	9	144	88	61,1
17	4	68	47	69,1
18	4	72	52	72,2
19	3	57	48	82,4
20	1	20	18	95,0
21	1	22	32	76,1
22	1	23	18	81,8
23	1	23	12	52,1
24	2	48	43	89,5
Totales.....	1.534	7.389	3.451	36,58

Esta estadística no está forjada en los antros de ningún Ministerio u oficina pública, en los que jamás entró la verdad desnuda. La he recogido yo mismo en el material de mi Hospital, y respondo de su exactitud. Se refiere a 1.534 familias del proletariado y de la clase media muy mezquina. Su simple examen nos enseña, con conmovedora claridad, a cuánto llega el esfuerzo materno de la mujer ibérica, pero también a cuánto la inutilidad de su afán.

Es necesario leer bien estos números y reflexionar sobre ellos: de 7.389 hijos, 3.451 muertos; esto es, ¡casi la mitad! Varios de los autores que tratan de la cuestión sexual en otros países, dan estadísticas semejantes a las nuestras en las multiparas pobres de ciertos departamentos de Francia, de Italia y de Rusia; pero ninguna supera a la hecatombe española.

Figure 2: Marañón's statistic about infant mortality.

The first column counts the number of descendants per family, the second the number of families analysed, the third the total of descendants, the fourth the 'death offspring,' and the fifth the mortality rate. He established in relation to these findings that more descendants imply a higher mortality rate.

Gregorio Marañón, "Maternidad y feminismo," in *Obras Completas. Tomo VIII: Ensayos*, ed. Alfredo Juderías (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1972), 297. Senate House Library, print.

As a "Latin" eugenicist, Marañón endorsed the application of non-aggressive measures, such as sexual education, to support mothers or to empower women, although he did not initially support feminism fully. However, at the conference *Biología y feminismo* (1920), he acknowledged the achievements of associations of suffragettes. Moreover, he also thought, "Feminism, in our country, is yet inorganic, embryonic. There is not a strong feminist action, and Spaniards are not ready to be reformed on this matter"<sup>27</sup>. Marañón stated that in Spain, there was not enough awareness or education about the emancipation of women (respecting the idea of the "chronology of genders"). In the prologue *Literatura sexual* from 1924, Marañón asserted that Spanish society was hypocritical regarding sexual morality, a situation exacerbated by a lack of sexual education<sup>28</sup>. In this vein, in his book *Amor* (1931), he insisted on the importance of sexual education. Notably, he emphasised that an average couple did not know anything involving sexual education at

<sup>26</sup> Dagmar Vandebosch, *Y no con el lenguaje preciso de la ciencia: La ensayística de Gregorio Marañón en la entreguerra española*, Romanica Gandensia, Genève, 2006, pp. 88-91. This answers Vandebosch's enquiry about why motherhood does not fit the chronology of genders.

<sup>27</sup> Gregorio Marañón, "Biología y feminismo," in *Obras Completas. Tomo III: Conferencias*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1972, p. 9.

<sup>28</sup> Gregorio Marañón, "Literatura sexual," in *Obras Completas. Tomo I: Prólogos*, ed. Alfredo Juderías, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1966, p. 32.

the time prior to the marriage. That is, nobody taught women anything "to avoid hurting their innocence", whereas men were considered to be "ready" because they had experienced brothels.<sup>29</sup> Thus, Marañón called for a new formulation of marriage in which morality, love or "avoiding scandal" did not play large roles, and fit children were the ultimate goal of marriage<sup>30</sup>. This new formulation concerns the idea of *conveniencia eugenésica* previously mentioned. Marañón called for sexual education in all sectors of society, as explained here: "Spreading among the youth from the start of their education, the fundamental idea that without health it is impossible to be a father. Therefore, a sick person, should be aware of this reality before falling in love, leaving they with two options: or incurring into chastity, if their moral makes them do so, or accepting, if their moral allows it, to have a conjugal relation with the compromise of this union being infertile"<sup>31</sup>.

Overall, education was a crucial field in Marañón's formulations. As a Latin eugenicist, he wanted to appeal to the individual's responsibility. Moreover, the notion of *maternidad consciente* set the stage for Marañón's later proposal of women's emancipation. He thought that women's empowerment would also liberate men, as he proposed in his monograph *Amor* (1931): "When a woman ennobles herself through access to knowledge and she becomes empowered, automatically she would acquire all legitimate liberties of life and the right that *mujeres modernas* enjoy... Men will have new competitors in public life: but they would be as well more independent, and in any case progress will win"<sup>32</sup>.

These statements match the idea of the "chronology of feminism". For instance, Marañón defended this new type of woman (*mujer moderna*), which was more independent than the intolerant and morally rigid *ángel del hogar* type, who allowed the perpetuation of men in prominent social positions<sup>33</sup>. However, this empowerment also involved a negative feature for women: They were unable to "flirt" or trick men into making them accept a marriage<sup>34</sup>. Marañón considered flirting or "fishing" for a husband to be legitimate due to the inequality which women faced, making it socially acceptable for a woman to marry a wealthier man<sup>35</sup>. He regretted only the cases in which a woman flirted to get a better husband without respecting his notion of *conveniencia eugenésica*<sup>36</sup>. Additionally, he related the empowerment of women to the criteria of "chronology of genders and feminism", as follows: "That [sexual] behaviour does not depend on religion. It appears to be related to a generational change. The proof can be found in Catholic parents' tolerance in our villages towards their sons, who, almost without exception, practise polygamy even with the support of absurd pretexts. On the contrary, a parent of our latitudes, even without practising any religion, would feel disowned if a daughter does the same.... That strong difference depends only on psychological situations, that times create, but with different chronology, in different countries"<sup>37</sup>.

Overall, Marañón recognised that women had been at a disadvantage concerning men since the early 1920s. Even so, he did not endorse feminism due to "biological reasons" and the "backwardness" of Spanish society. Through sexual education, which was also lacking in Spain, he aimed to empower both women and men to change society's

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<sup>29</sup> Gregorio Marañón, *Amor; Conveniencia y Eugenesia; El Deber de las edades; Juventud, Modernidad, Eternidad*, third edition, Ed. Argis, Historia Nueva, Madrid, 1931, pp. 48-49.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>31</sup> *Idem*, p. 76.

<sup>32</sup> *Idem*, pp. 524-525.

<sup>33</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>34</sup> *Idem*, p. 35.

<sup>35</sup> *Idem*, pp. 57-58.

<sup>36</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>37</sup> *Idem*, pp. 153-154.

perceptions of marriage and women's lifestyles. From the *ángel de la casa* type of woman, more ignorant and linked to the stereotypical figure of the mother and wife, Marañón wanted this type to become a *mujer moderna*, independent and competitive in social life.

However, Marañón did not write his monographs and articles for a broad audience. Nevertheless, specific Spanish public figures or activists, such as Hildegart Rodríguez Carballeira (1914–1933), echoed Marañón's notions. According to Wittenzellner, Hildegart was relevant because even at her young age, she was one of the founders of the Spanish League for Sexual Reform, according to a Scientific Base (SLSRSB), the Spanish branch of the World League for Sexual Reform (WLSR)<sup>38</sup>. Additionally, Wittenzellner explained that "free love" was the main proposal of Hildegart, who consistently cited the "Latin" eugenicist Marañón<sup>39</sup>. That is, they agreed on certain issues, such as the need for sexual education. As she explained in the Epilogue of her book *El problema sexual* (1931), "Sexual education, understood in its double aspect of education of men and women in relation with its possible behaviour in social life, will be an urgent problem of future governments"<sup>40</sup>. She was right, but she was more radical than Marañón on certain issues. Moreover, she insisted on the state's role to limit excessive natality and provide both women and men with sufficient resources to raise children<sup>41</sup>. Additionally, she defended the idea of "free love" against the Catholic marriage, which she considered useless for the same biological and eugenical reasons as Marañón, highlighting the relevance of the parents to avoid birthing unfit children<sup>42</sup>. Furthermore, she claimed the following in her book *El problema eugénico* (1930), "I deliberate that marriage is the great barbarism in which mankind could have incurred, in a civil and canonical level"<sup>43</sup>. Even with this view, Hildegart endorsed the free union of marriages of convenience, agreeing with Marañón<sup>44</sup>. However, she did not side with Marañón in some measures, such as the pre-marriage certificate. Hildegart thought that this title would allow couples to register their "health status" and to avoid possible misuses of the certificate, she wanted a body of non-corruptible doctors to be assembled<sup>45</sup>. Moreover, she endorsed Marañón's theory of original bisexuality and intersexuality, supporting the nonviability of the concepts of "true men" or "true women" and considering homosexuality a failure of the sexual instinct (similar to Marañón's theorisations)<sup>46</sup>. To close this analysis, Hildegart defined eugenics by citing Galton, but this did not situate her into the framework of Anglo-Saxon eugenicists because she also stated that eugenics would help individuals achieve the best environment for their development<sup>47</sup>. Actually, this was Galton's definition of eugenics in Hildegart's monograph: "Galton defined [eugenics] in his *Inquiries into Human Faculty* as «the science which improves race, which does not worry about superficial questions which affect couples, but to all the matters which can support

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<sup>38</sup> Jana Wittenzellner, "Cómo escenificar la erudición: Hildegart Rodríguez y la sexología," *Iberoromania* 81, no. 1, 2015, p. 48.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 52-56. However, Wittenzellner argues that Hildegart did not cite Marañón correctly. Apparently, Hildegart was not following Chicago style.

<sup>40</sup> Hildegart Rodríguez Carballeira, *El problema sexual tratado por una mujer Española*, Javier Morata, Madrid, 1931, p. 258.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 38-39.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 35; pp. 164-165.

<sup>43</sup> Hildegart Rodríguez Carballeira, *El problema eugénico: punto de vista de una mujer moderna*, Madrid, 1930), p. 26. There is no publisher in the book. Hildegart may have self-published this book.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 27.

<sup>45</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>46</sup> *Idem*, pp. 11-14.

<sup>47</sup> *Idem*, p. 19, p 37.



superior races to prevail over inferior races. Therefore, eugenics represents the social tendency to create a new type of man with the perfect capabilities as possible»<sup>48</sup>.

This definition is a less "racist" interpretation of Galton's. In *Inquiries into Human Faculty*, Galton wrote the following: "The most merciful form of what I ventured to call «eugenics» would consist in watching for the indications of superior strains or races, and in so favouring them that their progeny shall outnumber and gradually replace that of the old one"<sup>49</sup>.

Galton's definition of eugenics included the notion of replacing (inferior) races, while Hildegart's focused on the improvement of "the man", although her definition included the prevalence of superior races as well. Subsequently, Hildegart's definition was closer to Marañón's understanding of eugenics than to Galton's. However, Hildegart did not continue on writing about eugenics. Aurelia Rodríguez Carballeira (1879-1955), Hildegart's mother, who likely heavily influenced her daughter's work, killed Hildegart because her daughter did not live up to her expectations<sup>50</sup>. Ultimately, Hildegart supported sexual education and women's emancipation as Marañón but in a more radical way. Despite backing "free love" unions with a pre-marriage certificate, she did not support marriage in general and defended the state's intervention in providing childcare. Beyond this, Hildegart mentioned the participation of men in childcare and ultimately borrowed the theory of original bisexuality and intersexuality from Marañón, along with certain eugenic notions (even though she cited Galton).



Figure 3: Hildegart Rodríguez Carballeira.

"Hildegart Rodríguez Carballeira,"  
Wikimedia Commons, photograph taken in  
September 1933, downloaded July 14,  
2023,

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aurora\\_Rodr%C3%ADguez\\_Carballeira,\\_fotografiada\\_dentro\\_de\\_la\\_c%C3%A1rcel\\_de\\_mujeres\\_de\\_Ventas,\\_en\\_septiembre\\_de\\_1933.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aurora_Rodr%C3%ADguez_Carballeira,_fotografiada_dentro_de_la_c%C3%A1rcel_de_mujeres_de_Ventas,_en_septiembre_de_1933.jpg)

<sup>48</sup> *Idem*, p. 19.

<sup>49</sup> Francis Galton, *Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Developments*, Macmillan, New York, 1883, p. 307. Possibly, Hildegart took this definition, although she did not cite Galton properly.

<sup>50</sup> Micaela Pattison, "In Search of Hildegart: Tracking a Body and a Biography over a Century, in" *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research* 21, no. 2, 2015, p. 259.



*Figure 4: Aurelia Rodríguez Carballeira in prison.*

“Aurelia Rodríguez Carballeira in prison,” Wikimedia Commons, photograph taken before 1933, downloaded July 14, 2023, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hildegart\\_Rodr%C3%ADguez.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hildegart_Rodr%C3%ADguez.jpg).

## Conclusion

To conclude, in Marañón’s envisaged society women and men complete each other but not always in the same way. With the search for perfecting gender roles in mind, Marañón tried to keep under control all the deviations from his established norm. In Marañón’s envisaged gender roles for men, homosexuality was an issue, but as the findings for this article prove, *donjuanismo* was almost equally concerning. Marañón deemed sex without a eugenic or moral foundation a reason for study (generally as some pathology or misbehaviour).

Nevertheless, Marañón’s perfect woman depended on context. In the early 1920s, the *ángel del hogar* was the prototype for the ideal woman: Spain followed a slower ‘evolutionary path’ involving feminism than other countries, so women were not ready to fulfil the prototype of *mujer moderna* (independent and competitive in social life). Alternatively, the dawn of the SSR was the perfect background to Spanish women’s emancipation. Among these emancipated women, Hildegart incorporated some of Marañón’s Latin eugenic ideas in her activist labour. However, Hildegart’s tragic ending and the subsequent Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) caused her legacy to go unnoticed until recently.

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