Reaction to the Publication of the
Sonetos del amor oscuro

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Si esta obra no se ha perdido, sí, para honor de la poesía española y deleite de las generaciones, hasta la consumación de la lengua, se conservan en alguna parte los originales... (1a)

The publication, first in a clandestine and then in an authorized edition, of the Spanish texts of the known surviving poems from Lorca’s Sonetos del amor oscuro, his ‘libro más oculto y esperado’ (5a), is a major literary event, and the considerable reaction in the Spanish and foreign press is both fascinating and instructive about Lorquian affairs. In the present article, published commentary of the first twelve months after publication of the sonnets is listed (in an appendix) and analysed. Included as well are José Luis Cano’s report of his discussions with Vicente Aleixandre at the time of the sonnets’ publication, and a study of Mario Socrate, published in 1985 although written earlier. I have also commented on a problem discussed in this material, the legitimacy and meaning of the title Sonetos del amor oscuro.

The clandestine edition bearing that title is described as follows: ‘El libro es de pequeño formato, tiene 22 páginas, las cubiertas rojas, muy bien impresos en letras igualmente rojos, edición ésta no venal, bastante cuidada, con el cordoncito que sirve de separata. En las páginas del libro no aparece para nada el nombre de Federico García Lorca, ni el editor, ni nada que pueda hacer sospechar dónde han sido impresos’ (3). The edition, which shows signs of hand printing (personal examination; 6; 18), stated on the title page verso that it consisted of 250 numbered copies, and that it was ‘no venal’ (not for sale); copies were mailed in an envelope with no return address, postmarked Granada, to various literary figures and magazines in Spain and abroad (personal examination; 3; 18).

On the identity of the publisher(s) there has been no speculation; even those in Granada itself (3; 4; 8; possibly 6) have been unable to identify the printer, who worked ‘en soledad de alquimista’ (6). ‘Solamente se sabe que ha sido aquí en Granada por la referencia que hace a esta ciudad... en la primera página del libro’ (3). Early speculation said that the texts ‘no proceden del manuscrito que posee la familia, como demuestra el análisis de las variantes, sino de otros manuscritos o copias que el poeta habría regalado antes de su muerte o que alguien consiguió después de su asesinato’ (5a), ‘un amigo granadino de Federico, al que éste, en sus últimos días, pudo entregarle una copia de los sonetos, y esa persona, que ignoramos quién es, se ha cansado de esperar a que la familia publique los sonetos, decidiéndose a publicarlos él’ (21, p. 280). In contrast with this explanation, Lorca family spokesman Manuel Fernández Montesinos, presumably in a better position to know, said that ‘toda la obra poética contenida en el mencionado archivo ha sido revisada y estudiada
por un grupo de expertos lorquistas, a alguno de los cuales le han debido sacar copia de los sonetos (9e).  

The edition bore a postmark dated 14 December 1983 (18, p. 193), and was first mentioned in print within the month (2); a reviewer called it a Christmas present (4; also see 10). In January 1984, Tele-Radio, magazine of the official Radio y Televisión Española, reprinted all the previously unpublished sonnets, calling the clandestine edition ‘Libro del año’ (5). In March an authorized edition of what was called, with mysterious quotation marks, ‘todos’ los sonetos de amor hasta ahora conocidos de Federico García Lorca’ (9c) was published in the Madrid newspaper ABC.

Opinions expressed were quite in favour of the clandestine edition, which set right an anomalous situation in which these poems (and many others) had been published only in French translation. Tele-Radio stated roundly ‘hay que agradecer a esta edición pirata; no se queje ahora quien pudo hacerla antes y no la hizo’ (5a). Such an authority as Fernando Lázaro Carreter said: ‘No dispondré de mejor ocasión que ésta para agradecer su envío a los anonimos remitentes’ (9c), Vicente Aleixandre that ‘ha hecho bien ese editor anónimo en darlos a conocer’ (21, p. 280), José Luis Cano called the edition a ‘pequeña joya’, and Francisco Ayala said that it was wrong to call the unauthorized edition ‘pirata’. ‘Esa edición ilegal que el [Manuel Fernández Montesinos] califica de pirata . . . parece no perseguir ningún despojo económico, ni tampoco muestra otras intenciones torpes, sino que más bien da la impresión de ser una ofrenda anónima y desinteresada a la memoria inmortal del poeta’ (12).

Subject of almost unanimous comment was the ‘belleza inmortal’ (15) of the sonnets; they were described with such adjectives as ‘impresionantes’ (3), ‘hermosísimos’ (5b), ‘espléndidos’ (5d), ‘asombrosos’ (9a; 9f), ‘bellísimos’ (11), and ‘maravillosos’ (11). They were also called ‘los más hermosos y valientes poemas que escribiera Federico’ (4; 5a; 8). Miguel García-Posada said that they could only be compared with poems of San Juan de la Cruz and Quevedo (9c), and ABC, in an unsigned note, reported that the sonnets it published were considered ‘como los mejores del poeta y situados junto a las más altas muestras de la poesía en lengua castellana de todos los tiempos’ (9g).

The question of why such extraordinary poetry had not been and apparently was not going to be published in Spanish was an obvious topic for comment; its publication did away with the myth that its subject matter made it unpublishable (3; 11). According to Montesinos, an edition of the sonnets was already ‘en preparación’: ‘Los textos aún inéditos de García Lorca, no es que no se editen, se están editando, pero con el ritmo (que algunos podrán considerar lento, muy señores míos) exigido por la dificultad misma de la tarea y los a veces poco sincronizados calendarios tanto de preparadores como de editores de los textos’ (9e). That an authorized edition of the sonnets was already in preparation is not supported even in the same publication: Fernando Lázaro Carreter titled his essay ‘Poesía de García Lorca recuperada’, and said that this part of Lorca’s work ‘ya parecía perdido’ and that these poems had been ‘rescatados del silencio’ (9a). According to Álvaro Salvador, it was only as a result of the clandestine edition that ‘la familia ha decidido finalmente publicarlos’ (4).

The family’s decision to publish the sonnets in ABC was found surprising (10, 11, 12, 14, 21). In a first-person statement, the family spokesman Montesinos attempted to justify the unusual forum (9e). Cambio 16, unsatisfied, interviewed Montesinos on precisely this point: ‘Manuel Fernández Montesinos, sobrino del poeta, justificaba así su decisión de publicar los sonetos en un periódico como ABC: “porque a Luis María Ansón, buen amigo de Neruda, quien en nada menos que tres ocasiones le había hablado de los sonetos de Federico García Lorca, se le ocurrió dedicar parte del periódico de su dirección a este tema” [quote from 9e]. Preguntado por CAMBIO 16, Montesinos no quiso añadir más a lo ya dicho en ABC: “Yo soy hombre de pocas palabras, lo que tenía que decir ya lo he dicho. No
soy un vendedor ambulante ni un muñeco de pim-pam-pum. Lo he publicado en ABC porque ha sido el primer periódico que ha tenido esta iniciativa, y nada más." (11).

A summing-up of the whole episode was provided by Francisco Ayala (12), who commented on a 'problema arduo . . . : el del pretendido derecho que los familiares de un autor puedan tener sobre sus escritos, no en cuanto fuente de ingresos económicos (que esto no suele cuestionarse), sino como facultad de sustraer al conocimiento general la obra que se supone debiera pertenecer a la comunidad . . . ' Ayala pointed out that any poet, artist, or intellectual is necessarily in conflict with those around him or her, and especially when dealing with love: 'Muy verdad es que todo amor, y no sólo el homosexual, es amor oscuro; todo amor busca el secreto, la sombra, y todo amor suscita en principio una reacción de hostilidad por parte de los excluidos, hostilidad que fácilmente puede llegar a la violencia . . . . La impudicia del poeta merece la reprobación de las gentes. El poeta, como, en mayor o menor medida, cualquier artista o intelectual, es un réprobo, y lo será hasta que, entrando acaso por la puerta falsa del éxito en el terreno de una precaria y siempre dudosa aceptación, se haya hecho perdonar su salvaje independencia y adquiera la posición equívoca de héroe popular.'

The most significant commentary, however, was provided by the sober and knowledgeable André Belamich (11), a senior Lorca scholar and one of his authorized editors and translators. 'Esos sonetos son maravillosos y expresan sentimientos amorosos universales. Es rarísimo, inexplicable y criticable que la familia no haya querido publicarlos hasta ahora . . . . La familia es muy discreta y puede que haya tenido miedo de dar a conocer esa parte de la personalidad de Federico, pero creo que con eso han contribuido a alimentar la leyenda, una leyenda para la que no había motivo porque se trata de unos poemas bellísimos y púdicos. Creo que tantas precauciones se les han vuelto un poco en contra.'

A question addressed in the materials examined deserves additional attention: the validity of the title Sonetos del amor oscuro. The length at which the title was discussed suggests that it has been to some extent responsible for the delay in publication of these sonnets; the title in question would seem to imply that Federico had written a book of homosexual love sonnets, or even worse in its impact, first-person sonnets which envisioned homosexual love as an equally valid type of love. Francisco García Lorca, Federico's brother and the one who has shaped the current editorial situation, wanted the poems to be published 'bajo el título de Sonetos, o, a lo más, Sonetos amorosos o Sonetos de amor' (9f); it is this latter title which appeared on the cover of ABC. Eduardo Castro helpfully points out that 'los herederos de Lorca habían negado hasta ahora la existencia de estos sonetos en forma de libro' (8; emphasis added).

A case not only against the title Sonetos del amor oscuro, but against any homosexual overtones to it, if it had any validity, has been made by the Lorca family members and by García-Posada (9c) and Hernández (18). It may be summarized as follows. There is stronger documentation for the composition of a larger and broader collection of sonnets, in which the love sonnets may have been included, than there is for the Sonetos del amor oscuro. The title Sonetos 'es el que cuenta con la mayor legitimidad al ser el único atestiguado documentalmente y faltos los manuscritos conservados de cualquier indicación al respecto' (9c); 'el cambio de título da a indicar que el poeta había renunciado al monotemátismo primero, para crear un conjunto más amplio'.11 The various references of Lorca's friends to the title go back to a single, common source, Aleixandre's 1937 statement,12 and therefore have no weight as independent confirmation. Aleixandre, furthermore, has indicated that although Lorca obviously used it, he has 'presque regretté de l'avoir dévoilé car il a le souvenir que c'était un titre très provisoire'.13 With which the title Sonetos del amor oscuro vanishes like a puff of smoke. The situation, however, is not that simple.
The sonnets under discussion are obviously a group, ‘claramente relacionados entre sí’ (18, p. 220); ten of them are found together, on the paper of the same hotel, showing that they were written together, presumably when Lorca was staying in that hotel (the Victoria, in Valencia), in November of 1935 (9c; 18, pp. 194 and 218). Now, if Federico wrote a group of sonnets, he surely had a title for that group; Federico never lacked for titles. Yet according to Montesinos, as there is no title written on the collection these cannot be the Sonetos del amor oscuro: ‘desgraciadamente no se conserva en el archivo [al menos en dicho archivo [familiar]] ningún manuscrito con sonetos que lleve la indicación de su pertenencia al libro mencionado . . . [Hay] tan sólo un soneto denominado “del amor oscuro” [i.e., the sonnet whose first line reads “Ay voz secreta del amor oscuro”; emphasis his]. Since these are not the Sonetos del amor oscuro, there is no such collection: ‘el poeta pudo perfectamente haber ideado el libro, incluso haber decidido qué sonetos lo iban a componer’, but ‘en vida García Lorca no recogió nunca una serie de sonetos suyos que formaran un conjunto amparado bajo el título citado’. To use the title Sonetos del amor oscuro is to ‘falsar el contexto’ of the poems, permitting ‘una interpretación fruto de torpes manías’. The only evidence for the title Sonetos del amor oscuro is what Montesinos calls ‘recuerdos lejanos de los amigos de García Lorca’.14

Everyone outside the Lorca family, however, attributes at least a partial validity to these ‘recuerdos’, concluding that Sonetos del amor oscuro is as well documented as is Sonetos: they agree that Federico did at some time conceive of a collection of sonnets called Sonetos del amor oscuro, and that the sonnets under discussion were part of that collection. ‘No cabe duda alguna de que fue uno de los títulos, quizás el primero, pensado por Lorca para su libro en preparación’, writes Mario Hernández (18, p. 194). The chosen editor, Miguel García-Posada, admitted that ‘el título Sonetos del amor oscuro circulara . . . de modo privado’; ‘diversos amigos de Lorca . . . lo han mencionado, y sin duda se lo oyeron al poeta’ (9c).15

It is unlikely that Aleixandre’s statement is the source for all the various references of Lorca’s contemporaries to the title, ‘testimonios sobrados’, in the opinion of Lázaro Carreter, ‘de que proyectó los de materia erótica como conjunto unitario’ (9a). Not only Aleixandre but also Neruda, Ayala, Cernuda, Rivas Cherif, Martínez Nadal, Giner de los Ríos, Guillermo de Torre, Altolaguirre, Bergamín, Blanco Amor, and Manuel Benítez Ingollt all used that title and no other.16 It is hard to accept that all of these friends and acquaintances took the title from a single indirect source, and that not one of them would have realized and corrected the alleged error in that source. Aleixandre’s attack on his own 1937 statement, in which Sonetos del amor oscuro was clearly and unambiguously named (‘me leía sus Sonetos del amor oscuro’), is also suspect. Why was Aleixandre so definite about it, if it was merely a ‘provisional’ title? Why are we to prefer a recollection of 1969 over one of 1937?

That Lorca did call these poems Sonetos del amor oscuro would thus seem quite probable. There are two arguments, neither incontrovertible, that he moved from this collection and title to a more general and inclusive one; these arguments, rather than reinforcing, undermine each other. The first is the mention of the title Sonetos in a newspaper interview of April 1936; this is the official, ‘documented’, family title.17 However, Lorca might well not have wanted such a suggestive title as Sonetos del amor oscuro to be published.18 In a letter to Adolfo Salazar of early June, 1936, he tried to prevent certain words of his from being published in a newspaper, and sources, such as Neruda, are definite in his treating these poems, like the ‘irrepresentable’ El público, as something not to be circulated casually.

The second argument is based on the statements of Luis Rosales, the only one of Lorca’s circle to suggest a different title, unsupported, however, by any source outside Rosales’ family: jardín de (or de los) sonetos. According to Rosales in 1978, this title was merely a
projected one. However, in 1981 Rosales claimed that Lorca had written sonnets in Rosales’ house, while in hiding shortly before his assassination; these of course could not be the sonnets allegedly corresponding to the earlier ‘broader’ title of Sonetos. Rosales further claimed that he had turned over ‘algunos’ to the Lorca family, without keeping a copy. In 1984, repeating that he himself had turned over to the Lorca family Federico’s sonnets, he stated that he was ‘absolutamente arrepentido, porque esos sonetos no están entre los publicados’ (18, p. 228, n. 79).

These statements of Rosales appear contradictory and are combined with a claim that Lorca’s sonnet collection, the Jardín, consisted of 30 to 35 sonnets (see 18, pp. 220–22). (The possibility that Lorca could have written that many otherwise unknown sonnets in a short time Mario Hernández finds ‘perfectamente verosímil... [pues] en ningún momento debió temer por su vida’ [18, p. 206], while Miguel García-Posada declares ‘no creo que el terror reinante, y que el autor conocía, le permitiera escribir’ [Akal, II, 759].) They must also be assessed together with other statements of Rosales: that Lorca in his house was writing or intended to write a continuation of the Milagros de nuestra Señora and a work entitled Adán, which in one interview was called an epic poem, in another a drama (Molina Fajardo, p. 39). These statements, which to my knowledge no one takes seriously, are just as worthy of respect as is the Jardín de los sonetos.

None of this, then, would seem sufficient to remove authority from the clear statement of such a knowledgeable and straightforward source as Neruda: ‘La última vez que lo vi, me llevó a un rincón y, como en secreto, me dijo de memoria seis o siete sonetos que aún persisten en mi recuerdo como sonetos ejemplares, de una increíble belleza. Era un libro encuadernado al que nadie conoce aún. Lo tituló Sonetos del amor oscuro.’

According to García-Posada, even if Lorca did use the title Sonetos del amor oscuro, which he calls ‘mítico’ (9c), that does not therefore mean that it has the meaning commonly attributed to it. ‘Amor oscuro’ means ‘amor secreto’, and also ‘el amor que mata o hace morir’. To claim that ‘amor oscuro’ meant ‘homosexual love’ would be ‘irresponsabilidad’, ‘hacer daño’, in sum ‘lectura e interpretación errónea de la obra lorquiana’ (9c, adapted). Faced with which, one must cite the reaction of Carmelo Samonà: ‘Un curioso riserbo trapela dalle pagine del quotidiano madrileño. Perché? Nel 1984 occorre davvero difendere Lorca da se stesso?’ (17).

García-Posada’s own collaborator Mauro Armiño wrote ‘uno de los insultos lanzados contra Lorca es el de su homosexualidad. Y los sonetos del amor oscuro cantan esa pasión’. Even in the same publication, Lázaro Carreter (9a), while sensibly pointing out that ‘amor oscuro’ meant ‘love’ in general, did not avoid the implication that a love which is general is not only heterosexual. ‘Lorca vivió con dramatismo su condición... Aunque Federico no rehuyó el equívoco, ese adjetivo [oscuo] en su intención decía mucho más. Se refería esencialmente al ímpetu indomable y a los martirios ciegos del amor... ¿Que ese amor es distinto?... Aquíjoneaba a Federico [que este amor fuera] un amor improductivo... pero no niega que sea amor.’

One can maintain the contrary position: even if Lorca did move to a broader concept and title for his sonnet collection, the meaning ‘comúnmente admitido’—that the collection should be viewed as homosexual poetry—is still correct. That Lorca compared his book of sonnets to Shakespeare’s Sonnets, of which García-Posada makes much, recalls the attribution of homosexual implications to Shakespeare’s sonnets, an interpretation so widespread—more so than today—that Lorca certainly must have been exposed to it. In sum, even if Lorca was planning a larger sonnet collection, which is far from established, the poems he called Sonetos del amor oscuro, and only those poems, were what was new about it, what he was reading to his friends, what was thematically linked to other writing projects of the same period. Given what information we have, the title and the interpretation commonly given it are both valid.
As a concluding observation, the whole episode is inseparable from the well-known problem of access to Lorca's texts. If any of the several editions of Lorca's works had been complete, a clandestine princeps would have been not just unnecessary but impossible. The controversy following publication of the Sonetos del amor oscuro has had a positive effect, however: the quantity of not just unpublished but unknown juvenilia of Lorca revealed shortly thereafter suggests that the revelations were, to some extent, a consequence. While an assessment of the literary value of this juvenilia must await its publication, what has been revealed about it suggests that it is thematically fundamental to our understanding of Lorca.

Yet the question of Lorca's unpublished or imperfectly published works does not end here. The mysteries of the manuscripts of Poeta en Nueva York and El público are still unresolved, and Martínez Nadal has yet to tell us the nature of the 'papeles personales' which Lorca gave him together with the incomplete draft MS of the latter. Salvador Dalí, in 1978, said that he would publish his correspondence with Lorca, and Gerardo Diego said the same in 1979 regarding his correspondence; neither edition is yet available. Rafael Sánchez Ventura never carried out his plan to publish Lorca's letters to Adolfo Salazar. After fifty years of believing it destroyed we learn that Lorca's correspondence both to and from Aleixandre is in existence (Martín, Heterodoxo y mártir, p. 89).

According to García-Posada, the reappearance of the revised MS of the Sonetos del amor oscuro would be 'casi un milagro'. But 'miracles' are happening all the time in Lorca studies—the publication of La niña que riega la albahaca and el príncipe preguntón, described as late as 1981 as 'perdido', the 'discoveries' of Lola la comedianta and Comedia sin título, and the sonnets that occasioned this article. An earlier generation had its 'milagro'—the publication of all but the last page of El maleficio de la mariposa. The handwritten originals of the Sonetos were allegedly given to Rafael Rodríguez Rapún, Lorca's secretary, to be typed. Whether or not he typed them is not known, nor why he would not have given the typed copy to Lorca, who had seemingly got back his drafts (the only texts we have for nine sonnets). Still, the death of Rapún is offered as explanation for the disappearance of a 'manuscrito más completo y definitivo' (9c). Rapún, however, was killed in combat, in mid-1937, and that his death itself would lead to loss of manuscripts would seem possible only if he were carrying manuscripts into battle with him, a colourful but unlikely fantasy.

One legitimate position, faced with this, is a sad one: 'más vale tarde que nunca', and there is, even today, the danger that unpublished materials may be lost. However, some compensation may be found in the attention all these delays and problems are attracting to Lorca's work. His own words are an appropriate concluding reflection: 'Sólo el misterio nos hace vivir. Sólo el misterio.'

APPENDIX

   1b. Preliminary text of Pablo Neruda (reproduced in 3; identified in 10 and 18). From his Para nacer he nacido (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1978), 107–08: it is a 'Discurso pronunciado en la inauguración del monumento a la memoria de Federico García Lorca, en São Paulo, en 1968'.
   1c. Unidentified preliminary text (reproduced in 3).
   1d. Eleven sonnets.
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9a. Fernando Lázaro Carreter, ‘Poesía de García Lorca recuperada’, p. [3].


9d. Text of eleven sonnets.


9g. Unsigned note in ABC, 18 March 1984. There have been many reprints based on this publication in ABC. The text itself was reprinted in ABC a year later, 17 March 1985 (not seen); with a new introductory note by editor Luis María Ansón, referring to a letter on the sonnets by Matilde Urrutia, Neruda’s widow, received and published in ABC (see ABC, edición internacional, 18–24 July 1984, p. 21), they were published again on 17 August 1986. The texts from this edition, sometimes accompanied by reprints or paraphrase of the secondary material, were reprinted in Teresa Barutell, ‘Los desconocidos sonetos de amor de Federico García Lorca’, Argumentos, VIII, Nos. 63–64 (1984), 90–91; ‘La versión original de los sonetos de amor, de Federico García Lorca’, Nervo [Bilbao; ‘suplemento editorial de CLA, cuaderno mensual de poesía’], March 1984, 4 pages between pp. 32 and 33; La Nación [Costa Rica], 29 April 1984; Uno Más Uno, 20 April 1985, supplement ‘Sábado’, pp. 1–2; and a very curious volume, Inéditos de Federico García Lorca. Sonetos del amor oscuro, Buenos Aires: Instituto de Estudios de Literatura Latinoamericana, 1984 (June 1984, according to the colophon). The volume contains only the sonnets, despite the title, plus introductory material, primarily based on ABC, by Marta Teresa Casteros, identified as ‘compiladora’, and Jorge Arbeleche. I stumbled on this volume by chance, and used the copy in the University of Wisconsin Library. In response to a request to obtain a copy, Germán and Lilia Orduna answered from Buenos Aires that the Instituto de Estudios de Literatura Latinoamericana, Casteros, and Arbeleche were all unknown to them.


17. Carmelo Samonà, ‘E García Lorca cantó el amor “diverso”. Un risvolto sconosciuto della vita e dell’opera del grande poeta spagnolo’, La Repubblica, 1 June 1984. Includes an announcement of Mario Socrate’s translation (No. 20, infra), and includes two samples, ‘Llagas de amor’ and ‘Noche del amor insomne’.


19. ‘Suppressed Gay Poetry of Lorca Published Clandestinely’, Gay Studies Newsletter, XI, 3 (November 1984), p. 2. This report contains the erroneous statement that the Sonetos de amor oscuro are the earliest known collection of gay poetry in the Spanish language; actually Cernuda’s Placeres prohibidos and Donde habite el olvido are earlier.

20. ‘Studio critico’ of Mario Socrate, included in his translation Sonetti dell’amore oscuro e altre poesie inediti ([Milan]: Garzanti, 1985), 249–69. The other inéditos in the volume are the Suites. The Sonetos were of course available in France in 1981. Italian is thus the second language to have a
NOTES

1 The numbers and letters in parentheses refer to entries in the bibliographical appendix which follows the text. A large number of persons have assisted me in collecting the materials used in this article. They include José Amezúa, Andrew Anderson, Gilberto Greco, Victor Infantes, Thomas Lathrop, Christopher Maurer, Germán and Lilia Orduna, Ángel Sahuquillo, Giuseppe di Stefano, Scott Tucker, Noel Valis, and Jack Walsh. Andrew Anderson and André Belamich have read several drafts of this article and made valuable suggestions for its improvement.

2 Missing is an Italian (Pisa) tesina on the sonnets from November of 1985, on which I have been unable to obtain any more useful information.

3 HR and JHP received and acknowledged copies (LLI [1984], 261 and VIII [1984], 260, respectively).

4 All the commentators save Eduardo Castro (8), Lázaro Carreter (9a), and Socrate (20) speak of a single perpetrator; Lázaro, with no explanation, uses the plural (‘los anónimos remitentes’). Castro speaks of ‘el editor o los editores’, and Socrate attributes the publication to ‘un grupo de intelectuales granadinos’ (p. 251).

5 ‘Los once sonetos han salido clandestinamente de los archivos de la familia García Lorca en Madrid’, echoes Eutimio Martín, Federico García Lorca, heterodoxo y mártir. Análisis y proyección de la obra juvenil inédita (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1986), p. 61, who refers, p. 60, to ‘el responsable (o responsables)’.

6 Cano’s report that he discussed the edition with Alexiandre on 15 November 1983, must be an error for 15 December (21, pp. 279–80).


9 Breaking the unanimity is Alexiandre: ‘son desiguales, y unos son más hermosos y dramáticos que otros’ (21, p. 280).

10 This, then, represents a correction of Montesinos’ previous statement: ‘Todo lo que está hoy guardado por la familia no aparecerá o se hará referencia a ello en esa edición [the authorized critical edition]’ (‘Sobre los inéditos de García Lorca’, El País, 5 November 1978; emphasis added). However, it is in harmony with that of Isabel García Lorca, ‘no puedo anticipar si saldrá algo en algún plazo concreto’ (quoted in ‘Lorca el oscuro’, Cambio 16, 9–15 July 1978, p. 39).


12 1a. According to Belamich, Alexiandre’s piece in which the comment on the Sonetos de amor oscuro was included is ‘en quelques pages, ce qui a été dit de plus profond sur Lorca’ (his translation, I, xi, n. 1).


14 9e: ‘Sobre los inéditos de García Lorca’. According to Martínez Nadal, the same factor—that Lorca did not leave us a written discussion or outline of the book—was responsible for the delay in publication from 1973 to 1983 of Belamich’s reconstruction of Lorca’s Suites (‘Los inéditos de Lorca’, El País, 26 November 1978).

15 In his anthology García Lorca (supra, note 14), Garcia-Posada wrote that ‘los... sonetos antologizados pertenecen, sin duda, a los Sonetos del amor oscuro’ (p. 321).

17 'El título fue simplificado por el propio poeta en declaraciones últimas, bajo el simple título de Sonetos' (Montesinos, 'Sobre los inéditos de García Lorca'; also 9e, 9f).

18 According to García-Posada (9c), one can understand why the title Sonetos del amor oscuro 'no trascendería a las declaraciones públicas del autor'.


20 According to García-Posada, Akal, II, 759.

21 Rosales' statement contradicts an earlier statement of his sister Esperanza that it was their father who had turned over to Lorca's father all the manuscripts in their possession (Gibson, El asesinato, p. 180), and also fails to address the fact that Rosales, who met Lorca in 1930, conserves poems from 1918 unpublished until 1976 and 1982 (Akal, II, 770–71), perhaps the same 'inéditos' of Lorca he was reading in 1944 (Charles David, La costanilla de los diablos (Memorias literarias 1943–52) [Madrid: José Esteban, 1981], p. 41). If either Rosales did give these sonnets to Lorca's father, what has happened to them? Montesinos has repeatedly denied that his family possesses the texts in question, and most recently is quoted as follows: 'Respecto a los Sonetos del amor oscuro, Fernández Montesinos dijo no conocer la existencia de otros, aunque reveló que quizás "los tenga Luis Rosales"' ('Montesinos revela parte de la obra inédita de García Lorca', Diario de Granada, 9 November 1984, p. 1).

Furthermore, there is the question of Lorca manuscripts other than sonnets: Hernández believes it likely that at this time there passed off from the Roses to the Lorcas the or a MS of La casa de Bernarda Alba (18, p. 208), a text with a confusing history of its own (see my 'Nuevos documentos relativos a la edición de Poeta en Nueva York y otras obras de García Lorca', forthcoming in Anales de Literatura Española [Alicante]). No comment at all has been made on my suggestion (Poeta en Nueva York, p. 36) that Rosales might be one of the still-unidentified holders of a MS of El público, a work Lorca was carrying with him in July 1936.


24 1 July 1936, according to Audcain, p. 323.

25 1b. The title is also used by Neruda's widow, who refers to ABC's edition not by its title Sonetos de amor but as Sonetos del amor oscuro (ABC, edición internacional, 18–24 July 1984, p. 21). Also in ABC, Claude Coupain is quoted as using the title Sonetos del amor oscuro (15); it is used three times in the heading and text of 'Amancio Prada cantará los Sonetos del amor oscuro, de García Lorca, en el teatro María Guerrero' (ABC, edición internacional, 5–11 February 1986, p. 32). While reprinting the Sonetos de amor, the heading being the only place that title is found, the editor of ABC, Luis María Ansón, three times in his introduction uses Sonetos del amor oscuro (Los domingos de ABC, 17 August 1986, p. 27). In the same issue, the title is also used by Charles Marcilhe: 'la denuncia de la marginación más dolorosa y personal, la del amor homosexual que se confiesa en los poemas del Diván del Tamarit y los Sonetos del amor oscuro' ('El pensamiento de Federico', p. 13), and by Julio Huelamo Kosma: 'el código amoroso que recorre con manifesta acuciedad los Sonetos del amor oscuro' ('El soneto "El poeta pregunta a su amor", Cuenca...' , p. 42–43, at p. 42).

According to Mario Socrate, 'le obiezioni risentite al "mitico" titolo Sonetos del amor oscuro... appaiono trascendere gli scrupoli d'un rigore filologico' (20, p. 252).

26 García-Posada himself, carefully choosing his words, wrote (in Akal, II, 131) that "no se puede negar que
hay en él [the word “oscurito”] una franja de significado que conecta con una concepción amorosa no heterosexual, although in Lorca it was ‘exento de connotaciones turbias’. If it does not have those connotations, though, then why is there such resolute opposition to its use?

27 The quotation of Alexandre which closes Cano’s Cuadernos de Velentino: ‘Lo curioso es cómo en todos los artículos que acompañan a los sonetos en ABC se evita cuidadosamente la palabra homosexual, aunque se aluda a ello, pues nadie ignora que esos sonetos no están dedicados a una mujer. Se ve que todavía esa es palabra tabú en España, en ciertos medios, como si el confesarlo fuese un descubrido para el poeta. Todo eso viene de muy antiguo, de cuando la Inquisición quemaba vivos a los culpables del delito nefando. No es extraño que aún haya gentes para las que toda sospecha de ese supuesto pecado sea vista como peligrosa, aunque ya no haya inquisición.’ (21, pp. 284–85). Ian Gibson, who also calls the texts published in ABC the Sonetos del amor oscuro, also notes that in ABC ‘no aparece una sola vez la palabra “homosexualidad”…’ pero sí encontramos expresiones despectivas contra los lectores vulgares, maldicientes, presos de ‘torpes manías’, etc.’ (‘En torno a Lorca, hoy’, Cuadernos de Música y Teatro 1886–1936–1986 [Madrid: Sociedad General de Autores de España, 1987], pp. 81–91, at p. 88.

28 2. Mauro Armino is credited in the colophons of Akal I and II, and is also listed on García-Posada’s Garcia-Lorca, as the editor of the series in which the book appeared.

29 9c; García Lorca, p. 321.

30 For an introduction to this crux of Shakespeare scholarship, see Martin Green, The Labyrinth of Shakespeare’s Sonnets (London: Charles Skilton, 1974), Chapter 4, and Joseph Pequigny, Such is My Love: A Study of Shakespeare’s Sonnets (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1985).

31 Such as Divión del Tamario, El público, La destrucción de Sodoma, La bola negra, and, less directly, Comedia sin título and La casa de Bernarda Alba. An introduction is provided by Andrew Anderson, ‘El último Lorca: unas aclaraciones a La casa de Bernarda Alba, Sonetos y Drama sin título’, in Lecciones sobre Federico García Lorca, ed. Andrés Soria Olmedo (Granada: Comisión Nacional del Cincuentenario, 1986), 131–43. Anderson does not use the title Sonetos del amor oscuro.

32 For an introduction, see Rafael Martínez Nadal, ‘Los inéditos de Lorca’, El País, 26 November 1978. In response to Nadal’s accusations, a joint letter from Lorca scholars appeared in El País on 7 January 1979, stating that ‘el archivo de la familia del poeta ha permanecido desde hace años abierto y a nuestra entera disposición para el trabajo que realizamos’; this letter was signed by Ian Gibson, Francisco Giner de los Ríos, Mario Hernández, Marie Lafrenque, Eutimio Martín, and Antonina Rodrigo. Missing from the signers are García-Posada and Belamich, the former because he had not been able to consult the Lorca archives (Akal, II, 763); the latter’s access, which he has commented favourably and gratefully on (11; his translation, lx), was prior to the death of Francisco García Lorca.

33 A surprising recent revelation is the statement of Eutimio Martín that if it had been up to the Lorca family—as, by the laws of literary property, it should have been—Poeta en Nueva York would not have been published in 1940 (‘Los puntos sobre las íes’, 17).

34 It was revealed in a talk given in Granada by Montesinos on 8 November 1984, reported in an article significantly titled ‘Fernández Montesinos reveló parte de la obra inédita de García Lorca’ (italics mine), Diario de Granada, 9 November 1984, pp. 1 and 10; according to the article it includes fragments, up to 114 pages long, of five of the six works mentioned as in press or in preparation at the end of the long-unavailable Impresiones y paisajes. In May 1985, Ian Gibson added that the juvenilia also include ‘unos 140 poemas, algunos de ellos largos, otros muy extensos…’, varias pequeñas obras teatrales’ and ‘otros interesantes manuscritos’ (‘Crisis de religión y dudas de amor’, La Gaceta del Libro, 1º quincena de mayo, 1985, 2 pp). The prose material has been reported on by Christopher Maurer, ‘Sobre la prosa temprana de García Lorca (1916–1918)’, Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos (1986), Nos. 433–34, 31–30, which includes some brief excerpts and some new material, other than prose. Further information on the juvenilia is scattered in Martín, Heterodoxo y mártir, in the appendix of whose thesis of the same title Gibson read the unpublished juvenilia (‘Un probable artículo de García Lorca sobre Omar Jayyam’, Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos, 1986), Nos. 433–34, 37–42, at p. 39. Gibson (‘Crisis de religión’) comments on the material’s importance: ‘la publicación de este material nos brindará importantes claves para el mejor entendimiento del mundo lorquiano…’. Demuestra, en primer lugar, que la crisis religiosa del joven Lorca fue mucho más profunda y virulenta de lo que hubiéramos podido deducir de la lectura de Impresiones y Paisajes, El maledicío de la mariposa y Libro de poemas.’ He adds—the possible connection with the inaccessibility of this material is obvious—that ‘si el Lorca adolescente ha llegado a odiar al Dios de las Batallas [of the Old Testament], es principalmente porque éste condena la sexualidad humana’.

35 El público, 15. See also 21, p. 229, and Montesinos, ‘Sobre los inéditos de García Lorca’.

36 Gerardo Diego: Martín, Heterodoxo y mártir, 54, n. 24; one letter from Lorca to Diego was published in Los domingos del ABC, 17 August 1986, p. 8. Dali: Mónica Zerbib, ‘Salvador Dalí: “Soya demasiado inteligente para dedicarme sólo a la pintura”’, El País, 30 July 1978. This is apparently not to be identified with the letters of Dalí to Lorca, published (together with others written to Lorca) on the basis of MSS in the family archive by Antonina Rodrigo in Lorca-Dali: una amistad traicionada (Barcelona: Planeta, 1981); that book was obviously prepared without Dalí’s cooperation, and the incomplete and erroneous nature of one letter published in it was pointed out by Martín, Heterodoxo y mártir, 86–88, n. 6.
38 Described as lost: Lola la comedianta, ed. Piero Menarini (Madrid: Alianza, 1981), 83. Published in Titere, a small magazine devoted to puppet theatre, it first came to my attention in an advertisement on the back of Akal II, announcing its inclusion in the second edition of Volume III (Teatro, I) of García-Posada’s Akal edition of Lorca’s works. This has not been published; the text is available, however, in Anales de la Literatura Española Contemporánea, IX (1984), 295–306, and was studied by the editor, Luis González-del-Valle, in ‘La niña que riega la albahaca y el príncipe preguntón y las constantes dramáticas de Fedenco García Lorca’, Anales de la Literatura Española Contemporánea, VII (1982), 253–64.

In response to a draft of this article, André Belamich sent me a draft of part of the introduction to his translation of Lorca’s theatre, setting forth his reasons for believing the text of La niña to be a forgery (personal communication, 5 February 1983).

39 Rapún is also supposed to be the ‘destinatario’ of the sonnets, something which Alexandre ‘sospechó siempre’ (21, 280) and is stated without qualification by Mario Socrate (20, 250).


41 See Martin, Heterodoxo y mártir, 81, for one example. I fear the loss of the manuscript of Poeta en Nueva York, which could be recovered rapidly were there cooperation among the various parties interested in it.