

## María Zambrano

### A biography

**M**aría Zambrano was a Spanish philosopher who wrote several important philosophical works and won several prizes. Her philosophy on life can be summed up by her expression 'Poetic reason'. This was an attempt to create a **link** between philosophy and poetry. She believed that poets and philosophers could help us understand the meaning of life. Her **quotes** include the following:

- 10 'Culture is the **awakening** of mankind.'
- 'Only in **loneliness** can you feel a real hunger for the truth.'
- 'Philosophy is questioning, poetry is the discovery.'



- 15 María Zambrano was born on 22 April 1904 in Vélez-Málaga, Málaga. During her childhood, her family moved from Vélez-Málaga to Jaén and later to Segovia, where she went to secondary school. She attended university in
- 20 Madrid, where she studied Philosophy with Xavier Zubiri and José Ortega y Gasset, who were famous philosophers of the time. As a university student, María attended her classes but also took part in activities outside of her studies such
- 25 as writing for newspapers.

In 1936, she married Alfonso Rodríguez Aldave. At this time in her life, she worked as a teacher at the Universidad Central de Madrid up until the start of the Spanish Civil War.

- 30 After the war, she was exiled and moved to Cuba, then Italy, Switzerland and, finally, back to Spain in 1984.

Her most important works include *Philosophy and Poetry* (1939), *The Agony of Europe* (1945)

35 and *Antigone's Tomb* (1967).

She was awarded the Prince of Asturias Prize for Philosophy in 1981. And in 1988, she received the Cervantes Prize, becoming the first female philosopher to get it.

- 40 She died in Madrid on 6 February 1991.

#### KEY WORDS

**link** (n) vínculo  
**quotes** (n) citas  
**awakening** (n) despertar  
**loneliness** (n) soledad

- 1 **YOUR WORLD** In pairs, think of the names of as many influential women as you can in two minutes.

- 2 Read the biography. Then match each sentence with a date from the text.

- 1 María Zambrano was born.
- 2 She married Alfonso Rodríguez Aldave.
- 3 She moved back to Spain after living abroad.
- 4 *Philosophy and Poetry* was published.
- 5 She was awarded the Cervantes Prize.
- 6 María Zambrano died.

- 3 Find the English for these words in the text.

- 1 humanidad (n)
- 2 infancia (n)
- 3 exiliado/a (v)
- 4 premiado/a (v)

- 4 **GO ONLINE** Find out this information about an influential woman from Andalusia. Then write a short biography.

- date of birth/death
- childhood and studies
- career
- key achievements
- quotes