

HOW DO *THEY* HANG FROM THE NATION? ON EPIC POETRY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Helena González Fernández

Centre Dona i Literatura, Universitat de Barcelona

helenagonzalez@ub.edu

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Abstract II Can the poet take charge of the “us” without succumbing to a sentimental idea of community with utopian postponement as its backbone? How can both the cause of women and that of the inferior nation be simultaneously debated without one of them tending to shadow the other beneath a totalizing umbrella? How do you construct a non-heroic epic appropriate to a time when mythic or technique narratives about the origin of a community are no longer possible? In their books of poems (published in 2000), Chus Pato and Ana Romaní present models which interrogate the community through the transformation of the epic’s poetic forms so as to question national identity through sexual difference.

Keywords II Chus Pato | Ana Romaní | epic poetry | feminism | nation | community.

0. «que cultivas nos muros restaurados?» (Ana Romani)

The classic definition of the epic poem in the West refers to a glorious account of a hero or heroes' past deeds recorded in a setting of both nation and city; in other words, of community and public space - both distinctly patriarchal and heterosexual. The cultural technologies involved in producing these key concepts, as is the case with literature itself, are largely based on the fact that the epic is a genre that reinforces and extends the power of speech, and is therefore at the service of an ideology. As one of the genres creating the dominant discourse, however, the epic was accepted as a leading contributor to the collective imagination that aims to promote social cohesion and harmony. It appeals to the essence and to a form of communal sentimentality that serves as an indicator of the change of paradigm, in other words how the idea of collective thought is structured and rendered intelligible.

A common explanation is that this principle of cohesion is produced by an opposition effect against those other alterities that together create an impression considered "foreign" or external to the common story, and establishes an impermeable configuration of the idea of border (geographical, cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic ...). However, there are accepted and naturalized internal alterities, invisible to one's own community, or at least passed over as secondary, as feminist analysis insists on explaining and demonstrating. So this is a construction process of the subject that creates two alterities: that of the others, different from us; and that of the (female) others, different from us (females). And the epic, as a genre whose capacity for cohesion and social and internal harmony relies largely on the ritualization of sacrifice, is based then on an accepted logic of the sacrifice of women.

In her reference study on feminist reinterpretation of the classical epic, *Metamorphoses of Helen*, Mihoko Suzuki followed this line of critical thinking arguing that the stories representing the dominant communities - in this case let's take the story of the nation in Galicia - assert cohesion by attacking those internal alterities. In her view, those differences that seem more obvious, as well as more necessary for managing roles in society, would be women and minorities (Suzuki, 1992: 8). If the traditional conception of the nation reinforced by the epic as a normative discourse acts according to a principle of homogeneity, then these texts act as levelers of every kind of "difference". Even in the case of emerging national tales, in which the definition of *us* against the *others* is more visible and better defined, it is clear that a distancing operates between the us / others and us (women) / others (women). This separation is a response to an accepted logic of the "sacrifice" of women who are part of the

community, in other words, their confinement in roles and secondary or monstrous and frightening representations precisely because of the difference of sex / gender. This makes it very easy to understand what the commonplace use of gender roles in the hegemonic discourse of the nation is responding to, acting, let us not forget, as hegemonic communal narrative and as *all-encompassing umbrella* in relation to other discourses. The hero, representing the idea of national ordinary, combines the positive qualities that are attributed to the community and stars in the all-embracing cohesive story. Within that framework, however, the female figures, who are almost always described in terms of their family ties, as mother-daughter-widow, as “part of” or “dependent on”, become a metaphor for the hero’s shortcomings, desires and fears.

Yet this difference or distance is a constitutive factor in definitions of the community developed in the second half of the twentieth century, and it is considered a constituent figure of the common idea (Birulés, 2012). From this point of view, the internal differences cease to be considered as an undervalued or irrelevant stroke, and mechanisms to alter and transform the homogenizing story to include these formative differences are put in place. For this reason, feminist rewritings of the epic are an indicator of the negotiation of gender roles. Their aim focused on denaturing and countering the internal difference being understood as otherness. Thus, “esta reescritura que hace que el reloj vuelva a empezar de cero” (Pato, 2004: 116), reveals and demolishes the mechanisms that control and exclude women.

Perhaps this is the way the rewritings of Antigone, Medusa or Penelope should be understood: affirmative and exemplary figures to contemporaneity. Likewise the rereadings practised on the female representations that underpinned the inherited discourse of the nation but were deprived of their emancipatory capacity before being included in the hegemonic narrative. A little-known and striking case in point would be the figure of “la viuda de vivo”, a fundamental and even foundational representation of the nation speech in Galicia. Created by Rosalia de Castro in Book V of *Follas novas*, this figure became one of the metaphors that best represented the injustice suffered by the nation and that turned it, consequently, into a community wounded by migration and poverty. As we read in the text, (not in the prologue - a paratext with different intentions to the ones that can be found in the poems), the “viuda de vivo” is a lonely woman endowed with desire and subjectivity, though never allowed to become a heroine. Through the poems, an agency capacity, which the female metaphors of the nation lack, gains ground. However, the hegemonic discourse of the nation appropriated this figuration through the mechanisms of rewriting and reinterpretation according to the ideological patriarchal codes that structure the nation. By modifying her body (making her

older), her family circumstances (making her a mother) and leaving her to an unresolved penelopian wait, the subversive potential of the widow as a single woman who decides her own fate is neutralized. This is how Rosalia de Castro wrote her in her poems: the “different” woman in the community, endowed with a fundamental capacity to act and able to make decisions that break with the idea of women as procreator and guarantor of the nation, since she first attempts suicide to end her pain and loneliness before deciding to follow the migration path. The same “viuda de vivo” is immediately reinterpreted. She is immobilized as passive and sacrificial metaphor for the nation, and ultimately the order of the patriarchal community genders is restored (González Fernández 2009: 2012).

The reappropriation and rewriting of the silenced heroines, although it remains fully current and even necessary, is not a sufficient response to the expectations and demands of women. The discourse of the nation needs to modernise the formulas of its epic writing to include the difference of women as an unquestionable element of the nation story. That story should reject the comfort of the retrospective tale, based on an heroic figure who turns out to be ineffective, and simultaneously delay the transformation of speech, either until one of the set goals is achieved, or until utopian attainment, which would result in a *contradictio in terminis*.

We should bear in mind that Galician literature has, in recent decades, been showing signs of greater acceptance of women writers’ literary output. Although the logic of the totalizing umbrella still operates, under which the discourse of the nation behaves like the communal story in which the “other” discourses produced within the community are inscribed, after the leveling mechanisms operate, models of epic poetry that incorporate feminist debates do appear, and not precisely in the margins of the literary field. What I aim to present here are two models of nation epic poetry that seek to intervene in its present, from a position located in the female and feminist subject.

1. «logo das narracións míticas ou tecnolóxicas sobre a orixe» (Chus Pato)

Chus Pato is an indispensable poet when trying to follow the issue of gender and epic in recent Galician literature. At the moment she is the living poet with the greatest international renown, no doubt thanks to the translations of her books and to her participation in international poetry forums, such as the 43rd Poetry International Festival Rotterdam. And it is precisely in this festival’s official information that we find a profile of the author, written by her English translator and a writer herself, Erin Moure, in which it is emphasized

that she is a political poet focused on the idea of the nation and language:

the Galician language has long resisted the centrist administrative and social pressures of the Spanish government. In her poetry, Pato continues to refashion the ways in which we construct ourselves as an individual, community, nation, or world. In her daring grammatical and lyrical hybridisations, we come face to face with the traumas and migrations of Western Europe (Moure, 2012).

Chus Pato, who was one of the most unique voices of the explosion of female authorship poetry in the 1990s, opened the twenty-first century with a poetic project of great political ambition: to challenge and write the epic of the nation with emancipation as its fundamental starting point (emancipation of the nation, women, defense of the language and the model of society built by capitalism). She did so with the aesthetic tools of postmodernism and the conviction that the poem is a linguistic machine of freedom. In the year 2000, the first book of a radically political and experimental poetry series entitled *m-Talá* (2000) was published. It was followed by *Charenton* (2004), *Hordas de escritura* (2008) and *Secesión* (2009). The texts are full of definitions of the political nature of writing and the discursive character of common identity.

In one of the poems in *Charenton*, entitled “vale!, non te me poñas rallante”, the poetic voices respond to the conditioned expression of someone in a mental institute, where a dialogue is reproduced that effectively describes its poetic proposal:

—está vostede a dicir que a soberanía reside na Literatura?
—a Lírca non pensa o mundo, pero inventa os nomes que declaran o mundo.
[...]
«a invención dos nomes que declaman o mundo».
Representa unha posición: que as musas son determinadas baixo condicións políticas (Pato 2004: 90-91).

The elided section of this quote consists of a jumble of names and birth and death dates that serves to list the foundations of the Galician literary canon (Pondal, Curros, Rosalía, Cabanillas, F. Herrera and Viqueira) along with mentions of European authors from the nineteenth century (Byron, Baudelaire, Rimbaud). These lists constitute textual evidence of the delirium of the poetic voice that is found, like the Marquis de Sade, in the mental institute of *Charenton*, and has as subtext the *Marat / Sade* by Peter Weiss, which involves a vast fabric of intertextual references to Brechtian epic theater. An historian by profession, Chus Pato’s epic proposal is always written with an awareness of a past that is reappropriated but from which she also moves away, aware that the comfort of the past tense and the origin is not enough to describe the present. In

one of the first poems in *Charenton*, “cando afirmo”, she explains how she conceives, through experience in the first person, the myth of the origin of the nation. In this way she underscores the countless differences:

«eles, os meus antepasad@s tiveron casa (idioma, territorio)
souberon as voces para significar calquera/todo accidente na topografía»
e sosteño
«eu non ocupo a terra igual que os meus antepasados, non coñezo os
nomes (idioma-territorio) non son bosque, unha árbore, un cultivo»
non emito un xuízo de valor, non me contrapoño nin me considero un
sucesso de progreso (Pato, 2004: 14).

This text is followed by several fragments that place the utterance - the voice - outside the modern conception of history and progress. She chooses the representation of the cyborg to indicate the subject in order to depart from the realistic agreement, a pact of interpretation adjusted for consideration of space and time, in other words, geography and history, the territory and the *ethos*. The cyborg, a political figure Chus Pato had taken from Donna Haraway in previous works, releases the subject from the idea of progress and moves away from the classical and prophetic epic. As she would affirm in a later book of poems, *Secesión*, “o poema di identidade, cando a estrela nos leva ata unha potencia da lingua que é identidade, contra os soños e os sepulcros” (Pato, 2009: 87). It is precisely because she knows how the passages are woven and how they work that she persistently explains that we are at a point in history when essentialism has been overcome. One of the texts that best illustrates the changes that occurred in how the community is written, the *sensus communis*, can be found in her “Diálogo entre esta musa e a alma”, which refers to the dialogue which opens, by way of an introduction, *El caballero de las botas azules* by Rosalía de Castro. The muse makes use of the classic genre of discussing the arts to explain the changes in the definition of community, *art* and *identity*. She defines beauty as a communicable and understandable code for the community, as opposed to the sublime, which is a huge step since it involves the appearance of words “que nada desexan”. In the same text she defends ethics as an exercise of freedom in contrast to aesthetics, which are understood as an indicator of shared taste or evidence of the acceptance of dominant opinion, and therefore reclaims the political text, the text that takes responsibility for the present (Pato 2004: 115). The character chosen to defend this conception of poetry is the revolutionary muse that quotes Hanna Arendt and Antigone, Auden and Hölderlin, and argues for a poetry that appeals to the one who reads: “a palabra ten a forza dunha obriga fronte a unha segunda persoa: ESCÓITAME/ nada se relata nel” (Pato, 2004: 155).

We are told in the pages of *Charenton* that it was written by two

female enunciative functions: the “author” and a character-author, Liberdade Aguirre. Breaking the moulds between fiction and institution, between literature and biology, this writer fits perfectly into the generational schemas used by the Galician literary historiography: her DNA spiral weaves itself thoroughly into avant-garde Galician poetry from the middle of the twentieth century. So she would, for instance, be the alter ego of Heriberto [Bens], a pseudonyms used by Xosé Luis Méndez Ferrín, one of Pato’s reference poets to whom the fictional authors of *Charenton* pay homage. This process of multiplication and fictionalization of the lyrical instance calls into question the stable figure of the Author as *auctoritas*. If the position of the utterance is fragmented and destabilized in this way, it is not possible to succumb to the organized and intelligible narrative that the classical epic requires. Chus Pato explains the complexity of this figure in an interview:

«porque se escribe un poema só alí onde se dá unha imposibilidade de escribilo hai autora unicamente cando se deu unha desubxectivización. A non-poeta (por poñer un caso, Liberdade Aguirre no libro *Charenton*) é verdadeiramente a autora integral, e por iso non é posíbel separar a autora da non-autora» (Casas, 2012: 55).

Liberdade Aguirre, a fictitious whose name is loaded with revolutionary and heroic connotations, is described as a woman of a certain age, thus breaking the inertia of only imagining the revolutionary heroines of fiction in young bodies. In addition, she calls herself a friend of Franziska Ranner, a character created by Ingeborg Bachmann, marked by the violence inflicted on her during her treatment for hysteria and trauma by her husband, a psychiatrist who used her as a test subject for Nazi experiments. Subjected to her husband’s violence, Ranner represents horrors against womankind. After fleeing, the husband found refuge in the Egyptian desert so feminist criticism has interpreted this character as a confluence of violence exercised by highly patriarchal structures as well as evidence of the relationship between Europe and Africa (Von Maltzan 2004: 178-179). In this case, the sacrifice of the women turns into protest; there is no way it can strengthen the discussion of nation or patriarchy. In any case, the setting of the mental institution allows characters to be brought together without respect for chronological limitations. The institution’s inhabitants are the women: nineteenth and twentieth century revolutionaries, workers, migrants, mothers, farmers, muses of varying designations... There they share dialogues with real and invented poets and other male characters.

In *m-Talá*, a profusion of voices and characters had already appeared, inviting the dramatic reading that seems obvious in *Charenton*. In fact, the piece “os zapatos son un obxecto de meu interior”, for example, in which Achilles and Thetis appear as *dramatis personae*, can only

be understood as a long and meaningful list of stage directions (Pato 2004: 40). The rupture of literary genres along with a reading pact and movement of characters and voices that continually fluctuate encourage moody passages in which the most serious principles are questioned, as can be seen in a humorous and very significant scene: “¿é certo que vostede desexa ser Moisés?” (Is it true that you want to be Moses?). The author calls the biblical figure into question. She turns the leader of the Jewish people and the “Father” into a caricature of patriarchal discourse that sustains national discourses. The humanized, feminized and updated parody of Moses turns out to be a smart girl, not remotely obedient to her forbear’s command and aware that the patriarch exists as such thanks to her existence, thanks to her. The upending of the hierarchy empowers the female figure of the woman who expresses her desire, recognises her possibilities and comes forward as an heroic figure who has the potential to lead her people. The text, reproduced here in its entirety, is unequivocal:

- é certo que vostede desexa ser Moisés?
- ben, o que si é verdade é que ante min ábrese a posibilidade de conducir ao meu pobo a través do Sinaí.
- coñece vostede a desesperación do seu proxenitor?
- coñezo a represión do seu desexo, finalmente non fun guindada (carríño de bebé incluído) desde a Ponte Nova.
- isto, salvouna?
- mais ben ao meu pai, eu naturalmente sobreviviría (Pato, 2004: 46).

2. «como pactan os teus dedos?» (Ana Romaní)

Ana Romaní (Noia, 1962) is another of the fundamental voices that could be heard at the close of the twentieth century with her poetic discourse based on the defense of the key issues of feminism, the nation, and lesbian sexuality, which reinforces the imaginary of equality and symmetry. After several books in which the lyrical and the epic converged, such as *Das últimas mareas* (1994), *Arden* (1998) and *Love me tender. 24 pezas mínimas para unha caixa de música* (2005), in 2010 she published *Estremas*, her most explicitly political book of poems addressing contemporaneity. In it, the *j'accuse* of political poetry, she gets on with the questioning -Romaní is a well known journalist. She ponders questions in the poem, and therefore directly questions the reader, who must find answers or ask new questions about the community and about feminism itself.

The affirmative discourse and review of the roles of the second wave gives way to a text in which *history* and *herstory* meet and consequently provide the memory required to ask about the present. Mihoko Suzuki (1992: 17), discussing the epic, notes that the prophets speak of the future, the poets of the past and that none of them participate in the events when they occur. Ana Romaní relocates the

place of the poet. She positions her in that preliminary and elusive space between the past and the future so as to intervene.

She wonders publicly about feminism and the nation, about the challenges and covenants that marked the negotiation of feminism with community, precisely at a time when postfeminism is moving so far from the principles of second wave feminism and its institutionalization. Precisely at a critical time too for the nation discourse, so knocked by Galician political practice reaching crisis point as a result of policies enacted by successive governments of the Xunta de Galicia and the bipartisan of Touriño and Quintana and followed by the policy of dismantling acts which favoured culture and nation in Feijoo's government. If Xohana Torres, with a prophetic voice, proclaims the equality of women with her "Eu tamén navegar", Ana Romaní (2010: 63) puts the lyrical voice of her poem as "unha tregua no curso das idades". It is the questioning, not the statement, which has a transformative intent, addressed to the second person, who must assume their responsibility in the process of change, who must assume that the revolution should initially occur in one's own life.

From her initial poem, which I analyzed from the perspective of the community in a previous work (González Fernández, 2012), comes the title of this article: one of the three key questions that articulate the book of poems. In the first instance, the reader is forced to reflect on the relationship with the heritage of other women and feminists; secondly, the reader must examine the result of the negotiation with power, since it invites, for example, an assessment of institutional feminism; and, thirdly, the reader must look at the position feminist demands occupy in the discourse of the nation (Romaní, 2010: 22).

Also, in this case, the multitude of women featured in the book gathers many varied experiences and memories that are reexamined so as to vindicate, highlight and legitimise a *herstory* through repetition. This *herstory* collects diverse experiences and moves away from the totalitarian discourse of the one underpinning the epic, which departs from the flesh, from the body. In *history*, the role of the feminine was traditionally limited to types of representation that abounded in the sacrificial character of the heroines, who also had to respond to the substitution principle: "The principle of substitution and displacement which underlies the mechanism of sacrifice and scapegoating explains the arbitrary choice of victim, the infinitive substitutability of the victims, and the 23 repeatability of the sacrifice and scapegoating" (Suzuki 1992: 6). This substitution principle affects all forms of making women visible, reducing each case, each woman, to a representation of womankind as Ana Romaní denounces in the poem "Eu vinas reventar as pontes":

ese silencio que as rolda
[...] o xogo de bonecas rusas que ditan dos oráculos
unha come a unha
unha come a unha
unha come a unha (Romaní, 2010: 12).

Without the need for proper names, we find in *Estremas* the epic poetry of someone who knows that you cannot delegate responsibility for the received legacy, represented here by archeological remains of mammalian traffic in the middle of a desert, which must be read as a political heritage, as the revolutionary demands made by victims of sacrificial logic. For that reason, there is no room for heroines. Nevertheless, the poem knows how to take charge of the communal and the future without mangling them, inviting the assembly to take on the political via the body and experience.

3. «a partir de agora o poema nada anuncia» (Chus Pato)

The epic is built on the accepted logic of the sacrifice of women, since there is a construction process of the heroic male subject creating two alterities: that of the other, different from us, and the (female) other, different from us. Classical literary models did not conceive the figure of the female author and the available representations are not adapting to the capacity for action that the feminist positions currently demand. The ideology behind the dominant discourses of the national community made and are making it very difficult to negotiate this female voice without first undergoing some leveling mechanism. The representation of the sacrificial logic applied to the female subject demonstrates how the rejection of difference required the masculinisation of the -exceptional- woman converted into heroin or the metaphorical incarnation of any one of the nation's positive qualities (the motherland, among many others), when not of a troubled innocence that allows the stirring of male desire, or even demonstrations of violence against women figures who in fact collect male violence against women.

This conception of the epic transformed woman and female representations into a dangerous otherness within the same community which ought to swirl around the cohesive and foundational story “pois todo texto fundacional-político (non se interprete fundacional como texto sobre a orixe) de autoría feminina é inmediatamente vir-ado a varón ou barbas que lle saen e lle terán que saír a Rosalía” (Pato 2004: 94). (Pato 2004: 94).

The axial story of the community, the nation, proved impervious to the subject of women, and even to whatever can be considered

“today’s woman”, at the risk of falling into a general, prevailing and therefore questionable and easily refutable statement. If the epic bases much of its ability to provide social harmony and cohesion, or put another way, the intelligibility that Chus Pato talked about, in the ritualized sacrifice of women, how can we discuss an epic poetry that addresses feminist demands without succumbing to an epithelial substitution of the masculine for the feminine?

Facing the idea of stable national identity, organic society, essentialism and a homogeneous political subject, both recognizable and oedipical, Chus Pato (1994: 94 and 97) proposed the idea of the herd. Similarly to Donna Haraway in her manifesto, she explains the meaning of *Charenton* in the poem “o meu traballo versa sobre” (Pato 2004: 123). The herd is a political concept used to refer to individuals belonging to the same class or flock. In this case it is a cyborg herd, where the copy, the simulation, the parody, the cloning and the mixture prevail; in other words, the tools provided by postmodernity to demolish identities. In fact the hero necessarily divides in a crowd, because the idea of hero is senseless as an individual figure who gathers in groups, who joins his community together in a single male character (Pato, 2008: 15). In a similar way to how Ana Romaní conceives the idea of shapes and forms that define desert areas, the herd, the remains and the area all refer to an idea of community which is not homogeneous, but is composed of individuals and based on difference. In close connection with the idea of herd, in her book Romaní regains memory of the multitude.

This writing emerges on the one hand from the denial of the labels and speeches in which the silenced women were confined; and on the other hand from the recovery of experience, which necessarily refers to the body, to that which was the prevented body of the statue, of the victim and of the monstrous woman who finds herself a voice and speaks. In an interview of Chus Pato by Arturo Casas, the author declares that the poem cannot be reduced to the lyrical, but instead involves a porous writing, situated on the border and written by a multitude of voices dramatically arranged.

Entón o poema non pode ser reducido ao que de forma convencional recibiu o nome de lírica, sería algo así coma se dixésemos que todo o que non é retrato non é pintura. [...] Pola contra penso que todo eu, toda subxectividade non é só unha escena (unha dramaturxia) senón un conxunto indeterminábel de escenas (de dramaturxias) tanto dramáticas como cómicas, como tráxicas; e que en todas elas a linguaxe articulada é constitutiva. (Casas, 2012: 52).

It is worth highlighting the convergence in the Deleuzian landscape of the Egyptian desert in Chus Pato’s works as well as in Ana Romaní’s. It would be interesting to poetically map and to study in opposition the seascape that shaped the epic tale of self-recognition

of the poets in the 1980s and 1990s. This work would also address the recurrent appearance of the ruins in Chus Pato -the house, the nation- and of the remains in Ana Romaní -the body, women- but also with the idea that what remains are the poets' words, as Pato stated in her interview with Arturo Casas (2010).

Finally, an inroad should be made into comparativism so as to understand the adequacy of Pato's and Romaní's proposals to feminist political literature. Christa Wolf broke a formal convention of the epic, that of the distance between the telling and the narrative instance, to give voice to the characters, and in particular, to the heroines, from a feminist perspective. She stripped the epic text of the comfort of the totalizing tale that constructs and transmits the dominant ideology, and opted for a subjectivity that allows the characters to intervene with their own voices. The unique totalizing narrative that was impossible to recover within the framework of postmodernism, with its attention to particularities, gives way to the polyphonic story that Bakhtin defended in the novel and which seems appropriate for the poetry written at the end of the twentieth century in which the utterance is fictionalized and multiplied even though it appears in the first person. And then a certain parallel can be seen in that break with epic conceptions between the two books under review and two of Wolf's most popular books. As in *Cassandra*, Ana Romaní chooses for *Estremas* first person narration that is simultaneously the voice of testimony, experience, denunciation and especially interrogation. As in *Medea. Stimmen (Medea. Voices, literally translated)*, Chus Pato conceives *Charenton* as a polyphony of voices that break with the lyrical reading pact and lead to dramatic reading, with the reconfiguration of characters and an active exercise of restructuring characters along with their contradictions and mistakes. In *Medea*, Wolf opts to add monologues, in which each character explains their version of what happened and in the end we have a complex and nuanced view. So to all, Chus Pato decidedly chooses to immerse her *Charenton* in the territories of drama.

The territories of the feminist epic need, therefore, to move away from heroic masculinity in order to imagine the community through experience and through the body, and in the present, taking charge of the difference and the multitude, impregnable to the homogeneous.

We have analysed two models of epic poetry from a feminist viewpoint, but neither announces anything because they do not formulate utopia: in the reading, Chus Pato addresses urgently; Ana Romaní seeks explanations questioningly.

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