Representations of Women in Postwar Spain:

Gender and Performance in Recent Novels and Films

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how women's lives in postwar Spain are represented in recent (largely from the 21st century, with a few notable exceptions) novels and films. With almost all of the featured narratives here centering on women's lives in the decades immediately following the Spanish civil war (mostly the 1940s, during the time of the most oppressive reprisals), special attention is given to Francoist social policies as they related specifically to women. By viewing gender as both a social construct as well as a performance, the reader will note how more recent fictional versions of Spanish women's postwar experiences manage to create an opportunity for contestation, for agency, for pushing back against the social norms that strove to restrict women in their tightly scripted gendered roles in Franco's New Spain.

The introductory chapter opens with a rehearsal of the highlights of key issues in Spanish women's lives in the years preceding the war, during the Second Republic, and then during the war itself. The lives of both Nationalist and Republican key players such as Dolores Ibárruri (*la Pasionaria*), Pilar Primo de Rivera, Victoria Kent, and Mercedes Sanz Bachiller are briefly highlighted. Also mentioned are key women's organizations of the war and postwar era: the *Sección Femenina*, the AMA, and the *Mujeres Libres*, among others. All this historical review is helpful in the development of more firm footing in the discussion of Spanish women's postwar lives in general and in the more specific delineation of what would come to be known as the ideal Spanish woman.

The first chapter builds on the foundation laid in the introduction by exploring further the concept of true, Catholic womanhood (as articulated by Aurora Morcillo and others). Starting with Lacan and his "mirror stage," this chapter seeks to reveal how societies, in general, encode

gender norms, and how gender was socially determined in Franco's Spain, more specifically. I employ Martín Gaite's concepts of "una mujer muy mujer" and "espejos negativos" to point out the way recent Spanish novels and films use female protagonists to either exemplify an ideologically oppressed gendered performance, or manage to evade such a requisite, scripted performance and instead engage in a resistant gendered manifestation of their own creation. Some of the novels and films I look at here are Caso's novel *Un largo silencio* (2000), Grandes's novel *Inés y la alegría* (2010), Carlos Iglesias's film *Ispansi* (2011), and José Luis Cuerda's film *Los girasoles ciegos* (2008).

In the second chapter, I look at several recent films and novels featuring stories of women's lives in Franco's prisons of the 1940s. Using such theorists as Judith Butler and Foucault, I examine how Franco's gendered body politic came to be inscribed on the text of the imprisoned female body. Butler's work on gender performativity is crucial as I explore how these novels and films feature imprisoned female protagonists who engage in distinctly gendered performances that they then subvert and use to create a kind of contestatory discourse in response to the restrictive, oppressive gender norms into which Francoist policy sought to inscribe them. The fictional narratives examined here include Cañil's novel *Si a los tres años no he vuelto* (2011), Chacón's novel *La voz dormida* (2002) and film version (2011), and Ferrero's novel *Las trece rosas* (2003) and film version (2007).

Chapter three moves forward chronologically somewhat, past the early years of the most severe reprisals and into the height of the resistance movement engaged in by the *maquis* and their *enlaces*. Novels such as Almudena Grandes's *Inés y la alegría* (2010), and films such as *Silencio roto* (2001) and *El laberinto del fauno* (2006), unlike earlier narratives, now feature women as co-protagonists with the men they strove to aid or protect. In this chapter, I employ the

concepts of dispossession, spectrality, and foreignness (as articulated by Butler and Kristeva) to highlight the way the women in these stories are no longer simply wives, sisters, mothers, or lovers--they are now equal to men in the measure of agency they wield as active participants in the resistance movement. At the same time, the women exist alongside the *maquis* within a dispossessed state of precarity, forever branded foreign elements in Franco's Spain. In this dispossessed, precarious state, the women constantly engage in a gendered performance necessary for survival while at the same time participating in what Butler calls "situated acts of resistance."

Finally, in chapter four, I turn to a discussion of gender, identity, and postmemory in this chapter's focus on mothers, daughters, and the motherless. Many of the works examined here (such as Prado's novel *Mala gente que camina* [2006] and Riera's novel *La mitad del alma* [2006]) have the modern world as their setting, yet their protagonists and narrators reach back to the immediate postwar era in their exploration of the gendered performance a Spanish woman either chose to engage in, or was necessarily compelled to engage in, in order to survive in Franco's Spain. Francoist propaganda consistently promoted the nineteenth century ideology of domesticity, whereby a woman's life was limited to that of home and family in the state's project of reconstructing the country after the damage inflicted by the decadence of the Second Republic's sick body politic. Underlying all the novels and films mentioned here is the issue of the "brand" of femininity a mother attempted to pass on to her daughter. Will the daughters accept or reject the maternal inheritance of the performative quality of a gendered identity? Films such as *El laberinto del fauno* (2006), *Carol's Journey* (2003), and even such classics as *El espíritu de la colmena* (1973), increasingly show a tendency for young daughters to reject the mother's performance in their attempts to forge their own gender identity.

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Introduction: Women and the Spanish Civil War: Before, During, and After

The 1931 Constitution of Spain's Second Republic made men and women equal in terms of their civil and political rights and did much to profoundly change the status of Spanish women, at least before the law, by greatly enhancing the kind of opportunities available to them (Lannon "Gender and Change" 274). Women could vote and stand for parliament, act as witnesses or guardians, sign contracts, administer estates, hold jobs while married, or even get a divorce (Graham "Women and Social Change" 101). Carmen Martín Gaite recalls the surveys she read in the popular youth magazines of the Second Republic where young women spoke with passion and enthusiasm about their future plans for professional study, training, and work. She describes reading these articles in this way: "me fascinaban aquellas jóvenes universitarias, actrices, pintoras o biólogas que venían retratadas allí con sus melenitas cortas y su mirada vivaz y que cuando hablaban de proyectos para el futuro no ocultaban como una culpa el amor por la dedicación que habían elegido ni tenían empacho en declarar que estaban dispuestas a vivir su vida… Fueron las heroínas míticas de mi primera infancia" (*Usos* 49).

By the end of the war and with the full realization of Franco's regime, the "mythic heroines" of Martín Gaite's childhood had all but disappeared. The 1945 Fuero de los Españoles, one of the most important legal documents of the New State, rendered marriage indissoluble by revoking Republican civil marriage laws, thereby encouraging the revitalization of the Christian family (Nash "Pronatalism" 170). The return to the 1889 Civil Code made married women legal minors, required women to seek their husband's permission before buying or selling property, and made the manufacture and distribution of artificial methods of birth control illegal (Lannon "Gender

and Change" 275). The 1889 Civil Code, in essence, reinstated complete male authority in the home and much propaganda was generated that spoke to the commonly held idea that women had masterminded the decline of the family and, by extension, all of Spanish society with their Republican aspirations to achieve a higher status along social, political, and labor lines. The March 1938 Labor Charter (Fuero de Trabajo) was enacted which 'freed' married women from the workplace and the factory so that they could return to their rightful place in the home (Graham "Gender and the State" 184). Also enacted in 1938 was the Ley de Bases which granted government subsidies to families with more than two children whose mothers did not work outside the home. In 1944 the Penal Code was reformed naming divorce and adultery crimes (such penalties had been abolished during the Republic) (Linhard 38). Women's most important role in the New State was that of motherhood and any activities that might detract from raising up offspring to rebuild the fatherland (such as higher education, social or personal pursuits, or public work aspirations of any kind) were expressly discouraged and made difficult to access.

In order to better chronicle this progression from a pre-war revolutionary state in gender relations to a stilted, stifled postwar existence for women, this introduction will trace a few of the major developments in Spanish women's rights and life choice options from the pre- to the postwar era. We will look briefly at the contributions made by prominent women on both sides of the issue of Spanish women's liberation as well as a few of the key organizations that strove either to free women from their traditional, more restrictive roles in Spanish society or to return them to these roles and keep them bound there for good within certain sociological confines. Ironically, both sides of pre-war and wartime Spain (Nationalist and Republican) were using terms such as "abnegation" and "self-sacrifice" in their urgent calls for women to support the war effort in various ways. We will see how these terms took on similar yet distinct connotations

for the women on each side of the war who chose to mobilize. Finally, we will turn our attention to Franco's Spain, especially in the immediate postwar era and we will highlight how the tenets of Franco's body politic were always gender-specific (as delineated by the work of Morcillo and others) from the very moment of their origination.

All these aspects of historical discussion are necessary to provide a background to the overall investigative focus of this dissertation—that is, how gender, taken as both a social construct and a type of performance (Butler), specifically in Franco's Spain, is present as a key issue in certain recently produced fictional narratives (found in both novels and films) centering on the lives of Spanish women in the immediate postwar era. In each of the chapters that follow, we will explore a different aspect of how deviations in such a socially constructed gendered performance manage to "push back" against the policies of a repressive regime and "open a space for contestation" (Scarlett). We will find examples (both historical and fictional) of resistance, resilience, and contestation in the most unlikely of places, including prisons, extremely marginalized groups such as the *maquis*, and even in the choices the daughters of Franco-era children make in the manner in which these young women and girls elect to construct their own versions of contestatory femininity.

Life for women pre-war

In the early 1900s, 60% of women who worked in Spain were employed in agriculture. In the 1920s, only 2% of student populations in universities were women. By the 1930s, 75% of the general population was still made up of landless peasants but with the movement of massive amounts of people from the countryside to the cities due to the amount of jobs available in the quickly developing industrial sector (especially in cities like Barcelona), 40% of working women were now employed as domestic servants. When women did work in industry, their salaries were

half those of men; they were not allowed in unions; and there was no paid maternity leave (Mangini 4-5).

The impact of women's mobilization in 1930s Spain is open to various interpretations. It is true that from 1931 onward, the Republic made accessible public spaces which before would have been unachievable by women. Women participated in various forms of political activity such as campaigning and demonstrating—they were working in labor movements in union bureaucracies and arbitrating committees—and in the press as journalists and radio announcers. There were high-ranking, well-known women among the left—such as the Socialist parliamentary deputy Margarita Nelken, another Socialist deputy Victoria Kent (director of prisons from 1931-32 and Spain's first female lawyer), and the Anarchist leader Federica Montseny (Minister of Health and Public Assistance from Nov. 1936 to May 1937) (Graham "Women and Social Change" 109). Graham points out that all these apparent advances do not indicate that women had successfully broken with traditional gender roles, but rather that the new social spaces which women were occupying had simply been adjusted so as to 'admit' women into these new roles which were still conventionalized along gender lines. For example, these women's political sections were still answering to a male leadership—both on the right side as well as the left. In the progressive/left press, Graham states that "when the 'new woman' was featured (parliamentary deputy, political functionary, or—later—*miliciana*) these new functions were always made compatible with domestic and familial duties—thus demonstrating the patriarchal continuity underlying the new Republican order" ("Women and Social Change" 109).

Lannon stresses that the gender revolution embedded in the wide-sweeping reforms of the Republic (such as democratizing the government, secularizing the state, and restructuring

employment and property laws) was at risk of failure from the onset without the assurance of a strong, stable Republic endowed with the time necessary to establish itself and slowly change social practices, shored up by the support of the people it aimed to serve ("Gender and Change" 274, 278). The five short years before the military uprising occurred and war began was simply not enough time for the Republic to garner the public support it needed to sustain its aggressive reforms, especially in terms of its intentions to foster a secular, non-Catholic, state. Enormous segments of the population were intensely loyal to a deeply ingrained Catholicism and could not fathom functioning in a society separated from their faith. Such divisive issues as civil marriage, divorce, and secular co-educational schools were seen as direct attacks on Catholic identity and values (Lannon "Gender and Change" 283).

One example of the kind of deeply imbedded paradoxes surrounding the social status of women in 1930s Spain is the story of female suffrage—a story that involves at least three key players in Parliament: Kent, Nelken, and Campoamor. Clara Campoamor was a lawyer, a deputy in Parliament and a Republican politician who campaigned relentlessly for female suffrage, and she was even part of the parliamentary commission tasked with drafting the Constitution. While Campoamor argued for universal suffrage as an indispensable quality of any truly democratic society, Victoria Kent argued instead that female suffrage should be postponed until middle-class women who had never worked outside the home could be better educated as to how to avoid the pitfalls of reactionary political decisions. Margarita Nelken, also concerned about the poor level of education Spanish women usually received and about their pro-clerical tendencies, advocated delaying giving women the vote (Lannon "Gender and Change" 279). Many have noted that Kent and Nelken, full of contradictions, often spoke as if they were not women themselves—separated by their education and life experience from the poor, uneducated women they did not

want going to the polls, Kent and Nelken essentially took the position of their male colleagues in Parliament by insisting that women were not politically aware enough to think for themselves and would inevitably succumb to the influence of their husbands and confessors should they be granted the right to vote. Campoamor, by contrast, insisted that delaying women's suffrage was a purely political move and that her fellow Parliament members were ignoring the human rights question. She was famous for insisting that only those "who think that women are not human beings could deny their equal rights with men" (Mangini 25-26). On the other hand, Alcalde quotes Nelken as having criticized harshly the women who were reluctant to leave their homes and mobilize during the war—she said their desire to stay at home was "una reacción primitiva de hembra que no reflexiona" (135). Women did vote in the 1933 and 1936 elections—with the conservative right winning the former and the left (the Popular Front) winning the latter (Lannon "Gender and Change" 284).

Women and war

The urgencies with which both sides (Republican and Nationalist) began preparing for war meant that there were new social functions where women were needed as never before. The most obvious example of this rapid, drastic change in social status for women occurred in Republican Spain where the emergency needs of a fractured state in crisis propelled women into a mold-breaking societal space—namely to the front lines**,** where a number of them even held command positions, especially in the early stages of the war when women rushed to the defense of cities like Madrid and Barcelona. It is estimated that about 200 women fought on the front lines (Van Liew 230). In addition to serving at the front, these *milicianas* could be spotted taking part in search parties, riding around in open-air trucks with their male fellow soldiers waving their rifles conspicuously, or even racing to the hills outside the cities in order to do their part to

halt the enemy advance (Lannon "Images of Women" 217). Among the first women to rush to carry arms were the Anarchists (Alcalde 123).

What it meant to be recognizably feminine in Spanish society of the 1930s (an issue we will explore in greater detail in chapter one) was challenged by the image of the *miliciana*. A reporter in Valencia wrote in July 1936: "Corps of *milicianas* have been organized, and women, armed and aggressive take their place in the front line with men. All that womanhood traditionally stands for is rapidly disappearing" (Lannon "Women and Images of Women" 218). We see this matter of being "recognizably feminine" play out on the big screen in the 1996 film *Libertarias*, when the prostitutes at a brothel go to the door to see who is knocking and look through the peep-hole. "Son milicianos," one of them says as all she can see are blue *monos*, rifles, and the red and black colors of the CNT (Confederación Nacional del Trabajo, Anarchist labor union). Alcalde emphasizes that women who chose to mobilize were often described with masculine adjectives: "ya no se era una mujer, sino como un hombre" (122). Rosario *la Dinamitera*, one of the war's most famous *milicianas* whose right hand was blown off by a bomb she was making, was immortalized in a poem by Miguel Hernández who wrote these lines about her: "puedes ser varón y eres/ la nata de las mujeres/ la espuma de la trinchera" (Cuevas 174). Early in the 1995 film *Land and Freedom* when the protagonist David first arrives from the UK at the front to fight with the POUM (Trotskyist Marxists), he remarks on how strange it seems to see women in the trenches, fighting alongside men. "Women had never before adopted such masculine attire," Nash affirms, and the wearing of pants was an obvious "challenge to traditional female attire and appearance" (*Defying* 52). There are some records of women who wore the *mono* in the streets of major cities at the outbreak of war who were accused of showing off, of simply following a fleeting fashion they were temporarily drawn to with its excitement of

bearing arms while at the same time having no real military training. Nash insists, however that women wearing the *mono* as street clothes were relatively few in number and usually identified only with the militia and not with members of the proletariat, as men did who chose to wear the *mono* in the streets as part of their everyday attire. Nash says that "the majority of working-class women quickly rejected the *miliciana* in her *mono* and opted for a more traditional style of clothing perceived as being more feminine and respectable" (*Defying* 52).

The film *Libertarias* highlights the *miliciana*'s uncertain place in society as other women they encounter are at first confused by who they are and why they are determined to make war. They are frequently mistaken for prostitutes, as we see when the prostitutes they come to "liberate" misunderstand their speech on "amor libre" and instead label them "putas sin cobrar." In *Land and Freedom*, another 1990s film featuring (among other issues) women's uncertain place in the war, the female lead, Blanca, is also at first mistaken for a prostitute by the protagonist, David, who assumes all women serving in the trenches are there primarily to attend to the men's needs. Inés, in the 2010 novel *Inés y la alegría* (discussed in more detail in chapter one), also faces this sexist attitude in the military friend of her brother, Garrido, when he propositions her and asks if all *milicianas* went naked under the *mono*, as he had heard (Inés never even participated in any kind of military activity during the war, but as a female Republican, Garrido makes sweeping assumptions about her femininity in every possible way).

Some women who fought at the front lines in trench warfare had nothing but positive things to say about their male comrades in arms. One such *miliciana* recalled years later: "Todos ellos me han tratado con un respeto y un cariño del que serían incapaces los señores y los señoritos. Prefiero mil veces vivir entre un batallón de soldados del ejército del pueblo, que alternar con los elegantes de un Club de latifundistas y aristócratas. Me siento más segura y

mucho más considerada entre aquellos. Hablo como mujer" (Alcalde 132-133). But there were other reports of unequal treatment between men and women serving at the front—from many groups who had units there—including the Communists (Stalinists), the Anarchists, and the POUM. *Milicianas* were often expected to cook, wash, and sweep for their male comrades, even after serving alongside them in battle. "It seems often to have been the case that even when women were allowed to fight, they were expected to do a double shift, one with a gun, the other with a broom" (Lannon "Images of Women" 222). Nash maintains that this segregation of occupational duties at the front was a rationale often justified by those who claimed women lacked the necessary military training to be truly useful in battle and were naturally better suited to such ancillary tasks than men. It seems that some women agreed with this policy and were content to serve as cooks, washerwomen, and nurses but others were deeply offended by such attitudes and would seek out other battalions where work was parceled out in more egalitarian measures (*Defying* 108-109). We see this attitude also in *Libertarias* when the *milicianas* are frustrated by their demotion from freedom fighters to potato peelers and washer women for their male comrades when they get to the front. Pilar, one of the main characters in the film, reacts in anger when she attends a rally hosted by the Mujeres Libres where she hears a speech on how women should be recalled from the trenches in order to care for the men returning wounded from the front—"es hora de abandonar el fusil" the speaker says. "Queremos morir como hombres!" Pilar insists. When the *milicianas* in this film are eventually ordered to leave the front, they are offered the job of washing clothes—a task they scorn in favor of staying in the trenches, even though this decision will cost them their lives at the hands of Franco's notoriously ruthless invading Moroccan conscripts. In a similar fashion, in *Land and Freedom,* when the POUM is about to be absorbed by the Popular Army, Blanca says in defeat "I must know my place as a

woman" as she bitterly recognizes that the only jobs open to her now in the war effort are those of nurse, truck driver, or cook. The image of the *miliciana* was even more deeply tarnished when huge campaigns were launched alerting soldiers to the danger of venereal disease—campaigns that implied that having women in battle was part of the problem. Again, in the film *Libertarias*, we see reference to this issue as the *milicianas* are forced into group testing for STDs just before being ordered to leave the front.

Popular on wartime posters long after the height of their wartime activities, the *miliciana* in her unisex overall of the working class (the *mono*) made for an excellent propaganda piece,[1] though she was somewhat misleading as Largo Caballero's government recalled women from the front as early as September of 1936. Lannon reminds us that women's presence at the front "had been a feature of the urgency of the crisis rather than of any widespread view that soldiering was a proper activity for women" (*The Spanish Civil War* 71). All political parties were in favor of withdrawing women from the front and none of the women's organizations, including Mujeres Libres—the only group that had initially advocated women's participation at the front lines, were in favor of keeping them there by 1937 as the Popular Army's struggle to hold back advancing Nationalist troops grew ever more precarious (Linhard 39). Even Dolores Ibárruri, *La Pasionaria*, came to the front to tell women that their place was in the rearguard, where they would be more useful to the war effort (Fraser 286). While La Pasionaria talked about the

[1] It is now generally accepted that female figures on war posters were not meant to be interpreted as a call to arms for women, but rather were directed to men. The fact that so many posters featuring women were still in circulation long after women were recalled from the front is indicative of the allegorical nature of the *miliciana*—directly linked with the image of the Republic as female (Linhard 52). The 2008 film, *La mujer del anarquista*, exemplifies well this dichotomy. The opening credits play against a background of war posters—all of which feature scenes of women in combat. But the female protagonist of the film is never in combat—she is arguably never mobilized in any way, and her only concern is reuniting with her exiled, Anarchist husband, not understanding or participating in his political ideals at all.

importance of the militarization of the entire population, including women and young people (Ibárruri 63), in her speeches she often reiterated her insistence on how incorporating women into the work force was the best way for women to support the army and make a direct contribution to the war effort: "las mujeres que nunca tuvieron otro horizonte que el de su hogar, y que hoy reclaman con insistencia un puesto en el trabajo, en la lucha, ya que lucha es también desarrollar actividades en el frente de la producción… los hombre útiles, al frente de la lucha; las mujeres, al frente de la producción" (Ibárruri 362).

Rather than serving at the front, most middle- and working-class women who chose to mobilize were often employed at tasks that freed men to go to the front—they toiled in workshops and factories, provided health and welfare services via the Popular Front organizations, and in Barcelona and Madrid they practically ran nearly all of the public transportation (Graham "Women and Social Change" 110). (We see young women working in Madrid as street car ticket takers in the film, *Las 13 rosas* [discussed in more detail in chapter two], when one of them still works in the trolley system even as Madrid falls and the Nationalists march in.) One of the more famous *milicianas* serving at the front lines, Rosario "la Dinamitera," recalled in later life how all the work women did during the war made them equal with men, not just fighting alongside men in the trenches: "no he sido yo sola la que me he igualado al hombre en aquellos años de lucha; fueron muchas las que cogieron en sus manos los trabajos de los hombres… otras compañeras se responsabilizaban en talleres, fábricas, el campo y puestos administrativos" (Cuevas 174).

Fraser's oral history of the war reveals an actively evolving social attitude towards women during their wartime mobilization. The women he interviewed recall how these changing attitudes played out in their daily lives in the Popular Front zone. One woman, Rosa Vega, a

schoolmistress who remained in Madrid, tells the story of walking home in the dark, in the middle of a siege, during a blackout after she had been preparing medical supplies. She remembers, "it was so dark that I often bumped into people in the streets. But never once was I molested or in any way made aware that I was a woman. Before the war, there would have been remarks of one sort or another—now that was entirely gone. Women were no longer objects, they were human beings, persons on the same levels as men… the fact that both sexes were humanly equal was one of the most remarkable social advances of the time" (Fraser 286).

On the Nationalist side, women were not needed for industrial war material production work thanks to Axis aid. Here women were encouraged through propagandistic efforts to extend their traditional duties of charitable work by joining the *Sección Femenina* (defined in more detail momentarily) and helping to provide basic health care and social services. The propaganda slogans stressed that women's help was an essential, yet temporary, wartime necessity, which would return them to their more traditional roles at home once the war had been won. However, this aspect of the Nationalist agenda would essentially 'backfire' as the boundaries between the public and private worlds of women were shifting during the war. Through the work of the *Sección Femenina*, the state began to intrude more and more in the private world of the home. The mostly middle-class women working within this organization were trained in various roles such as the *divulgadoras* (health workers) and the *cátedras ambulantes* (rural mobile schools) ("Women and Social Change" 110-111).

Key players: women and women's organizations

There were several prominent women's organizations on both the Republican and Nationalist sides that were important in the mobilization of women during and after the war. Among these were: the *Margaritas* (Carlists), the *Mujeres Libres* (Anarchists—hereafter referred to as the

ML), the *Asociación de Mujeres Antifascistas* (Communists—hereafter referred to as the AMA), and the *Auxilio Social* and *Sección Femenina* (the former with its National-Syndicalist tendencies being eventually subsumed by the latter with its fiercely Falangist loyalities, respectively).

The Margaritas were a Carlist organization that ran a hospital and did work to benefit the front lines directly. (Pilar Primo de Rivera eventually sought to incorporate them into the *Sección Femenina* as well [*Doves* 258]). Fraser quotes Pamplona women who recall their volunteer work baking bread, fashioning bandages, and assembling grenades—all forms of work which the women did without pay (310-311). The women he interviewed talked about the war as if it were a Crusade—one in which their husbands and sons died in honor and went immediately to heaven. These women gave the highest of praises to the Carlist requetés whose war-wounds they nursed. Fraser, in *Blood of Spain*, cites the following creed from the Margaritas of Tafalla who "solemnly promise on the Sacred Heart of Jesus… to observe modesty in dress: long sleeves, high necks, skirts to the ankle, blouses full at the chest; to read no novels, newspapers or magazines, to go to no cinema or theatre, without ecclesiastical license; neither publicly nor in private to dance dances of this century but to study and learn the old dances of Navarre and Spain; not to wear makeup as long as the war lasts" (309).

Formed by the Spanish Communist Party, the *Asociación de Mujeres Antifascistas* (AMA) attracted many middle-class women Republicans from 1934 on. "The AMA backed social reforms… including equal pay legislation, state nursery provision, equal access to the professions for women, and a quota system whereby a third of all seats on municipal councils would be filled by women" ("Women and Social Change" 108-109). The AMA provided employment for thousands of domestic servants who were left behind in Madrid when their

masters were evacuated. Fraser mentions that the largest of these workshops employed 2,000 to 3,000 women in the making of militia and army uniforms, and that these workshops were always run as collectives under communist leadership (Fraser 290). In order to sustain the support of these female constituents, the left had to address women's needs specifically. These types of state-driven reform projects were diametrically opposed to the anti-statist stance adopted by the anarcho-syndicalists. The strongest rival the AMA would face would be the *Mujeres Libres*, which was first established in May 1936, organized around a journal of the same name.

Since feminist movements in general in Spain, in their nineteenth- and early twentieth-century forms, tended to focus around the concerns of the élite—and such movements were often university-based—centering on such issues as suffrage reforms and promoting middle-class women's educations, many socialist and anarchist women identified the feminist movement as being one concerned primarily with improving the rights of an already more privileged group. As women became increasingly aware of the gender-based contradictions inherent in their society, they became more open to the libertarian ideas of *Mujeres Libres* (ML). This organization was formed as independent of the CNT and established in the spring of 1936, but its members would always maintain that having a separate women's organization (from that of men) was only a temporary measure ("Women and Social Change" 103).

In Mary Nash's 1976 collection of publications from the *Mujeres Libres* journal, she selected key writings which give the reader a fairly well-constructed idea of what the organization was: what its key tenets were, what it aimed to achieve, and how it planned to go about making those aims a reality. The organization was active during the war from April 1936 to February 1939 and Nash reports a membership of around 20,000 women, primarily from the working class, and from territories loyal to the Republic. ML was a unique organization because

it was the first time in Spain that what Nash calls *femenismo proletario* appeared on the scene. With the use of this term, she implies that the ideals of feminist liberation were first presented from the point of view of the working classes, instead of the bourgeoisie (*Mujeres Libres* 7-8). Nash maintains that even prior to the civil war, during the Second Republic, women were considered unable to participate fully in social struggles, given their lack of cultural and political preparation. Women's activities in social struggles were limited to helping men from home and supporting their participation. The position of the woman in society, then, from a ML point of view, was not only an anarchist struggle but also a feminine one. The founding members of ML saw the libertarian proclamation of equality between the sexes as having essentially failed to attract working-class women (*Mujeres Libres* 10-12).

The initial objective of ML was the emancipation of the woman and her mobilization and incorporation into the libertarian/anarchist movement. The ML had a broad educational project (mostly carried out in factories) as the basis for their formation—there was a newly mobilized female labor force that desperately needed both cultural enrichment as well as practical skills training (*capacitación*) if its members were ever to be truly freed from what they called triple slavery: "the enslavement of ignorance, enslavement as workers, and enslavement as women" (Graham "Women and Social Change" 111). The war was the catalyst that served to pull women out of their traditional passive roles at home and propel them into the workplace as well as the public sphere of social reforms. "Los hombres al frente, las mujeres al trabajo" was the constant slogan of the ML during the war years when many jobs were left empty by men who were sent to the front. Although this slogan sounds discriminatory to women, the ML held this position throughout the war, pointing out that the rearguard was where women could best fight for social change (*Mujeres Libres* 16-17).

At the local level, the ML organized basic literacy classes, cultural classes, and, of course, the magazine of the same name that aimed to stimulate the intellectual and philosophical needs of its readers while at the same time keeping them well informed as to the activities of the organization. The ML believed that women must not be restricted to working in the home—that they had to be permanently incorporated into the public workplace, even after the war freed up the men from their duties at the front. Women had to work publicly because their emancipation was contingent upon their economic independence—the ML proposed that a woman who did not work publicly was a burden to society and was acting as a social parasite to the detriment of the interests of the collective—a woman's work must benefit the collective and if she only worked at home, this work benefited the individual only. In order to help women better assimilate themselves into the public workforce, the ML organized various campaigns to promote the creation of childcare centers near factories or working-class neighborhoods, communal dining halls to help alleviate some of the domestic duties of working women, and constantly pushed for equal pay between the sexes for equal work (*Mujeres Libres* 28-30).

One of the main differences between the ML and the AMA was that the ML focused on the realization of the individual while the AMA was more of a Popular Frontist initiative addressing more of an inter-class constituency. The AMA was better maintained by its state resources due to its connection with the PCE and with its top-down approach that viewed women's mobilization as instrumental to its goal of holding the Republican state together for the duration of the war. By contrast, the ML focused more on the process by which women would take on new roles and thereby acquire critical consciousness, rather than making a quantifiable contribution to the war effort (Graham "Women and Social Change" 114). We see this focus on individualized, personal consciousness-raising in films such as *Libertarias*, where women, specifically Maria, the former

nun, must be 'educated' in libertarian thought before she is suitable for the front lines. She is given Anarchist books to read and ingest and later quotes from *La conquista del pan* when she is in the trenches and using the megaphone to irritate the enemy with her recitation of anarchist propaganda.

A surprising exception to the previous explanation of the ML and their revolutionary struggle as they defined it, is the best known of anarchist women, Federica Montseny, CNT health minister, whose advocacy for women resulted in the legalization of abortion under controlled conditions, the dissemination of birth control information, and the institution of something called "marriage by usage" in April 1937 (i.e. cohabitating for 10 months, or less if pregnancy occurred, was considered marriage) (Fraser 287). Montseny, a novelist turned politician and political journalist, helped to form the FAI (Federación Anarquista Ibérica) and in 1936 she became Spain's first female cabinet minister (Mangini 46). While Montseny did contribute magazine articles and speeches to the ML, she did not view the ML struggle as being a feminist one, but rather an individual one. She was concerned about the liberation of man as an individual human being, not as part of a collective. The solution to inequalities between the sexes could therefore be found in the rise of the individual and the creation of a new person, not in the emancipation of the woman (*Mujeres Libres* 21). In an interview with Carmen Alcalde she said: "We have never been, we are not, we will not be, feminists. We think that the emancipation of women is intimately tied to the true emancipation of men. That's why it is enough to just call ourselves Anarchists. But it has seemed to us that, above all in Spain, our movement suffered from an excess of masculinity; men, in general, do like women to represent them" (Mangini 46-47). She also believed motherhood to be the culminating achievement in the life of a woman so

much so that she said that women without children were incomplete and not fully realized. "Mujer sin hijos, árbol sin fruto, rosal sin rosas" (*Mujeres Libres* 33).

Another key figure whose name bears mentioning in an overview of what life was like for women in pre-war and wartime Spain was *La Pasionaria*, Dolores Ibárruri. For the Communists she was an inspirational mother-earth figure and for the Nationalists, she was a mannish, whoring woman whose "blood-thirsty rhetoric unmanned the right-wing parliamentary deputies in the Cortes of the Popular Front" (Preston *Comrades* 277). Preston cites her ability to empathize keenly with the suffering of others as well as her unflagging determination to right social injustices as being her most salient personality characteristics. Born into a mining, Catholic, Carlist family, her extreme suffering of privations as a woman married to a miner who showed her little tenderness drove her to seek solace in reading, primarily Marxist literature which she obtained not only from her husband but also from the local library where she lived in Somorrostro. Around Easter of 1918, she wrote an article for the local miners' newspaper using the pseudonym *Pasionaria* (passion flower—a flower that blooms in the spring), thereby adopting the nickname by which she would be known the rest of her life (*Comrades* 278-280). As a result of her welfare work with the Unión de Mujeres Antifascistas and the PCE (Partido Comunista Española) in the repressive aftermath of the 1934 Asturias mining uprising, she was chosen by the PCE as a candidate in the Popular Front elections of 1936 and was elected as a regional Communist deputy. She became famous for her fiery parliamentary speeches characterized by her passionate commitment to social justice and her direct manner of attacking the right. By the advent of the military uprising in July 1936, she had coined her famous phrase which would become the Republican battle-cry: "¡No pasarán!" ("They shall not pass!") urging all men, women, and children in all regions of Spain to take a definitive stand against Fascism

and militarize the entire population (*Comrades* 285-288). Throughout the war, she worked tirelessly to shore up the morale of the soldiers: frequently visiting the front lines to make speeches, help dig trenches, procure supplies and transportation for troops, and on more than one occasion, convince retreating battalions to return to the battle and not give up the fight (*Comrades* 290-294). Preston calls her "the single most representative figure of the Republic," a "powerful mother-figure" that became "the mouthpiece of the fears and hopes of many working-class people in the Republican zone" (*Comrades* 290).

Fraser cites an article from a Falangist newspaper in the spring of 1937 which maintains that nationalist women were more concerned about equality with men in terms of "sacrifices and duties" than in pursuing voting rights and social equality. The newspaper article goes on to talk about how hard the nationalist women were working in hospitals, clothing workshops, and the Auxilio Social. The Auxilio Social (Social Aid) was established in Valladolid during the war by Mercedes Sanz-Bachiller, Onésimo Redondo's widow (he was a founding member of the JONS—the National-Syndicalist party that later merged with the Falange), for the initial purpose of attending to the needs of the orphaned children as a result of the repression there. It was arguably the most important practical social work established by the Falange during the war. It was a copy of the Nazi organization of the same name and followed the German model by helping the young and old alike with food, clothing, medicine, and eventually, family-style orphanages with young girls being placed in charge of even younger children (Fraser 310). Preston describes Sanz-Bachiller as a young, vibrant widow who was shocked by the ravages of war in her country and who sought only to alleviate the suffering of those in most need, namely children, widows, and the elderly. She wanted to establish a welfare organization that did not discriminate in terms of political allegiances. She insisted that no questions be asked when the

destitute came to her canteens for food or other forms of assistance. Preston quotes her as having said: "For me, a child was a Spanish child and that was all there was to it. And a woman was a Spanish woman and no more. Nothing about Reds or bandits or the like" (*Doves* 239).

Preston paints a picture of a young, convent-educated widow, who shared her husband's Catholic faith and general right-wing political views, but who was concerned only with establishing a social welfare system, rather than with the political power struggles raging within the Falange and the early years of Francoism. He implies that Mercedes did not fully comprehend the militant ideology of her first husband, Onésimo Redondo, who was an enthusiastic supporter of both Miguel Primo de Rivera's dictatorship and the Nazi party's efforts to cultivate a return to traditional German values in response to the liberal quality of the social freedoms espoused by the Weimar Republic (*Doves* 210, 216). Even while in exile during the Second Republic, Redondo continued to advocate for a violent armed uprising—the only solution he could see in order to purge Spain of Marxism (*Doves* 220). When her husband was killed during an ambush in the Nationalist zone within a few days after the beginning of the coup in July 1936 (*Doves* 229), Mercedes was immediately propelled to political prominence.

Pilar Primo de Rivera and Mercedes Sanz-Bachiller possessed completely opposite views on the role of women in politics. Pilar was José Antonio Primo de Rivera's sister (he was the Falange's founder) and promoted complete female subordination within the organization she founded, the *Sección Femenina* (hereafter referred to as the SF). In contrast, Mercedes never sought to establish a completely female organization, as did Pilar, nor did she seek to promote the submission of women (*Doves* 234-235). At first, her organization aimed to provide care for the inordinate amount of orphans who were helplessly stranded on the streets as the immediate result of the outbreak of war, but eventually she extended her programs to include not only soup

kitchens and orphanages, but also literacy programs, clothing and medicinal distributions, and even laundry services for Nationalist forces. The Auxilio Social's canteens and *Cocinas de Hermandad* (as the food packaging centers for older adults were called) were eventually expanded all over the Nationalist zones and by the end of the war it could boast of having founded and maintained almost 3000 canteens and a little over 1500 *Cocinas de Hermandad* (*Doves* 242-245). Preston's biographical account of the well-meaning and humanitarian intents of Sanz-Bachiller's heart are a far cry from the nefarious role the *Auxilio Social* plays in a novel such as Prado's *Mala gente que camina* (2006), as we will see in greater detail in chapter four. Preston insists that while Franco realized how much he needed the *Auxilio Social* for his propaganda purposes, Sanz-Bachiller did not see things in this way. The inherent irony in such a situation is enormous when one considers that the very suffering the *Auxilio Social* professed to seek to relieve was often the direct result of the sponsoring repressive regime which sought to "cleanse" Spain of its leftist elements—a cleansing which often resulted in suffering unique to women (as we will see throughout each chapter of this study): rape of widows and wives of political prisoners, confiscation of goods and property, imprisonment by proxy for women as punishment for their sons or husbands, and even having to resort to prostitution as the desperation of extreme poverty drove them to the streets (*Doves* 266-267).

Pilar Primo de Rivera**,** as head of the *Sección Femenina*, at first sought to bring the *Auxilio Social* under her supervision and command, especially after her brother, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, was executed in 1936 (*Doves* 243-245). Pilar was concerned not only about Mercedes's having recruited many women as volunteer workers in the *Auxilio Social* who were already working in the SF, but she was also troubled by the way Mercedes structured her organization in direct opposition to Pilar's ideas on female subservience to male authority. The differences in the

two women were ideological as well as personal. Preston explains how "Pilar's determination to bring Mercedes Sanz's Auxilio de Invierno into the orbit of the *Sección Femenina* paralleled the efforts by the followers of José Antonio within the wider Falange to tame the radical followers of Onésimo Redondo" (*Doves* 246-248). Pilar's philosophy on the role of women in the establishment of a postwar New Spain had as its major tenet the demobilization of women so that they might return to the domestic sphere in order to raise their children and prepare their homes for the triumphal return of the noble Falangist soldiers. Mercedes Sanz's concepts of the role of women were more influenced by the way women were mobilized in Nazi Germany than the kind of Catholic, aristocratic, charitable traditions espoused by Pilar (*Doves* 260).

Preston estimates that Pilar's organization, from 1937 to the mid-1950s, reached millions of middle and lower-middle class women with her goal of instilling in women conservative Catholic values—bringing up children and making a good home for their husbands (*Comrades* 111). In 1934, when the SF was first founded and Pilar appointed Jefe Nacional, the initial purpose of the organization was to provide a means by which Falangist families of those either killed or imprisoned in pre-war street violence might receive some sort of welfare provisions. These women made arm-bands and flags, functioned as messengers and secretaries, organized charitable assistance for the families of the imprisoned, and even hid the guns of their male partners in their dresses. By typing and disseminating José Antonio Primo de Rivera's "Letter to the Soldiers of Spain" that called for a military uprising to overthrow the Republic, these women were doing what they could to precipitate the outbreak of war (*Comrades* 114-115). During the war, members of the SF served as nurses at the front lines, secretaries for high-ranking Falangists and military officers, as well as working as cooks, washerwomen, and uniform seamstresses for the armed forces (*Comrades* 117).

The SF mobilized these middle-class and lower-middle class women literally by taking them from the private sphere of the home to the public domain and using them to police other women—namely the urban and rural poor. In the social service program (*Servicio Social*), unmarried women between the ages of 17 and 35 were required to serve the state for six months in order to obtain employment. Of these six months, three had to be spent in unpaid welfare work where women might work in schools, hospitals, homes for the aged, or food kitchens, for example (Graham "Gender and the State" 187). The SF was also involved in educational and work training programs in rural areas (such as the famous *cátedras ambulantes* or travelling groups of teachers*)*. One study on the presence of the SF in rural Galicia revealed how the notion of "backwardness" was employed by members of the SF to convince local residents that all aspects of their daily life (hygiene, cooking, crafts, farming methods, etc.) were out of date with the rest of Spain. By imposing a system of *cursillos* (short classes) and *concursos* (competitions) held at the end of such courses, the SF infiltrated the private sphere of the home by teaching women more "modern" methods of cooking, creating crafts, running their homes, raising their children, and even growing food, thereby preserving the traditional Galician forms of all these things for special folkloric activities and holidays only (Roseman 130-131). Roseman points out that these *cátedras ambulantes* were often the only way young women in more impoverished, rural zones of the country would have encountered SF teachings, given that these women often did not attend high school regularly, married young, had children, or simply avoided the six months of mandatory social service that young, unmarried women from more urban, middle-class settings were obliged to perform by not needing the social service certificate at all since they had no plans to attend university, obtain a post in the civil service, or even procure a driver's license or passport (132).

The Sección Femenina strove to educate women according to their Falangist ideology by enforcing this six month period of social service for all eligible women that included training for motherhood as well as political indoctrination (Nash "Pronatalism" 171). Women ages seventeen to thirty-five were required to participate in these social service programs instructing them how to become "la esposa ideal" before they could get a degree, a passport, or even a hunting or fishing license (Schumm 10). Martín Gaite points out that although the numbers of young women who belonged to the SF were never as high as the founder would have liked, no young Spanish woman could escape the reach of the Servicio Social, for the reasons already mentioned (*Usos amorosos* 59-60). Nash even mentions the fact that many women found fault with the discrepancy in their policies—namely that only single women could become leaders in the Falange—while all women were constantly taught that motherhood should be the ideal goal of their lives ("Pronatalism" 174).

As working-class women found employment in such marginal sectors of society (including prostitution) they were also largely able to avoid the mandatory 6 months of social service required by the SF until the decrees of 1944-46 released them from this requirement, after which they only had to attend classes in such subjects as basic literacy, etiquette, or "national history and culture." Since the industrial workers were exempted from this mandatory service from the mid 40s on, the SF functioned mainly due to the work of single women from the lower and middle classes (as opposed to the women who were working to provide or supplement family incomes). These young single women saw themselves as actively contributing to the political construction of the new state and nation yet while they led independent and relatively self-sufficient lives, the message they preached was one of submission, subservience, and joyful

domesticity. The SF gave the appearance of women's involvement in public life without really allowing them an entrance into formal politics (Graham "Gender and the State" 193-194).

Limits to a gender revolution

Labanyi and Graham stress that it is important to keep in mind that in 1930s Spain, many cultural issues concerning women were not very well defined. For example, while the right mobilized women to protest against the Republic, anarchist attempts to liberate women did not always challenge traditional definitions of femininity and not all socialists were in favor of giving women the right to vote (*Spanish Cultural Studies* 95). Formal equality between men and women in 1930s Spain was still a far cry from lived equality. Graham points out that the first problem with women being able to achieve a permanent status of equality with men in Spain is that these reforms were being administered from the "top-down," rather than originating in any sort of grass-roots, "bottom-up" manner. Although women industrial workers had begun to unionize by the end of the nineteenth century, they encountered a myriad of obstacles in their efforts to organize themselves. In the first place, they were a fragmented labor force—working in textile factories, as domestic servants, or in homes. They often were doubly burdened by their work both within and without the home. They were also largely illiterate and had little opportunity for socialization and so sometimes excluded themselves from unions. Furthermore, the unions failed to address the needs of women which were specific to their station in life (i.e. equal pay, maternity benefits, child care). Even when women did join unions, they faced hostility from their primarily male membership. Graham notes that "only in exceptional cases did women achieve leadership positions where they could influence policy or act on their own initiative… Women's 'otherness' was as encoded into the programs of socialist oppositional groups as it was into the policies of the capitalist regimes they opposed" ("Women and Social Change" 101-102).

The Second Republic had changed women's social status only slightly—women were still discriminated against in wages, in their options for work, and in the avenues open to them for social activities—they were held back by "the weight of a gender discourse of domesticity" intent on confining them to home and family (Nash *Defying* 48).

Fraser interviewed several women who were frustrated with the lack of progress made in the women's liberation movement during the war. He quotes Pilar Vivancos, the teenage daughter of a CNT smallholder in an anarcho-syndicalist Aragon village, as commenting on how "the role of women—that hadn't changed. There was much talk but little action" (288). She liked living and working with the collective—she enjoyed the big meetings where one could say what one thought in a village assembly but she was frustrated by the fact that there were no women on the village committee. She recalled how "the question of women's liberation wasn't posed as part of the revolutionary process… in Aragon the woman's place was in the kitchen or working the land" (288). She partly blamed women for not pressing for further social change. She said, "we women… understood very little of what women's emancipation entailed. We lacked the necessary education and culture" (288).

Where the Nationalists and the Popular Frontists coincided with their mobilization of women is, interestingly enough, in the way they exhorted women to participate in the war effort (in various ways) while constantly reminding women that the ultimate goal was a return to established gender norms based upon female subordination once was the war was over. Contradictions abounded on both sides—while the Republicans were more conservative in their efforts to mobilize women than one might think, the Nationalists were less able to realize their professed policy of female subordination than they might have cared to admit. The SF provides an excellent example of this failure by offering a new, very public social role to massive

numbers of Spanish women, while at the same time preaching abnegation and self-sacrifice (Graham "Women and Social Change" 114-115).

By the end of the war, the gendered politics of Franco's re-imposition of traditional patriarchal values meant that the social climate was again rapidly changing for women. The somewhat progressive stance of women such as Mercedes Sanz-Bachiller was possible only because of the wartime need for labor, but when men began returning home from the front lines looking for work there was increasing pressure on women to stay home and stay out of the workforce (Preston *Doves* 275-276). By 1939, Serrano Suñer, brother-in-law and top advisor to Franco, effectively halted much of Sanz-Bachiller's work by declaring that the *Auxilio Social* should focus on the establishment of orphanages, rather than creating a system of beggars with its other charitable programs. Of particular distaste to the regime (and the Catholic hierarchy) were the childcare centers established by the *Auxilio Social* to care for the children of working mothers. By 1940, the Servicio Social program was effectively co-opted by the *Sección Femenina* and Mercedes subsequently resigned her position as director of *Auxilio Social* (Preston *Doves* 278-280).

In a 1935 speech in Badajoz, José Antonio Primo de Rivera spoke to the "mujeres extremeñas" assembled there, assuring them that the Falange was the only political party that truly understood the position of women in society. He urged them to perceive "la profunda afinidad que hay entre la mujer y la Falange" (538). He explained that the reason why the Falange could comprehend the position of women was that they (the men of the Falange) were compelled to practice "abnegación" in a way was not unlike the self-sacrificing ways of women: "A mí, siempre me ha dado tristeza ver a la mujer en ejercicios de hombre… El verdadero feminismo no debiera consistir en querer para las mujeres las funciones que hoy se estiman

superiores, sino en rodear cada vez de mayor dignidad humana y social a las funciones femeninas… es evidente que la del egoísmo correspondería al hombre y la de la abnegación a la mujer. El hombre… es torrencialmente egoísta; en cambio, la mujer casi siempre acepta una vida de sumisión, de servicio, de ofrenda abnegada a una tarea" (539). He goes to say how the "abnegación" that Spanish women excel at demonstrating can also be found among the members of the Falange who must be prepared to give up hearth, home, family, friends, and physical safety. He ends his speech by conflating masculine and feminine roles when says to his female audience: "Ved, mujeres, cómo hemos hecho virtud capital de una virtud, la abnegación, que es, sobre todo, vuestra. ¡Ojalá lleguemos en ella a tanta altura, ojalá lleguemos a ser en esto tan femeninos, que algún día podáis de veras considerarnos hombres!" (540).

Like Pilar and José Antonio Primo de Rivera, La Pasionaria also spoke of "abnegación" and "sacrificio" in terms of what women could do for the war effort. In one of her famous speeches to the women of Madrid she said: "vosotras no habéis atemorizado, os habéis mantenido firmes y habéis mostrado vuestra abnegación y vuestro espíritu de sacrificio en la lucha por la defensa de la República y por la democracia… La victoria sólo podrá ser obtenida a costa de sacrificios y de abnegaciones. ¡Qué no seáis vosotras las que retengáis a vuestros hijos y a vuestros maridos!... Pensad que más vale ser viudas de héroes que mujeres de cobardes" (Ibárruri 64-67). In this same speech, she goes to talk about how, only if necessary, should women join their male partners at the front and fight side by side with them, but at the same time she repeats her admonition that women should not discourage their husbands and sons from fighting, just because they fear death: "¡Qué no seáis vosotras las que retengáis a vuestros hijos y a vuestros maridos! Porque, si queréis velar por su vida, sabed que ésta no se defiende quedándose en casa,

sino luchando" (Ibárruri 64). She was obviously more concerned about women keeping their men at the front lines than she was about keeping women there.

Graham concludes that ultimately, the right moved faster than the left to mobilize women in the early 30s. In contrast to the Republic's hesitancy to incorporate women more fully into their reforms, the right saw women as a valuable commodity (not a dangerous one) which might be used to reverse the Republic's reforms. As soon as women were granted suffrage, the right looked to those socially conservative female constituents who maintained clerical sympathies—largely among the rural and lower middle-class women whose social and cultural values revolved around religious activities. These women were mainly mobilized under the auspices of the Church in order to guarantee a return to a conservative social order whereby women would be demobilized and returned to their natural social status—within the home and family's sphere. Pilar Primo de Rivera said, "we believe that it is the women of Spain, as a block, who safeguard the traditions of our nation, all that is best in our race… that they are a tremendous source of social continuity" (Graham "Women and Social Change" 104).

Eventually, however, the right showed signs of being aware of how dangerous it could be truly to mobilize women on a mass scale. Motivated by the scrutiny of Church hierarchy, by late 1934 and into 1935 most of the Catholic/conservative press designed to mobilize women had begun to disappear. The message for women was now for them to return to the home as that was the place where moral control could best be maintained. But the problem remained for women whereby under the Republic, the boundaries between their private and public spheres had shifted so significantly that the act of mobilization itself had irrevocably altered women's perceptions of their social roles. It is not a coincidence that this political withdrawal of conservative women

from the public scene occurred practically at the same time as the creation of the *Sección Femenina de Falange* (June 1934) (Graham "Women and Social Change" 105).

By the end of the war, the SF boasted of having reached 800,000 members. It is noteworthy that Pilar herself did oppose the Francoist policy of reprisals being taken against widows of those who fought for the Republic. But her resolved loyalty and submission to Franco thoroughly cemented her unique place within his regime—they needed each other. As the sister of José Antonio, she lent a cover of Falangist legitimacy to his policies and he provided her with the necessary backing she needed to consolidate all right-wing women's organizations (namely the Margaritas and the Auxilio Social) under the wings of the SF (*Comrades* 111, 125).

In a 1938 opening speech to the national council of the SF Pilar said, "What we shall never do is put women in competition with men because women will never succeed in equaling men; if they try, women will lose the elegance and grace necessary for a life together with men" (Fraser 309). Preston describes how "Pilar exhorted women to be as feminine as possible. There was no question of their assuming male dress or functions, let alone those of front-line combatants" (*Comrades* 124). In her speeches, Pilar was adamant that the activism of the SF members would cease as soon as the war ended. The submission of women to men was paramount to her. Preston points out that even the symbol of the SF—the letter Y—suggested female subjugation in two ways. Y was the first letter of Isabel de Castilla's name (as written in the fifteenth century) and she would become an important icon in Francoist postwar propaganda aimed at women, and Y is also the first letter of the word "yugo" (yoke)—part of the Falangist yoke and arrows symbol (*Comrades* 129). But what did it mean to be as feminine as possible? Who was the ideal Spanish woman in postwar Spain? This is a topic pertinent to this study that we will develop more fully in chapter one.

The ideal Spanish woman: gender as social construction and performance

Frances Lannon talks about what she calls "collective social identities" when she points out how, regardless of what time or place or what kind of society one is born into, it is impossible for anyone to escape a biological inheritance of a socially constructed identity—an identity that is pushed and pulled and influenced by any number of factors: race, religion, politics, class, and in the case of this study, gender. She says, "the social experience of men in any society in any period will be differentiated from that of women not only by biology but also by legal norms, social structures, and cultural conventions based on deeply rooted assumptions about what it means to be male or female" ("Gender and Change" 273). If gender is socially constructed by such powerfully defining values as religion or politics, what does it mean then to "push back" against the "legal norms, social structures, and cultural conventions" that constantly influence, mediate, and attempt to determine what it means to be male or female?

Martín Gaite describes how the fear of anarchy pervaded all national and international policy in the immediate post-Franco years and points out that such fear was directly tied to the domestic realm. She mentions the young housewives who "sabían desde niñas que no había males más temibles para la buena salud de la sociedad que los que se incubaban en un hogar desorganizado" (*Usos* 118). Part of the litmus test of a woman's femininity, she maintains, had to do with her ability to run an organized household as well as to organize the inner sanctum of her soul, that world of "los propios humores y descontentos" (*Usos* 118). A truly "womanly woman" (*una mujer muy mujer*) would be able to pull off both without a hitch—she would never complain, keep an orderly home, train her daughter to do the same, and thereby ensure that not just her family but the whole of society (to which she contributed a small but crucial part) was functioning smoothly. Daughters (as opposed to sons) were to inherit directly this "sabiduría

maternal" as they were ones who had to learn the delicate balancing act between Mary and Martha roles so that they might one day manage their households with the same aplomb as their mothers. "La mujer había de representar a la vez los papeles de Marta y de María, y la primera tenía que estar preparada a esfumarse, es decir, a quitarse la bata y los rizadores en cuanto sonasen los pasos del hombre por el pasillo. Era un equilibrio difícil" (Martín Gaite *Usos* 119).

In postwar Spain, Francoism projected a certain conservative construct of the 'ideal' Spanish woman via both the Church and the SF. This 'ideal' Spanish woman was considered the most important underpinning of social stability or stasis. But what Francoism could not control was the way in which different female constituencies would respond in different ways to the stabilization of the regime as their varying socio-economic and cultural experiences dictated. Graham points out that even within the most overt forms of these stabilization efforts (such as the educational and social services offered by the SF) there could always be found "the seeds of social/gender change." Anxiety about women's changing roles and identities was actually part of a larger network of cultural anxieties in the face of modernity or social change, as Graham defines it. The fact that women's roles and identities were changing so quickly, even before the war, gave rise to the belief (held by certain sectors of Spanish society) after the war that women were the cause of their own problems and therefore, were directly contributing to society's degenerating values. "As a result, a whole pathology of state legislation was written on women's bodies via repressive state legislation—in particular with regards to pronatalism" ("Gender and the State" 182-184). Birth rates had been declining for several decades in Spain, even before the advent of the Second Republic, but by 1939, war deaths and the problem of population decline became an obsession for the new regime. Declining birth rates were taken as indicators of the moral degeneracy of the Republic and women in the postwar era were tasked with preventing the

spread of such decadence (Nash "Pronatalism" 160-162). Women were constantly reminded of Franco's postwar demographic goal of forty million Spaniards (Morcillo 33).

Francoist pronatalist policies focused on women because of their key role in the family. If the patriarchal family was perceived as a microcosmic version of the state at large, then by reconstructing it Francoism, at least in theory, would be able to build up the 'new order' from an atomic level. The family was less threatening to the state than certain other aspects of civil society such as political parties and trade unions—threats which were annihilated by the war. By diffusing society with an image of the **'**ideal' woman as one who is pure, passive, and submissive—a "woman as mother for whom self-denial was the only road to real fulfillment," Francoism aimed to destroy women as socially independent beings, rendering them inseparable from the family (Graham "Gender and the State" 184). With the 1938 Labor Charter, women were "freed" from working upon marrying—marriage was made more financially enticing by such incentives as offering a dowry for getting married, monetary prizes for couples who married in their 20s and early 30s, and low interest loans to families producing up to four children (Nash "Pronatalism" 171). Men were rewarded for being the "jefe de familia" by being granted certain bonuses for having larger families, even being paid more on a sliding scale according to the number of children they had. These bonuses were generally not available for women, thereby reinforcing male authority within the family ("Pronatalism" 172).

The Franco regime's pronatalist policies were designed to boost the birth rate by providing various forms of state assistance to larger families (payment of school fees, special credit terms, and subsidies for transportation, for example) as population levels were equated with socio-economic and political strength. The policy of autarky employed by the regime required the largest labor production possible and to achieve that, the birth rate had to be raised.

As in other fascist states (namely Italy and Germany), abortion and use of contraception were rendered criminal acts. While autarky as a policy seeks to have the nation totally self-sufficient economically in terms of postwar reconstruction, in Spain autarky was primarily designed to protect the weak *latifundista* agrarian sector from any contact with the international economy. This kind of state intervention in the economy caused numerous stresses and strains which resulted in terrible conditions—a drop in wages, an enormous black market, the absence of foreign investment, a lack of raw materials, etc. As a result, people resorted to working two or three jobs with the working classes suffering considerably. Proletarian women often worked in whatever capacity they could, whether they were married or not—although since they were being pushed legally to the outer fringes of the labor market, they would frequently find work on the black market (we find women doing just this in Caso's novel *Un largo silencio* [2000]) or in other marginal activities. In this way, the severe poverty experienced by the working classes disrupted the regime's autarkic, pronatalist policies ("Gender and the State" 186). Geraldine Nichols sees an inverse correlation in Francoist "rewards" policies for larger families and the actual low birthrate in postwar Spain (283-84). Nash, too, admits that Francoist policies were not always successful at maintaining compliance among women with its attempts to indoctrinate them with the submissive mother model. She says, "there is no evidence to suggest that women unquestioningly accepted their biological destiny as mothers according to the norms of the regime, nor that they identified with the ideological implications of the policies of the new state" (*Defying Male Civilization* 185). In fact, birth rates steadily declined in the early years of Franco's regime and did not begin to increase until the mid-fifties ("Pronatalism" 173).

As has already been mentioned near the beginning of this introductory chapter, the legal ramifications of these policies included such legislature as a return to the 1889 Civil Code that

made married women legal minors, the March 1938 Labor Charter (Fuero de Trabajo) that 'freed' married women from the workplace and the factory, the Fundamental Law of July 1938 (Ley de Bases) that paid the working father a family subsidy so that, ostensibly, women would not be required to work in order to supplement the family income, and the March 1946 Family Subsidy Law (Ley de Ayuda Familiar) that denied husbands of working women their state paid family bonus (Graham "Gender and the State" 184). But in 1940s Spain, especially for the urban poor, the daily survival of the family frequently fell to women. Male family members were often dead, in prison, or forced into work battalions or labor service. Women had no other options but to work, whether legally or otherwise. (In Caso's novel, *Un largo silencio*, all the men in the family are either dead or gone and the women must find work—legally or otherwise—in order to survive.) Furthermore, wives and mothers of those who had been executed or imprisoned were denied any help from the state—under the Law of Political Responsibilities, they could not collect pensions; they often suffered the harshness of Francoist courts' penalties; or they were terrorized by repeated raids from Falangist squads (as we see happening repeatedly to the women in the 2001 film *Silencio roto***).** Among those jobs that would have earned them the most money was prostitution which, surprisingly enough considering the New State official puritanism, was not officially outlawed until 1956, when brothels were officially criminalized ("Gender and the State" 188-189). In Cañil's novel, *Si a los tres años no he vuelto* (discussed in more detail in chapter two), the protagonist ends up in a jail for prostitutes (of which there were many), as her civil marriage to a man who fought for the Republic in the war is not recognized as legitimate in postwar Spain. Graham also mentions the absolute desperation of women who formed relationships with men in the Falange or Franco's military or the black market—men who could help them survive in some way ("Gender and the State" 191). We see these types of relationships

play out on the big screen in 2007's *Las trece rosas* (where the communist girl who works on the trolley in Madrid in the opening scenes of the film has a Falangist boyfriend who does not intervene or even attempt to save her from certain death when he sees her arrested), and in 2006's *El laberinto del fauno* (where Ophelia's mother has married a high-ranking military man, though her father was a communist). Paula, the protagonist in the 2011 film *Ispansi*, also has a Nationalist brother whose military vocation offers her the umbrella of a life of wealth and comfort—a life she chooses to reject in favor of one with Communists and impoverished Spanish ex-pats in Russia. Inés, in the novel *Inés y la alegría*, makes a conscious choice to reject the attentions of her brother's military friend, Garrido—she says she has seen the women in Madrid who succumb to such beastly men in order to survive and she will not be that sort of woman, no matter the cost.

In chapter one of this study, we will look more closely at how gender norms are encoded by societies in general and, more specifically, how gender was socially determined in Franco's Spain. By using Lacan and his mirror stage of individual development, as well as several recently produced fictional novels and films, we will employ the metaphor of the mirror as representative of society's reflection of a social gender construction. We will examine various female protagonists who either exemplify an ideologically oppressed gender performance in Franco's Spain (usually engaged in for survival purposes), or manage to evade such a sociologically scripted performance and instead engage in a resistant gender manifestation of their own creation. In the film *Ispansi*, we find a protagonist who (by leaving and entering Spain) cleverly slides between these two poles of gender construction. We will pay close attention to the way fictional narratives push back against these encoded norms and will note the use of certain key terms along the way. What is Lacan's "false armor of identity" and what bearing does that

phrase have on our study of fictional representations of Franco's Spain? What did it mean to be "una mujer muy mujer" (a womanly woman) in the early postwar years? What did Martín Gaite mean by her use of the term "espejos negativos"? What is "true Catholic womanhood" as defined by Morcillo, disseminated by the Sección Femenina, and reflected in recent novels and films? In this first chapter, we will investigate these terms and their implications for women struggling to survive the immediate postwar era in such novels as Ángeles Caso's *Un largo silencio* (2000) and Almudena Grandes's *Inés y la alegría* (2010). We also look at these issues in light of such recent films as *Ispansi* (*Españoles*) (2011), *Los girasoles ciegos* (2008), *El laberinto del fauno* (2006), and *La lengua de las mariposas* (1999).

Chapter two focuses on women in postwar prisons and explores the ways Franco's gendered body politic came to be inscribed on the text of the physically imprisoned body. By employing the works of Butler and Foucault who write about the body as text and how societal norms are typically encoded and often violently inscribed onto that text, this chapter highlights the fashion in which Francoist policy deemed certain bodies invalid and unrecognizable as persons. Butler's work on gender performativity is crucial here as we probe the way more recent novels and films feature female protagonists in postwar Spanish prisons who engage in distinctly gendered performances, sometimes conforming to the norms placed upon them, but more often responding in ways that demonstrate their resistance to such norms. Also key to this chapter's themes is Foucault's work on the prison systems of the modern state and how such systems utilize a complex relationship between observation, knowledge, and power in their efforts to produce "docile bodies" from those officially identified as aberrations to the norms.

Ventas—perhaps the most infamous prison for women in Madrid in the early postwar years, appears repeatedly in the novels and films discussed here. Originally designed to hold around

500 women, its population would eventually swell to around 14,000. It is central to the action in Cañil's novel, *Si a los tres años no he vuelto* (2011), in Chacón's novel *La voz dormida* (2002) and the 2011 film version, as well as Ferrero's novel *Las trece rosas* (2003) and the film version (2007). As is depicted in Cañil's novel, the conditions for nursing mothers in prisons were particularly horrendous—the women often did not have access to adequate bathing and water to wash themselves and their children, and so fought a daily battle again filth, rats, and disease. Preston quotes Paz Azati (a Valencian communist) as describing the situation at Ventas in this way: "every day on the floor of the Ventas infirmary you would see the corpses of fifteen to twenty children dead due to meningitis" (*Spanish Holocaust* 513). Due to the complete lack of sanitation, nutritional support, and health care, the mothers often were unable to produce enough milk to nurse their babies and as a result, the infants frequently died of starvation (*Spanish Holocaust* 204). But even within such an oppressive gender-specific performance demanded of the imprisoned, there can still be found ways to protest and resist. Some of the forms of resistance while in prison exemplified in the fictional narratives reviewed here in chapter two include using clothing, singing, silence, spoken and written discourses (in the form of subversive confession), and even sewing—all these activities can and will take on agentic properties.

In chapter three, we turn our attention to the way more recent novels and films treat women and their relationships with the *maquis* (resistance fighters who lived mainly in the mountainous, remote regions of the north of Spain, crossing and re-crossing the French border, for years after the war). Maroto Camino's definitive work on films featuring the *maquis* notes how in earlier films, especially those produced during Franco's regime, women are depicted only as *enlaces* (links)—they are usually wives, mothers, sisters, or lovers and do not normally express political or sociological ideals of their own. This chapter draws attention to the fact that more stories are

now being written and produced featuring women as co-protagonists with the *maquis* whom they strive to aid and protect, granting to women certain agentic properties of their own and drawing them as active, vital participants in the resistance movement. By employing the concepts of dispossession, spectrality, and foreignness as articulated by such theorists as Butler and Kristeva, we will explore how postwar women found ways to participate in acts of "resilience, courage, struggle, and confrontation" (Butler) all the while co-inhabiting the marginalized state into which the *maquis* were forced, as they were labeled criminals in Francoist rhetoric, relentlessly deemed non-Spanish, foreign elements. In this chapter we look at such films as *Silencio roto* (2001) and *El laberinto del fauno* (2006) and note the way the female protagonists who are associated with the *maquis* exercise a great deal of individual agency. Lucía in *Silencio roto* enters and leaves town at will, even while engaging in a romantic liaison with a *maquis*. She assists the *maquis* by transporting messages among them and at one point, even threatens to kill her nationalist uncle who continually denounces his local friends and neighbors to the Civil Guard. She (and the *maquis* she helps) exist along lines of what Bulter has labeled a state of precarity—whereby people are disowned and abjected by the normalizing powers of the state—where they are often exposed to violence, poverty, and death, due to the manner in which these excluding powers of the state label them as socially disposable. Butler explores the way dispossessed people who are forced to occupy a state of precarity still manage to function with a certain degree of agency. Coupled with the notion of precarity, Butler also discusses the concept of what she calls spectrality—how bodies are enclosed and exposed in a cycle of presences and absences, especially at checkpoints along borders between countries. The *maquis* and the women who worked alongside them in early postwar Spain could also be said to inhabit a state of spectrality, they are there but not there at the same time. In the 2006 film, *El laberinto del fauno*, the fascist

Captain Vidal constantly hunts for evidence of a band of *maquis*, hiding in the hills near the remote mountain outpost to which he has been stationed. "Los del monte" (as the child protagonist, Ofelia, calls them) leave spectral traces of their bodily presence—a smoking campfire, a page of reading material, a vial of medicine. The female protagonist, the housekeeper and sister to one of the *maquis*, Mercedes, is also seen but not seen. She is the keeper of the keys to Vidal's household (both literally and figuratively), she has the power to smuggle food and medicine to the *maquis*, she enables the *maquis* to facilitate an attack on the mill, and when her position as a mole is finally discovered by Vidal, she says to him that it was her female gender that rendered her invisible to him. This chapter concludes with a discussion of Kristeva's abject and the related notion of internal foreignness—including such novels as Almudena Grandes's *Inés y la alegría* (2010) and Giménez Bartlett's *Donde nadie te encuentre* (2011). Kristeva speaks of how there is something of the foreigner within ourselves, describing how we wander forever in search of the homeland that exists only in our dreams. In Grandes's novel, Inés and her *maquis*-husband, Galán, find in each other that ephemeral homeland of their dreams—the lost Republican Spain, living out nearly their entire lives in French exile, creating their own Spain and their own sense of Spanish-ness out of their dispossessed state. Finally, in the character La Pastora from Giménez Bartlett's novel (who is based on historical accounts of one of the last of the *maquis* from the 1950s), we find a unique metaphor for the *maquis* and all those connected to them—La Pastora's gendered identity is constantly in flux as she exists all her life in a dispossessed state of precarious spectrality—starting from the time she is rejected by her family when very young and sent to care for animals in the fields, and ending with her association with a renegade *maquis* who convinces her to turn to a life of banditry by deserting the group of *maquis* that had previously taken her in and accepted her as one of their own.

Kristeva reminds us that the foreigner has no true self—he has masks and false selves at his disposal but he can never live in a state of complete authenticity. The same could certainly be said of the *maquis* and the women who resisted with them.

In the fourth and final chapter of this work, we turn to a study of several novels and films that highlight the struggles in the relationships between mothers and daughters, some from the immediate postwar era and others found in more modern settings. In all of the works explored in this chapter (both filmic and novel forms), we find examples of daughters who reject their mothers' notions of "true Catholic womanhood" as defined by Francoist rhetoric and attempt to forge their own futures in pursuit of their new, individualized versions of gendered identity. The performative nature of gender is still important here as we see in the way women can choose to perform certain versions of femininity as their social situations dictate. Caso's novel, *Un largo silencio,* tells the story of a family comprised entirely of women—the men have all either died, left, or been left (by the women). The left-wing women of this family struggle to survive in Franco's Spain—their version of femininity is unacceptable and they are harassed on the streets, ostracized by old right-wing associations, and denied work based on this complete societal rejection of their identity as women. They struggle to decide what sort of identity legacy they will hand down to the youngest member of their clan. Legacy and identity are also important in the transmission of memory and identity from mother to daughter in Chacón's novel, *La voz dormida*. In spite of death and generational separation, the mother-daughter bond remains strong in this novel especially when compared to Riera's extremely frustrated mother-daughter legacy in the 2006 novel *La mitad del alma*. Returning one final time to Lacan's mirror, and coupling with it Hirsch's study of family photographs, this chapter explores the nature of a daughter's search for a mother's identity and highlights the elusive, performative nature of feminine

identity. How does a young girl either look to or look away from her mother's construction of a gendered existence in her need to construct her own? Time and again, especially in the films examined in this chapter (such as *El laberinto del fauno*), we will find young girls who turn away from their mothers' examples, and either construct their own gendered identity as they see fit, or simply engage in the complete opposite performance of femininity than the one proffered them by their mothers. This chapter ends by engaging Kristeva's notion of the abject and using it to discover how within tales of the motherless, orphans, and exile, there is still opportunity for discussion on the performative quality of gender to surface, especially in a film such as *Ispansi*.

Throughout this work, we will constantly engage with the interplay of fiction and history. In recent years, many scholars have commented on the verifiable, "reality-bearing component" of both history and fiction, especially in light of the fact that both forms of writing frequently include chronicles, photographs, and other historical artifacts. We are frequently cautioned not to expect to find a single truth emerging from the conclusion of narration, but instead to be alert to multiple, alternate truths which might come to light during the narrative process (Herzberger, *Narrating the Past* 4-5). Following Hayden White, E.L. Doctorow even goes so far as to affirm that "there's no more fiction or nonfiction, there's only narrative" (qtd in Herzberger, *Narrating the Past* 5). Within the context of Spanish history, Herzberger reminds us that women have "traditionally appeared only fleetingly" in both the pages of historiography as well as those of fiction. However, with the conclusion of the Franco era and the advent of Spain's process of national redefinition and modernization, women narrators and writers begin to appear more frequently in narratives concerning the recent past ("Postwar Historical Fiction" 108). Maroto Camino affirms that films and novels have the power to "contribute actively to not only historical interpretation but also…to social construction" and they can "make present what is

(apparently) forgotten and can contribute to political reconciliation or to the reconstruction of a sense of individual or collective identity that may have been marginalized or obliterated" (40-41). What this study aims to do, by filtering our discussion of gender through the dual optic of social construction and performance, is to allow us as a modern audience to bear witness to these alternate truths about Spanish women's postwar agency and resistance that may have been present, that were present, but were either ignored or left unrecorded by those seeking to create an inviolable gendered life script for the National Catholic woman.

Chapter One: Mirror, mirror on the wall: Framing the Gendered Subject in Postwar Spain

In her book *Gender in the Mirror*, Diana Meyers employs the term "cultural noise pollution" to describe the way a person's social habitat seeks to encode gender norms within the individual's psyche. She speaks of how women are frequently barraged with a system of imagery reflected to them in mirrors manufactured by patriarchal societies and stresses that women, in order to form themselves as individuals, "must shatter the silvered glass of entrenched gender imagery and create their own self-imagery" (Preface). Meyers's work argues that gender, as a dimension of identity, is both internalized and individualized, and that women are capable of writing their own self-narratives by exercising various agentic skills which they have at their disposal (4-5). She discusses feminist voice theory and how women manage to find their own voices, in spite of the widespread tendency to internalize oppression. The problem she denotes "voice authentication" involves the process of distinguishing between "a woman's ideologically oppressed voice and her emancipated voice" (17-18).

In this chapter, we will attempt to identify female protagonists who exemplify both of these positions, and a few who manage to slide in and out between the two dimensions in a cleverly orchestrated gendered performance. We will highlight the ones who struggle to exercise their agentic skills and shatter the mirrored images constructed for them in the postwar society of Franco's Spain, or conversely, choose to conform to the gendered identity norms presented to them in the Francoist mirror of their social environment. The female protagonists of Ángeles Caso's novel, *Un largo silencio* (2000), and Almudena Grandes's novel, *Inés y la alegría* (2010), present examples of both types of women. In not only these novels but also in the films *Ispansi*

(2011), *Los girasoles ciegos* (2008), *El laberinto del fauno* (2006), and *La lengua de las mariposas* (1999), we find examples of both these distinct categories as well as women whose gendered identities morph, adapt, or are overwhelmed to the point of annihilation by the social circumstances in which they find themselves. Using theorists such as Meyers, Lacan, and others, as well as historical anecdotes unearthed by historians such as Morcillo and personally expressed by women such as novelist Martín Gaite who experienced adolescence in the postwar decades of the 1940s and 1950s, we will confront all sorts of gendered imagery and widely disseminated messages as expressed by Franco's *Sección Femenina* and learn how women responded to these images. We will then use that information to inform our study of the fictional characters who allow us to revisit the site of these socially and politically produced policies and see what alternate individualized gendered identities might have been accessible for women, even under the most difficult of circumstances.

The subject and the self

Lacan uses the term "imaginary" to refer to the state in which we lack any defined center of self—what notion of self we do have passes into objects and objects, in turn, pass into it, in what seems to be a closed exchange. It is in this "mirror stage" that we first begin to develop an integrated self-image, as we find in the mirror what we perceive as a unified, whole image. According to Lacan, however, what we see in the mirror is not unified or whole, but is only an image, an object. There is a blurring of subject and object that begins to occur as the image in the mirror both is, and is not, ourselves. Lacan stresses that we "misrecognize" ourselves in the mirror image, as we continue to make imaginary identifications with objects and in this narcissistic way, "we bolster up a fictive sense of unitary selfhood by finding something in the world with which we can identify" (Eagleton 164-165).

In this imaginary phase, there are really no more than two terms, the child itself and the other body, usually the mother representing external reality. When the father, who represents what Lacan refers to as the Law, enters the scene, the child is forced to recognize that it is a part of a larger social network, where the role it must play is predetermined by the social practices into which it has been born. The presence of the father teaches the child that its place in the family is defined by difference, exclusion, and absence. In order to obtain identity as a subject, it must relinquish its bonds to the mother's body. The move from the imaginary to the symbolic order occurs during a difficult process of negotiating the sea of differences and similarities to other subjects surrounding us—we formulate a sense of self by encountering and engaging with the symbolic order: this predetermined structure of social and sexual roles of which society at large is comprised (Eagleton 166-167). When we enter the symbolic order, we enter into language itself which was always already in place, pre-existing us, ready to receive us as parents whom we can never fully dominate or control (Eagleton 174). Judith Butler (whose work on gender is more closely examined in the next chapter) insists that the symbolic itself is comprised of nothing more than social practices (*Undoing Gender* 44).

Althusser, in his "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," from his book *Lenin and Philosophy* (1971), questions the way in which human subjects come to submit themselves to the dominant ideologies of their societies. For Althusser, individuals lack essential unity as they are the product of various social determinants. However, given that as human beings we see ourselves as free, autonomous individuals, Althusser insists that what allows us to feel this way is ideology. Eagleton points out how even though we do not normally feel we are nothing more than functions of a social structure which does not depend upon our presence to exist, rather "it is as though society were not just an impersonal structure to me, but a subject which addresses me

personally—which recognizes me, tells me that I am valued, and so makes me by that very act of recognition into a free, autonomous subject" (172). For Althusser, ideology is the set of beliefs and practices that help us feel centered—in the way that we are centered on the world and we feel as though it is, not completely, but at least in large part, centered on us (Eagleton 171-172).

Eagleton highlights the way Althusser rethinks the concept of ideology in Lacanian terms. The relationship of the individual subject to society as a whole for Althusser is comparable to that of the child and his reflection in the mirror for Lacan. In both instances, as human subjects we are presented with an image of unified selfhood with which we identify and which reflects back to us an idealized image of our situation, and hence misrecognition must necessarily occur. Eagleton reminds us that "the child is not actually as integrated as its image in the mirror suggests; I am not actually the coherent, autonomous, self-generating subject that I know myself to be in the ideological sphere, but the 'decentered' function of *several social determinants*. Duly enthralled by the image of myself I receive, I subject myself to it; and it is through this 'subjection' that I become a subject" (173; emphasis mine). These "social determinants" that Eagleton references are what we will now turn our attention to as we probe the ways in which Francoist policies and organizations sought to "socially determine" the role of women, especially in the immediate postwar era.

Una mujer muy mujer

In her work *True Catholic Womanhood* (hereafter referenced as TCW), Aurora Morcillo maintains that as Franco's regime and the Catholic Church viewed gender, "gender difference constituted the very essence of selfhood; it provided stability and social order to the nation and clarity of purpose to the individual. In Franco's Spain, gender difference was central to the

problem of government. The state organized political and social relations by using gender as a signifying element of normalization" (6). Martín Gaite gathers quotes from popular texts of her adolescence in the late 1940s and early 1950s to further underscore how widely disseminated was the notion that the postwar Spanish woman was Catholic, reserved, modest, not tempted by any foreign fads, a womanly woman… "a finales de la década de los cuarenta, España seguía teniendo fama de dar *mujeres 'muy mujeres'*" (*Usos* 27; emphasis mine).

Morcillo goes on to show how "true Catholic womanhood" was far from being a monolithic entity. She discusses several right-wing women's organizations such as the *Sección Femenina* (hereafter referred to as the SF), the Teresian Institute, the Catholic Student Youth Section, and the Association of Spanish University Women, to show how different groups defined and promoted their own ideals of Spanish femininity (6). For the purposes of my study, I will mention some of the general common attributes of all these organizations (with special attention reserved for the SF, as that is the one organization referenced time and again in the novels examined here) in order to show how the general notions of Catholic femininity under Franco permeated postwar society and still find their way into more recently produced fictional narratives.

Morcillo points out how the "Francoist recovery of tradition was grounded in a National-Catholic discourse that included gender as an essential element in defining the new state's concept of nationhood" (TCW 27). To demonstrate how gender ideology was central, from the very moment of its inception, to Franco's plan for state formation and maintenance of his supreme authority over the state, Morcillo highlights the way gender and social relations came together in the family—the place where women, as mothers, "represented an essential element in the reconstruction of the fatherland" (TCW 31). Francoism promoted key elements of what Nash

calls an "ideology of domesticity" which had never completely disappeared from Spanish culture, even during the Republic and war years. This ideology was reinforced by early twentieth century medical gender discourse that deemed women biologically different from men due to their ability to bear children. This medical discourse disguised and strengthened cultural norms by labeling them scientific facts: "the individual subject was sexed and consequently predetermined as a person"—therefore, motherhood was a woman's inescapable, biological destiny (Nash "Un/Contested" 33, 35). From the late nineteenth and into the early twentieth century, the dominant discourse on women concerned the development and maintenance of "la perfecta casada" (the perfect married lady, from the sixteenth century) and the "ángel del hogar" (the angel of the hearth, from the nineteenth century). The primary gender role for women was that of a self-effacing, submissive, nurturer of the home and family. This kind of gender discourse and the cultural values it represented were deeply internalized by many women (*Defying* 10-12).

In order to remedy Spain's fragmented condition after the war, the Francoist regime looked to Spain's imperial past and the sixteenth-century ideals of Spanish Catholicism which sought to wed the concept of a military, Catholic monarchy to the national identity (Morcillo TCW 28). As has already been mentioned in the introduction, the Fuero de los Españoles (a preamble to the Spanish charter) declared the state the guardian of the Catholic doctrine, the only religion officially sanctioned to be practiced in public. In this document, the family was declared the foundation of society, held together by the unbreakable bond of marriage, which meant that state-enforced social relations were perfectly in step with Catholic teachings (TCW 31-32). The regime made a concerted effort to repopularize certain sixteenth-century bastions of female piety that could be found in historical figures such as Santa Teresa de Jesús or the Virgen del Pilar.

Quoting from early modern treatises on how women should behave and be educated—such as the ones written by Fray Luis de León (*La perfecta casada*, 1583) and Juan Luis Vives (*La instrucción de la mujer cristiana*, 1523)—became standard practice. The official discourse on women was always grounded in official Catholic discourse as prescribed in Pope Pius XI's encyclicals of 1929 and 1930. And the SF was tasked with boiling all these influential sources down into a steady diet of "Christian feminism" which could be easily digested and assimilated by the general female populace (Morcillo TCW 36-37).

Vives did not begrudge women the opportunity to learn and be educated but he stipulated that a woman's instructional focus should center on a study of virtue and how to maintain it. A woman's character in life should be formed by acquiring the ability to recognize and separate wisdom from lust (Morcillo TCW 38). *Lujuria* (lust) is big problem when it comes between men and women, as seen in the narratives under discussion here, as it is repeatedly attributed to originating with women. In the film *Los girasoles ciegos* (examined in more detail later in this chapter) the young deacon says to his confessor that *lujuria* is what he is struggling with in regards to the mother of one of his young pupils. He never considers that the feelings of lust may be originating from his own desires but constantly places their source of origin on the woman. Of course, the notion of the inherent culpability of the woman (originating with Eve's sin) can be traced throughout ecclesiastical and secular literature for centuries. Gallego Méndez writes about how "la Iglesia consideró imprescindible la adecuada formación de las mujeres, para así controlar el peligro que acecha siempre a través de ellas…Tanto si la acción de Eva se considera un pecado sexual como si se considera un pecado de rebelión. Ambos, condenables hasta el fin de los siglos" (139).

Likewise, in the novel *Inés y la alegría,* Inés has her own run-in with the damage *lujuria* can inflict. Her virtue is called into question by the military friend (Garrido) of her Nationalist brother during the time she is forced to live with her brother. This man also places the burden of the lust he experiences every time he sees her squarely on Inés. Because he feels it, its origin must lie with her. Asking her to take a walk with him away from her brother's house one day he professes prior knowledge of her particular brand of femininity: "me gustan otro tipo de mujeres. Las mujeres malas….En la guerra, por ejemplo, pensaba mucho en las chicas como tú… pensaba… los de enfrente las tienen a ellas, mujeres libres, ¿no?, sin novios, sin maridos, que sólo se deben a la revolución, a su partido… al pensar en vosotras, me ponía… ¡Uf! Por eso, cada vez que te veo me imagino lo bien que te lo pasarías cuando ibas desnuda debajo del mono" (Grandes 197). He cites the infamous stereotype of the militia women serving in the trenches (which Inés never did) who allegedly went naked under the *mono azul*.

Garrido goes on to describe the typical brand of femininity espoused by the Nationalist women—in a way that indicates his boredom, even disgust with them: "En nuestra zona, las chicas iban a misa, rezaban el Rosario, tejían jerséis y escribían cartitas ñoñas a los soldados, pero vosotras no, vosotras no perdíais el tiempo en esas tonterías… Vosotras erais de todos, de la causa, para eso habíais superado la superstición del matrimonio, el prejuicio de la decencia, y estabais todo el día calientes, porque había que recompensar a los héroes del pueblo, tenerlos contentos, ¿no?" (Grandes 197-198). Garrido makes a comparison between "las nuestras" and "las suyas—las rojas." He stands in direct opposition to what his society tells him he should want in a "true Catholic woman," as Inés is the total opposite of that and he is consumed by his lust for her.

And when she continues to resist his advances, he reminds her that his is the side which has won the war: "Deberías portarte mejor conmigo, Inés, porque yo he ganado la guerra, no sé si te acuerdas" (Grandes 198). The implication is that since his side won the war, his version of Inés's gendered identity is the one that should stand. He (and his ilk) should decide how her role in life as a woman plays out, now and in the future. She knows that being a communist-sympathizing sister of a high-ranking Falangist brother is a novelty in the early years of Franco's New Spain—she describes how she feels like a circus sideshow when visitors come to her brother's house. She says her brother's friends who visited were "invitados que me miraban con mucha atención al principio, que eran amables conmigo por pura curiosidad, y se me acercaban como se habrían acercado a un papagayo multicolor o a una planta carnívora, un ser incomprensible, atractivo de puro exótico… fui la hermana roja del delegado de Falange, una atracción turística, la imberbe mujer barbuda de la temporada" (Grandes 192). She stands out as an unusual woman, not for how she looks or dresses, but simply for what people know about her past: that she was isolated from her family and left in Madrid alone in the family home when the war broke out, that she held Socorro Rojo meetings in her home, that as a member of the upper class, she surprisingly chose a boyfriend from the working class—a poor railroad worker—who later denounced her and got her sent to the Ventas prison when he was himself arrested.

In the immediate postwar era, "a woman's body and appearance became objectified as the paramount proof of her modesty" (Morcillo TCW 39). Women were encouraged to avoid ornamentation, not wear make-up, and strive to present themselves as they really were, both to their husbands at home, as well to the outside world, in order to achieve the highest form of femininity. Gallego Méndez describes how the publications of the SF often gave specific mandates to women regarding clothing and modesty. She says these circulars were sent out

"dando instrucciones precisas sobre largo de faldas, escotes, bañadores…Se prohibía tajantemente la existencia de duchas sin puertas o cortinas, así como las fotografías en los campeonatos deportivos" (144). Esther Tusquets describes how girls were not encouraged to participate in athletic competitions during her youth of the 1940s and 1950s because an athletic girl was not womanly. She recalls how in international athletic competitions of her day, the few Spanish women that did participate "habían tenido un éxito enorme al desfilar el día de clausura por la pista con zapatos de tacón y el cabello crepado; las habían vitoreado más que a nadie, ¡no como a aquellas horribles campeonas del Este, que acaparaban todas las copas y medallas pero parecían hombres! Y es que no había en el mundo mujeres más guapas ni, sobre todo, más femeninas que las nuestras" (106). In the next chapter, we will devote even more attention to the body and how it was considered the receptacle of a woman's virtue under Francoist social and political thought (a concept which was, of course, well cemented within the doctrines of Catholicism), as well as what happened to that body when it was judged immoral and aberrant. For now, we will focus on how in the writings of both Fray Luis de León and Juan Vives, "the identity of a woman emanated from the objectification of her body" (Morcillo 40). A woman could only achieve Christian perfection through either maintaining her virginity, or consecrating herself in motherhood after marriage. According to these two writers, a woman's struggle against her own inherent evil nature could only be triumphed over via suffering: "suffering for God, the fatherland, their husbands, and their children" (Morcillo 40). Fray Luis de León wrote that the married woman's duty in life consisted of industriousness and abnegation. These were the virtues most required during the early years of autarchy in the 1940s and even with the advent of consumerism in the 1950s, the thrifty housewife was still encouraged to be obedient and avoid extravagances in her homemaking (Morcillo TCW 39).

The suffering mother/abnegation

Martín Gaite talks about the "cult of the mother" (clearly tied to the cult of the Virgin Mary) when she describes postwar courting rituals and how strong a mother's influence was over a son who was in the process of choosing a wife, and how he might never escape her manipulative influence during his whole life. "La influencia de la madre… nunca era directa sino solapada, pero en cualquier caso constituía un chantaje sentimental" (*Usos amorosos* 108). In Cañil's novel, *Si a los tres años no he vuelto* (discussed in more detail in chapter two), the main character, Jimena, has a vicious mother-in-law who resents her for marrying her son. The mother-in-law views Jimena as an inherently evil temptress who has ensnared her right-wing, upper-class son with her immoral Communist poison. Jimena, a girl from a poor, rural background, was not politically active before the war and cannot understand the deep-seated hatred her husband's mother has for her—a hatred so intense that she will denounce Jimena and have her thrown in prison for being a prostitute (on the basis that her son's marriage to Jimena was a civil service only). Paula's mother in the film *Ispansi* is also extremely manipulative—constantly playing the role of the martyr as she slowly turns her back on her daughter, allowing her husband the final word in his decision to declare their daughter dead to the family. Even when Paula returns from Russia years later, the mother's senility and unresponsive state echoes her attitude and words from years earlier when she read the farewell note Paula wrote on the occasion of her exodus from Spain with Republican orphans, among whom is her illegitimate son. Martín Gaite, citing a popular religious text of the time, explains how the cult of the mother elevated mothers to a martyr-like position, as the true mothers of New Spain denied themselves all worldly pleasure to revel in their afflictions as martyrs: "Se llega a la maternidad por el dolor como se llega a la gloria por la renunciación… Maternidad es continuo martirio. Martirio

creador, perpetuador, que comienza con la primera sonrisa del hijo y sólo finiquita cuando los ojos inmensos de la madre se cierran para siempre… *Sólo es mujer perfecta la que sabe formarse para ser madre… El gozo de ser madre por el dolor y el sacrificio es tarea inexcusablemente femenina*" (*Usos amorosos* 107-108; emphasis mine). Both Jimena's mother-in-law and Paula's mother paint themselves as having suffered greatly as a result of the decisions their children make. To suffer as a self-sacrificing, self-denying mother in postwar Spain is the ultimate outward sign of perfect, true femininity.

Through the "discourse of abnegation" women were expected to fulfill their duty to the fatherland by their self-sacrificing good works. A constant sense of patriotic duty in a woman's role in society pervades these novels and films as they strive to represent what life was like for women in immediate postwar Spain. In the opening scenes of the 2008 film *Los girasoles ciegos*, a neighbor woman knocks on Elena's door at an unexpected time when her husband is out of his hiding place. Elena makes up the excuse that she has to cut the conversation short because it is time to take her son to school. The neighbor, who is dressed all in black, with her black lace mantilla covering her head, says she is on her way to mass and encourages Elena to attend to her son because "la obligación es lo primero." What a woman should do and be is far superior to who she is or what her individual desires for self-expression may be. Indeed, in this neighbor's mind, in a system of "true Catholic womanhood," duty reigns supreme and completely defines oneself—there is no room for manifestation of personal identity.

Sección Femenina

As has already been established in the introduction, another way to prove oneself as a self-sacrificing daughter of the fatherland was to complete one's mandatory six months of social

service work with the Sección Femenina. The SF, "as institutionalized by the decree of 1939, became the mediator between the state and Spanish women" and so enabled women to cultivate their "Catholic feminine virtues" (TCW 32). As Martín Gaite points out, the only woman making public speeches in 1940s Spain was Pilar Primo de Rivera, sister to José Antonio, revered founder of the Falange (*Usos* 53). The key to the success of the SF was its inherent antifeminism—the only way it could meet with Franco's approval (*Usos* 57). Pilar was the mediator between Spanish women and the state, even after the Falange fell out of favor with the regime. Through her skillful guidance the SF managed to survive until 1977 (Morcillo TCW 101). From 1940 to 1950, Morcillo states that over 600,000 women joined the SF, with over one million completing the mandatory social service (TCW 45). A woman was required to complete six months of Social Service (and present an official certificate proving she had done so) in order to apply for public jobs, obtain a passport, or enroll in a university (TCW 32-33).

Martín Gaite describes the dreaded mandatory six months (around 500 hours) of social service that any childless widow or unmarried woman under the age of 35 had to perform before she could pursue higher degrees or enter the work force. She says, "a algunas nos había dado tiempo a terminar una carrera y soñábamos con ejercerla, a despecho del mes de formación teórica, los dos de asistencia de escuelas del hogar y los tres de prestación que se podían cumplir en comedor infantil, taller o cocina. Además de gimnasia y un poco de baloncesto, se había aprendido, haciendo empanadillas de escabeche y la canastilla del bebé, que para la mujer la tierra es la familia" (*Usos amorosos* 62-63). Martín Gaite, who grew up in the 1940s and 1950s, recognizes that even though young women may have made future plans and longed to begin practicing their careers, they were forced to endure this parenthesis in their lives, while they may have successfully petitioned for delays in fulfilling it while finishing training for careers.

As we also mentioned in the introduction, the Civil Code of 1889 was reestablished in 1938. This code did not allow a woman to live outside her parents' house unless she married or entered a convent. Even when married, she was legally considered a minor, with no custodial rights over her children or economic independence for herself. Husbands were the legal representative of their wives—they were administrators of all goods commonly owned by the couple. Women needed the permission of their husbands to execute any kind of business: lawsuits, sales and purchases of property and goods (other than those small purchases necessary for family use or consumption), or the running of any kind of business or shopkeeping, even if she had worked in commerce prior to her marriage (Nash *Defying* 15-16). These restrictions would persist until the 1950s and 1960s when a certain amount of them were lifted. Even then, Pilar Primo de Rivera would sanction the changes only with the admonition that educated and working women remember that they would never be equal with men—that their activities outside the home should only be seen as an extension of her domestic duties; that is, her work was to supplement that of her husband and her education was to make her a better wife and mother. Abnegation of any selfish desires was still imperative (Morcillo TCW 67-69). An editorial in the February 1938 issue of *Azul* (the magazine published by the SF) reads in part: "The good National-Syndicalist state rests on the family. It will be strong if the woman at home is healthy, fecund, hard-working and happy, with the windows of her home and soul open to the sweet imperial dawn that the son of the Falange is bringing us" (Fraser 309).

The way a woman treated her husband was an important sign of her femininity. A proper wife would know how to make her husband forget the trials of his manly life and would be able to soothe his irritability and anger, always keeping him comfortable in the delights of a smoothly run home (*Usos* 120). Esther Tusquets, born at the start of the civil war, recalls in detail her

memories of what life was like in the immediate postwar era. She describes the three years of home economics curriculum she pursued in secondary school along with other girls—the "masculine" subjects of mathematics, Greek, and Latin were reserved only for the boys. She recounts how she and her female friends were taught

> cómo alimentar al bebé, cambiarle los pañales, conseguir que durmiera,…clases de cocina…clases de manejo de la casa—ventilarla, decorar el cuarto de los niños, disponer los armarios—y del marido, al que había que contentar a toda costa y utilizando siempre la mano izquierda, porque lo nuestro era reinar desde las sombras…Evitar las discusiones, nunca oponérnosle de frente…Se insistía muchísimo en que había que ganárselo por el estómago…y en que, cuando llegaba a casa, debíamos llevarle las zapatillas. El detalle de las zapatillas era una auténtica obsesión (107-108).

The key to a successful society was for men to lead and protect and for women to submit and sacrifice. Martín Gaite quotes one of Pilar's speeches: "Tenemos que tener detrás de nosotras toda la fuerza y decisión del hombre para sentirnos más seguras, y a cambio de esto nosotras le ofreceremos la abnegación de nuestros servicios y el no ser nunca motivo de discordia… éste es el papel de la mujer en la vida. El armonizar voluntades y el dejarse guiar por la voluntad más fuerte y la sabiduría del hombre" (*Usos* 58).

In the 2006 film *El laberinto del fauno*, we find a perfect example of this aspect of "true Catholic womanhood" in the mother character, Carmen. Early in the film, she tells her daughter, Ofelia, how hard her stepfather (Captain Vidal) is working to provide for them and how his exterior gruffness should not be mistaken for disdain or lack of love as he has and will continue to provide for and protect them. In the opening scenes of the film, Ofelia and Carmen are travelling to a remote mill outpost where Captain Vidal, as a high-ranking military officer in Franco's New Spain, has been assigned the task of ridding the hills of the resistance fighters hiding out there. While they are still in the car, Carmen urges Ofelia to call Captain Vidal

"father" when she sees him saying, "Es sólo una palabra, Ofelia." She seems to sense that Ofelia rejects this version of the femininity she finds reflected to her in the mirror of her mother's making, and throughout the film urges Ofelia to change, to submit in order to survive, as she herself has had to do. At one point Carmen scolds Ofelia severely for continuing to believe in fairy tales and talk about the faun and the magical adventures she has lately experienced. She insists that there is no such thing as magic and that Ofelia must learn for herself what a cruel place the world is. "¡Tienes que escuchar a tu padre," Carmen insists, "tienes que cambiar!" We see many instances where Carmen herself attempts to act in a docile, subservient manner becoming all true Catholic women: when she takes the wheelchair Vidal offers her, even though she does not need it; when she dresses carefully for the dinner party Vidal throws for the rich and powerful members of the community; and, as just mentioned, when she encouraged Ofelia to do all she can not to disappoint her "father."

This self-effacing quality of a woman's life in comparison to that of a man is what stands out not only in Martín Gaite's descriptions of life for women in the immediate postwar era, but also in many of the films and novels discussed here. A proper woman must erase her own needs, her own identity, her own self in this world where men and their prerogatives come first. Carmen in *El laberinto del fauno* is self-effaced to the point of death as she dies in childbirth bringing forth a son for New Spain. The mother in *Ispansi* is self-effaced by her own dementia as she has been instructed by her husband to forget that they have a daughter (perhaps a metaphor for the long years of forgetting following the war).

Martín Gaite quotes a *New York Post* correspondent in Madrid in the 1940s so as to highlight the position of women in Spain as seen by an outsider to the culture. The report reads in part,

> La posición de la mujer española está hoy como en la Edad Media. Franco le arrebató los derechos civiles y la mujer española no puede poseer propiedades, ni incluso, cuando muere el marido, heredarle, ya que la herencia pasa a los hijos varones o al pariente varón más próximo. No puede frecuentar los sitios públicos en compañía de un hombre, si no es su marido, y después cuando está casada, el marido la saca raramente del hogar. Tampoco puede tener empleos públicos, y aunque no sé si existe alguna ley contra ello, yo todavía no he visto a ninguna mujer en España conduciendo automóviles. (*Usos amorosos* 30)

We see Inés in Grandes's novel *Inés y la alegría* undergoing such unrelenting male vigilance at the hands of her high-ranking Nationalist brother, who first moves her from the Ventas prison in Madrid (a prison that will figure largely for the female characters discussed in the next chapter) to a convent (from which she tries to escape via suicide), and then, after a hospital stay, finally to his home where he keeps her practically under house arrest (she is not allowed any contact with friends outside his household—she is not even allowed to ride his horses for fear she will attempt escape). Her pre-war involvement with the Socorro Rojo and her communist boyfriend and other friends have threatened her survival in a postwar Spain, with nowhere to live now but under her brother's protection, such as it is.

But what were the precise objectives of the Sección Femenina? Martín Gaite mentions another phrase from Pilar Primo de Rivera's speeches where she urges her followers to reach all women in Spain with their mission and message: "de toda esta prisa necesita la Patria para que ni una sola mujer escape a nuestra influencia y para que todas ellas sepan después, en cualquier circunstancia, reaccionar según nuestro entendimiento falangista de la vida y de la historia" (*Usos* 59). Was there was some sort of highly specialized knowledge base necessary for women to achieve in order to live out their Falangist destiny in the new state? On the contrary, Martín Gaite points out that the "teachings" of the Sección Femenina were not dissimilar to those of the

nineteenth-century middle-class girls of marriageable age and included such topics as cooking, sewing, child care, home economics, dressmaking, family upbringing and such like (*Usos* 59).

The SF played an important role within Franco's regime and was allowed to continue to exist long after the Falangist element had been all but eradicated from the government, because it offered "a maternal face, more benign than that of the Falange, and provided essential social services [health and educational] at a very low cost for the regime" (Morcillo TCW 105). The women of the SF represented no threat to the male political sphere. They had carved out a place for themselves, "a state within the state," as they exercised their own form of power over social functions deemed appropriate for their gender, rather than competing with men for power in the political realm. They were the metaphorical mothers of the Falange's political values, celebrating "domesticity and Catholicism… serving as propaganda agents of the official National-Catholic femininity" (TCW 106-107). One study involving interviews with former members of the SF revealed that many of the women viewed their efforts as being quite progressive for the time and saw themselves as women dedicated to improving living conditions for Spanish women. From their point of view, their allegiance to Catholicism as religious believers meant that they could not side with Communists, even though they might admire and agree with some of the tenets of social justice espoused by proponents of Communism. These SF members were adamant in their protection of the family because they felt that degradation of the family actually threatened the well-being of women. They were attracted to the Falange's platform of social justice—a platform claiming that no Spanish child should be at an unfair disadvantage to any other Spanish child simply due to conditions of birth. To enact this social justice, the women of the SF campaigned vigorously for improvements in health, educational, cultural, and sanitary conditions of the poorest sectors of Spanish society. They participated in vaccination campaigns, *Cátedras*

Ambulantes (travelling classrooms), and disseminated medicine, instruction, and entertainment across Spain (Enders 378-380). In something of a similar fashion, Esther Tusquets also writes of her struggle to find a way to champion social justice causes—a struggle that led her, at least temporarily, to the women of the Falange. She describes how she always felt uncomfortable in the higher social class into which she had been born: "Desde niña, yo había tenido la sensación de que algo no funcionaba bien en el mundo, de que no era justo que unos tuvieran tanto y otros tan poco" (251). In deciding to turn against everything her family stood for and participated in, as a university student she admits that she turned to the Falange because she "andaba buscando a ciegas algo en lo que creer, algo que me permitiera encauzar mi preocupación por las desigualdades sociales, mi rechazo de los valores burgueses" (254). Not unlike the women Enders interviewed, Tusquets was drawn to what she called "la Falange de izquierdas" (266)—the left-wing branch of the party that was interested primarily in social welfare and reform and felt betrayed by what they viewed as Franco's infidelity to the true intentions of José Antonio's vision. After a series of encounters with other young university students at retreats and hostels, she ultimately finds no fulfillment in affiliating herself with the Falange and concludes that what she was seeking did not exist—except as a dream: "tal vez fue un error afiliarme a Falange, porque buscábamos una quimera, la Falange revolucionaria y de izquierdas, que no tenía posibilidad de existir en otro lugar que en nuestra imaginación" (275). Obviously, the teachings and activities of the SF represent a deep contradiction in the story of women's role in Spanish society—the leaders of the SF consistently rejected a life of passivity in favor of mobilizing and motivating women to take action while at the same time, advocating for the reimposition of traditional male authority. The life of a "nueva mujer moderna" of the SF was rife with paradoxical attributes: she was to be "politically conscious, yet domestically inclined; skilled, yet

unemployed; well versed, yet quiet; subservient, yet enterprising; youthful, yet grave; meek, yet dignified; modest, yet accomplished; longsuffering, yet cheerful…" and the list goes on (Kebadze 68).

Ultimately, most critics and historians would conclude that the brand of "feminism" that the SF sought to promote was one driven by fear—fear that educated women would compete for men's jobs in a postwar economic disaster, fear that women would lose their femininity, and fear that educating women in a lower social class would somehow erode the social values on which the postwar society rested. And of course, a woman should never enter the political realm. Martín Gaite reminds us that the only woman Franco permitted to speak publicly as the head of a political association was one who devoted herself to depoliticizing all women, even those of her own party. She quotes Pilar Primo de Rivera in one of her speeches as having said: "Que el contacto con la política no os vaya a meter a vosotras en intrigas y habilidades impropias de las mujeres. Nosotras atendamos a lo nuestro y dejemos a los hombres, que son los llamados para que resuelvan todas las complicaciones que lleva en sí el gobierno de la Nación" (*Usos* 70).

But were young women actually convinced by the SF that they should adopt a certain brand of femininity being marketed by the state? Martín Gaite speaks of the "bendito atraso" (blessed backwardness) of the immediate postwar years and how young people were encouraged to view outdated "styles" in entertainment and clothing as something new, rather than old. She emphasizes how young people were not fooled by such labels as these, but instead continued to see inconsistencies all around them, as well as realize that when they were grown, they could choose for themselves. She describes how "los chicos y chicas de la postguerra… habían vivido una infancia de imágenes más movidas y heterogéneas, donde junto a la abuela con devocionario y mantilla de toda la vida, aparecían otra clase de mujeres, desde la miliciana hasta la 'vamp,'

pasando por investigadora que sale con una beca al extranjero y la que da mítines. Las habían visto retratadas en revistas, fumando con las piernas cruzadas, conduciendo un coche o mirando bacterias por un microscopio. Habían oído hablar de huelgas, de disputas en el Parlamento, de emancipación, de enseñanza laíca, de divorico… y claro está, que a uno cuando fuera mayor le sería posible elegir entre aquellas teorías distintas que hacían discutir tanto a la gente, y entre aquellos tipos de mujer, para imitarlo" (*Usos* 26). In Benjamin Prado's *Mala gente que camina* (a novel whose themes we will explore in greater detail in chapter four), Prado's narrator's mother talks about the mandatory six months of social service that she had to do under the tutelage of the SF: "era, sobre todo, una pérdida de tiempo… las beatas de la SF te metían en unos ejercicios espirituales y te daban una cuantas clases de cocina o una lecciones degradantes sobre el papel de la mujer en la sociedad y en la familia: ten preparada una cena deliciosa para cuando él regrese del trabajo; minimiza cualquier ruido, apaga la lavadora y el aspirador; recíbele con una sonrisa y deja que siempre hable él primero; ofrécete a quitarle los zapatos; si tienes alguna afición, no trates de aburrirle hablándole de ella" (78). Passages such as these suggest that many women were not totally convinced by the discourse of domesticity promulgated by the SF. As Martín Gaite mentions, she and the young women of her youth had heard of what Nash calls "la nueva mujer moderna" who in the first decades of the twentieth century moved to fill new roles in the quickly developing labor market and the fast changing social scene ("Un/Contested" 31-32). With the population influx into growing cities and towns, there were new opportunities for public, social entertainment for women—there were places to go and things to do: tea salons; clubs and hotels to dine, drink, and smoke in; and the cinema—all places were one could see new fashions and try them out on oneself (Richmond 9).

Marriage

Marriage was the only acceptable choice for single women in the postwar era. If a young woman did not make the decision to become a nun, Martín Gaite reminds us that she would be pitied and disrespected because her single status made her appear to have been rejected. She cites a popular saying of her youth where "la que iba para solterona solía ser detectada por cierta intemperancia de carácter, por su intransigencia o por su inconformismo" (*Usos amorosos* 38). A young woman must aspire to be married at all costs because to choose to remain single was equivalent to choosing to be different, and to be different was judged as inferior. Esther Tusquets describes how in her high school days of the 1950s, the only options open for young women who might choose not to marry were courses in shorthand and accounting—courses that would be prepare them for secretarial work, because as she says, "¿a qué otra profesión podía aspirar una chica?" (108-109).

But as Ángeles Caso's novel, *Un largo silencio*, aptly demonstrates, a young woman's options for finding marriageable men was greatly reduced after the war simply because so many young men's lives had been lost in the war. This novel showcases an entirely female cast of characters due to the fact that all men—whether father, brother, boyfriend, or husband have been somehow eliminated from the women's lives by the war (e.g. by dying in war, by divorce, or by abandonment and betrayal). Martín Gaite cites a 1951 text which reads in part, "como el ideal y el lógico destino de la mujer es el matrimonio, resulta desolador presentar a las mujeres el panorama de unos cientos de miles que no pueden casarse por la sencilla razón de que no hay hombres bastantes. En el último censo de Madrid, el número de mujeres supera al de varones en casi 200.000" (*Usos* 46).

Work

Not all women subscribed to the cult of domesticity and the gender discourse based on "la perfect casada," even in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. For example, female workers formed the core of the labor force in the Catalan textile industry, as early as the nineteenth century (Nash *Defying* 14). However, even before the war ended married women were largely prevented from working outside the home by the 1938 Fuero de Trabajo because they were needed as good mothers producing healthy citizens of the new state. They were mandated to fulfill the only purpose of Christian marriage—reproduction, and as an aid to achieve these ends, the male workers' salaries were increased to compensate for the loss of the extra income from working-class women's wages. Even so, these laws did little to ameliorate the extreme hunger, poverty, and accelerated death rates from malnutrition during the so-called "hunger years" (Morcillo TCW 33-34). In a later 1944 decree, married women were allowed to work outside the home, but only with the husband's signed consent, even if they were separated (TCW 36). When women did manage to find work outside the home, they carried a double burden (i.e. both wage and housewifely duties) as the sexual division of labor made women (and only women) responsible for the care of the children and the house (Nash *Defying* 20).

If a woman chose to have a career outside the home, she would find her activities censured by government, society, and the Catholic Church. All these powerful mechanisms worked in concert to reinforce the segregation of labor along gender lines, to make sure that women were always paid less than men, and to only allow them access primarily to the most poorly paid jobs in the sectors of industrial work requiring the least amount of skills. This conservative ideological stance was of course sustained by the Catholic Church and its cult of domesticity that rejected female wage work as a threat to the potential moral degradation of the

family and therefore, society at large (Nash *Defying* 23). Martín Gaite explains how in the 1940s such frantic efforts were made to reform Spain's national morals that women were discouraged from working outside the home for fear that her actions would somehow not only corrupt the moral fabric of society but would also lead other women to a life of depravity. She cites one text which reads: "Ha aumentado mucho, especialmente en las ciudades más populosas, la libertad y el desparpajo con que procede la muchedumbre de mujeres jóvenes independizadas por tener que trabajar fuera de su casa, libertad aprovechada por otras muchas que no podrían invocar la misma razón. Son mayores, por consiguiente, los riesgos de relajación del pudor femenino" (*Usos* 47). If a woman did work outside the house, it should be for a temporary period only, only until she found a husband, that is. Another problem with women working outside the home in postwar Spain had to do with the high rate of unemployment. If women were educated and equally qualified to compete with men for the same jobs, the competition for such scarce jobs would be even more fierce (*Usos* 47).

The 1938 Fuero de Trabajo proclaimed the new state's intention to separate women from any and all ideas as to their individual life choices and demand that they leave their jobs to devote themselves to home and family. And there were the infamous government incentives encouraging young people to marry and have large families. Martín Gaite describes how "mediante préstamos a la nupcialidad y los famosos subsidios y leyes de protección a las familias numerosas, Franco se había propuesto remediar el estrago demográfico de aquel millón de muertos, víctimas de una guerra que él mismo había emprendido. Y la mujer tenía que ser la primera en pagar el pato" (*Usos* 51-52). Martín Gaite calls all these attitudes "el culto a la feminidad" (*Usos* 53) and reminds us that the state's goals was not to alienate women with programs and policies but rather to save them—to save them from "las garras del capitalismo

industrialista" (*Usos* 52). Nash points out that due to the widespread belief that a wage earning woman represented a threat to the gender hierarchy within the family, "hostility towards female extra-domestic labor came from all classes" and was even practiced by those on the left, while the more conservative sectors of society were of course, more vocal in their opposition (*Defying* 24). This kind of hostile discourse did not erase the history of working women, but instead made their work invisible. Women had long been working outside the home—in agriculture, domestic service, street commerce, and of course, the textile industry. By the mid-nineteenth century, female textile workers comprised 40% of the work force in Catalonia but by 1930, women made up just under 13% of the total work force in Spain (Nash *Defying* 25, 27). While the serial publications of the SF encouraged women in need of income to seek "gender appropriate" positions (nurses, teachers, secretaries, librarians and such like for middle class women and cooks, maids, nannies, or hairdressers for working class women), there was always the underlying message that such work should be temporary only (Kebadze 60). Often the wages that women received were much lower than that of men or the work might be done on an unpaid, volunteer basis or perhaps even in exchange for small sums taken as a token of appreciation, rather than as pay. Of course, doing volunteer work for little or no pay was perfectly in keeping with the SF's teachings on self-sacrificial service for church and country (Richmond 106-107).

Education

In the nineteenth century, the notion that women deserved an adequate education was a common topic of debate among those in more educated circles. But a woman's access to education was still designed around a sexual division of labor—women should not be encouraged to aspire to jobs outside their domestic sphere of home and family. Even by the close of the nineteenth century, the overall quality of education in general in Spain was sadly lacking

and was even worse in girls' schools. These deficiencies in the educational system led to high illiteracy rates in the whole country with even higher rates for women. In the mid-nineteenth century, around 86% of women were illiterate and that rate had only dropped to 71% (as compared to 55% of illiterate males) by the start of the twentieth. By 1930, illiteracy rates had dropped to around 47% for women and 37% for men. Due to the educational reforms of the Second Republic, by the start of the Civil War, rates had further dropped to approximately 39% among women and 25% among men (Nash *Defying* 17, 19).

These extremely high levels of illiteracy only served to reinforce restrictions on a woman's opportunities for employment or other cultural activities that would call her away from the domestic sphere. A young woman was not advised to be a critical, independent thinker. "Se les pedía ingenuidad, credulidad, fe ciega" (Martín Gaite *Usos* 38). While women were officially granted access to higher education in 1910 (Nash "Un/Contested" 35), they were for the most part not encouraged to pursue higher degrees[2] or professional careers in the early twentieth century—indeed, women's presence at the university was not even recognized for the first twenty years of the regime. Within two weeks of the end of the war, the government made known its plan to reform the university with a program combining morality and patriotism—the university was to be imbued with the ideals of *hispanidad* as it was deemed a vehicle for inculcating young minds with "Catholic knowledge concerning morality, spirituality, discipline, and service to the fatherland and state" (Morcillo "Shaping" 59-60). As Franco's regime looked to current Catholic Church doctrine to refine its definition of femininity, certain notions on biological differences between men and women were used to support the regime's claim that

[2] In 1940, the Instituto de la Mujer reports that only 13% of university students were women. By the late 1960s that number had risen only to 30%. Only in the mid-1980s did women finally comprise 50% of the population of university students (Morant 334).

women were not naturally suited for higher education. Women were not expressly denied the right to be educated, but it was argued that they should be trained differently and in separate institutions from men. Any intellectual interest a woman might have was considered threatening to her femininity. "Men were to be the soldiers and scholars, women the wives and mothers" (Morcillo TCW 40). Home economics courses were mandatory in all primary and secondary schools and "no girl could graduate without passing courses in home economics, sewing, pattern design, arts and crafts, darning and mending, cooking, and music" (Morcillo TCW 44). Esther Tusquets writes about her decision to change from the home economics program to the college prep diploma in her private, costly, upper class secondary school of the 1950s. After spending three years in this program, she told her parents of her intentions to catch up enough on core subjects such as Mathematics and Latin so that she would be able to enter the university. In her autobiography, she remarks on the unusual support she received from her parents: "No creo que les pareciera una mala idea. Nunca, y era insólito en la época, habían compartido el principio de que la única carrera apropiada para una mujer era el matrimonio, nunca me lo habían propuesto como único futuro deseable" (128).

While women were not forbidden to engage in university studies and pursue higher degrees, the SF certainly did all it could to dissuade such inclinations. Martín Gaite quotes an advisor of Public Health for Women on this issue: "No nos parece mal este avatar que transforma a la inútil damisela encorsetada en compañera de investigación. Pero a nadie más que a ella es necesario un freno protector que la detenga en el momento en que una desaforada pasión por el estudio comience a restar a su feminidad magníficos encantos" (*Usos* 68). It would seem, then, that preserving oneself as "una mujer muy mujer" was far more important that improving one's mind or career prospects.

While the state held the supreme oversight of education as a social practice, it allowed the Church to consecrate that practice, and as the family was the first site of a child's education, the Church was permitted to infiltrate that private sphere in order to orchestrate a proper education. According to a Pius XI papal encyclical of 1929, the right of the family to instruct children took precedence over the right of the state in matters of education. It was the state's task not only to promote Christian education, but to also recognize that the family was endowed with the sacred duty of fulfilling that task (i.e. of educating its children)—hence the emphasis on properly equipping women within the tenets of Catholicism as they were the first nurturers of children in the home (Morcillo TCW 40-41).

There is a moment in the film *Los girasoles ciegos* when Elena takes her young son Lorenzo to school (a Catholic one, of course, and not co-educational) and stays for the daily singing of the Nationalist anthem, "Cara al sol." When the Director notices that the little boy is not singing and approaches him menacingly, Elena steps in to assert that the reason he doesn't sing is out of loyalty for his mother, as opposed to the fatherland—a term she maintains he does not understand at his young age. The Director responds that "la patria también es madre." Morcillo points out that in nineteenth-century iconography, Spain was often represented as a mother-figure afflicted by political conflict. "Literally meaning mother fatherland, la madre patria conveys a hermaphrodite-like essence of the Spanish nation; mater and pater involved in the unfolding of Spanish destiny" (*Seduction* 69). Therefore, when the School Director makes this statement he is reinforcing a notion that has its seeds in the previous century—the constant theme that Franco's Spain reaches its insidious fingers even to the very core of the social fabric—to redefine the familial structure—replacing even the mother as the first object of a

child's loyalty is challenged. The fatherland *is* the primary parent to whom all true sons of Spain must render due allegiance.

As we will see in even more detail in the next chapter, the power of the societal norm to homogenize, subjugate, and dominate is certainly a force to be reckoned with. Foucault says, "normalization becomes one of the greatest instruments of power" by "playing a part in classification, hierarchization, and distribution of rank" (*Discipline and Punish* 184). At the end of *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault talks about how the completion of the carceral system extends far beyond the prison walls with the powers of normalization reaching deep into every aspect of society as the "carceral archipelago transported this technique from the penal institution to the entire social body" (298). He goes on to talk about how the institutions of surveillance permeated every aspect of a person's life (e.g. hospitals, orphanages, prisons, schools, etc.) until the process of incarceration manages to maintain relative continuity. In this chapter, we notice how various institutions of Spain's postwar society—ecclesiastical representatives of the Catholic Church, schools, women's organizations—continued to exercise surveillance over and impose punishment on women's bodies, their choices, their lives. "Christian education, according to Pius XI, was directed not only to the soul but to the body as well. The individual in his totality was the subject to be educated" (Morcillo TCW 41). The carceral nature of modern society, as Foucault saw it configured, "assures both the real capture of the body [as we will see in the next chapter on prison narratives] and its perpetual observation" (*Discipline and Punish* 304).

In the film *Los girasoles ciegos*, we see these educational policies reified in a perfect example of state policy. The young deacon (who is not even sure he wants to be a priest) increasingly permeates the private sphere of the home. The church has given him that right and

the state bows to the authority of the church to educate the children in a proper Christian environment. Franco's regime famously used gender-segregated schools to indoctrinate younger generations into the National-Catholic ideals. Morcillo reminds us how in the early years of Franco's regime, "schools turned into indoctrination agencies; the new curriculum emphasized religious and patriotic content, disregarding technical and scientific knowledge" (TCW 43). The idea was that the nation would flourish once traditional Spanish values had been sanitized from all the alien, Republican influences that had so sullied it. Especially in the immediate postwar era, curricular content was carefully prescribed and teachers were instructed via short courses in how to impose this ideological uniformity in their classes (Boyd 256). Laws were passed requiring the display of both a crucifix and a picture of the Caudillo (Franco). Children had to be separated by sexes and educated by a priest, "who came to embody the purest educator; his classroom symbolized a sanctuary, a temple" (Morcillo TCW 43).

Based on Alberto Méndez's short story collection by the same name, the film version of *Los girasoles ciegos* focuses on the fourth story (with some connection to the second story) in the collection where Elena lives with her husband, a "topo" in hiding in 1940 Ourense. While their young son Lorenzo continues attending the local Catholic school, he struggles to maintain all his family's secrets—they are atheists, his Republican father lives in a hidden wall compartment behind the armoire, his pregnant sister and her Republican boyfriend-poet are fleeing Spain for the Portuguese border. Salvador, a young "deácono" who is not quite a priest, is sent to teach at Lorenzo's school by his rector at seminary in order to give him time to recuperate from his psychological war wounds. At the beginning of the film, Elena and her husband discuss their distaste at sending Lorenzo to the local Catholic school but as they fear reprisals if they do not, and as they are hiding Elena's Republican husband in a hole in the wall behind the

wardrobe, they dare not call attention to themselves by keeping their son home from school. But when young Lorenzo attracts Salvador's attention (by refusing to sing the Nationalist "Cara al sol" anthem), we see how the Church begins to intrude into the private sphere of the home. Salvador repeatedly offers to help tutor Lorenzo (presumably so as to take the place of the absentee, communist, atheist father and correct the lack of proper instruction he feels the boy has been sadly denied). When Salvador begins to insist on coming to the home to tutor the boy, he repeatedly verbally accosts the mother whenever he sees her in the street, follows her to see where she goes, and essentially spies on every detail of her life that he can possibly access. His professed concern about the education of the boy is his way in—his way into the home that he eventually destroys.

Elena, the mother in the film, is perpetually observed and practically held hostage by this young deacon who teaches at her son's school. Salvador constantly professes that he is concerned about Lorenzo's education, but really it is Elena herself who catches his eye and becomes his daily obsession. After visiting the local civil government office, Salvador finds a record of Elena's civil marriage (she is listed as a "concubina" in official government documents since civil marriages were not officially recognized by the state, only Church marriages were valid) as well as records of her two unbaptized children. Salvador then constructs his own specious life story for Elena—she was married to a communist (now dead, he thinks) who did not allow her to baptize her son and so must be rescued from this life of martyrdom she now inhabits. He constantly projects his own contradictory vision of "true Catholic womanhood" onto her. He tells his Rector/confessor that he wants to view all women as either Eve before the fall of man, or as martyrs who died a pure and guiltless death. But, as his Rector points out, his own "lujuria" makes that wish impossible. Because he is attracted to her when she brings her son to

school (telling his Rector that the way her hips swing in the tight dresses she wears are part of the "malas artes" she possesses which allowed her to entrap him: "me pescó" and "me engañó"), he is eventually driven nearly to rape her in her own home when he arrives in military, not clerical, garb in order to divulge his plan to form a family with her and be the proper husband (he thinks) she never had.

Standing in direct opposition to the representation of how the Catholic Church in Spain viewed women's role in society in *Los girasoles ciegos*, is the young priest, Miguel, in another 2008 film *La buena nueva*. Written and directed by Helena Taberna and loosely based on the autobiography of her family member—a priest who took a courageous stance against the official pro-Franco position of the Catholic Church during and after the war, *La buena nueva* tells the story Miguel who views the good news ("la buena nueva") of Christ's gospel as far superior to any official goals of Cardinal Gomá's "santa cruzada." He consistently aids and abets all those in need that cross his path—regardless of whether or not they are believers. He is especially concerned about the large number of defenseless women and children in this largely communist/socialist Navarre town. When war breaks out and the atheist village women knock on his door asking him to baptize their children in order to keep them safe from the Nationalists who will soon occupy their town, he agrees to their plan immediately. And even though he disagrees with the Nationalist agenda, he encourages the women to form a textile cooperative where they sew uniforms for Franco's soldiers as a way to survive economically. When his Bishop removes him from his parish after he is nearly executed for his subversive behavior, his last act as the only priest in town is to lead the women in a funeral mass for all those executed by Nationalists at the edge of a great pit just outside the town. In his conversations with Margari, the local Catholic, Carlist schoolteacher whose socialist husband was among the first executed, he

talks of how he has been leading these funeral masses for people from other towns as well—people who are not buried within the church walls—who were known atheists, socialists, communists. Unlike Salvador, the lecherous cleric in *Los girasoles ciegos*, Miguel in *La buena nueva* does not seem to struggle with how to relate to atheist women—they are just human beings who deserve to be treated as such—not objectified sexually the way Salvador sees them.

Espejos negativos

It would seem, then, that one can choose to seek one's image-self in either society's mirror, or one of your own construction. In mentioning the great female orators of the Republican side (Victoria Kent, Margarita Nelken, Federica Montseny, and Dolores Ibárruri), Martín Gaite employs the phrase "espejos negativos" to describe how the Francoist postwar society of her day discouraged young women from being distracted by their messages. She says these famous women were only mentioned to young girls of her postwar generation because "habían abjurado de su femineidad en aras de un quehacer que no era de su incumbencia… a manera de *espejos negativos en los que ninguna mujer debía mirarse*" (*Usos* 70; emphasis mine). We will now consider examples of what Martín Gaite calls "negative mirrors" by examining several fictional examples of women who create their own mirrors of self-reflection and reject those constructed by Francoism for them. We will see what happens when women attempt to resist the image in the mirror their society holds up to them and conversely, when they choose to conform to that image in an attempt to hide behind a false "armor of identity" (Lacan) in their struggle to protect themselves and survive.

In Prado's 2006 novel, *Mala gente que camina*, there is a quotation from a 1944 article from *Teresa* (a magazine published by the SF) as having said this about the role of women in

society: "La vida de toda mujer, a pesar de cuanto ella quiera *simular*—o *disimular*—, no es más que un eterno deseo de encontrar a quien someterse. La dependencia voluntaria, la ofrenda de todos los minutos, de todos los deseos y las ilusiones, es el estado más hermoso, porque es la absorción de todos los malos gérmenes—la vanidad, el egoísmo o la frivolidad—por el amor" (Prado 82-83; emphasis mine). But what happens in the novels examined here is the complete opposite: we find women repeatedly seizing the moment for themselves (an authentic moment—not one in which they are only pretending to want something for themselves as the *Teresa* article suggests), not in submission to the wants and needs of others. When Inés in *Inés y la alegría* takes the gun off the bed and holds her sister-in-law at bay with it, while ordering the maid to tie her to a chair with a bathrobe belt, she is thinking of no one but herself and how she can escape her Falangist brother's house.

And what about the women who did not submit to a Francoist construct of their femininity? How was their gendered identity socially interpreted? We have already seen some examples of how Inés, in *Inés y la alegría*, is miserable in the world she is forced to inhabit—living with her Falangist brother, being imprisoned in a convent before that; she admits that life in prison was preferable, even begging her sister-in-law at one point to send her back to prison. We have also seen how Inés was subjected to Garrido's view of communist women as he repeatedly harasses and abuses her sexually. His vision of what a communist woman was is obvious—a woman of loose morals, who was naked under the *mono*, and disposed to provide sexual favors on demand as a "mujer libre"—and he projects his own twisted version of Republican femininity onto her. But Inés chooses to reject the mirror image Garrido holds up for her by creating her own version of feminine identity.

Inés confronts the mirror-image Garrido subjects her to and challenges what she finds there. Immediately after Garrido leaves on the day he finally forces her to perform a sexual act on him (while holding a loaded gun to her head), she goes to the bathroom and talks to her image in the mirror: "me miré en el espejo y dije algo distinto. —No pasa nada—el espejo me devolvió un rostro tan pálido… —Me voy a escapar y eso es lo único que importa. Esto no. No ha pasado nada, porque me voy a escapar, y cuando esté lejos, esto dará lo mismo—hablaba en voz alta con mi propia imagen, me veía mover los labios, escuchaba mi voz, y sentía como la mujer que hablaba conseguía serenar poco a poco a la mujer que me miraba, y que también era yo" (Grandes 214). Inés is conscious of the two fragmented images in the mirror: Garrido's version of herself (and the one he is trying to force her to become), and the new one she is constructing as she makes plans to escape (which she does soon after this scene when she joins the resistance fighters in the Arán Valley invasion).

A little earlier in the text, just before Inés makes the decision to resist and flee, she imagines what it would be like just to submit to being the type of woman Garrido wants her to be. But she had seen that type of woman before, and even though she entertains the thought of conforming for a short time, she will ultimately reject it as repulsive to her existence. "En Madrid, durante la guerra, había visto escenas como esa, mujeres aniquiladas, vacías, tan huecas que ya no les quedaba ni siquiera espacio para el miedo, sentadas junto a hombres uniformados que las trataban como si fueran ganado, animales de compañía que acabaran de recoger por la calle y que agradecían los palos que se llevaban a cambio de tener algo que comer, un rincón bajo techo donde echarse a dormir por las noches. Era repugnante, daba asco y vergüenza, sobre todo vergüenza" (Grandes 204). She counts the high cost of conforming in order to maintain a warm place to sleep and plenty of food (i.e. her brother's home) and finds the cost too high:

"cuando me veía con un vestidito negro y los labios muy pintados, como una muñeca estropeada en manos del comandante Garrido… comprendía que tenía que escapar, que no me quedaba más remedio que intentarlo, costara lo que costara… la cárcel, la muerte, mejor morir que convertirme en una cáscara de la mujer que había sido, que seguía siendo, una cosa con mi cara y con mi cuerpo, la ofensa viva de todo lo que había amado, de todo lo que había creído, de lo que me había hecho ser como era" (Grandes 205). She rejects the "husk of a woman" a life under Garrido's talons would represent and will risk her life to escape this destiny.

In Caso's novel, *Un largo silencio,* we find examples both of women who choose to conform to Franco's mirror image held up for them, and women who do not. On the rainy day in late 1939 when the Republican Vega women return from exile to their fictional hometown on the Cantabrian coast, the Virgin of the Rain (La Virgen de la Lluvia—the local sacred relic—"más virgen y pura y santa que nunca" [10]) is being returned to the church where she resides after three years in exile. People fill the streets and the third person narration describes the Falangist women in the crowds: "Un tropel de señoras emperifolladas" with "el cabello bien peinado, la finura de las mantillas, el lustre de la ropa y la carga ostentosa de joyas al cuello o en los brazos… lucen incluso sus abrigos de pieles…. haciendo así pública exhibición de poderío y, a la vez, de exaltada fidelidad a las ideas triunfadoras" (Caso 11). Not only their opulent dress but their overt actions make them highly visible in the street as they "se llaman a gritos, cruzan sin cesar de una acera a otra para saludarse entre besos y lágrimas fáciles, se enseñan mutuamente ropas, joyas, escapularios e insignias" (12). The text goes on to describe how these rich women stop to buy a piece of fish or a potato to feed a hungry street urchin until there are so many hungry street people clamoring for help that the soldiers have to intervene to protect them. "Desgradecidos, que son unos desgradecidos" (12) the poor children shout at the frightened rich

women who are "respaldadas ya por los hombres—maridos, padres, hermanos, novios" (12). The poor are keenly aware of how the wealthy women are backed by the male patriarchal system and do not function as women of their own accord, even as they strive to show off their wealth; rather they are products of a system into which they have been fully inscribed. Preston speaks of these sorts of attitudes and actions being displayed by the upper and middle-classes in the face of institutionalized violence, including educated, Catholic women during the war. He describes how in the outskirts of Valladolid, prisoners were taken out in trucks to be executed in the early morning hours and spectators gathered so often to watch this macabre spectacle that coffee and *churro* stalls were set up for the crowds who would shout insults and jeer at the condemned before they were executed. In Segovia, middle-class women often attended military trials to laugh and applaud when death sentences were passed and executions there became as popular as bullfights. "The terror had become normal," Preston explains, "and no one dared condemn it for fear of being denounced as a red" (*Spanish Holocaust* 191-192).

Feda, the youngest adult daughter in the novel, goes to find Simón, her old boyfriend. His Falangist mother meets her at the door. Note the way she (the mother) is dressed: "vestida como siempre de negro, con su collar de perlas brillantes alrededor del alto cuello de encaje y el pelo recogido en la nuca, tieso y duro igual que un casco" (112). Doña Pía, Simón's mother, tells Feda that Simón has gone to Madrid, as part of Franco's army: "Prefiero verlo muerto antes que liado con la hija de un socialista pobretón" (113). Feda loses her upper class friends and connections after the war—she is made to feel keenly that she is on the losing side. Her friend, Rosa, is sorry to tell her that she can no longer see her—that they can no longer be friends and go to parties and dances together, "como ahora sois… rojas… ya sabes" (133). When Rosa offers to see Feda but not in public, Feda rejects this offer with a resounding "yo no quiero volver a verte,

ni aquí ni en ningún sitio. Adiós, Rosa, que disfrutes de tus fiestas de fascistas" (134). Later on, Feda gets a letter from Simón in Madrid where he advises her that the best way to survive as a woman in postwar Spain is to do the best job she can at feigning "true Catholic womanhood." He writes to her and says: "Piensa en tu futuro… Trata de alejarte todo lo que puedas de los tuyos… las cosas no van a ser fáciles para los que están marcados por sus ideas. A ti nunca te ha importado la política, y así es como debe ser… Empieza a ir a la iglesia. Que te vean allí todos los domingos. Busca apoyo en un confesor. E intenta a encontrar un buen marido" (135). Feda rejects this scripted performance for success and tears up the letter throwing it into the sea. "Después se dará la vuelta, con la cabeza muy alta, muy firme, y caminará de regreso a casa, empapada y rodeada de luz" (137). The text implies that she has made the right choice in rejecting this plan, as light surrounds her—illuminating her decision not to conform.

It would seem that if gender is an ideological construct of society, and if society itself is always in flux (especially during such times of upheaval as war and postwar instabilities), then the nature of one's gender is also in flux, is malleable, is capable of change, growth, and further development. We see examples of this flux, of gender's ability to morph and change in Grandes's novel, *Inés y la alegría*, in the interaction between the life-long communist Inés living in exile in France following the failed Arán valley invasion and her Nationalist sister-in-law, Adela, who slowly breaks away from her military husband (Inés's brother) and comes to visit Inés in France and spend more and more time there. Adela is shocked by what she sees in Inés and the way she lives her life as a wife, mother, and head chef of the co-op owned restaurant where she works with other Republican exiles. On one of her first visits to France to see Inés, Adela comments on how it is obvious that Galán (Inés's husband) loves Inés very much. She says, "la verdad es que sois todos unos comunistas muy normales…. O sea, que estáis casados,

tenéis hijos, los regañáis cuando se portan mal, trabajáis, lo normal" (*Inés y la alegría* 640). Inés responds with, "¿Y qué esperabas?... ¿Comunas y amor libre?" (640). Adela explains, "Eso es lo que hacen los comunistas, ¿no? Su propio nombre lo dice, ¿o comunista no viene de comuna?" (640). In this moment, Inés and Adela confront the slippery nature of their socially constructed gendered identities—they each have lived out different manifestations of their gendered roles as Spanish women: one in Republican exile, the other in Franco's Spain. That is, to be a Nationalist woman in Spain means certain things for Adela, and to be a communist woman living in postwar ex-pat exile, means something completely different for Inés.

During this conversation, Inés begins to realize the internal conflict inherent in what Adela is saying, "hasta que no me lo explicó, no me di cuenta de que se había hecho un lío entre lo que había aprendido antes y después de nuestro reencuentro, lo que estaba acostumbrada a creer y lo que veía en mi casa, en el restaurante, cada vez que venía" (640). What Adela has been taught by Francoism to believe about communists clashes with the reality she sees Inés living out, and Adela struggles to make sense of what she sees. She doesn't stop coming to visit Inés however, and Adela's own version of Spanish womanhood changes as she grows more independent of her husband, and finds more creative lies to feed him in order to keep her visits to his renegade sister secret (e.g. she tells him, among other things, that she is making sacred pilgrimages to France with other Spanish women—a perfectly reasonable excuse to travel unescorted, as her pious pursuits are completely acceptable within a system of "true Catholic womanhood").

Do the attributes of your gendered identity change then (or have the potential to change) by simply crossing borders between countries, between societies? To some extent at least, it would seem so. Paula, in the 2011 film *Ispansi* (the Russian word for Spaniards), has a similar

experience when she returns to Spain after years of living in exile in Russia with her communist husband. Like Inés, she comes from a military, Nationalist family—when she first runs away to follow the orphan trains to Russia at the end of the war (for the purpose of protecting her illegitimate son, whose existence she hides from her family in a "red" orphanage) her father openly disowns her in front of her mother and brother, forbidding any of them ever to speak of or to her again. Paula escapes to Russia with the orphans only by stealing the identification card off the body of a dead communist maid who dies in an air raid near Paula's family home. Her gendered identity is certainly in flux—she at first "plays the role" of a communist woman (hiding her prayers so that the caregivers of the orphans will not discover her true identity—an "act" she cannot maintain for long as eventually her "true" identity surfaces). But by this time, she has lost her son (he is killed when the Soviet trains are attacked by Nazis), and after a time of deep agony and depression, she falls in love with an exiled Spanish communist, marries him, and begins to rebuild her life, taking on a very different identity from the one that she had when living with her family in Spain.

Then, after her father's death, when she returns years later to visit her now senile mother, her high-ranking military brother (very much like Inés's brother), who facilitates her return by procuring the necessary paperwork for her to enter the country, views her homecoming as a willingness to accept her socially dictated gendered role as a woman in Franco's Spain. In other words, he expects her to step back into his Nationalist world and function within its norms, taking her to a ball filled with Nationalist military men and upper-class, Franco loyalists. A little like Adela from *Inés y la alegría*, she teeters on the brink between two countries, two different gendered roles to play. And she seems to dally a bit with the idea of stepping back into her old life as a wealthy Nationalist woman, pursued by wealthy Nationalist men, where she is not

suspected at all of being disloyal to the regime. On the contrary, the people at the upper-class party her brother takes her to seem to view her as having suffered terribly in Russia, as having been there against her will (a martyr-like, self-sacrificing "true Catholic woman"). They see her as having returned to her true self—and the mirror they hold up to her allows her to see what her life would be like for her in postwar Spain, if she would only play the proper role. She is courted by wealthy military men at the party, she could have her pick of them, she could live in luxury—she would not have to suffer the cold, hunger, and poverty of exile in Russia with her impoverished, exiled former commissar of a husband, living in a tiny one room apartment, freezing in the harsh Russian winters, with barely enough to eat. In the end, she cannot accept the role the privileged of Franco's Spain show her in the mirror, and chooses to go back to Russia, leaving Spain behind forever (forsaking all, even her aged, senile mother who is locked in time, her black mantilla always on, her fingers forever clutching at her rosary, her lips murmuring constantly some inaudible prayer; the gendered role that she has chosen to play is now no longer a choice—her dementia makes it a seemingly inescapable trap).

> The mirror stage is a drama whose internal thrust precipitated from insufficiency to anticipation—and which manufactures for the subject, caught up in the lure of spatial identification, the succession of phantasies that extends from a fragmented body-image to a form of its totality that I shall call orthopaedic—and lastly, to the *assumption of the armor of an alienating identity*, which will mark with its rigid structure the subject's entire mental development. (Lacan 4; emphasis mine)

Lacan describes here how the drama of the mirror stage unfolds as the child, enthralled by the lure of the integrated image he sees, launches himself into the world in the hope of achieving power as he matures. "While he is caught up in the spatial lure of this image of his assumed future, the child witnesses a pageant or parade of carefully machined phantasies of what he might become" (Payne 32). This parade of phantasies includes all the elements Lacan mentions: the

fragmented body-image, the 'orthopedic' image of the body's recuperated integrity, and the "armor-plated rigidity of terminal alienation" (Payne 32). Indeed, we find many fictional accounts of women who have progressed to this "armor-plated rigidity" stage—terminally alienated from the women they once were—trusting this "armor" will keep them safe in Franco's world.

The mother in *La lengua de las mariposas* shows at the end of the film an awakening into what sort of performance will be required of her in order to survive in Franco's Spain. She first has Republican posters in her house until Nationalist troops take over her village, then she tears them down and burns them (along with her husband's Communist identification cards), puts on her "Sunday best" conservative black clothing, and runs out to publicly denounce the atheist Republican schoolteacher (and other Republican town leaders, including the mayor). She knows what it means to perform her gendered identity, and like the women whom Inés scorns who choose to conform in order to survive, this woman puts on her "costume" so as to start playing immediately the necessary part—she does what is needful in order to protect her husband and sons and to destroy evidence of the family's left-wing sympathies when war breaks out. Sociologists have long recognized the power of clothing to signify. "Clothing serves as a tool in the social construction of self and others" (Leeds-Hurwitz 111). It makes manifest in a concrete way a social reality—it allows a social reality to become a physical reality—making it so we can clearly see this social reality. It can transmit social as well as individual meanings. "Clothing is the place where individual, private concerns and societal, public ones intersect" (Leeds-Hurwitz 112). When the mother in the film arrives in the town square where the whole village has been ordered to assemble, she glances over at the wife of the richest man in town, representing the landowner class. This woman's "true Catholic womanhood" is even more pronounced than the

mother's—her mantilla is as high as she can get it, her jewels and crucifix are gleaming brightly, and her haughty expression seems to imply that for her, her appearance is not a performance, but rather a completely assumed identity. We have seen similar descriptions of Nationalist women at the opening of Caso's novel—loud and proud in the streets with their public gendered performance highly visible; appropriately costumed in their jewels, furs, mantillas, and money.

Payne reminds us that the mirror stage is "transformed into a stilted theatrical event before becoming a fortress or stadium" (32). Ofelia's mother in *El laberinto del fauno*, though we know she was married to a communist (as Ofelia offers the Captain her left hand to shake when she first meets him), tries to conform (and encourages Ofelia to conform) to Franco's ideal version of womanhood that she has completely sutured herself into (though it will not save her life—her husband, Captain Vidal, tells the doctor tending her to save the baby's life first, not the mother's). Even the sex act that Inés (in *Inés y la alegría*) is forced at gunpoint to perform on Garrido is rendered a performance by his very words: "tu hermano debe de estar a punto de volver. Es una pena que no te haya visto hace un momento. Estoy seguro de que estaría muy orgulloso de ti" (Grandes 214). Garrido implies that Inés's brother would be proud of the fact that she is now finally yielding to what he has been pressuring her to do all along—be a quiet, meek, self-abnegating woman, submissive in service to fatherland (as embodied by Garrido). The "armor plating" that life in her brother's home offers her is an illusion—it will not protect her; it will not be sufficient. She "performs" only as long as necessary to save her life while Garrido has a gun to her head. Later she will think only of herself, and act authentically (tying and gagging her sister-in-law and the maid, holding them at gunpoint with a stolen weapon from her brother's collection). She is certainly not engaged in a performance when she escapes on

horseback to join the Republican invasion of the Arán Valley, just across the French border from her brother's house in Lérida.

"**Nos enseñaban… *a representar..., no a ser*"**

Martín Gaite hypothesizes that perhaps the reason for the long hours and months of the social service required by the SF was to slowly chip away at the individual will of the young women in its clutches (*Usos* 64). She goes on to describe this so-called cultural training that young women of her generation were subjected to as "el timo de la estampita disfrazado con frases sublimes" (*Usos* 63), adding that young women were encouraged to cloak their individual identities with an idealized non-thinking, ever-smiling cardboard cut-out of a woman whose company all men naturally craved (Dulcinea), while at the same time maintaining a more practical earthy version of womanhood on the inside (Aldonza Lorenzo). "Nos enseñaban," Martín Gaite asserts, "*a representar...no a ser*" (*Usos* 64; emphasis mine). Martín Gaite concludes her work on courtship customs in postwar Spain by reiterating what she points out time and again: the greatest tragedy in postwar courtships between men and women was the dishonesty that pervaded Spanish society and dictated the rules by which young people were allowed to interact with each other. "La exaltación de la insinceridad… los datos falsos que se proporcionaban mediante *la representación de un papel*" (*Usos* 210; emphasis mine).

There is a noteworthy scene in Caso's novel, *Un largo silencio,* which takes place on a train when María Luisa, one of the daughters in the novel, and her friend Teresa begin to work as *estraperlistas* (black marketeers), scouring the countryside for bits of farm-grown food and then selling this food at back kitchen doors of the rich who will pay higher prices for things they cannot get with their ration cards in the cities. These women learn not only how to transport

lentils and beans under their skirts safely, but also how to feign "true Catholic womanhood" while on the train so as to not arouse suspicion. Pairs of Civil Guardsmen would frequently patrol the train cars, asking people for identification papers if they did not like something about the way they looked. Playing a certain gendered performance became a game for the daring young women who would laugh at how well they were able to pretend to be "respectable." "Cuando los vean aparecer, pondrán cara de buenas chicas, los saludarán sonrientes, hablarán en voz alta de lo crecidos que están los hijos y lo bien que hacen de monaguillos en la iglesia y a veces hasta fingirán ir rezando. Así conseguirán pasar desapercibidas un día y otro" (Caso 199).

For these women (in order to survive), it was more important to "pass" as a right-wing, true Catholic woman than to actually be one. Eventually "passing" will not be enough for Teresa who commits suicide rather than live as a piano teacher with no piano. In her suicide letter to her friend María Luisa she says, "ya no puedo tocar. Si miro mi interior, me veo blanca y silenciosa, tan blanca y tan silenciosa como el paisaje que cruzábamos en el tren. Todo es hermoso y suave, e infinitamente triste. Estoy muerta" (206). A little later the text says that "su cuerpo no aparecerá. Nadie sabrá nunca qué lugar ni qué manera eligió Teresa Riera para morirse de aquella vida tan fea que no supo ni quiso soportar" (206). She could no longer find an image within any mirror, whether external or internal, with which she could identify. And pretending was not reason enough to keep on living. For her, death was preferable to performance.

This emphasis on pretending versus being, on illusion versus reality, on performance versus authentic living, is one that will persist throughout this entire investigative work. With this simple phrase, Martín Gaite calls to mind Lacan's unreliable mirrored image of the all-too-fragmented subject, manipulated, pushed and pulled by social determinants; anticipates Judith Butler's observations on the notion of gender as performance ("representación de un papel"

indeed—see chapter 2), and echoes, as already explored here, Aurora Morcillo's insights on the label she designates "true Catholic womanhood"—a facet of Franco's body politic which continually sought to construct a carefully scripted gendered identity for women.

Chapter Two: Women in Postwar Prisons: the Body as Text

The body has long been acknowledged for its ability to serve as a cultural medium—a text whose meanings and forms often mirror historical conflict and social change. Critics such as Michel Foucault, Susan Bordo, and Judith Butler have all written extensively on this subject, recognizing in different yet interconnected ways how the politics of gender come to be inscribed on the text of the body. "The body," Bordo claims, "is a powerful symbolic form, a surface on which the central rules, hierarchies, and even metaphysical commitments of a culture are inscribed and thus reinforced through the concrete language of the body" (13). In her work on the reproduction of femininity, Bordo (following Foucault) reminds us that "the body is not only a text of culture," but is also "a practical, direct locus of social control" (13). Investigating how the films and novels discussed here configure the docile, regulated bodies that Foucault describes as being so much a part of the modern age as well as how much of the Francoist regime's gendered body politic can be seen in these fictional, yet historical narratives is part of the focus of this chapter's explorations. We will also note the power of historical fictional narrative to contest and subvert certain oppressive ideologies that may have been present in the past while at the same time, allowing for new contestatory voices and new forms of agency to surface. These agentic voices and actions may have been present in the past but were potentially either overlooked or silenced (in terms of Franco era historiography) but with the power of novels and films, can now assert themselves and be recognized in ways they were perhaps, not allowed to be seen and heard in the past. David Herzberger talks about how, in novels of the 1950s and 1960s, Spanish fiction writers tended to assert dissonance by reaching through the official discourse of Franco's regime to subvert narrative principles that sought to constrict history into a tightly

constructed monolithic version of the past (2-3, 118-119). In the more recent films and novels explored in this entire work and more specifically, the ones in this chapter-- *La voz dormida*, *Las trece rosas*, and *Si a los tres años no he vuelto*—the reader/viewer becomes aware of what Herzberger calls the "dynamic" quality of history (153). That is, the further removed we are from the Franco era, the less the relationship between history and fiction is driven by discord, and the more we become aware, as readers and writers, of "a desire for narrations broadly conceived as open to Otherness" (Herzberger 153). We will see then, by highlighting the performative nature of gender, what "other" versions of contestatory femininity can be found in these fictional prison narratives.

Following up on her work on gender performativity in *Gender Trouble*, Judith Butler continues the discussion in *Undoing Gender* by talking about how gender is "done" by what essentially amounts to improvisational acting—it is "an incessant activity performed… it is a practice of improvisation within a scene of constraint" (1). She goes on to explain how one cannot "do" one's gender for oneself in isolation. She says, "the terms that make up one's own gender are, from the start, outside oneself, beyond oneself in a sociality that has no single author (and that radically contests the notion of authorship itself)" (1). This chapter explores how the "sociality" of gender (as it was applied to women in postwar Spain) was constructed by Francoist policy (as described in the previous chapter) and how these socially determined gender roles find their way into even the most recently produced novels and films centering on the lives of women in the postwar era. Furthermore, if gender is conceived of as a social construct outside of one's own authorship, then how do the novels and films discussed here provide any sort of contestatory discourse to the kind of gender norms that Francoist policy sought to create and enforce? Is there any room for contestation or resistance in the text of an imprisoned body? In the process of

tracing Foucault's and Butler's work on gender, norms, and what happens to the aberrations of those norms, we will further develop our discussion from chapter one on "true Catholic womanhood" by noting how these novels and films highlight the way gendered performances can be used as acts of resistance.

Foucault defines the term "body politic" as "a set of material elements and techniques that serve as weapons, relays, communication routes, and supports for the power and knowledge relations that invest human bodies and subjugate them by turning them into objects of knowledge" (*Discipline and Punish* 28). As we have already delineated in the introduction and in chapter one, Aurora Morcillo in her work charting the evolution of gendered discourse in the Spanish body politic reminds us that from Franco's ascendancy to dictatorial power in 1939 until his death in 1975, the Francoist state consistently viewed women as the cornerstone of nation-building and firmly cemented such discourse in a Catholic nationalist platform. We have seen how Francoist policies looked to the early modern period to recover a truly Spanish tradition, and how the effort to resuscitate the true Spanish woman meant a return to the early modern period's definition of true Catholic womanhood as well. Elements of femininity found in such treatises as Juan Luis Vives's *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana* (1523) as well as Fray Luis de León's *La perfecta casada* (1583) were emphasized, along with promoting the popularity of such female figures as Santa Teresa de Ávila. Under the guidance of such organizations as the Sección Femenina de Falange, Spanish women were urged to cultivate Catholic values in the domestic sphere as wives and mothers exclusively, especially during the immediate postwar autarchy of the 1940s with its aggressive pro-natalist policies (*True Catholic Womanhood* 4).

Another place where Francoist policy sought to enforce its own constructed gender roles on women was in the crowded prisons of the postwar era. In Foucauldian terms, the prison is just

one tool employed by the state apparatus for the purpose of organizing its subjects around a norm. The prison is one "disciplinary technology" that can be used to produce "docile bodies"—ones that can be shaped, molded, and subjected to the nationalization of a norm—in this case the norm being defined by the gendered discourse of the Francoist body politic. Perhaps the most famous prison for women in the postwar years (and one that appears time and again in novels and films) was the Ventas prison for women in Madrid. Preston reports that by the third week of April 1939, this prison, originally designed for 500 women, held more than 3,500 and would eventually hold almost 14,000 (*The Spanish Holocaust* 510). Designed by Victoria Kent[3] as a humane retention center for incarcerated women and their children, Ventas was described by Tomasa Cuevas as "un edificio nuevo e incluso alegre" with its red brick, big windows, spacious cells, bathrooms, workshops, and even a school. She goes on to explain how in 1939, the cells designed for one or two women were totally stripped of furniture and packed with eleven or twelve women in each cell. Ventas "se había transformado en un gigantesco almacén, un almacén de mujeres" (*Testimonios* 275). Ventas is described in Ana Cañil's novel, *Si a los tres años no he vuelto*, in the summer of 1939 as having 75 bedrooms and 45 bathrooms and three months after the war ended, as holding more than 5,000 women suffering from lice and scabies (90). This novel centers on the main character, Jimena, a young woman from the same hometown as Cañil (Rascafría), who comes to Madrid in the middle of the war as her communist husband, Luis, is fighting on the front lines. When Luis must go into exile at the end of war, his brother Ramón tries to take care of Jimena, but is unable to protect her from his nationalist

[3] Educated as a lawyer, in 1931, Victoria Kent was appointed Director of Prisons by the Republican government. She believed in the concept of a prison as being a place of education and professional training with the goal of social reformation of the inmate. She often wrote and spoke about "protecting the prisoner from the prison" (Alcalde 193-194).

mother who denounces her and so is directly responsible for the three years Jimena spends in various prisons. At one point in the novel, the population of Ventas is mentioned as having reached more than 11,000 inmates—a figure that is corroborated by Tomasa Cuevas who finds women who attest to even higher numbers, such as 14,000 (*Testimonios* 322, 326). The director of Ventas, Carmen de Castro, was ironically a student at the Institución Libre de Enseñanza (where Jimena's father-in-law taught prior to the war in *Si a los tres años*) and the director of this institution, María Sánchez Arbós, was also imprisoned there (Cuevas *Testimonios* 327).

In the prison narratives discussed here, Ventas figures largely. In addition to being the site of much (though not all) of the action in Ana Cañil's novel *Si a los tres años no he vuelto* (2011), it is also the focus of Dulce Chacón's novel, *La voz dormida* (2002–novel; film–2011). This novel tells the story (largely through the use of flashbacks) of a group of women who are imprisoned in Ventas just as the war ends. Hortensia, one of the main characters and a former *miliciana*, is living under the death penalty for her crimes—knowing that she will be executed as soon as her child is born[4]. Ventas is also the prison where the "thirteen roses" were held before their eventual execution, as both the novel and filmic versions of *Las trece rosas* (2003–novel; 2007–film) depict. Tomasa Cuevas's collected testimonies mention how the thirteen young women (seven of whom were under the age of twenty-one) who have garnered international fame as the "thirteen roses" were accused of having plotted the assassination of Franco during the Victory parade in Madrid on May 18, 1939 (*Testimonios* 277). Preston says that this was a non-existent plot and that their executions were really a desire for revenge for Isaac Gabaldón's

[4] In both novel and film versions, Hortensia's execution is delayed so that she may be allowed to nurse her baby for a few weeks after she is born and then given to Hortensia's sister, Pepita. Historians repeatedly concur that children of "rojos" in prison would not have been given to family members to raise, but instead would have become wards of the state and placed in state orphanages, other religious facilities, or adopted out to high-ranking, Francoist families (Fonseca 183).

(a major in the Civil Guard) murder, which Preston attributes to car-hijackers (*The Spanish Holocaust* 512). The documentary film, *Que mi nombre no se borre de la historia*, also mentions the fact that as most of the thirteen roses were members of the JSU (Juventud Socialista Unificada), their executions were carried out in unjustifiable retribution for Gabaldón's death, as they were already in jail by the time of the murder. The documentary also references the fact that members of the Gabaldón's own family suspected that he was possibly assassinated by the regime's own intelligence service. But the feature film version of this story has the young women being arrested for simply being members of the JSU (Preston says that they were arrested because the Casado Junta had turned over the lists of JSU members to the Francoists [*The Spanish Holocaust* 512]) and for engaging in such mildly subversive activities as distributing propaganda pamphlets on the day of the parade. Ramblado Minero reports that the final charge brought against the young women accused them of reorganizing the JSU and the PCE (Spanish Communist Party) for the purpose of committing crimes against New Spain (114). The novel version toys with the theory that Comandante Gabaldón and his daughter and driver were assassinated by resistance fighters hiding outside Madrid and even mentions how the interrogators of these women: El Pálido, Roux, and others were given a bouquet of roses by the mother of a prisoner who had just been released. According to the novel, since there were thirteen roses, and in order to avenge Gabaldón's death, thirteen young women were chosen to be executed—mostly on the basis of their physical appearance (i.e. youth and beauty)—and they are described as being very attractive but at the same time repulsive to their interrogators.

Power/knowledge/truth

Foucault uses the term power/knowledge to indicate how the production of knowledge is wedded to productive power. In *Discipline and Punish*, he says that "power produces

knowledge… power and knowledge directly imply one another… there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (27). Knowledge of the subject is necessary to analyze, punish, rehabilitate, and re-structure him/her. Modern constructs of power use increasingly narrow categories through which individuals are analyzed and identified. Foucault's discussion of the advent of the modern forms of institutionalized power since the mid-eighteenth century highlights the way in which institutions strive to examine, watch over, subordinate, normalize individuals, and then punish those identified as aberrations from the norm. Power operates physically on bodies through discourse which assigns categories to bodies in relation to the norms that govern them, thereby organizing them under such labels as: praiseworthy, deviant, punishable, or criminal. Following Foucault, Butler reminds us that "the question of who and what is considered real and true is… a question of knowledge. But it is also… a question of power." In this way, knowledge and power "work together to establish a set of subtle and explicit criteria for thinking the world" (*Undoing Gender* 27). Therefore, official Francoist discourse created categories for women to be governed by, and when women did not fit these categories, they were labeled as deviant.

Foucault describes the prison as being a place of both observation and knowledge. The prison officials must constantly watch the inmates and gain clinical knowledge of each individual so that the reformation of inmates will have its best chance (*Discipline and Punish* 249). When there is a lack of knowledge, the entire system breaks down. For example, when Hortensia in *La voz dormida* is finally taken out of prison to be executed, she is part of a group of thirteen who have all been tried and sentenced together. There are three members of this group who do not step forward when their names are called and the prison functionaries do not know

them personally due to such a large number of women being held in Ventas. Eventually the condemned women do come forward and identify themselves, as the nun in charge has ordered that other names at random be called out to be executed and the condemned women do not want to sacrifice their comrades. But they do succeed in delaying imminent death for a few more minutes as their captors lack this crucial "knowledge" of them.

Another example of the breakdown between knowledge and power in the prison setting, providing a moment of levity in Cuevas's collection of oral history, is the story of the women who acted as if they did not know how to sew or make anything at all when the Sección Femenina women from outside the prison came in to force the prisoners to carry out their mandatory social service for all women under the age of thirty. The woman Tomasa Cuevas interviews says, "nos pusimos en plan de no aprender nada, en plan de torpes" (*Testimonios* 333). They made such a complete mess of everything their hands touched that the Falangist women finally left them alone only to discover later how they had been mocked when they happened to see at the prison one day the beautiful handwork being sold to a Swiss man. The Falangist women were outraged when they found out the names of the seamstresses were the same young communist women they had tried so hard to teach to sew. This story is powerful in light of the aforementioned discussion of Foucault's relation between knowledge and power. The account continues with the communist women confronting the Falangist women about why they did what they did. "Ustedes nos han venido a ofender porque han pensado que nos iban a enseñar a nosotras… pero teníamos necesidad de darles una lección de que no conocen a las mujeres que ustedes llaman *rojas,* que no tienen ni idea de cómo somos… que están entre nosotras y tampoco saben nada; no han profundizado para conocernos. En eso es lo que se sostiene el régimen de ustedes, en la ignorancia" (*Testimonios* 333-334).

In an interview Foucault once clearly defined what he meant by the term "truth" as he employed this word in *Discipline and Punish*. He said, "my problem is to see how men govern (themselves and others) by the production of truth… by the production of truth I mean not the production of true utterances but the establishment of domains in which the practice of true and false can be made at once ordered and pertinent" ("Questions of Method" 108). As we have seen in chapter one, it was the gendered discourse of Francoist policies which sought to create and promote the idealized Spanish woman—the perfect Catholic wife and mother: these were the "domains of truth" against which the aberrant Republican women had to contend, and whose "womanhood" (or femininity) was judged to be false, thereby warranting containment, isolation, or even execution.

Preston points out how "women were sentenced to death and imprisonment for the crime of military rebellion, yet they were given the status not of political prisoners, but of common criminals" (*The Spanish Holocaust* 512). Blanca in *Las trece rosas* and Jimena in *Si a los tres años no he vuelto* do not even fully comprehend why they have been imprisoned. Tomas Cuevas describes well this type of female prisoner in her *Testimonios*: "las mujeres detenidas por no haber encontrado al marido, al hijo, por haber insultado a los fascistas, por haber gritado contra los aviones que bombardeaban, por haber sido de izquierda, por haber votado al Frente Popular, por haber lavado ropa para las milicias… para todas estas mujeres el drama individual era un sufrimiento irracional e inesperado" (274).

Furthermore, many times in the novels and films discussed here, Republican women are referred to as prostitutes, even when there is no evidence of their ever having participated in such activities. The propaganda produced by the Franco regime consistently represented the prostitute as "the nemesis of the honest woman; a relationship that symbolized in the larger context the

fraudulent, fallen Second Republic… Catholicism imbued political discourse with only one purpose: to regenerate the whorish body politic of the Second Republic" (Morcillo *Seduction,* 90). Furthermore, women who were in any way associated with the Republic, were labeled "red whores" who had to be isolated, restricted, and controlled lest they contaminate New Spain in the same way they had the Republic. As Linhard points out, "in the rhetoric of Nationalist and later Francoist Spain, politically active women became the culprits of the disasters and the unrestrained violence of the civil war. The war supposedly erupted because these 'red' women challenged their traditional roles within the patriarchal family structure" (56). Jimena (a woman of little to no political awareness), in Cañil's *Si a los tres años,* is repeatedly called a prostitute by both her jailor and her mother-in-law, who never recognizes the marriage between Jimena and her son as valid (as theirs was a civil union only since Luis, her husband, was a Communist and refused to be married by a priest). This labeling is so insistently and constantly inscribed on Jimena's body that she is eventually transferred from a women's prison to another prison particularly dedicated to incarcerating prostitutes.

In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault cites the eighteenth century's sensibilities towards sex which, he says, "formed specific mechanisms of knowledge and power centering on sex" (103). He talks about the "hysterization of women's bodies… a threefold process whereby the feminine body was analyzed—qualified and disqualified—as being thoroughly saturated with sexuality" (104). While María Topete[5] herself (Jimena's nun-jailor after she is moved from Ventas to the prison for nursing mothers in Madrid) is portrayed as being sexually frustrated and unlucky in love, having lost the love of her youth to another, more wealthy woman for want of a

[5] Tomasa Cuevas interviewed a woman who described Topete this way: "María Topete, que era hija de marqueses y que, además, era una señora que tenía la idea falangista hasta los tuétanos" (*Testimonios* 336).

better dowry, she constantly refers to Jimena as a prostitute or seducer of men. Preston reports that Topete "assuaged her own resentments in the treatment of the mothers and their children" (*The Spanish Holocaust* 513). By the end of the novel, her internal dialogue marvels at how Ramón (Jimena's brother-in-law) has managed to get Jimena and her young son freed from prison. Sensing that Ramón is motivated by his love for Jimena, Topete blames Jimena and other Republican, communist women like her for all that is "wrong" in Spain: "ellas saben enredar a los hombres. Acúerdate de la Pasionaria, María. Más fea y ordinaria no podía ser y mira, dicen que tiene un montón de hijos… Todas son unas pasionarias… Son mujeres de la vida, más allá de los ideales. Proclaman el amor libre y echan la culpa a los anarquistas. Ni ideas ni nada, todo lo que quieren es hombres, calor de hombres" (368-369).

Norms/regulations/subjects

Foucault uses the term "bio-power" to describe how bodies become subjugated and populations are controlled (*The History of Sexuality* 140). With the advent of the eighteenth century, he claimed that power no longer dealt only with the threat of death used as an instrument of dominion over legal subjects, but rather power began to deal with "living beings, and the mastery it would be able to exercise over them would have to be applied at the level of life itself; it was the taking charge of life, more than the threat of death, that gave power its access even to the body," and goes on to explain how bio-power brought life and its associated mechanisms into a world of precise calculations thereby granting knowledge-power the ability to transform human life (*History of Sexuality* 143). Morcillo says that by using this knowledge-power to transform human life, "totalitarian regimes represent the clearest example of bio-power" (*True Catholic Womanhood* 5).

As Judith Butler also discusses, the age of bio-power also ushered in the development of the norm as the means of regulating society. Butler describes how the regulatory power of the norm actually participates in the formation of the subject: "to become subject to a regulation is also to become subjectivated by it… to be brought into being as a subject precisely through being regulated. In other words, the regulatory discourses which form the subject of gender are precisely those that require and induce the subject in question" (*Undoing Gender* 41). Butler goes on to explain how people are regulated by gender which "operates as a condition of cultural intelligibility for any person. To veer from the gender norm is to produce the aberrant example that regulatory powers… may quickly exploit to short up the rationale for their own continuing regulatory zeal" (*Undoing Gender* 52).

Butler takes issue with the Foucauldian insights that suggest that broadly functioning regulatory power has the ability to operate upon not only gender norms but other social and cultural norms, implying that gender is just part of a larger regulatory operation of power. Foucault references the normalizing operation of bureaucratic and disciplinary power when he argues in *The History of Sexuality* that in the nineteenth century, the norm emerged as a social regulation that was not identical to the operations of the law. He says that a norm belongs to the arts of judgment, and while it is related to power, it is not so much concerned with the use of violence as it is with allowing that power the space to define its objects. Butler instead suggests that gender is a norm in and of itself—one that "requires and institutes its own distinctive regulatory and disciplinary regime" (*Undoing Gender* 41). How then, is gender a norm? What is a norm exactly? Butler explains that a norm is not a rule, nor is it a law, but rather it "operates within social practices as the implicit standard of normalization… For gender to be a norm suggests that it is always and only tenuously embodied by any particular social actor" (*Undoing*

Gender 41). She goes on to explain how the norm delineates what is deemed intelligible by "imposing a grid of legibility on the social and defining the parameters of what will and will not appear within the domain of the social" (*Undoing Gender* 42). Butler stresses that gender is actually a form of social power, capable of producing an intelligible field of subjects (*Undoing Gender* 48).

How then, do gendered subjects emerge from Francoist policies and regulations? The gender-specific norms invoked by postwar Francoist policy deemed Republican women not feminine enough—not feminine enough and more specifically, not Spanish enough. As we have seen throughout the introduction and chapter one, the Francoist regime strove to disseminate and inculcate among its populace a gender-driven, Catholic-based sense of individual, national duty. That sense of duty was defined differently for men and women as "gender difference constituted the very essence of selfhood; it provided stability and social order to the nation and clarity of purpose to the individual" (Morcillo *True Catholic Womanhood* 6). Gender was always used to signify normalizing elements of Franco's state.

What does it mean to be outside the norm then? "If the norm renders the social field intelligible and normalizes that field for us, then being outside the norm is in some sense being defined still in relation to it" (*Undoing Gender* 42). And what are the consequences for identifying and labeling a subject as outside the norm? The consequences were enormous for Republican women remaining in Spain after the war as we will outline in further discussion and as we will continue to explore in subsequent chapters.

I am reminded of Blanca, the mother of the young son in *Las trece rosas* (film version) whose last letter written to her son before execution is quoted at the end of the film. In the letter she encourages him to remain Catholic and true to his faith and not to "guardar rencor en el

corazón." She is a unique case study as a character in relation to social norms that seek to exclude her, as she repeatedly tells her prison guards that she is Catholic too—that all of her life she has been such.[6] At first she aims to align herself with the prison guards as a practicing Catholic and shows herself willing to attend mass—she does not rebel on the grounds of atheism as her fellow prisoners frequently do. There comes a moment, however, when this mother accepts her status as being outside the norm and she no longer strives to please the guards who hold her hostage when she takes a stand with her fellow prisoners and goes on a hunger strike until the perishing babies of the mothers in prison are provided with milk (as the infants are dying of malnutrition). She has finally accepted the boundary placed on her by the norm that she can no longer satisfy. Her jailer is shocked by her actions—"Tú, también, Blanca?" Her jailer cannot believe that this "docile body" (to use Foucault's term) in front of her has just ceased to be classified as such.

We see this notion of not being feminine enough exemplified in the fictional narratives (both filmic and novelistic) discussed here. For example, in the opening scenes of the film *Las trece rosas*, at the declaration of Franco's victory, women immediately appear in public in darker, somber-colored clothing (often black in color) and always wear the traditional mantilla. The young "rosa" who is wearing pants while she and her comrade urge a small group of unenthusiastic *madrileños* to keep fighting, even as Nationalist troops march into Madrid, is never shown wearing pants again (only skirts). Also, on the day of the victory parade when some of the "rosas" are plotting an anti-Franco leaflet distribution, a few of them run from the Guardia

[6] Fonseca reports in his journalistic work on the *trece rosas* that Blanca, in her court trial, insisted that the charge brought against her for conspiring to assassinate Franco on the day of the victory parade was false. She also stated that before the war, she placed herself among those of right-wing ideology, even having voted for candidates on the right in the last election (131).

Civil and hide among a group of women praying before a priest, all of whom are cloaked in black mantillas. With this action, we see the "rosas" attempting to hide their "difference" among women who outwardly better express the manifestation of the acceptable feminine norm.

"Viewed historically," Bordo insists, "the discipline and normalization of the female body… has to be acknowledged as an amazingly durable and flexible strategy of social control" (14). The gendered social norms that Francoist policy sought to promote and inculcate among the populace included a uniquely Francoist Catholic version of femininity that "stressed women's asexuality, exalting either virginity or motherhood, and called for different forms of subordinate behavior" (*True Catholic Womanhood* 5). In Cañil's novel, the nun-jailor María Topete constantly struggles with her own desire to be asexual (and forget the great disappointment of her lost love), while at the same time judging Jimena as being neither virginal nor worthy of motherhood (she could not accept that Jimena and Luis's civil marriage was valid in the eyes of God, nor those of the state). She classifies Jimena the only way she can see her as being, a completely lost woman—a prostitute—it does not matter to María Topete that Jimena was not politically active (or even politically aware) before she met her communist husband—once she has been denounced as a "roja," she is the same as a prostitute harboring threat of contamination for Franco's New Spain. The social enemy, then, is the one who deviates from the norm and who brings with him or her "the multiple danger of disorder, crime, and madness" (Foucault *Discipline and Punish* 299-300). Jimena, in *Si a los tres años*, possesses an apparent sexuality that is judged (by Topete) as being so deviant, so dangerous that Topete eventually has her transferred to a special prison reserved for prostitutes.

As we have seen in the first chapter of this study, Juan Luis Vives's sixteenth century treatise on Christian education for women *(La instrucción de la mujer cristiana* [1523])

highlights how the sole purpose of a woman's education was to protect and preserve her honesty, chastity, and physical and spiritual virginity. Morcillo cites Vives's text: "When women do not know how to protect their chastity… they deserve the worst of punishments; paying with their own life is not enough" (*True Catholic Womanhood* 37-38). It would seem, then, that Topete has taken such a Golden Age adage to heart by making the women in her charge more than pay for their "sins" of not having protected their chastity—there is no punishment in jail that she can ever inflict upon them that would ever be "enough" to expiate those sins. At the same time that she claims genuinely to desire to reform the charges placed in her care and to want them to be reinstated into New Spain as model gendered citizens (especially as mothers), Topete invokes upon her prisoners the most cold, cruel punishments imaginable. The women are separated from their children, placed in cages with cold water dumped on their heads, forced to watch helpless as their infants die from disease and malnutrition and then putrefy with maggots coming out of their noses, eyes, and ears due to the terrible environmental conditions inside the prison walls.

Gender and desire

Judith Butler asks us to consider what it is that gender wants by claiming that "the social norms that constitute our existence carry desires that do not originate with our individual personhood," and furthermore "the viability of our individual personhood is fundamentally dependent on these social norms" (*Undoing Gender* 2). Butler reminds us that in the Hegelian tradition, desire is always linked with recognition and that it is only by being recognized that we are socially constituted as human beings. However, the terms by which this recognition occurs are malleable and changeable precisely because they are socially generated (*Undoing Gender* 2). It follows that if desire wants recognition, then gender will seek to gain recognition as well. In desire's quest for recognition, power must enter the discussion. Since a person can be "undone"

by either conferring or withholding recognition, Butler reminds us that "recognition becomes a site of power by which the human is differentially produced" (*Undoing Gender* 2). Desire, the nature and function of social norms, and power are all bound together in the question of who qualifies as human and who does not.

Tomasa Cuevas records the story of a woman who went through menopause while in prison and was seen and heard weeping by Cuevas and others in Ventas when she realized that she would never have the opportunity to have children, due to having spent so many child-bearing years in jail (Dulce Chacón makes use of this woman's story in *La voz dormida* as well). Cuevas says, "Ir evejeciendo y saber de manera instintiva que *una mujer desaparece cuando deja de ser deseable*… No sirve de mucho pensar en la forma de realizarse *la mujer como ser humano*; para que tal planteamiento tenga un contenido real *es preciso que la elección de su vida sea posible*, que pueda escoger su papel y no que le sea impuesto de forma implacable" (*Testimonios* 275, emphasis mine). For me, these phrases express powerfully what Judith Butler and others have said about gender's desire for recognition. Stripped of their choices as to how their lives would be lived out, the novels and films examined here show how these women were essentially robbed of their ability to define themselves first as women, and ultimately as human beings. Both men and women in prison at the end of the war obviously did not qualify as persons capable of functioning for the benefit of the Francoist state and so must be purged from society, lest they pollute, contaminate, or transfer their poisonous Republican ideals.

If recognition is what both gender and desire want, then how does this desire for recognition play out in these fictional narratives examined here? These women are not recognized as persons, their gendered performance is negated at every turn, and yet they persist in clamoring for recognition, even in cases where the characters do not survive the prison

experience (such as Hortensia in *La voz dormida* and the "thirteen roses" in *Las trece rosas*, both novel and filmic versions). On numerous occasions in the works discussed here, we see that the imprisoned Republican women are not considered whole and valid persons. The Francoist policy into which they were immediately inscribed (against their will) at the end of the war does not recognize them as such.

For example, in Ana Cañil's novel, *Si a los tres años no he vuelto*, Jimena's right-wing mother-in-law denounces her and so is directly responsible for her imprisonment. Jimena's brother-in-law, Ramón, finds in his mother's house (to his great alarm and disgust) a medical article published by the psychiatrist, Antonio Vallejo-Nágera, who was working with Hitler at the time, which described how communism and communist thoughts and practices should be considered a mental illness for its adherents. Vallejo-Nágera was a well-known psychiatrist who, during the Second Republic, was protected by his high rank in the army even while openly expressing his anti-democratic beliefs. Like others before him, he believed Spain's political problems could be attributed to the contaminating factors that were poisoning and sickening the racial body of the once "virile Hispanic race" (Morcillo *Seduction* 26). Since Spain was neutral in WWII, he was able to visit German concentration camps, hospitals, and asylums and was greatly influenced by the work of German psychiatrists. In 1937 he published *Eugenesia de la Hispanidad y regeneración de la raza* which proposed a way to rid Spain of its contaminating elements and thereby heal its sick racial body. As Morcillo rightly points out, this text represents a clear demonstration of how the Franco regime was already designing its plan for bio-power even before winning the war. In 1938, at Nágera's request Franco authorized the creation of a Department of Psychological Research for the purpose of studying the bio-psychological roots of Marxism. While this department was closed in 1939, the results of its research among prisoners

were published in the medical journals *Revista Médica Española* (the one Ramón finds in his mother's house in Cañil's novel) and *Revista Española de Cirugía y Medicina de Guerra*. The "findings" confirmed Nágera's suspicions—environment and not only genetics determines the outcome of the ideal phenotype. The proposed therapeutic cure for the morally diseased included an intensely Catholic moral re-education, segregation and separation of the "diseased" from the rest of the society (i.e. prisons), and a necessary purge of the sinful from the racial body (Morcillo *Seduction* 50-51).

Therefore, in the novel we can see evidence of all these beliefs in the actions carried out (and justified) by Topete. Cañil's novel mentions the fact that Nágera had been doing experiments with Marxist prisoners among the captured soldiers from the International Brigades and others in Málaga prisons and was invited to speak at the Escuela de Estudios Penitenciarios where María Topete attended his lectures (171). From his book *La locura y la guerra: psicopatología de la guerra española,* she learns to view Marxism/Communism as mental illness. This belief leads her to decide that in order to save the children from this terrible illness, they must be separated from their mothers in order to keep the mothers from "contaminating" the children's minds so that the future of Spain would not be in danger. Therefore, the mothers are only allowed one hour each day with their children. When Jimena is first separated from her child, he is still nursing and is about seven months old—she reacts violently and is restrained and thrown in a special cell outside (shaped like a cage) where she is nearly drowned with torrents of cold water every time she calls out for her child. Topete wants to cull from society the evil, sinful, contaminating bodies of Marxist, communist women by keeping them in prison. She wants to re-educate them by forcing them to accept her version of Catholic values and morality. And finally, she wants to separate them from their children, so that the phenotype might be

improved and thereby spared the contagion of contact with their contaminated mothers' diseased minds.

Somehow, for reasons she never fully understands, Jimena has become for Topete the supreme example of all that might "infect" the purity of New Spain—but one problem is that Jimena does not have specific ideas about what her political leanings are (nor is she ever told why she is even imprisoned in the first place), so Topete hones in on the moral depravation that Jimena's body represents for the men who must lead New Spain into its glorious dawn. She thinks, "Esa chica es un peligro y tenemos que extirpar el mal del raíz. Es peor que si se declarara comunista o anarquista. No sé cómo es en sus ideas, pero lleva el pecado en el cuerpo" (Cañil 304).

Morcillo's work in exploring the nature of "true Catholic womanhood" in Franco's Spain reveals the important role gender played in defining womanhood for right-wing women. As Morcillo has indicated, "right-wing women also celebrate the distinction between the sexes, but whereas cultural feminists challenge patriarchal privilege, right-wing women call themselves antifeminist and seek protection within patriarchy" (*True Catholic Womanhood* 7). In Cañil's novel, the nun-jailor, Maria Topete, is humanized, we have much of her back story—childhood, adolescence, the broken heart of her youth, and her decision to serve both God and country as a nun, are all narrated in great detail. She claims to have a real missionary zeal in her desire to reform the incarcerated women placed in her care. She conforms to the classic profile of Franco's ideal Spanish woman—but at the same time, we have indications that she once struggled with this notion of ideal femininity as a child. When María confronts her mother about having less money than her cousins with their monarchical connections, she tells her mother, "No sé por qué los hombres pueden pelear por más y nosotras conformarnos con buscar un

marido… hubiera preferido ser chico, y trabajar y mandar y poder hacer las Indias" (118). She is the only girl in her family allowed to read her father's newspaper and discuss world events with her father and brothers, including soccer (120). Her mother is concerned about her restlessness and about these "manly" ideas getting into her head the same way that Jimena's mother is concerned about her husband's political inclinations getting into Jimena's head. The idea seems pervasive (in both left and right-wing families) that knowledge/education is dangerous for women and will lead them to no good end.

Morcillo notes that "during the postwar and well into the 1960s the only respectable option for a young woman other than marriage was to enter a convent" (*Seduction* 80). Morcillo goes on to say how nuns were crucial to the creation of a true Catholic womanhood by taking posts such as prison wardens, teachers, nurses, and members of the Sección Femenina. Working in such capacities, they formed perfect links between the Church and State (*Seduction* 81). Topete is the model against which all other women are judged—not just Jimena and the other prisoners but also other nuns, female wardens, even Jimena's mother-in-law (doña Elvira) has failed in her efforts at becoming the ideal Spanish woman in the eyes of Maria Topete. Topete thinks "la tonta de Elvira no sabe que sus dos hijos están enamorados de la misma mujer, una pazguata flaca y soberbia que sólo tiene un rostro moreno y gracioso" (272), and her thoughts on Jimena continue, "ella es más peligrosa que las rojas declaradas. Mira lo que ha hecho con esos chicos… Esa joven tiene aura, los enamora, babean por ella. Es asqueroso. Repugnante. Tiene todo bien puesto, la cara, las piernas, los pechos" (273)—the very physical person of Jimena, in spite of her dubious, never-quite-solidified political leanings are deemed equally repugnant and dangerous by Topete who sees her as a very serious threat for the new Spain. Jimena has warped the minds of two young men (the minds of both her husband Luis and his brother Ramón, that is)

who should have been strong Falangists/Catholics and because Jimena has this child, her "moral illness" is just as contagious for the child as it is for the men in her life, according to Topete. At a meeting in Seville during Holy Week while Jimena is still in prison, Topete says to Elvira: "Esa muchacha lleva al diablo en el cuerpo e incita a sus hijos al peor pecado: el de la carne. No sé cómo ha educado Ud. a esos muchachos… pero Ramón está enamorado, o mejor, atrapado, en las redes de esa pelandusca" (303).

The novel goes on to say that it was not just Topete but all the women of the winning side who were now the upper class against whom Jimena has committed the ultimate sin—robbing them of one of their own. In their minds, the novel says, Jimena "les había robado a Luis Masa, un joven de su clase. ¿Con qué artimañas le habría envenenado la sangre? Porque a esas alturas, la carcelera, doña Elvira, y cualquier otra mujer de esa sociedad opresiva, cruel, de falsa caridad cristiana, echaría la culpa a Jimena de todo lo que hubiera hecho o dicho Luis. De todo eso la culpaban. Y por eso la castigaban con años de encierro sin ninguna explicación" (352). The illness of the Republic, of infectious diseases of the mind such as communism or anarchism, is blamed ultimately on the Republican women who stole these men's hearts—even if those women were of such humble origins, so poorly read (or even illiterate), and scarcely informed enough to even know for what cause their men were fighting, as was Jimena.

María Topete is a unique character among the novels discussed in this chapter, as she is the only Nationalist woman whose inner workings of the personality and mind we as readers are allowed to see in any detail. The version of femininity that she models in front of the women placed in her charge stands in stark contrast with the version of femininity that the prisoners themselves display, as interpreted by Topete herself, that is. Morcillo points out that as women were called upon to participate actively in their domestic roles of reconstructing the fatherland,

the call to engage was always composed of what she calls the "discourse of abnegation" by calling upon the self-sacrificing virtues of women as they were urged to focus on others and not themselves (*True Catholic Womanhood* 32). Pilar Primo de Rivera often spoke of and wrote about this concept of extreme self-denial and self-sacrifice in her work with the Sección Femenina. She once wrote: "y lo propio de la Sección Femenina es el servicio en silencio, la labor abnegada, sin prestancia exterior, pero profunda. Como es el temperamento de las mujeres: abnegación y silencio… Cuánto más abnegadas, más falangistas y más femeninas seremos" (Gallego Méndez 194). As we can clearly see here, Falangist femininity was directly equated with silent, self-sacrificial labor.

Topete exhibits these self-sacrificing traits (or claims to hold these traits close to her heart) as she constantly refers to her work in prisons as being in service of God and her country, even to the disregard of her own health. For much of the time in Cañil's novel, Topete suffers from swollen legs and circulation problems and frequently returns to rest in her office in the prison (an environment which is much more comfortable than her imprisoned charges' quarters) or the home she shares with her sister who is also a nun. Her sister (and other higher ranking male clerics working with her in the prisons) repeatedly urge her to give up her post or to rest more and take better care of her health. She always responds to these admonitions by expressing her desire to keep devoting herself to service of God and her country by working to "reform" women in prison and endeavoring to keep them separated from their children so as to "purify" her country of its contaminating elements.

Agency/resistance in the face of violence

Early theorists in semiotics such as Bogatyrev and later Barthes, in their works dealing with clothing as a cultural product, have long acknowledged how clothing, as a type of second

skin on the body, has a power to signify (Leeds-Hurwitz 108). People, when given the option, often choose what they wear, knowing that others will interpret meaning from their clothing choices in different ways (Leeds-Hurwitz 104-105). In *Si a los tres años,* the reader sees through Topete's eyes how she viewed her jailors when she herself was imprisoned by the "rojos" for several months during the early days of the war. She remembers the day "cuando llegaron a la cárcel milicianas triunfantes deseosas de custodiar a las reclusas. Todos llevaban monos, correas y pistolas, como si fueran hombres, aunque en realidad eran mujeres de malas trazas" (153). Clothing is important here—what you put on your body contributes to the interpretation of your femininity. Topete and the other captive nuns are repulsed by various "masculine" aspects of the women who guard them. "La repartidora de paquetes era para las esclavas y las señoras de aquellas buenas familias, de antiguo abolengo o recientes burguesas, el prototipo de miliciana… ha sido verdulera… La verdulera no vestía mono, sino un guardapolvo marrón, y encima de él se ajustaba el correaje y la pistola" (153-154).

Once out of prison, María Topete entertains the children in the Norwegian embassy where she temporarily is given refuge by making fun of the *milicianas*, her captors—she sings the children songs that the prisoners made up—"se reían de lo burdas y maleducadas que eran las milicianas… 'Ay, miliciana pajolera,/ cuánto me quieres humillar,/ porque llevamos en las venas/ sangre española de verdad'" (163-164). Topete is sure she is the real Spaniard, and not the *miliciana*. She tells the women and children in the embassy how the *milicianas* dressed and talked: "se vestían como si fueran hombres… como marimachos… Lo peor no era eso. Lo peor era su forma de hablar. Una decía todo el tiempo… 'que *sus* sentéis, que *sus* calléis'" (164). At this point, she mocks not only the way the Republican women dress like men (and therefore do not "perform" gender the way a "true Catholic woman" would) but also the lack of education

that was prevalent among them as evidenced by their diction. Topete feels that these women have been tainted with the venom of women like La Pasionaria—"Todas aquellas mujeres que durante tres años de guerra habían sido marimachos, luchando a veces al lado de los hombres, golfas que disfrutaban del sexo sin pasar por la Iglesia siquiera, que tenían hijos a los que criarían directamente en los pecados del infierno, no merecían su consideración" (170-171).

Susan Bordo asserts that all aspects of how we attend to the body—"what we eat, how we dress" contribute to the functioning of the body as a cultural medium (13). Leeds-Hurwitz also goes on to discuss how clothing can be used as a vehicle to convey identity. It has the power to inform and shape our identity and situates us firmly in a certain position within society. It mediates between the individual and the group (113). In *La voz dormida*, Mercedes is one of the more merciful functionaries in her treatment of the prisoners in Ventas. She is described as being proud of the way she dresses and what this says about her place as a woman in New Spain. The author tells us that she received her job for being a war widow and she enjoys putting on the uniform and arranging her hair in the popular *Arriba, España* style. "Lleva el pelo cardado, recogido en un moño alto con forma de plátano que deja ver la cabeza de multitud de horquillas a lo largo de su recorrido, desde la nuca a la coronilla… Siente que le favorece ese peinado, y también le favorece el uniforme. Se ciñe el cinturón apretándolo al máximo para marcar su cintura, y siempre, al acabar de ponerse su capa azul, se da una vuelta frente al espejo" (33). In the film versions of *La voz dormida* and *Las trece rosas*, one can clearly see the prison guards are nearly all wearing this hairstyle and uniform with the large blue capes. In *Si a los tres años*, Jimena and her brother-in-law have a good laugh about this hairstyle in a café one day when he advises her that she might want to start wearing her hair this way. (At this point, she had not

been arrested yet and he was trying to keep her safe in his home with his Nationalist mother after her Communist husband went into hiding at the end of the war.)

"The body," Bordo reminds us, "may also operate as a metaphor for culture" (13). There is one jailor in *La voz dormida*, La Zapatones, who constantly harasses the Republican prisoners under her watch with her *Arriba, España* hairdo and an inventive application of very red lipstick applied around a yellow piece of candy which she holds between her teeth, as she grins garishly at inmates under her watch: "separa los labios y deja asomar un caramel de limón, el color amarillo destaca sujeto entre sus labios rojos. Después se da media vuelta, pasea su peinado de Arriba España y recorre el patio buscando a otras presas para mostrarles su peculiar bandera nacional" (200-201). It is as if she were silently using her body to say—I am more Spanish than you, more feminine—you are outside the norm, aberrant, diseased, rejected.

In a rare moment of levity, once La Zapatones has been dismissed (due to her not having stopped Felipe and Paulino [communist men in hiding trying to help their female comrades in prison], dressed in Falangist uniforms sewn by the women in Ventas, from leaving with both Sole and Elvira in tow), Reme and Tomasa[7] trick the prisoner identified only as *la chivata* into putting on red, yellow, and purple sweaters and parading through the prison patio in the colors of the Republican flag (*La voz dormida* 276).[8] Leeds-Hurwitz reminds us that clothing is part of a larger group of social codes that can both indicate membership within a group, as well as delineate separation of individuals from a group. People can use clothing as an external sign,

[7] Sole, Elvira, Reme, and Tomasa are all imprisoned women in Ventas in Chacón's novel, *La voz dormida*.

[8] There are similar stories of women in prison with Tomasa Cuevas mounting entire subversive theatrical productions with women dressing as both fascists and the Republic (*Testimonios* 339) which are reminiscent of similar scenes in Chacón's *La voz dormida.*

knowing that sign will be interpreted as socially significant in some way (113). Even though these women were in prison, they found a way to use clothing to situate themselves socially as loyal to the fallen Republic, no matter how many *Arriba España* hairdos were surrounding them.

The non-conforming bodies are easily recognizable here—they are the *miliciana* in the *mono* (as Hortensia is described as having worn in *La voz dormida);* they are the girls in pants working on trolley cars in Madrid at the beginning of the film version of *Las trece rosas* (one of whom is suddenly and without reason fired from her job as trolley ticket-taker in the film—a fact that is historically accurate as we have seen how Francoist policies sought to return women to the domestic sphere and remove them from the workplace[9]). Their clothing is an outward sign that renders their gender "unintelligible" (as Butler would say) and ultimately, unacceptable in Franco's New Spain, which is why violence and often death must be enacted upon these transgressive bodies of women who do not conform to the norms seeking to subjugate them. Indeed, in the documentary, *Que mi nombre no se borre de la historia*, Julia Conesa's niece states that part of the court documents her family retained regarding her aunt's sentencing state that, among other charges, Julia was also condemned to death for having this job working on the trolley cars during the war.

Both Tomasa Cuevas's as well as Lidia Falcón's testimonies speak of the common suffering female prisoners endured while being repeatedly tortured by male interrogators during their time in the dreaded Gobernación in Madrid (Dirección General de Seguridad), before arriving at the jail where one's captors (at least in the immediate postwar era) would most likely

[9] Fonseca claims that women filled 80% of the public transportation jobs in Madrid during the war. When the Nationalists entered the capital, Madrid's transportation commission immediately pulled women from these posts and began filling the vacancies with men (135).

be women, often nuns. One notes a striking similarity when reading both Tomasa Cuevas's as well as Lidia Falcón's accounts of the time they each spent in prison. In many ways, the descriptions of interrogations and tortures are nearly identical, in spite of the fact that Lidia Falcón's imprisonment and the publication of her account took place some 30 years after that of Tomasa Cuevas's. Although Falcón does say (again in a way very similar to what Cuevas said years before her), "La detención es igual para hombres que para mujeres" (24), she goes on to describe how the torture inflicted upon the bodies of female prisoners by their male interrogators was distinctly sexual in nature, designed to hurt and humiliate a woman in a specifically sexual way. "La mirada del policía no se dirige igual a su enemigo varón, que a la hembra ha tenido la osadía de *atreverse a ser mujer y conculcar las normas establecidas por ellos*" (Falcón 24, emphasis mine). Once again, we find mention being made of an established norm being transgressed—a norm established by a male dominated society which has been transgressed by a certain version of femininity that is deemed unacceptable. "To counter that embodied opposition by violence is to say… that this body, this challenge to an accepted version of the world is and shall be unthinkable" (Butler *Undoing Gender* 35). The violence enacted upon the bodies of these women both before and while they are incarcerated reflect the "unthinkable," "unacceptable" version of femininity that Francoism has rejected.

Preston claims that "the suffering of women in the prisons had dimensions unknown in the male population" (*The Spanish Holocaust* 511). He goes on to describe the frequency of rape during interrogations and how even transfer to a prison or concentration camp could not fully protect a woman from rape, as Falangists would often visit the prisons at night and take women away to rape them—Ana Cañil makes use of this fact in her novel as Jimena witnesses such an event one night while she is in prison. Even as late as the 1970s, Lidia Falcón is conscious of the

fact that women who are political prisoners in Spain are being tortured in a way that is specific to their gender. She talks about the "connotación sexual de la tortura femenina" (35) when she describes the various forms of torture applied to women's breasts, genitals, womb, and other reproductive organs—some of which we see played out in the films and novels discussed here. She describes the interrogators as enjoying the voyeuristic quality of their "work"—as they are sexually stimulated by the acts of violence committed on the bodies of these women (Falcón 34-35).[10]

Jimena, when she is first arrested in *Si a los tres años,* knows that she is lucky that she has been spared rape when she is returned to her cell with only a dislocated wrist and shoulder and her pregnancy intact and undiscovered—she seems aware that all women do not share her fate. In *La voz dormida,* when one of the main characters, Pepita (sister to the imprisoned Hortensia), is taken to Gobernación after the mailman denounces her for receiving a letter from France from her exiled communist boyfriend (Paulino/El Chaqueta Negra), she is not tortured but rather is forced to witness her friend and communist liaison with whom she has shared secret messages (Carmina) being dragged out lifeless and bloody from an interrogation room (*La voz dormida* 176).[11] In the film version of *Las trece rosas*, one of the girls who is first arrested is forced to undress before her interrogator who watches her with lustful eyes. "El espectáculo

[10] Another film, *Entre rojas* (1995), set in a Madrid jail in 1974 also portrays women as political prisoners who like Jimena in *Si a los tres años,* and also many of the women interviewed by Tomasa Cuevas, are often unaware of why they are being imprisoned as communists, when they were largely uninformed of their male companions' political activities.

[11] In the film version, Pepita is physically tortured by having electrical current applied to her breasts (a common form of torture used on women as both Cuevas's and Falcón's testimonies mention it) and is then thrown into a cell naked—after she is forced to witness the torture of the captured Paulino and her brother-in-law, Felipe.

puede ser más emocionante que la participación," Falcón says, "se puede violar con la mirada" (35).

There are many other instances of torture in these prison narratives—the typical disgracing of the body by shaving the head or forcing the prisoner to drink large amounts of castor oil which then causes her to defecate involuntarily (Elvira's hair is cut short in *La voz dormida* and Reme comforts her by telling her how she had her head shaved more than once). Other times the women are forced to undergo various forms of painful punishments (such as being forced to remain on your knees on top of dried peas or beans for hours, until your knees are bloody and the peas/beans are stained with your blood—as happens to Elvira in *La voz dormida*). The violence enacted against these bodies is graphic and painful to read and watch. It calls to mind the violent response to the other that Judith Butler speaks of when she says that "the violent response is the one that does not ask, and does not seek to know. It wants to shore up what it knows, to expunge what threatens it with not-knowing, what forces it to reconsider the presuppositions of its world, their contingency, their malleability" (*Undoing Gender* 35).

The question remains then, as to whether or not there can be any meaningful sense of agency in a narrative which ends with execution (as with the thirteen roses or even with Hortensia's story in *La voz dormida*). Foucault, in his essay "Right of Death and Power over Life" at the end of the first volume of his *The History of Sexuality*, talks about modern warfare practices and how

> wars are no longer waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended; they are waged on behalf of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity… The principle underlying the tactics of battle—that one has to be capable of killing in order to go on living—has become the strategy of states… at stake is the biological existence of a population. If genocide is indeed the dream of modern powers, this is not because of a recent return of the ancient right to kill; it is because power is

> situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population. (137)

Foucault goes on to say that "capital punishment could not be maintained except by invoking less the enormity of the crime itself than the monstrosity of the criminal, his incorrigibility, and the safeguard of society. One had the right to kill those who represented a kind of biological danger to others" (*The History of Sexuality* 138).

Judith Butler maintains that just because gender is socially constructed by forces of power which lie outside, over, and beyond us, does not mean that there is no possibility for individual agency, even within these socially constructed norms. She says: "that my agency is riven with paradox does not mean it is impossible. It means only that paradox is the condition of its possibility. As a result, the 'I' that I am finds itself at once constituted by norms and dependent on them but also endeavors to live in ways that maintain a critical and transformative relation to them… the 'I' becomes… threatened with unviability, with becoming undone altogether, when it no longer incorporates the norm in such a way that makes this 'I' fully recognizable" (*Undoing Gender* 3). This desire to live in a way that "maintains a critical and transformative relation" to the gendered norms which seek to construct them is what I see the female characters in these narratives attempting to do.

For example, several times in Cañil's novel, *Si a los tres años no he vuelto,* Jimena's strength is compared to both water and rock. Luis, Jimena's husband, tells his brother, Ramón, at one point, "si algo nos pasara…. Jimena lleva dentro la firmeza de Peñalara, como ella dice, y la agilidad de todos los ríos del valle del Lozoya, como te digo yo. No lo olvides" (66). Later, when Luis sneaks home one last time to see Jimena before he flees the country for France in the face of

Casado's coup and Franco's inevitable triumph, he says to her, "No salgas, no llores, tú eres la roca y el agua. Hoy sólo puedes ser la roca Jimena" (67).

"Discipline makes individuals," Foucault says, "it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise" (*Discipline and Punish* 170). Time and again, we see that the "discipline" enacted upon the bodies of these incarcerated women by their nun-jailors fails to produce subjected, normalized bodies. For example, the women in *La voz dormida* are allowed to have a sewing workshop in the basement of the Ventas prison as this is an approved domestic activity deemed appropriate for women in New Spain, but the women turn this opportunity to their advantage by sewing uniforms for the resistance fighters. Cuevas records accounts of the sewing "talleres" which were allowed in the basement of Ventas where the women made uniforms for the army. In the process of making clothes for the army, they managed to make clothes for the "guerrillas" as well and smuggle them beyond prison walls (*Testimonios* 332). Chacón again makes use of this anecdotal testimony by incorporating it into her novel whereby the army uniforms are smuggled out to Elvira's brother (Paulino) and Hortensia's husband (Felipe) who manage to infiltrate the prison, disguised as Nationalist soldiers, taking Elvira and Sole with them in a daring escape plan—a plan which cleverly subverts the intended use of the uniforms the women are forced to sew by their captors.

Also, many of the bonds that the women develop as fellow prisoners in Chacón's novel speak to the capacity they have to subvert oppressive Francoist ideology. For example, as Leggott has pointed out, the character Reme serves as a stand-in mother-figure for many of the younger women around her in prison. She cares for the youngest of the clan, Elvira, when she is sick; she helps Hortensia while she is pregnant; and she even distracts a guard from striking Tomasa by singing loudly. Her actions are self-abnegating and maternal—in the way Francoist

ideology would mandate that a mother behave, however, because of her left-wing loyalties and the fact that her actions serve to undermine authority within the prison system, she is clearly a transgressive element who is capable of subverting the ideology that seeks to inscribe and control her (*Memory, War, and Dictatorship* 54).

Singing was also a popular form of protest while in prison. Both novel and film versions of *La voz dormida* and *Las trece rosas* attest to this. Historical evidence abounds to back up these fictionalized versions of history as Tomasa Cuevas collects and records numerous song lyrics in her *Testimonios*. She even mentions one song with the phrase "lujoso baldosín tenemos por colchón" (*Testimonios* 275) (referring to the lack of beds and the fact that prisoners usually slept on mats on hard, cold, damp floors in Franco's prisons) which is printed in Fonseca's restructuring of events (181) and even sung in its entirety by the young female protagonists in the film version of *Las trece rosas.*

Education was very important to the women in prison as they felt it aided them to resist in some way. Both the novel and film versions of *La voz dormida* show Hortensia either learning how to read and write when she fought as a *miliciana* working under El Chaqueta Negra (novel) or teaching other women to read and write right up to the time of her execution (film). Cuevas's *Testimonios* speak of this "interés loco por aprender" (334) which pervaded the prison as the women organized classes, taught each other, and even read aloud in groups when they were able to get their hands on books. Antonia García, another woman Cuevas met in Ventas, said "no podía haber ninguna analfabeta entre nosotras… Todo el mundo estudiaba y no había nadie que a los seis meses de entrar en la prisión no supiera leer y escribir" (*Testimonios* 331, 334).

Discourse and silence

> Silence itself—the things one declines to say, or is forbidden to name… is less the absolute limit of discourse… than an element that functions alongside the things said… There is no binary division to be made between what one says and what one does not say; we must try to determine the different ways of not saying such things… There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses. (Foucault *History of Sexuality*, "The Repressive Hypothesis" 27).

In her book on the history of the Sección Femenina, Gallego Méndez talks about how silence was always a virtue women were encouraged to cultivate in Francoist Spain: "que las mujeres no usaran su voz. Ellas nada tenían que decir. Sólo debían acatar lo previsto y exigido por el varón, ya fuese el padre o el esposo, el jerarca, el sacerdote o el caudillo" (194). She goes on to quote Pilar Primo de Rivera as having said in a speech: "que vuestra labor sea callada; que a las Secciones Femeninas mientras menos se las oiga y menos se las vea, mejor; que el contacto con la política no nos vaya a meter a nosotras en intrigas y habilidades impropias de mujeres" (194). Silence, Morcillo notes, is "another precious virtue of the Christian woman" as exemplified in Fray Luis de León's *La perfecta casada* (1583), which urges women to refrain from speaking too much as "silence and rare talk is not only a pleasant condition but just virtue" (*True Catholic Womanhood* 39). In Cañil's novel, Topete and other prison guards are constantly trying to get the prisoners to be quiet—as also occurs in both the novel and film versions of *La voz dormida* and *Las trece rosas*. But these efforts are fruitless, as there seems to be no way to silence the prisoners, short of ending their lives. The imprisoned women in these novels and films are continually shouting and singing in protest. Or, they find ways to use silence as another form of protest.

Elizabeth Scarlett, in her work on the body in Spanish novels, talks about the act of religious confession as being the moment when the subjected body comes face to face with the

"channeling force of society" made manifest in the body of the confessor. She goes on to describe how confession implicates a discourse between this incarnate form of power and knowledge (i.e. the confessor) and the subjected body of the individual (144). Foucault, too, notes that the rite of confession is so much a part of Western culture that it is often used to produce truth and can even appear without coercion from the subject on occasion (*The History of Sexuality* 58-59). As Scarlett has indicated, when a woman confesses to a physical representative of a patriarchal power structure, she "opens a space for feminine difference and for the expression of female desire" (144).

Ultimately, what we have in the texts discussed here are two types of confession. What Hortensia and most of the thirteen roses refuse to do just before they are executed is the type of subjugated discourse that we encounter when a "docile body" confronts the incarnate, human representative of patriarchal power and knowledge. Hortensia, in *La voz dormida*, refuses to confess her "sins" to a priest just before her execution as the novel tells us that she would not relinquish her convictions for any reason. In the film version, she refuses to recant her ideals as a communist even when her sister urges her to do so for the sake of her newborn child. Later in the film, she shouts a final "Viva la República" just before being shot. Tomasa (also in Chacón's novel), the woman whose family was so brutally murdered by the Civil Guard officers who pushed them off a bridge and then fired on them as they tried to swim to shore, never tells her cellmates and comrades her story, but keeps silent until she is placed in solitary confinement for having bitten off the foot of the baby Jesus icon when the nun-jailors attempt to force the prisoners to kiss it. Only when she is alone and there is no one to hear her story does she shout it at the top of her lungs ("Grita con todas sus fuerzas para ahuyentar el dolor… Grita para llenar el silencio con la historia, la suya… y cuenta a gritos su historia, para no morir" [213]: hers is "la

voz dormida"—the sleeping voice which has awakened shouting the truth—the one that will drive her to "sobrevivir y nada más," as Hortensia always urged her comrades to do).[12] Tomasa's actions echo Dori Laub's observations that Holocaust survivors "did not only need to survive so that they could tell their story; they also needed to tell their story in order to survive" (78). What Tomasa does is the other kind of confession—the kind that Scarlett identifies as being emitted voluntarily, spontaneously, almost without control on the part of the one confessing (the text mentions that she literally vomits the words). Tomasa's "confession" of all the crimes committed against both her body and the ones of her loved ones is the type of confession that indeed "opens a space" for the expression of female desire and an alternate femininity.

Between the two types of confession, the first might better be identified and defined as the kind of pastoral power that Foucault develops in *The History of Sexuality*. Judith Butler points out that this kind of confession—whereby one person has specific knowledge over the other and is therefore capable of controlling and administering the body of the other person—hinges on the knowledge-power relationship that we have already discussed (*Undoing Gender* 161-162). The nuns and priests who claim to have this knowledge and therefore the right to administer a form of pastoral power over their charges in all narratives discussed here, never truly understand the ideals, convictions, beliefs, and motivations of their charges and so, ultimately, fail in their efforts to "administer" the bodies of the women placed in their charge.

Butler goes on to elaborate on how Foucault in later writings, appears to recant this version of confession as an exercise of pastoral power whereby the confessor seeks to elicit

[12] One might say that Tomasa's sleeping voice is the one for which the novel and film are named but it could also be said that Chacón is really giving all "undocumented" women from Franco's prisons a voice (Everly 72).

confession from the subject so that the confession itself might be subjected to a normalizing judgment. There appears an alternate form of confession in Foucault's later writings such as his essay "About the Beginning of the Hermeneutics of the Self" (1980). Butler maintains that this alternate form of confession hinges not upon a repressive hypothesis, but rather "emphasizes instead the performative force of spoken utterance," whereby the self is constituted by this splitting open, self-sacrificial revelation of the truth. In this version of confession, Butler reminds us, "The point is not to ferret out desires and expose their truth in public, but rather to constitute a truth of oneself through the act of verbalization itself" (*Undoing Gender* 162-163).

One can find examples of both kinds of confessions in the narratives discussed here. In instances of the first kind—the one that involves the use of "pastoral power" is the more common—all prisoners are offered a chance to confess their sins to a priest just before execution. As we have already mentioned, Hortensia in *La voz dormida* turns down this opportunity as do almost all of the thirteen roses in both the film and novel versions of *Las trece rosas*. Blanca, in the novel version of *Las trece rosas,* is the only one who decides to confess to the priest, don Valeriano. Although she says she has nothing to confess and does not know what to say when the priest asks her if she has anything to confess, the omniscient narrator tells us that she wants to confess so that no one in the new regime might accuse her son of not having had a Christian mother. When she finally comes up with something to confess, all she can say is "Estoy llena de espanto" to which the priest replies, "Yo más bien creo que estás llena de pena" (Ferrero 179). What a perfect example of Foucault's pastoral power of confession as a normalizing agent! Because the priest does not possess "knowledge" of Blanca—he neither knows nor understands her actions or her utterances—he therefore projects his own interpretation of her spoken utterance onto her physical body by absolving her and instructing her to pray one "padre

nuestro" when she is before the firing squad. "Es la única oración que puede aliviar ese trance," he says (Ferrero 179). Her truthful "confession" (i.e. being full of fear) is literally obliterated in the face of his interpretation of her confession as acknowledgement of sin (i.e. being full of shame or sorrow), just as her body will be before the firing squad a short time later.

Tomasa (as we have already mentioned), when she is placed in solitary confinement in *La voz dormida*, exhibits a prime example of this second version of confession—the self-sacrificial act—"one that opens the self to interpretation and, in effect, to a different kind of self-making in the wake of sacrifice" (*Undoing Gender* 164). Speaking is a bodily act, Judith Butler reminds us—the act of speaking reminds the hearer that a physical body is present and the speech act ultimately "forms a certain synecdoche of the body"—as it can stand in for the body itself (*Undoing Gender* 172-173). When Tomasa is in solitary confinement, there is no one to hear her "confession"—there is no one to advocate for her physical presence. The text tells us, "Como un vómito saldrán las palabras que ha callado hasta este momento. Como un vómito de dolor y rabia. Tiempo silenciado y sórdido que escapa de sus labios desgarrando el aire, y desgarrándola por dentro" (Chacón 214). It is as if she cannot control the torrent of words that flows out of her like vomit—she rips open her physical self in the pain of telling her story— and the text goes on to say how talking about her family members' deaths makes her relive the pain of those death scenes as well. And even though there is no one there to hear her, she must tell her story in order to survive. Everly points out how, in this novel especially, "women's words are compared to and contrasted with the patriarchal, dominant discourse, resulting in the commingling of two distinct versions of the same event" (64). Therefore, Tomasa's "confession" and Hortensia's "confession" are resistant subversions of the kind of pastoral confession they are subjected to while in prison.

For example, Hortensia knows that she is not going to survive her prison experience and so must tell (confess) her story in another way. She chooses to write to her husband and infant daughter in the blue notebooks that she has in jail and which are delivered to her sister, Pepita, upon her death. Pepita will later give them to Tensi (daughter of Felipe and Hortensia, neither of whom survive to see Tensi grow up). The notebooks then become another sort of "stand-in" for the body of Hortensia, they are not spoken words, but rather written ones—ones that still form a type of confession, a splitting-open of the self to reveal the truth, which will in turn allow for a type of reconstitution of the absent subject. Tensi (daughter) will read these notebooks time and again as she grows up and will come to know her dead parents through the writings of her mother until finally, when she is eighteen years old, she will decide to heed the words of her absent mother and take up the fight where her parents left off by joining the Communist party. ("Lucha, hija mía, lucha siempre, como lucha tu madre, como lucha tu padre, que es nuestro deber, aunque nos cueste la vida" [Chacón 357].)

On the other hand, there are also several times when silence is used as a powerful form of contestatory discourse for these women. In *Si a los tres años no he vuelto*, Jimena stares back at her oppressor, María Topete, in stony silence on many an occasion and then later confesses to her friend Trini that she uses this technique to strip her jailor of her importance, value, even her physical presence as she pretends the nun is clear, running water from her hometown through which she can see the wall behind her. Trini, Jimena's midwife friend in prison, is awed by Jimena's ability to look through la Veneno, one of the guards among the most infamously cruel in Ventas. Trini says Jimena looks at her "como si fuera la repugnante guardiana más transparente que el agua de una fuente" (97). When Trini asks Jimena how she manages to look through the guards as if they were transparent water, Jimena responds "Sí, agua que corre en las

caceras de mi pueblo porque si estuviera estancada se reflejarían en ella. Y yo no quiero que su reflejo se detenga ni un segundo en mis ojos, Trini. No existen" (98). And again we are told, "A la Veneno le sacaba de quicio que Jimena hiciera como que ni la oía. Sabía cómo hacerla transparente, miraba a la pared de enfrente a través de ella, como si no existiera" (207).[13]

Conclusion

As we have seen in the examples underscored here, women on the fringes of "true Catholic womanhood" as the margins were delineated by Francoist policies, were rendered a threat to the state and to the future of New Spain—their bodies had to be locked away from their children, their families, and the rest of society lest they contaminate and spoil all three. Often, their bodies were judged to be so far outside the norm and so dangerous to society that complete elimination was deemed necessary by the state. Judith Butler reminds us that if our personhood is mediated by socially constructed norms of recognition, then we cannot persist without those norms. She says, "I cannot be who I am without drawing upon the sociality of norms that precede and exceed me… I am outside myself from the outset, and must be, in order to survive, and in order to enter into the realm of the possible… when we struggle for rights, we are not simply struggling for rights that attach to my person, but we are struggling *to be conceived as persons*" (*Undoing Gender* 32). This is what the prison narrative does—it shows women who, because of their political beliefs, activities, or sometimes simply their relationships to political activists, struggle under Franco's New Spain to be conceived of as persons. There are some small victories as we have highlighted here: sometimes they escape or are rescued from prison (Elvira and Sole in *La voz dormida* and Jimena in *Si a los tres años*), sometimes their acts of

[13] In a similar fashion, Tomasa, from *La voz dormida*, often has conflicts with the guards and on at least one occasion, uses silence to aggravate an already enraged Mercedes because the text tells us that she knows that "el silencio es lo que más les duele" (43).

defiance are very nearly heroic (such as Tomasa's biting off the baby Jesus foot she is being forced to kiss or her hunger strike in *La voz dormida*), but many other times, they lose the battle to be conceived of as persons and their bodies/gender are not recognized as valid by the state which fails to provide the necessary norms of recognition to sustain them (e.g. Hortensia in *La voz dormida* and the thirteen roses in the both the novel and film ultimately face the firing squad). Is execution, then, not the ultimate failure of the state to create the necessary norms of recognition that would include these women as viable, valuable persons?

When discussing the type of violent, often fatal hate crimes enacted upon the bodies of those who are deemed non-conformists in terms of socially produced gender norms, Judith Butler says that these killings suggest that "life itself requires a set of sheltering norms, and that to be outside it, to live outside it, is to court death… the negation, through violence, of that body is a vain and violent effort to restore order, to renew the social world on the basis of intelligible gender, and to refuse the challenge to rethink that world as something other than natural or necessary" (*Undoing Gender* 34). Near the end of Ferrero's novel, *Las trece rosas,* the nun assigned to confirm the deaths of the thirteen roses after the firing squad has done their duty, moves among the bodies of those shot, checking for any signs of life. She comes upon the body of Ana, often described in the novel as the most beautiful of the thirteen. Hovering over Ana's body she murmurs, "¿Ya ves qué cuerpo tenías? ¿Y los pechos?… Eran como dos manzanas verdes que querían crecer y no se atrevían… ¿Y ahora qué?… Ah, *si no te hubieses hecho notar tanto*… Pero, claro, tú te hacías notar aunque no quisieras" (199, emphasis mine).[14] As Butler says, to live outside a set of sheltering norms is to stand out, to indeed court death. Francoist

[14] Ferrerro's novel has been criticized for its "extremely sexualized male gaze" with only "minor reference to the political experience of the women" and for demonstrating a "fixation on the bodies of the women, their beauty, their sensuality, and their eroticism" (Ramblado Minero 126).

policies directed at women strove to restore order by creating norms that kept the populace in line with very rigid definitions of masculinity and femininity—"to renew the social world on the basis of intelligible gender," as Butler would say. What I have tried to show here is that the novels and films not only reflect the struggle for recognition Republican women in postwar Spanish prisons faced when confronted with the kinds of gender norms produced by the pastoral power of Francoism. Additionally, these fictional narratives allow us insight as to how women might have managed to resist and contest those oppressive gender norms, even in the most desperate of circumstances. In the next chapter, we continue our study of those outside the norm by tracing the history of the *maquis* and the women who either fought alongside them or aided them in other ways in the years following the war. We will see how gender still clamors for recognition, even when it has been excluded to the point of being rendered non-citizens. Just as we did with the stories of women in Franco's prisons, with the *maquis* we continue to listen for echoes of agency, of resistance, of contestation, even from those in the most precarious, marginalized existences.

Chapter Three: Mujeres y maquis: Precarity, Spectrality, and… Agency

Yusta-Rodrigo's work recording the oral history of women who fought with the maquis reminds us that the story of Spanish resistance has not been one traditionally inclusive of women. However, as more recent cultural productions concerning the maquis increasingly feature women as protagonists, the problematic paradoxes inherent in their restricted role as women in Franco's society, while at the same time serving as active agents in the guerrilla, begin to crumble. For the most part, as many have noted, women who participated in the resistance movement were *enlaces* (links or supportive contacts) but only in recent years have they been depicted as anything more than sexual liaisons, playing roles of wives and lovers at best, prostitutes at worst (Di Febo 85-86). The patriarchal system into which they were inscribed relegated them to the sidelines, and if the *guerrilleros* were forgotten warriors, the women who served as *enlaces* were all but invisible (Serrano 213). In more recent years novels and films have demonstrated resurgence in public interest in telling and retelling the stories of the maquis and those who aided them. In the fictional narratives discussed here, we find not only renewed fervor for crafting plots centering on the maquis, but also for featuring women as co-protagonists in those plots.

In this chapter, we will explore how more recent fictional stories about the maquis employ women as main characters, not only acknowledging their sacrifices and struggles, but also highlighting their agency as individuals, playing a distinct yet equal role in the resistance movement, equivalent to that of their male counterparts (be they maquis, *huidos*, or *topos*—all of which we will define momentarily). Due to the fact that Franco's regime never recognized the maquis as a legitimate military threat, but instead labeled them common criminals, fictional

stories about the maquis consistently reflect their marginalized status—always deemed foreign elements to Francoist society. This chapter will employ the concepts of dispossession, spectrality, and foreignness, as articulated by such theorists as Judith Butler, Julia Kristeva, and others, as we explore the way these narratives featuring women and their work with the maquis persist in pushing the paradoxical boundaries lying between marginalization and agency. We will also continue our discussion of subversive, resistant performances of femininity begun in the first two chapters of this work as we highlight the way women in novels and films about maquis from the more recent postwar era tend to play increasingly active, central roles in plots as they transform and transgress the boundaries of "true Catholic womanhood." As Yusta-Rodrigo points out, "la mujer guerrillera es un ser extraño y antinatural que ha traicionado su papel de esposa y madre" (249). In the final section of this chapter, we turn to Giménez Bartlett's novel, *Donde nadie te encuentre* (2011), a novel that is based on the true story of one of the last of the maquis—a story that at its center hinges on the performativity and malleability of gender construction. It is a gender story that serves as a unique metaphor for the plight of the maquis at large.

Who were the maquis and their *enlaces*?

The word itself is derived from the Corsican word *macchia,* which referred to mountainous lands characterized by shrub brush. It is a shortened form of the French word *maquisard* and was later applied to French resistance fighters who struggled again Nazi occupation during World War II. It makes sense that the French and Spanish terms for insurgents hiding out in remote, isolated mountains should be closely related, as many Spanish fighters continued their struggle bravely in Nazi-occupied France once the war in Spain was over. Also, the reference to geographical isolation in remote mountain territories is significant as in the

postwar era, most of the Spanish fighters were located in the northern mountains of Cantabria, León, Asturias, and the Pyrenees. Finally, as we will see in all of the novels and films discussed here, the maquis have become famously inseparable from the mountainous backdrop framing them as they are often depicted as trapped, isolated, and cut-off from outside help by hilly, densely forested terrain (Maroto Camino 29, 31).

Preston divides the story of the anti-Francoist guerrilla forces into two main chronological groupings. The period from 1939-1944 was the time of the *huidos* (the stragglers), or those Republican soldiers who, rather than surrender at the end of the war (or be captured by Nationalist forces in occupied zones during the war), fled for cover to the hills. The second group, from 1944-1951, included the maquis—those Spanish exiles who fought in the French Resistance during WWII, and then crossed back into Spain to continue the struggle against fascism after the defeat of the Nazis ("Urban and Rural" 230). Preston places the height of the maquis' resistance from 1945-1948 when they managed to be "a considerable irritant to the regime" ("Urban and Rural" 234).

In describing what sorts of men joined the maquis, Cañil points out that the maquis were composed of all sorts. While it is true that some joined the resistance movement because of their political ideals and beliefs which they were prepared to defend to the death, others were simply lower class laborers and farm workers who were being oppressed by the Guardia Civil in their towns. Many of them did not have the financial means to get out of Spain as did the more elite among the Republican intellectuals. Still others were humble people of limited means who had lost everything during the war and now were being so hunted, so repressed by the victors of that war that there remained very few options for survival other than fleeing to the mountains and hiding in caves (*La mujer del maquis* 31). While a maquis might be a socialist, a communist, an

anarchist, or simply an anti-Francoist, the PCE (the Spanish Communist Party), was "the only political organization that, for a number of years, devoted the greater part of its human and material resources to the guerrilla" ("Urban and Rural" 232). With the withdrawal of support from the PCE, by the last of the 1940s, the maquis were raiding and stealing just to survive—a fact which the regime used to label them bandits, claiming that they were never anything more at any earlier time ("Urban and Rural" 235).

The maquis of the 1940s and 50s were considered bandits and outlaws until the beginning of the twenty-first century when laws describing them as such were finally revoked (Maroto Camino 4). Part of the reason they may have earned this notoriety was that after the PCE withdrew their support from the maquis around 1946 or 1947, there was no real organizational structure to fortify them or regulate their tactical methods of fighting, so the maquis began to resort to more violent ways of eking out an existence. There were not always love stories involved in their escapades with women. Some young women claimed to have been raped. Others claimed to have been threatened and coerced into sleeping with the maquis. Sometimes the maquis would offer money to the families who took them in and the parents would consent to certain sexual arrangements with their daughters out of extreme poverty (Cañil *La mujer del maquis* 40-41).

The relatives and friends of these resistance fighters were made to suffer terribly by the local authorities, especially in isolated, mountainous regions near where they were ensconced. Sometimes even members of the general populace in these locales, living under martial law, were treated brutally by the Civil Guard as a way to flush out the maquis and their sympathizers. The historian Serrano estimates that around 20,000 *enlaces* were arrested, imprisoned, or executed in their efforts to resist the dictatorship (213). Those who worked as *enlaces* were not

the only ones in danger of suffering reprisals: "girlfriends, relatives, and even acquaintances of insurgent fighters were routinely detained, raped, tortured, and murdered as a means to root out the guerrillas" (Maroto Camino 135). Serrano reports that *enlaces* were sometimes even forced to abandon their homes when it became obvious to the authorities that the maquis were growing stronger due to finding reinforcements in certain villages and towns (214). The "pacto del hambre" ensured that wives and families of the maquis were denied work, and hence, the means to feed themselves. Women were targeted in a gender-specific form of violence as wives, girlfriends, and female relatives of the maquis were often imprisoned, tortured, and held as bait as a way of forcing the maquis out of hiding (Maroto Camino 5-6). We will find women suffering many of these fates described above in the fictional narratives discussed here.

Cañil emphasizes how all homes suspected of aiding the maquis were watched closely by the Civil Guard. One way of figuring out who was supporting the maquis was to keep a tight inventory of all the food consumed by a family in a certain household. The Civil Guard knew how much bread each family bought at the bakery, how many eggs their chickens laid, and how much livestock was being raised and consumed for food. If a family ate too much food, this was taken as an obvious clue that they were aiding the maquis (Cañil *La mujer del maquis* 39-40). The Civil Guard also hunted the maquis by disguising themselves as resistance fighters and taking to the hills to infiltrate their bands, as figures known as *contrapartidas*. By pretending to be maquis, the Civil Guard found yet another way to punish those locals who might come into contact with them and not denounce them immediately (Maroto Camino 86-87).

While it is true that there were some rare instances of women serving among the ranks of the maquis, for the most part, the maquis were armed men—a mixture of exiles and *huidos* who often escaped to the mountains from occupied zones throughout the war—hiding in and

attacking from the mountains, where they depended on the aid of family members and sympathetic villagers to risk their lives continuously in order to help them (Maroto Camino 31). At any rate, it is difficult to determine definitively the exact number of men and women who fought as maquis; Preston places the number anywhere from 3,000 to 15,000 ("Urban and Rural" 234). Likewise, the precise number of women who fought with maquis is difficult to ascertain. In the northern regions, close to the border with France, it is estimated that only 5 out of the 281 members of this unit were women. In the south central region, only 26 out of the 1466 member unit are reported to have been women (Herrmann 6).

Serrano points out that while women did occasionally join their male partners in the resistance movement by fleeing to the mountains, they were not necessarily motivated by political ideology so much as the need to escape the reprisals they were experiencing at the hands of the Civil Guard (214). There were also cases of entire families (due to extreme oppression by local authorities) disappearing to the mountains together to join male family members already there. In the eyes of the regime, women living with the maquis in the mountains were relegated to the role of sexual liaison only (Serrano 220). Serrano stresses that the statutes of all formally organized nuclei of resistance fighters across Spain officially prohibited the permanent presence of women in the mountains, except in cases where their lives were endangered, and even then, it was paramount that they be smuggled out of the country so as to avoid problems with sexual rivalry among the troops, as clandestine sexual relationships were expressly prohibited (221). There are, however, surviving oral testimonies of women who fought as equal comrades with the maquis for a number of years. Remedios Montero and Esperanza Martínez were two best friends who fled to the mountains with other family members in order to join their fathers who were already there. From 1949 to 1951 they remained with the maquis until they crossed into France

to continue their work with the Spanish Communist Party. In their surviving oral testimonies they insist that life with maquis was not one of subjugation as cook, laundress, or prostitute. They were educated while with the maquis, who taught them to read and write, and helped them study Marxist literature. They carried small pistols for self-defense, were not asked to descend into nearby villages to procure supplies, and were routinely welcomed into political group discussions. They repeatedly insisted that romance and sexual liaisons were strictly forbidden (Herrmann 6-7).

The *guerrilleros* themselves often assigned to women a secondary function (as *enlaces* only) as they were not so much concerned with changing the social customs of the day as they were with defeating Francoism (Serrano 221). Therefore, for the most part, women aided the maquis in the role of *enlace* only, as opposed to serving as armed fighters themselves. Serrano estimates that somewhere between 20-40% of all *enlaces* were women (225). Cañil says that the maquis used women primarily to bring them food, transmit messages, and deliver letters in their clandestine operations. Women were uniquely suited to these risky tasks as they could carry, without attracting attention, "las cestas con pan bajo el brazo, las espuertas para la compra, los delantales de grandes bosillos o los faldones y mantas que arropaban al bebé que llevaban en brazos," in which these letters and messages could be easily hidden (*La mujer del maquis* 39). Due to the high rate of illiteracy among rural populations, the decision to aid the maquis was often an act of compassion on the part of neighbors and family members, as opposed to more ideologically motivated conscious acts of resistance (Serrano 225). In light of all these historical facts, the recent films and novels examined here are truly remarkable in their endeavors to move women featured in the maquis' stories from the sidelines to the forefront, from the role of sympathetic aides to fully conscious resistance fighters, as we will soon see.

Changes in cultural representations of women and maquis

Maroto Camino's seminal work, *Film, Memory, and the Legacy of the Spanish Civil War: Resistance and Guerrilla 1936-2010*, investigates the changing ways the maquis are presented in filmic narratives by comparing and contrasting films produced both during and after Franco's regime. In films featuring the guerrilla struggle produced during the Franco era, women were always present; however, they were typically cast as being central to the family—as dutiful mothers who embodied the ideal Catholic woman notion directly associated with the nation. In these films, the internal microcosmic world of the home and patriarchal family was overtly associated with the macrocosmic vision of the Francoist state by employing obvious imagery of women depicted as "silent, discreet, modestly dressed mothers or girlfriends, located in church or at home, and even sewing in front of religious images" (Maroto Camino 18). In other Franco era films, women who acted as *enlaces* to the maquis were portrayed as being equal to the lower classes—a classification which makes sense given the widespread postwar notion that any sort of female agency would have been seen as a threat to the type of patriarchal society that Francoism sought to shore up (Maroto Camino 10-11). In the earlier films, the lower classes, women, and maquis were all caricatured and stereotyped in a way that reveals the "intricate link between misogyny, class prejudice, and the repression of dissidence" that constituted Francoist ideals (Maroto Camino 19).

After the 1970s, Maroto Camino insists that there is a marked shift in the way women are presented in films featuring maquis. The main difference is that women are no longer cast only as wives, mothers, daughters, girlfriends, or sexual liaisons of the maquis but instead are drawn as more direct associates of the guerrillas themselves. Standing in stark contrast to these descriptions of earlier films are the more recently produced films discussed here. Erice's *El*

espíritu de la colmena (1973) is often cited as the first film to depict sympathetically a character who might be considered a maquis (Maroto Camino 20). In this film, the young female protagonist, Ana, smiles briefly at an injured, tattered, transient man who is hiding out in an abandoned house near a well which her older sister has shown her earlier. She brings the man food, her father's overcoat, and offers him what little assistance she can by attempting to tie his bandage tighter around his wounded leg. As a child, she is clearly completely innocent of any wrongdoing in her actions—she could not be expected to understand the full implications of her actions and indeed, there is nothing in the film that suggests anyone is passing judgment on her. Even after the vagrant is killed by the Guardia Civil and her father is called to their headquarters to claim his overcoat (and pocket watch), Ana is never questioned regarding the matter.

A film such as *Luna de lobos* (1987), which is based on the 1985 novel by the same name, stands at a crossroads between Franco-era and post-Franco films by demonstrating certain tendencies to marginalize women (in the way Maroto Camino describes older films doing), while at the same time giving the female characters a somewhat increased amount of agency in their interactions with the maquis. The viewer first meets a small band of maquis in 1937 León and follows their fate until 1946. Juana (sister to Ramiro in the film and to Ángel in the novel) is seen only in traditional female roles—she is either caring for the sheep or for her dying father. She is tortured by the Guardia Civil who are after information on her brother's whereabouts and near the end of the film, she begs him to leave the area because his presence is causing her so much suffering. She has nowhere near the amount of agency that Lucía has (from the 2001 film *Silencio roto*, discussed in more detail below). In contrast to Juana, Lucía can come and go from the village where her relatives live—she seems free to initiate and terminate repeatedly her interactions with the maquis. Lucía also openly threatens physical violence to those who oppress

her—she tells her Nationalist uncle that she will kill him if he denounces one more local person to the Civil Guard. When her life is in clear danger at the end of that film, she makes what appears to be a final decision to leave the village forever.

The only other main female character in *Luna de lobos* is that of María, Ramiro's lover (in the film, not the novel), who alternately sleeps with the local Civil Guard sergeant, as well as Ramiro. She does not seem to have political motivations for helping Ramiro and the other maquis—in fact, he seems surprised and hurt to find her in bed with the sergeant when he comes to her for help. Her actions, as well as her loyalties, are inconsistent. At the end of the film, she, like Juana, urges him to leave, stating that he does not understand how hard life is for the women around him. Standing in striking contrast to her character is Mercedes, the housekeeper from the film *El laberinto del fauno* (2006), who, although working for the enemy (the fascist Captain Vidal), consistently displays her loyalties very clearly as lying with the maquis. Mercedes even goes one step further than Lucía from *Silencio roto* by not only threatening violence against the man (and by extension, the regime he represents) who oppresses her, but actually making good on her promise to gut Vidal like a pig. Taking a knife and repeatedly stabbing the one man the entire local population fears most is an act of agency that characters such as María and Juana from *Luna de lobos* would never dream of doing. In *Luna de lobos*, the maquis are still in the center of the action, while the women who aid them are relegated to the background. In more recent films such as *Silencio roto* and *El laberinto del fauno*, the women are obviously in the forefront of the action, while the maquis really serve as the backdrop to their stories.

Maroto Camino notes that in post-1975 films, the communal values of solidarity and resistance are highlighted, while at the same time the guerrilla fighters' experiences are seen through the eyes of their family, friends, and loved ones, who are cast as the protagonists in the

films. Women are often configured as being central to the actions of the maquis in these later films—an observation that may be viewed as significant in the debate between willful amnesia and the current memory boom, or emphasis on remembrance. While we know that women actively participated in the militia during the war, in the trenches, in the rear guard, on the home front, and even in the resistance movements after the war ended, Spanish history books written up to the 1970s tended to ignore and omit these activities (9-10).

One such film that grounds the story of the maquis on the lives of the women who love them is *Silencio roto*. The action in Armendáriz's 2001 film covers the time period from fall 1944 to winter 1948. The viewer sees, through the main character Lucia's eyes, the mountains, trees, shrubs, and underbrush that covers them, as well as mist and changing weather conditions (such as snow) that surround a remote village in a desolated, impoverished land. The film opens with Lucía arriving by bus after an absence of nine years. She has come to live with her aunt, Teresa, who runs the local tavern and inn for her disabled husband who is always upstairs, issuing his pro-Nationalist mandates from his bed from which he is incapable of moving without assistance. It is worth noting that this film features multiple female protagonists at its very center. We realize this almost immediately—the first thing that Lucía does when she arrives is accompany the women to the local Civil Guard headquarters where they all stand outside and wait for the identity of the latest body to be brought in from the mountain to be revealed. It is a custom which has been repeated many times, it seems. The women gather and wait for news of their dead and captured men. All the men in this story orbit around the women, but are completely dependent on them. Teresa's husband, Cosme, depends on her to run the business for him and sustain him financially; the former Republican teacher, Don Hilario, depends on Teresa's hospitality in feeding him, eventually hiding him from the Civil Guard—it is her

friendship which sustains him. Teresa's self-abnegating virtues in the way she cares for both her disabled husband and her former love interest, Don Hilario, therefore subvert the traditional gendered role prescribed for her by Franco's Spain. She hides information from her right-wing husband and secretly provides as much aid as she can to all those resisting Nationalist oppression in her town, while at the same time exhibiting all the traits of a nurturing, self-sacrificing woman, placing herself at risk in her efforts to protect others from harm, especially her niece, Lucía. Indeed, the maquis hiding outside the town depend on the women to serve as their *enlaces* to bring them news, messages, food, letters, and information about the movements and plans of the local barracks of the Civil Guard. Almost all agency has been stripped from the men and given to the women in this narrative, but all are dispossessed and living precariously—it is just that that dispossession manifests itself in different ways for the men and women of these stories, as we will see.

Dispossession and "Precarity"

In *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political*, Butler and Athanasiou explore how the experience of being dispossessed entails reference to "processes and ideologies by which persons are disowned and abjected by normative and normalizing powers that define cultural intelligibility and that regulate the distribution of vulnerability"—a vulnerability which includes "loss of land and community" and "subjection to military, imperial, and economic violence" (2). All these terms encapsulate well the general living conditions for anyone associated in any way with the Spanish Republic at the end of the civil war. Anyone who resisted, who was a member of any leftist organization or labor syndicate, or who simply did not openly and loudly (enough for your neighbors to hear and not denounce you later) support Franco's military uprising from its very beginning was subject to various forms of dispossession, as we have seen from previous

chapters. At the end of the war, the Spanish Republic was gone—at least in physical, geographic form. As an ideal in the hearts of the men and women who supported it, who still chose to fight to keep it alive, who looked to the Allies for help restoring it (help that would never come), it occupied a non-existent space in which the maquis and their supporters existed as dispossessed individuals. Butler's and Athanasiou's work reminds us how "dispossession is a condition painfully imposed by the normative and normalizing violence that determines the terms of subjectivity, survival, and livability…dispossession involves the subject's relation to norms, its mode of becoming by means of assuming and resignifying injurious interpellations and impossible passions" (2).

One way in which women, specifically, were violently, injuriously dispossessed is by the rhetoric of purity, which pervaded Franco's body politic. Maroto Camino talks about this "rhetoric of purity" which viewed women as receptacles of purity that must not become imbalanced or threatened by their agency and freedom of choices (as we have already seen in the first two chapters of this work). In describing the roles of women in early Franco-era films, Maroto Camino points out that women carry a double significance. As has already been noted, their place in the family dramas into which they have been inscribed represents the supreme example of Catholic womanhood and motherhood. But they are also used to signify "a motherland on whose body the struggle for possession of the body politic is fought. The references to this 'body' accord with the notions of physical pollution, which were so often used in public discourses of the regime, and the implicit fragility of the body politic" (51). In storylines involving the maquis, female characters embody these notions of social purity in two ways—they are either "clean vessels needed to transfer the name of the father domesticated through their reproductive ability, as loyal and devoted mothers, or as tainted outcasts unfit to

belong socially" (Maroto Camino 72). I would say that Ofelia's mother, Carmen, in *El laberinto del fauno* and the priest's version of womanhood as projected onto the mother in *Los girasoles ciegos* (both of which will be discussed in more detail momentarily) would fall under the categorical heading of clean vessels valued only for their reproductive ability in Franco's New Spain. All other female characters in the narratives discussed here serving as *enlaces* would fall into the second category of tainted outcasts unsuitable for society. These women thus become, like the maquis, an enemy within, regardless of whether they did or did not take up arms against the regime. Their mere emotional or familial association with resistance fighters rendered them unfit elements as part of the future construction of "the nation" as they had been "contaminated" by their contact with the maquis. Therefore, they were "abjected" by the normalizing powers that deemed them impure (as stated by Butler), and were subjected to various forms of violence which was enacted on either themselves or those they hold dear, surviving only in a state of constant precariousness.

The maquis, and hence the women who supported them, occupied a precarious position in the version of the Spanish state that Francoism sought to construct. Butler and Athanasiou talk about "precarity" in this way: "In designating the politically induced condition in which certain people and groups of people become differentially exposed to injury, violence, poverty, indebtedness, and death, 'precarity' describes exactly the lives of those whose 'proper place is non-being.' This is indeed related to socially assigned disposability…as well as to various modalities of valuelessness, such as social death, abandonment, impoverishment, state and individual racism, fascism" (19). This description of "precarity" continues with the explanation of how "the power of dispossession works by rendering certain subjects, communities, or

populations unintelligible, by eviscerating for them the conditions of possibility for life and the 'human' itself" (Butler *Dispossession* 20).

Returning to the discussion of "precarity" in the film *Silencio roto*, the women occupy a very precarious position, equal to that of the maquis, and possibly more so. The women themselves recognize their situation and speak of it at several points in the film. For example, when Teresa first realizes that her niece, Lucía, has placed herself in the way of danger by volunteering to take messages to the maquis (the current *enlace* had been captured) almost immediately upon her arrival to the town, she slaps and scolds Lucía harshly: "No te metas en líos," she tells her, "Las ideas son para ellos que viven de ellas—no traen nada bueno." She discourages Lucía from getting involved with the maquis—because "ideas" are not practical and can bring nothing good. But she relents when she realizes that Lucía has fallen in love with Manuel—the newest maquis who has recently been forced to flee to the mountains when the Civil Guards come looking for him (his father is already with "los del monte" and has been for two years). Another example of women who recognize their position of "precarity," and question its validity, can be found in Rosario, the mother of Manuel. Rosario is repeatedly questioned and tortured by the local Civil Guard, due to the fact that both her husband and son are known to be hiding with the maquis. In the summer of 1946, the maquis invade and temporarily take over the town. Matías, husband to Rosario and father to Manuel, is very eager to hold trials and execute those in the town whom he deems an enemy to the "cause." Rosario, realizing that there will be an afterward to the temporary victory of the maquis, asks her husband what will happen to the women in the town after the maquis are gone. As she rightly suspects, more truckloads of Civil Guardsmen soon arrive and the maquis retreat back to the mountains. Rosario is again summoned for questioning to the barracks (local Civil Guard headquarters) and she commits

suicide by hanging herself before this meeting can occur. The viewer is reminded of Teresa's words to Lucía when she first learns her niece is making regular trips to the mountain, "¿Por qué siempre nos toca sufrir a nosotras?" The idea that the women are suffering as much as, if not more than, the men is certainly present here.

Another salient female character in this filmic narrative is the wife of the local Chief of the Civil Guard. She is often seen (and first seen) through the window of her private quarters above the barracks. She watches from above the women waiting for the news of the identity of the dead body that has been brought down from the mountain and makes eye contact with Lucía. It is as if there is only a hairsbreadth between them in their stations in life. They could very easily change positions. This young wife comes to Teresa's tavern on one occasion to warn the women working there that the Civil Guard is looking for Manuel. This warning allows Lucía enough time to get to Manuel first and he, in turn, has enough time to escape to the mountains to join his father and the other men fighting there. The Chief's wife also tells Lucía at one point that her husband is only doing his job—that he needs this job in order for the two of them to survive. And near the end of the film, when Lucía has returned after an absence of almost two years to beg Manuel to flee to France where she would later join him with their infant daughter, the Civil Guard chief (husband of this young conflicted wife) is summarily shot by the maquis who have captured him, right in front of Lucía. And this time it is Lucía who locks sympathetic eyes with the now young widow of the Chief, later in the town square as she and her husband's corpse are removed from the town by truck. All the women suffer in this town, it would seem—the constant war between the men on both Nationalist and Republican sides brings nothing but destruction to all the women whose lives they touch.

Lucía occupies a unique position among all the women in the film. Hers is the viewer's position—the outsider's position. Because she does not live in the town, because she is only visiting her aunt, she can come and go. She walks in and out of the tremendous suffering she is forced to endure and observe during her stays in the town. When she first becomes pregnant with Manuel's child, she begs him to leave with her, but he will not leave the cause. When she comes back almost two years later, she has secured the necessary papers for Manuel to escape to France, but he still will not leave, even though Lucía reminds him that no country is coming to help them and there is no future in staying with the maquis. The second (and final) time that Lucía leaves the town, she barely escapes with her life—she is arrested with her aunt Teresa, Don Hilario, and Manuel and another maquis, but is let go after the others are all shot. Through Lucía's eyes, the viewer sees not only the "precarity" of the maquis and their cause, but also the senselessness of violence and death brought on by the perpetual, apparently futile, resistance of the maquis. "Estoy harta de los del monte y del todo," she says to Manuel after his mother commits suicide and his father is pushed off a cliff for his insubordination among the ranks of the maquis themselves. And she chooses to leave the town one last time on the bus, looking back at the mountains—she is finally turning her back forever on the maquis and their lost cause, and in so doing, chooses to extract herself from their precarious state.

Spectrality

When Athanasiou and Butler mention checkpoints (or borders between two countries), we see how the "dialectic of presence and absence" plays out. "This condition of bodily enclosure and exposure can become the occasion not only of subjugation but also of resilience, courage, and struggle… there is a dialectic of presence/absence that goes on in this differentially distributed political condition of bodily exposure, whereby presence (or a presence-effect) is

produced by being constantly haunted by its spectral absences or (mis)recognized presences" (16). The specter is "the trace that remains from the other's uncanny presence as absence…. the lexicon of the specter here is not meant to conjure away corporeality… the specter involves a return to some sort of bodily presence, be it displaced, dismembered, enclosed, or foreclosed" (Butler *Dispossession* 16-17). If the maquis are like specters, appearing out of and dissolving into the camouflage of the forest undergrowth, then so are the women who assist and support them—they are both there and not there. Their presence becomes an absence when they confront the other of Francoism. Because in Franco's New Spain, they have no place, they are forced to exist only on the fringes of the society that rejects them.

The women in these narratives who are dispossessed of any possibility of achieving "true Catholic womanhood," also struggle to survive as specters, in perpetual "precarity." They have been deemed socially impure by their associations with the maquis, which is why they are continually harassed by those who govern them. As mentioned earlier, in order to maintain this purity in the Spanish body politic, the social fabric must be cleansed by ritualistic bloodshed, which was a key component of the regime's cleansing policies, as has been well documented by many historians. This purifying language, derived largely from Catholic Church doctrine, was promoted as necessary for the Spanish state to do penance for its sins after the war. Women were often affected adversely by these widely held views that self-sacrifice, self-mortification, and indeed bloodshed, were necessary to purify the New Spain in its incipient stages (Maroto Camino 11-12). At times we see women being driven to desperation by the physical manifestations of this rhetoric of social purity, which is why the tortured mother in *Silencio roto* eventually kills herself and why Lucía, after having witnessed the executions of practically all her loved ones involved in the resistance struggle in any way, leaves the town at the end of the

film, having been forced to give up on any dream of a family life that she might construct with the father of her child, a maquis who has been executed within her earshot. As the maquis in *Silencio roto* invade, make themselves present, briefly control, and then retreat from the town, the women sway back and forth with them—they possess and are dispossessed; they are present and then they are absent. In the 1985 novel version of *Luna de lobos*, the narrator Ángel acknowledges that his lover, María, is condemned to share his spectral existence because of her association with him. He refers to her as a "mujer solitaria, hermosa y joven todavía, pero ya condenada para siempre a esperar a una sombra, a un fantasma. A alimentar un recuerdo de un hombre que jamás volverá" (Llamazares 57). These are all specters living in precarity—a very difficult line to walk.

In addition to the women who assist the maquis, the women who assist the *topos* (those sympathetic to the Republican causes who immediately went into hiding at the end of the war, some for years or even decades), walk a fine line between being seen and not being seen as well. The husband, Ricardo, in Méndez's story version of *Los girasoles ciegos* (2004), is described in the text as being an *huido* as he was a professor and organizer of an anti-fascist writers' group, and had associations with communists, masons, and trade unionists. He disappears at the end of the war by remaining indoors at all times, and spending increasing amounts of time in his hiding place in the wall behind the armoire. His seven-year-old son, Lorenzo, is instructed to tell anyone who asks that his father is dead. His wife, Elena, does the same. Lorenzo's voice narrates parts of the story in the first person and he speaks repeatedly of the double life all members of the family are forced to live in order to keep his father alive. He describes this state of precarity that he and his parents live in as being divided between light and darkness and between the world in front of and behind the mirror that covers this father's hiding place: "Ese cosmos estaba netamente

dividido en dos mitades: la lóbrega y la luminosa… yo era capaz de estar a un lado y a otro sin confundirme gracias a las enseñanzas del espejo… Yo tenía que disimular lo que mi padre me enseñaba en casa cuando estaba fuera y remozar lo que ocurría en el exterior cuando estaba en casa" (Méndez 121). In another moment, Lorenzo describes the state his family is living in as a fragile bubble: "yo también estaba asustado por si se rompía la burbuja donde ocultábamos nuestra cotidianidad familiar y el exterior… lograba penetrar en nuestro mundo arrasando nuestras ternuras silenciosas, nuestra felicidad disimulada" (Méndez 124).

The third person narration also speaks of Ricardo's existence as being spectral. As time goes on and Ricardo becomes more severely depressed with his state of self-imposed "house arrest," he begins to drink more. Elena tries to encourage him not to give in to desperation saying, "Necesitamos estar lúcidos para…," but he finishes her sentence with "Para vivir como si no existiéramos" (Méndez 128). Ricardo's statement: "to live as if we do not exist" makes obvious the precarious, liminal state the entire family is trapped in and echoes the narrator, Ángel's words in *Luna de lobos*: "Es como si estuviéramos muertos. Como si, fuera de aquí, no hubiera nada" (Llamazares 27).

In the film version of *Los girasoles ciegos*, the lecherous deacon's comments to Elena make it overtly clear just how much of a performance she is required to give in order to maintain a delicate balance of safety for her husband's sake. Near the end of the film, the deacon comes to her home and professes to know why she acts the way she does—he declares that he "knows" how she has suffered under the heavy anti-clerical arm of her now-dead (he thinks) husband. He assumes that she has been suffering in docile, submissive silence all these years that her communist husband did not let her baptize her children, attend mass, or even have a church sanctioned wedding. And she very consciously performs "true Catholic womanhood" just as long

as she can in order to keep her husband alive. To the outside world, she is a quiet, hardworking widow devoted to the care and education of her son but in the private world of her home, she is also the provider and protector of her husband. Her husband's spectral existence is part and parcel of her own—by necessity she is a false reflection of all that the obsessed cleric believes her to be.

In one final striking example of spectrality which stands out in this short story, Lorenzo's voice once again narrates an episode that occurs one day when he has friends over to play. His father was supposed to be in his hiding place as usual but he feels sick and must go to the bathroom. One of his friends notices the shadow that crosses the hallway. Elena explains to the children that it was simply "un fantasma que de vez en cuando venía a visitarnos" (Méndez 133) and then when they hear the toilet flush, she adds: "Siempre hace lo mismo este fantasma. Tira de la cadena y se marcha" (Méndez 134). She uses the word "fantasma" (ghost) to explain the evidence of her husband's presence—she and her young son are living with a ghost, and so are necessarily participants in his spectral existence. The third person narrator tells us: "la vida de Ricardo se había resuelto como la del aire: estaba pero no ocupaba lugar en el espacio" (Méndez 142). While Ricardo's life is there, yet does not occupy space, his wife Elena is a specter too—a specter, a pale reflection of the woman she might otherwise be, were she not living in such a stifling society. As we have already suggested, her entire life is a contrived performance: she sends her son to a Catholic school while teaching him at home to resist being instilled by their values; she pretends her husband was killed in the war; she pretends the German translations she sells to keep the family alive are her own. She, like all women aiding maquis or *topos*, walks a dangerous line—a tightrope—in a constant state of precariousness, having been publicly dispossessed of her own private identity.

Dispossession and Agency: a unique role for women

In her investigative book, *La mujer del maquis*, the journalist Ana Cañil describes how the women who aided or were in any way associated with the maquis occupied a special role in postwar Spain. They were not the submissive wives and mothers in Pilar Primo de Rivera's Sección Femenina who were pushed so far back out of public social life that they became "el mejor sostén, el más silencioso y alienado de la dictadura" (18). But neither were they the *milicianas* fighting in the trenches or serving alongside La Pasionaria or joining the FAI (Federación Anarquista Ibérica) and advocating free love. These women who took great risks in aiding the maquis were something different still. Cañil points out that they were usually either Catholics or skeptics; none that she interviewed identified as atheist. They were simple women from small towns and villages who were, above all, pragmatic, as they had to be in order to survive. Cañil describes them this way: "Eran madres normales, chicas vulgares, adolescentes enamoradas que se vieron arrastradas en su destino por unas circunstancias que las sobrepasaron" (19). Even for these poor women in remote, isolated villages their gendered identity was dictated to them—how to dress, arrange their hair, talk, pray. And as we have seen in the last chapter on women in Franco's prisons, to stand out in any way was to court danger. Cañil says, "significarse era una lacra de por vida. Daba igual que una se significara con un beso con el novio en la plaza, con una falda más corta o con una idea diferente a la grisura medioambiental. Por no hablar del pecado de quedarse preñada. Si alguien se saltaba las normas no escritas, se significaba… y su vida se convertía en un infierno" (19-20).

Dispossession leaves all those it touches without a home, without a nation, without an identity. Butler reminds us of how we are dependent on others to sustain us:

> if we are beings who can be deprived of place, livelihood, shelter, food, and protection, if we can lose our citizenship, our homes, and our rights, then we are fundamentally dependent on those powers that alternately sustain or deprive us, and that hold a certain power over our very survival. Even when we have our rights, we are dependent on a mode of governance and a legal regime that confers and sustains those rights. And so we are already outside of ourselves before any possibility of being dispossessed of our rights, land, and modes of belonging…we are interdependent beings whose pleasure and suffering depend from the start on a *sustained social world, a sustaining environment*. (Butler *Dispossession* 4; emphasis mine)

Without the Republic and without the continued backing of the Spanish Communist Party, which gradually ceased sending any sort of aid to the maquis, these resistance fighters would slowly falter and fail. One such story about the loss of a sustaining environment for the maquis and the agency that women can demonstrate in providing that lost sustaining environment (or one woman in particular) is Almudena Grandes's novel, *Inés y la alegría*, which fictionalizes the 1944 Arán Valley invasion.

The 1944 Arán valley invasion was the only organized anti-Franco guerrilla invasion launched from France. Preston estimates that 12,000 men invaded Spain through the Pyrenees, but that in most of their skirmishes with Franco's forces, they were outnumbered by at least four to one ("Urban and Rural" 233). As Grandes's novel documents, there was no external help provided and the mission was doomed to fail from the beginning. There was no "sustaining environment" to validate the existence of the maquis and so they were slowly starved out, hunted down, killed off. The women who attempted to keep them alive were the only sources of sustenance they had and they became (as we will see in the following discussion) the only form of the nation, the home, the nurturing safe place to which the maquis had any access. In Grandes's novel, Galán, the leader of the Arán Valley invasion, is terribly demoralized by the lack of support his men receive once they invade Spain. When they encounter a group of

prisoners working in a field, they declare them all "liberated" and invite them to join forces and continue liberating other towns, other prisoners. But the prisoners run away—they have been oppressed and have suffered too much for too long to have any will left to resist through warfare. Galán clings to his relationship with Inés, who has fled her nationalist brother's home near the French border on horseback in order to join herself to the resistance fighters and declare her loyalty to their cause. For Galán, Inés represents the Spain he has lost—the Republican Spain that he realizes can never be recovered. As he recalls the first time he sees Inés, he recounts their meeting in this way:

> …aparecieron dos soldados diciendo que a la vez que teníamos una invitada y una prisionera… y me encontré en la puerta con mi propia versión de la patria perdida. España medía un metro setenta. Nunca antes había sido tan alta, pero su estatura no era lo único que llevaba la atención… España era guapa y no era guapa… Tenía los ojos oscuros, la piel bronceada… España podía presumir de nariz, estar contenta con su barbilla y celebrar aún más la desnuda elegancia de sus mandíbulas… España tenía un esqueleto interesante, poderoso, incluso vestida de aquella manera extraña, un cruce pintoresco entre señorita amazona y miliciana aficionada, botas y pantalones de montar, una camisa blanca con volantes en el pecho, una americana de terciopelo, un chubasquero muy usado, una manta sobre los hombros y una pistola bien visible, encajada en la cintura del pantalón… Eso fue Inés para mí, un país cuyos límites coincidían exactamente con el que yo añoraba, la España que había poseído, a la que había pertenecido una vez y ya no sabía dónde encontrar fuera de mi memoria… (338-339)

And then later when he tries to convince his men of the futility of their efforts—that retreat is now necessary before Franco's troops arrive to massacre them all, his only consolation that the invasion has not been completely in vain is that at least he found Inés, even if he has lost his beloved Spain forever. Immediately after ordering his men to retreat he says, "En ese momento fue cuando me atreví a creer que todavía me quedaba Inés, que aquel viaje me había dado algo que necesitaba. *Si no un país, al menos una mujer donde vivir*" (380; emphasis mine). And then finally he says, "me habría hundido si no hubiera podido agarrarme a Inés, si ella no hubiera

servido para mantenerme a flote" (381). Inés "saves" Galán in many ways. Not only does she alert him to the presence of a sniper in a church tower thereby saving his life as well as those of many of his men, but also Galán can "stay afloat" and survive in French exile for almost his entire adult life (as he and Inés and their children do not return to Spain until after Franco's death), outside of and without hope for the recuperation of a Republican Spain, because in his dispossessed and displaced state, he finds in Inés home, nation, and identity.

It could be argued that Inés also finds the same (home, nation, identity) in Galán. Her first boyfriend, Pedro Palacios, denounces her for her work with the Socorro Rojo and gets her sent to prison. From prison, she is taken to a convent, where she learns to cook with the nuns but otherwise is so miserable that she attempts suicide. From the convent, she ends up in her brother's home where she is held hostage and sexually assaulted by his beastly military comrade. Galán and the other Republican ex-pat exiles that Inés makes a home among (and later starts a restaurant with), represent the lost Republican Spain she first dared to align herself with when she was very young and they provide her with a safe, sustaining environment in which to exercise a resistant form of femininity, one that would not have been possible in Franco's New Spain. For example, while the nuns are attempting to reform and rehabilitate Inés in the convent, they teach her to cook very well. She later hones this skill at her brother's home, where she is allowed complete freedom of expression in the kitchen. But when she flees her brother's home to join herself with the invading Arán Valley resistance fighters, she becomes a fighter alongside them (she steals a gun from her brother's home), as well as their head chef. Later, once she is safely living in French exile with Galán and the other surviving members of his troops, she will form a cooperative restaurant and essentially own and manage her own business with the other women who are also Spanish ex-pats. Cooking, a traditionally nurturing and self-sacrificing

enterprise for a woman in Franco's Spain, becomes her means of economic and emotional, psychological survival once Inés has escaped all the stifling options a postwar Spain has to offer her (e.g. prison, convent, house arrest). Esperanza Martínez, one of the previously mentioned women who served with the maquis, also commented on how her work with the resistance represented a certain amount of freedom—of escape from the oppressive social destiny of rural wife and mother that would not have been otherwise accessible to her in the Spain of the early postwar years (Yusta-Rodrigo 244).

Butler's conversations with Athanasiou in *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* go on to discuss how presence can occasion displacement. They explore how

> …in becoming present to one another, we may be dispossessed by that very presence. In becoming present to one another, as an occasion of being both bound up with subjugation and responsive and receptive to others, we may be positioned within and against the authoritative order of presence that produces and constrains the intelligibility of human or non-human presence… Even though we are compelled to reiterate the norms by which we are produced as present subjects, this very reiteration poses a certain risk, for if we reinstate presence in a different, or catachrestic way, we might put our social existence at risk (that is, we risk desubjectivization). (14-15)

The female characters discussed here try to reiterate the norms by which they are produced as subjects so as to not "significarse" (Cañil)—stand out, call attention to themselves—and arouse suspicion. Their gendered performance is still a risk, as Butler says, for if they "perform" in any sort of way that is judged inadequate, they put their social existence, and indeed their very ability to stay alive, in a precarious state. This interplay between presence and displacement, between possessing and being dispossessed strikes me as a blurry line along which to walk—a hazy, dangerous, liminal region in which to float along between existence and non-existence. Certainly the maquis were present and not present at the same time, which meant that their female *enlaces* (or anyone connected to them in any way) also walked this line between being seen and not seen,

between being present and not present. For example, all the women in these stories about the maquis try not to be noticed—they watch what they wear, how they walk, what time of day or night they go out—and they pretend that they are not really present in order to do what they are there to do. Lucía and her friend, Lola, in *Silencio roto*, wear mantillas in church, only to rip them off the moment the maquis invade and interrupt the service. Lucía takes messages to the maquis by bicycle under the guise of taking groceries to an elderly couple who live in the mountains. As we have already mentioned, Elena in *Los girasoles ciegos* is constantly performing: pretending that it is important to her that her son get a Catholic education, pretending to be a war widow, pretending she learned German during the war from a pen pal (as she tells the man to whom she sells her husband's German translations), pretending not to notice or not be bothered by the increasingly overt advances of the cleric. These women are all "compelled to reiterate the norms by which they are produced as subjects" while constantly risking desubjectivization (Butler). Mercedes, in *El laberinto del fauno*, feels guilty (as we see when she confesses to her brother this guilt she feels while working for Vidal, the "enemy") about her performance but she needs to continue that performance as the harmless, unassuming housekeeper in Vidal's household in order to help the maquis. Therefore, all of these "reiterations of norms" can be read as resistant. And these characters do manage to achieve a certain amount of success with their performance: Lucía in *Silencio roto* escapes with her life even after extreme acts of defiance, Elena in *Los girasoles ciegos* has completely duped the deacon with her performance of "true Catholic womanhood" (even though her "reiteration of norms" will eventually be discovered as false), and Mercedes in *El laberinto del fauno* gives such a good performance that the Captain never suspects her of mutiny until it is too late. There is a moment when she despairs of her precarious position and expresses to her brother her

extreme disgust in having to pretend to be loyal to the Captain: "I cook his meal, I wash his clothes, I clean his house"—her loyalty is a feigned performance but it will be the undoing of Captain Vidal. Butler reminds us of how dispossession can also provide opportunity for "situated acts of resistance, resilience, and confrontation within the matrices of dispossession, through appropriating the ownership of one's body from these oppressive matrices" (*Dispossession* 22).

Perhaps the best example among the films examined here of women connected to the maquis who exercise agency by engaging in "situated acts of resistance" even while living in a dispossessed state, is found in the film *El laberinto del fauno* (2006). Mercedes the housekeeper is often seen early on in the story in the interior, feminized world of the home, the kitchen, and the food storehouse while Captain Vidal is around (her fascist employer), but she explodes the paradoxes surrounding her as she is also seen (by the viewer, not Captain Vidal) stepping outside the traditional role of "true Catholic womanhood" and interacting directly with the maquis. She signals to the maquis hiding in the mountains outside the mill, hides food and medicine for them under the floor boards of the kitchen, helps get the doctor to them to treat the wounded Frenchman fighting with them—she resists in a way that Captain Vidal would never imagine she could, given his prejudices and her status as a woman in New Spain. And when he finally does see her for what she is—a spy in his house, a resistance fighter herself, he is still blinded and shocked by the revelation of the kitchen knife she hides in her apron as a weapon. She makes good on her promise to gut him like a pig as she slashes his face open just before he attempts to torture her. Her words recall her prescribed role as a woman as seen by Vidal—she should be using that knife to prepare his food. He says at one point while interrogating her, "No es más que una mujer." He cannot believe that someone he has deemed harmless and nearly useless could represent such a dangerous source of resistance from within his own house.

Ofelia, the young daughter of Vidal's new pregnant wife, Carmen, together with Mercedes, function as the protagonists of the story. Every time Mercedes is shown helping the maquis, Ofelia is nearby shadowing her movements. Towards the beginning of the film, Ofelia steps outside her mother's bedroom and first sees Mercedes conferring with the Doctor on the landing about a packet of medicines Mercedes was to take to the maquis. On another occasion, when the Captain is hosting a dinner with various high-ranking members of the community, Mercedes goes out to the edge of the woods to signal to the maquis with a lantern, and Ofelia walks up through the woods and sees her—she is not blinded to Mercedes's value as a woman as Vidal is. Ofelia later shows herself to be just as much of a resistance fighter as Mercedes and her brother when she drugs the Captain with her mother's sleeping medicine, and takes her newborn brother from the Captain's quarters near the end of the film. Mercedes and Ofelia both live in a state of constant "precarity" in the Captain's household, but they are both underestimated by Vidal, which is how they are able to defeat him in the end, even though Ofelia dies by his hand. Just before Mercedes stabs Vidal repeatedly and escapes the torture he has planned for her, he expresses his surprise to learn that she was the informant living right under his nose. "Era invisible para usted," she says to him, pointing out her spectral state—because she was a woman she was invisible to him, even though she had been dispossessed of the Spain she knew before the war, she is able to seize upon the opportunity to hide the kitchen knife in her apron once she realizes Vidal has determined she is the one who has been aiding the maquis from within his household. She uses her position of invisibility and spectrality within his patriarchally dominated world to transgress its borders and claim an agency of her own—one he could never conceive her capable of. Throughout the film, but especially near the end, she participates in what Butler designates "situated acts of resistance, resilience, and confrontation with the matrices of

dispossession, through appropriating the ownership of one's body from these oppressive matrices" (*Dispossession* 22).

Forever foreign

"Foreigner: a choked up rage deep down in my throat, a black angel clouding transparency, opaque, unfathomable spur. The image of hatred and of the other… the foreigner lives within us: he is the hidden face of our identity, the space that wrecks our abode, the time in which understanding and affinity founder. By recognizing him within ourselves, we are spared detesting him… Can the 'foreigner' who was the 'enemy' in primitive societies, disappear from modern societies?" (Kristeva in Oliver 264). In her work *Strangers to Ourselves*, Kristeva explores the notion of how the foreign dwells inside us, and how the foreigner disappears when we all acknowledge ourselves as foreigners. But Franco's New Spain was acutely conscious of the "foreigners" hiding within its borders (literally struggling to exist at its borders), and constantly sought to exterminate and eradicate all "foreign" elements, never capable of recognizing any element deemed "impure" as also Spanish, as we have seen throughout each chapter of this work.

For one final example of gendered spectrality as it is associated with the maquis and their foreignness in a postwar society, we turn to Alicia Giménez Bartlett's 2011 novel, *Donde nadie te encuentre*. Noting that the title itself suggests a liminal space where identity is blurred, concealed or even lost, we find the fictionalized story of one of the last of the maquis, known as La Pastora. Most scholars agree that by the early 1950s, nearly all maquis had been killed, imprisoned, or exiled in countries such as France and Morocco. By the early 1960s, the only maquis hanging on were fighting only for personal survival (Moreno-Nuño 4). The setting for

the novel is 1956, well after the height of the maquis' activities, in the remote mountainous regions of Spain near the border with France. Like many of the authors and filmmakers discussed here, Giménez Bartlett grounds her fictionalized tale of self-exploration and self-discovery on the historical account of La Pastora assembled by the journalist José Calvo, *La Pastora: Del monte al mito* (Giménez Bartlett 497). La Pastora is a character of some renown as she appears briefly in the definitive work on the history of the maquis by the Spanish historian Serrano, where he describes her as a woman who "modificaba de manera sustantiva las convenciones sobre la mujer y la violencia armada" (227). Giménez Bartlett creates two fictional characters, a Spanish journalist (Infante) and a French psychologist (Nourissier), who in 1956 go in search of La Pastora, ostensibly for the purposes of Nourissier's research, as he is fascinated by this case study in gender ambiguity after reading an article on La Pastora written by Infante. La Pastora is Teresa Pla Meseguer, a hermaphrodite born in Vallibona and assigned female gender at birth by her mother, who felt she was protecting her child from military conscription and certain humiliation had she assigned her child a male gender. La Pastora (this was the nickname affiliated with her, both before and during her time with the maquis) was constantly teased, tormented, and beaten by other children (who frequently called her "Teresot" in reference to her masculine size and strength) for her inability to perform femininity to socially acceptable standards in her community. She always dressed in long skirts and high collared shirts that sympathetic seamstresses in her community made for her, in an attempt to hide her long, strong limbs and body. As a fairly young child, her mother sent her to live with a farming family whose children did not beat her constantly as did her own siblings and she became famous locally for her talents taking excellent care of livestock, hence the nickname. As Giménez Bartlett narrates in the afterword to the novel, La Pastora's name was not officially changed to Florencio, nor was

her gender legally assigned male until near the end of her life, after many years in various prisons where she served sentences as punishment for her guerrilla activities. (Therefore, to avoid confusion, I will refer to this character as La Pastora and continue to use feminine pronouns as Giménez Bartlett constantly has her protagonist switching gendered pronouns throughout the first person narrated segments in the novel.) As La Pastora matured, she spent more and more time alone, often sleeping in the outdoors with only her animals as her companions. She became very solitary in nature, unable to find a place in society where she could be accepted without physical and verbal abuse. At several points in the novel, she laments her inability to marry and have children as other women do, as she notes that very small children do not reject her or treat her cruelly—for them, as well as for the animals she takes care of, her gender ambiguity is of no consequence.

How appropriate that she find a place among the maquis—not especially motivated by political reasons or any real desire to fight Francoism, but she needed a borderline space in which to survive, on the fringes of the society that had completely rejected her, and within the maquis she found a "sustaining environment" that accepted and nourished her. Throughout Giménez Bartlett's novel, La Pastora and her lone maquis companion, Francisco, constantly refer to themselves as "forasteros" (strangers). Kristeva, in her *Strangers to Ourselves*, describes the plight of the foreigner in this way: "A secret wound… drives the foreigner to wandering… Arrogant, he proudly holds on to what he lacks, to absence… Riveted to an elsewhere as certain as it is inaccessible, the foreigner is ready to flee… he seeks that invisible and promised territory, that country that does not exist but that he bears in his dreams" (Oliver 267). All the maquis in the films and novels discussed here, speak of the Spanish Republic in this way—as a homeland they have lost—as a place only accessible in their dreams and memories. But they refuse to give

up on this inaccessible dream—even when their persistence endangers the lives of those they love. Like the women in *Silencio roto*, like Mercedes in *El laberinto del fauno*, Francisco's family suffers too—there is a heart-wrenching account of the final time he sees his mother in the novel—knowing that without the larger organization of the maquis to back him, he faces certain death. And La Pastora's life is in just as much danger as the friends and loved ones surrounding the other maquis and *topos* we have already mentioned.

Describing her life to her interviewers in the novel, she says, "Acabas por no ser ni una mujer, ni un hombre: no eres nada, nadie te espera, nadie se preocupa por ti" (Giménez Bartlett 48). "Nada" is just one word she uses to describe her existence on the fringe of society. At one point, she describes how cruelly most children treated her when she was young: "Las ovejas me hacían compañía… Eran mucho mejores que los niños del pueblo. No me decían nada ni se quedaban mirándome como si yo fuera un monstruo o un demonio… me dijo uno… estás con los fantasmas en el monte" (Giménez Bartlett 102). The language she uses to describe her existence is saturated with spectrality—it is that of one denied an existence: "nothing," "monster," "demon," and "ghost".

As the fictional Nourissier, French psychologist, and Infante, Spanish journalist, travel from the comforting civilization of Barcelona to more remote villages and finally to nearly desolate regions where they ultimately meet and interview La Pastora face to face, we see them begin to internalize elements of spectrality and dispossession as these aspects apply to the maquis in general, and La Pastora in particular. At one point near the beginning of the search, the omniscient narrator informs the reader of Nourissier's increasing feelings of disorientation: "Se sentía como si hubiera abandonado el mundo normal, la cotidianeidad de una vida juiciosa, como si hubiera despertado en un paraje de sueño en el que no regían los mismos valores, las mismas

reglas de civilización" (Giménez Bartlett 77). And later, as their trip drags on, his wife says to him once over the phone: "Cada vez te noto más lejos, como si estuvieras distanciándote de nosotras" (Giménez Bartlett 192). Infante and Nourissier embark on a life-changing journey in their efforts to confront the "other" that La Pastora represents. Kristeva says, "the other leaves us separate, incoherent; even more so, he can make us feel that we are not in touch with our own feelings… Confronting the foreigner whom I reject and with whom I at the same time identify, I lose my boundaries, I no longer have a container… I lose my composure. I feel 'lost,' 'indistinct,' 'hazy'" (Oliver 286). After Infante and Nourissier finally meet and interview La Pastora, Infante encourages Nourissier to return to his home, family, and medical practice, urging him to forget all that he has seen and heard while in Spain. But Nourissier denies that this would be possible: "Imposible, sería como suplantar a otra persona" (Giménez Bartlett 496). Both characters have been indelibly changed by their confrontation with foreignness, with spectrality, and have experienced their own personal dispossession of identity.

La Pastora narrates how she came to live among the maquis by describing the difficult economic situation after the war. People could no longer afford to hire her to take care of their livestock so she had to live off the land as best she could. Living in the woods, she began to encounter maquis from time to time. They would ask her to share her food with them and take messages into towns for them as well as buy them supplies. They paid her small amounts of money for the tasks she did and as they treated her with respect, she was glad to oblige. As her contact with them increases, they begin to influence her to think about her life in a different way—they offer her acceptance, stressing that in the world they seek to create after the fall of Franco, there would be education for the humble masses, there would be no distinction between rich and poor, and people would accept her regardless of her gender identity. When she sees

what the local Civil Guard are doing to her friends and neighbors who also serve as *enlaces* to the maquis, and with the offer that they will teach her to read if she will consent to join their cause, she agrees and begins to cry. The leader of the maquis who convinces her to join their group says: "Tranquilo, hombre, tranquilo, que ya dicen que los hombres no deben llorar. Mira tú qué pronto te manda y te jode la gente con lo que puedes y no puedes hacer" (Giménez Bartlett 250). Once she joins the maquis, she must learn to "perform" her newly assigned gender in a more masculine way—she must cut her hair, wear pants instead of skirts, and never cry. As she undergoes these first steps in the process of her formation into a fully armed maquis she says, "Yo, que había dormido en el monte desde chica, que me hubiera enfrentado a cualquiera sin que me temblara la mano jamás, aquel día tenía un miedo que me dejaba quieta como un pájaro caído de un nido" (Giménez Bartlett 250). For La Pastora then, to leave her life as a woman and to embrace life as a man was to fall from the nest like a baby bird—to undergo a type of re-birth. While serving with the local unit of maquis, La Pastora reiterates how happy she is, especially as she is praised for her good work at leading her unit through remote areas and never getting lost, and as she begins to learn to read a little. She finds a kind of social acceptance (a sustaining environment) among the maquis—something she has never before known.

After witnessing a great deal of death and narrowly surviving gun battles through the maquis' "missions" to get food or take vengeance on those who have denounced them to the Civil Guard, La Pastora agrees to desert her unit with her last companion, Francisco. Francisco, fearing that he is about to undergo an internal trial for being an alleged informant to the Civil Guard, makes the decision to desert his local unit of maquis and convinces La Pastora to go with him. Francisco has been completely dispossessed of his family and home as he joined the maquis himself in an effort to save his own life as he was being beaten nearly to death by the Civil

Guard who were after information on the whereabouts of others in his family who were also maquis. Francisco accepts La Pastora, who still uses this nickname among the maquis, even while dressing as a man. On one visit to his wife, Francisco takes La Pastora with him and tells his wife when she is confused by the name Florencio that "en el maquis se era lo que uno quería ser" (Giménez Bartlett 111). For Francisco, Pastora (as he calls his last comrade) simply is—gender is not an issue for him.

With Francisco, La Pastora embarks on an even more severe journey into solitude and dispossession. At this point, La Pastora moves into what might be described as a fourth state of "precarity" or liminal existence. In the early part of her life, she attempted to live as a woman but was never accepted by her society, so she took refuge in sleeping outdoors with the livestock she tended, living as a solitary outsider. When she decides to join the maquis, she enters their world—on the fringes of a fascist society which has named them bandits, thieves, and murderers, and which seeks to annihilate them completely. And finally, when she follows Francisco in his decision to desert and become what he calls "independent maquis," she realizes that she has entered yet an even further removed state of separation from society. She describes her difficulty in having to learn to think in a new way in her efforts to define herself in this new state of precarious existence: "tenía que olvidarme de los últimos tiempos y volver a pensar como cuando era una mujer. Pero no era tan fácil… yo ya no era una mujer sino un hombre y además me perseguía la Guardia Civil, era un bandolero. Ya no podía pasarme la vida tranquila con las ovejas" (Giménez Bartlett 338-339). For La Pastora, to focus on nothing but survival is difficult but not impossible since she has never really felt herself part of a community for very long. But for Francisco who has left his family behind forever and who sees nothing but certain death in his future, the transition is a slow mental torture driving him ever onward to madness: "a él del

pasado le quedaba la familia y cada vez se veía más claro que no volvería a verla nunca más. Ni a la mujer ni a la hija ni a la madre, nada, como si hubieran muerto o, mejor dicho, como si se hubiera muerto él" (339). It was as if he had died already, even before his violent death. We recall again the similar statement from the film *Silencio roto* when one of the maquis (Antonio) marks the identity loss one must undergo when taking to the hills: "Cuando subes al monte, pierdes hasta el nombre. Es como si acabaras de nacer" (López-Quiñones 235). The emphasis on absence and spectrality pervades passages such as these.

One cannot help but note the striking contrast in the way dispossession is made manifest in La Pastora's and Francisco's personalities. La Pastora has accepted solitude—is comfortable with it, as it is all she has ever known from her young childhood. She accepts marginalization as a woman, as a man, and as a maquis. Each state is equal to the other. And each state is equally isolating. In the novel, she repeatedly makes statements revealing her acceptance of her marginal existence: "la vida es como es y nadie lo puede arreglar de ninguna manera. Pero no sé qué esperaba [referring to Francisco], yo sabía esas cosas casi desde que nací" (Giménez Bartlett 376). Francisco, on the other hand, had a family and country, and he never makes peace with having lost them. He keeps trying to go back and visit his family, with La Pastora in tow, at great risk to them both. Kristeva says about the foreigner: "Without a home, he disseminates on the contrary the actor's paradox: multiplying masks and 'false selves' he is never completely true, nor completely false… This means that, settled within himself, the foreigner has no self. Barely an empty confidence, valueless, which focuses his possibilities of being constantly other, according to others' wishes and to circumstances" (Oliver 270). In Giménez Bartlett's novel, near the end of Francisco's life, he becomes increasingly erratic in his behavior—occasionally assaulting and robbing farming families when he and La Pastora are not really in dire need of

supplies, sometimes stating that they have come in the name of the maquis and their "cause" and sometimes not. He can put on several 'multiplying masks' and 'false selves' (e.g. affiliated maquis, independent maquis, randomly vengeful bandit, family man exacting revenge for loved ones' suffering, man without a past, etc.) but the outcome is the same—he cannot find a place (geographical or psychological) in which to exist peacefully.

In contrast to Francisco, the state of "being constantly other" is one that La Pastora can accept and even thrive in—she simply does not participate in either a Republican Spain or a Francoist one. "Always elsewhere," Kristeva reminds us, "the foreigner belongs nowhere" (Oliver 271). Kristeva goes on to describe the two types of beings among those who do not belong. It strikes me that La Pastora and Francisco embody well these two types. La Pastora is one of Kristeva's ironists—"the followers of neutrality, the advocates of emptiness" (Oliver 271) and Francisco has forever cast his lot in with that of Kristeva's believers—"those who transcend: living neither before nor now but beyond, they are bent with a passion that, although tenacious, will remain forever unsatisfied" (Oliver 271). La Pastora survives each stage of her life by living only in the present—looking neither forward nor backward. She urges Francisco to do the same, but he cannot bring himself to envision his existence as she does hers. When the pair briefly find work in Andorra (on the border between France and Spain), they temporarily find a place to live, work, sleep in real beds, and belong to a society which accepts them and wishes them no harm. When the summer work there runs out, they must decide where to go and of course, Francisco wants to return to Spain. La Pastora tries to convince him that Spain is not their home any longer, that they are not wanted there. But Francisco cannot accept this fact: "¡Eso ni hablar! No nos quieren los franquistas, los somatenes, los fascistas, los falangistas y la puta Guardia Civil, pero ésos no son el país, ésos son los ladrones que se lo han quedado como si fuera suyo de buena

ley… Manden o no manden me da igual, mi país es España y yo soy tan español como el que más" (Giménez Bartlett 411). Francisco "believes" in a "beyond" which he can never reach but La Pastora is calmly accepting of her station in life as a foreigner: "Soy como una mala hierba que igual crece aquí que allá" (Giménez Bartlett 413).

With isolation comes freedom but also great suffering and sacrifices, for both Pastora and the maquis. While living as a woman, working for others and taking care of their flocks, Pastora experienced a great deal of freedom in her isolating vocation, but she was not completely free. When she meets, makes friends with, and eventually joins the maquis as more of a wilderness guide than a resistance fighter, she subjects herself to a whole new set of rules and regulations which she had never before encountered, but she does not mind trading some of her independence for the acceptance, kindness, and praise that she finds among the maquis. When Francisco convinces her to desert with him, she finds a new kind of freedom, but one that is not without cost and hardships. And when Francisco is finally killed near the end of the novel, Pastora switches once again to referring to herself in feminine form, even taking back her old name in the last passage she narrates in the first person: "¡Qué sola te has quedado, Tereseta, qué sola vas a estar! Entonces me dejé caer de rodillas, me tapé la cara con las manos y me eché a llorar. Era la primera vez que lloraba desde que dejé de ser mujer" (Giménez Bartlett 479). Now that her last tie to her self-definition as a maquis is gone, La Pastora too is Kristeva's astronaut (see below), floating without an anchor to which she can hold. Without the maquis among whom she grounds herself, her performance of a masculine gender is no longer necessary (Bezhanova 61). I find in La Pastora's gendered identity crisis a striking metaphor for the maquis and their relationship to Spain. She accepts herself as she is as well as her liminal, marginalized existence but cannot find solid purchase in her society. In like manner, the maquis believed fervently in

their cause but could not find a way to persist long enough to achieve their goals. They are all forever foreigners within Franco's Spain, forever free, yet forever spectral.

Kristeva describes the position of absolute freedom in this way: "Free of ties with his own people, the foreigner feels 'completely free.' Nevertheless, the consummate name of such a freedom is solitude… Deprived of others, free solitude, like the astronauts' weightless state, dilapidates muscles, bones, and blood. Available, freed of everything, the foreigner has nothing, he is nothing… Without other, without guidepost, it cannot bear the difference that, alone, discriminates and makes sense" (Oliver 272-273). La Pastora can exist in this state of complete freedom and solitude but Francisco, and by extension, the maquis, cannot. When the pair visits Francisco's family for the last time, La Pastora describes Francisco's demeanor this way: "estaba seco como un palo cortado, más seco que nunca y con la vista perdida en el aire" (Giménez Bartlett 435). This analogy of the dry branch, cut off from the tree forever, fits perfectly with Kristeva's descriptions of the foreigner. Without the guideposts of either a country, home, family, even or an organization (such as the PCE, the Spanish Communist Party) to guide them, the efforts of the maquis will slowly desiccate into annihilation. Indeed, the historical epilogue to the novel informs the reader that La Pastora is the sole survivor of this particular unit of maquis.

Butler stresses how disorientation is inherent to the process of dispossession: "we do not simply move ourselves, but are ourselves moved by what is outside us, by others, but also by whatever 'outside' resides in us. For instance, we are moved by others in ways that disconcert, displace, and dispossess us; *we sometimes no longer know precisely who we are, or by what we are driven, after contact with some other or by some other group, or as a result of someone else's actions*" (emphasis mine) (*Dispossession* 3). Practically all the main characters in *Donde nadie te encuentre* (which could just as easily be called *Donde nadie se encuentre*), exhibit these

conditions of feeling lost, disoriented, and displaced by their contact with others (or "the other"). In the passage previously quoted, we see how Francisco insists that he is more of a true Spaniard than those who rule his country, in spite of the fact that Franco's Spain would never own him. Nourissier, too, insists that he is forever changed by the journey he has undertaken to find and interview La Pastora—vehemently denying the possibility of returning to his old life as his former self because "sería como suplantar a otra persona" (Giménez Bartlett 496). And La Pastora, too, is forever changed by her contact with the maquis, switching back to her feminine self-identity once the last vestige of the sustaining environment the maquis provided is gone (i.e. Francisco).

"The foreigner thus, has lost his mother… this cold orphan, whose indifference can become criminal, is a fanatic of absence. He is a devotee of solitude, even in the midst of a crowd, because he is faithful to a shadow: bewitching secret, paternal ideal, inaccessible ambition" (Oliver 267). Kristeva speaks here about the orphan who has lost his mother—the maquis (and all those sympathetic to their cause) had indeed lost their motherland and become devotees of solitude, forever trapped in their foreignness inside Franco's Spain which rendered them common criminals and sought to exterminate their foreignness completely. In the next chapter, we will focus, in part, on narratives featuring orphans, foreigners in exile, and other forms of motherless-ness as we examine stories about mothers and daughters and explore the ways future generations inherit and process the legacies of war.

Conclusion

Thus far, in the first chapter we have defined "true Catholic womanhood" and have seen how women attempted to construct themselves as subjects within Franco's Spain, struggling to

survive the type of gendered performance that their society demanded of them and how more modern fictional narratives allow us, as readers and viewers, closer insight into the nature of that resistance. In the second chapter, we focused on those narratives that highlight women's experiences in Franco's prisons. With these prison stories we continued our discussion of gendered performance as it is constantly subjected to societal norms, to explore the ways in which recently produced films and novels depict women as somehow being able to find methods allowing them to push back against such a violently gendered construction of the feminine subject, even under situations of extreme suffering and torture. In this third chapter, we have seen how women played a distinct, unique role in their work with the maquis—a role which brought them into often painful confrontations with the paradoxes surrounding them in their daily lives and revealed their agency as equal to that of the guerrillas they aided, in spite of still having to attempt survival within the tightly scripted social confines of "true Catholic womanhood" in the immediate postwar era. In this chapter we have also delved into the notions of dispossession and "precarity" and have seen how although the maquis were dispossessed of the Republic they fought so long and hard for, they still occasionally found in the women who aided them, a center around which to orbit, as Galán says in *Inés y la alegría*, "una mujer donde vivir." Having been dispossessed of their beloved Republic, they struggled to survive on the fringes of society, when often the only link (*enlace*) to survival were the women of their former life: mothers, sisters, daughters, lovers, girlfriends, wives—all of whom shared in their precarious, spectral existence—an existence which finds unique, metaphorical resonance in a character such as La Pastora from the novel, *Donde nadie te encuentre*. In the next and final chapter of this work, we will turn to stories of mothers and daughters and explore the ways a mother's gendered performance can be accepted, rejected, or manipulated. We will also return to

the notion of dispossession and take it one step further by navigating in more detail the concepts of abjection and orphanhood, as these ideas can be applied to narratives either centering on mothers and daughters, or the complete loss of mothers, which can be interpreted as representative of irrecoverable loss.

Chapter Four: Mothers, daughters, and the motherless: the legacy of war

As mentioned in the introduction and reiterated throughout this work, motherhood was always an important part of women's social destiny in both pre- and postwar Spain. Nash describes how "the ideology of domesticity provided the foundation of traditional gender discourse in late nineteenth-century Spain. As in Europe and North America, this model of good mothering and housewifery—the product of male thought—generated the notion that women's ambitions had to be exclusively limited to home and family" (Nash, "Un/Contested Identities" 27). Franco's body politic sought a return to this nineteenth-century "ideology of domesticity" in which women were construed as being the perfect embodiment of nurturers whose primary and sole occupation should be that of mother, wife, and caretaker of the home. While women were expected to be good managers of household affairs and have considerably efficient skills at homemaking, they were at the same time expected to be completely submissive and self-sacrificing in their unswerving dedication to husbands, parents, and children (Nash, *Defying Male Civilization* 10-11). The reform policies enacted by the Second Republic did much to ameliorate the kind of discriminatory laws that had traditionally subordinated women in political, labor, and social realms. But in spite of these reforms, due to the deeply ingrained "gendered discourse of domesticity" and what Nash calls the "cult of motherhood," the social reality for women in pre-war Spain was slow to change and still hindered women in their ability to take a more active part in politics or a more equal role in the workplace (*Defying Male Civilization* 47-48).

As has also been noted in the introduction, the advent of war gave rise to a new discourse and new images of women. Women were suddenly mobilized and asked to step outside their

domestic spheres in order to support the war effort. At the same time, however, the exaltation of motherhood was still very much a part of the call to mobilize. Women were addressed as mothers by political organizations and were urged to contribute to the fight against fascism in order to protect their children. Even the AMA (*Agrupación de Mujeres Antifascistas*) portrayed women as deriving cultural identity, not as individuals, but as bearers of children. Nash cites the AMA membership card as reading in part: "fascism takes away something worth more than life, which is freedom and the desire for improvement which every mother has for her children" (*Defying Male Civilization* 55). In this way, the AMA exploited maternalism with an appeal to a version of feminism that was not a struggle for women's rights but rather against fascism. As nationalist women would not have questioned traditional gender roles like motherhood and homemaking, Nash maintains that this apparent lack of feminist ideas surrounding gender-specific issues cannot be attributed solely to the need to make women more receptive to the Republic's ideology and desire to defend itself in war. Instead she claims that "the deference to the traditional vision of women predominated and there was a decided lack of questioning of patriarchal gender values" (*Defying Male Civilization* 74).

With the Republican loss of the war, however, the window of social opportunities for women almost immediately snapped shut as a maternalistic Francoist discourse permeated everyday life in postwar Spain. Francoist propaganda insisted that the changed status of women's demands for equal rights was indicative of the moral decay of the Republic and mandated that women return to their traditional role as "angels of the hearth." The only political role women could now play was by fulfilling their female destiny as reproducers, thereby replenishing the biological reserves depleted by war. Motherhood was a woman's duty to the fatherland which would prevent a return to decadence. As Pilar Primo de Rivera said, motherhood was women's

absolute destiny and their "biological, Christian, and Spanish function" (*Defying Male Civilization* 183).

Closely tied to the pronatalist discourse of Franco's regime was its focus on familialism. The family, as the central building block of Spanish society, was to be rebuilt as its moral "degeneration" was viewed as the direct result of the sick Republic's body politic and blamed on changes in traditional cultural values, a decline in interest in religious practices, and most importantly, the significant modifications in women's social status that led to what Francoist discourse labeled the complete moral decay of the family unit. In Francoist ideology, the moral decay of women and by extension, the family, was clearly visible when one considered that such political rights and social reforms as access to birth control, civil marriage, divorce, and granting women suffrage had clearly corrupted the "perfecta casada" who should be content fulfilling her natural mandate as a submissive spouse and mother (Nash, "Pronatalism" 160-161).

Spanish women were expected to fulfill their destinies as wives and mothers by not pursuing any other profession outside the domestic sphere of the home. The roles of wives and mothers represented their complete contribution to the national project, as well as encapsulating the official significance of Spanish femininity. Their bodies were considered objects to be manipulated and controlled for the purpose of contributing to rebuilding their nation. Morcillo talks about how "biology determined women's destiny. A new set of operations and procedures come together around the objectification of the body" (*True Catholic Womanhood* 5). Nash points out how a woman's professional work or education goals, social activities, or any kind of desire for self-improvement would have been seen as a "threat to women's biological destiny as forgers of the nation's future generations" ("Pronatalism" 167). For almost forty years the body of the mother becomes the primary concept around which the state-defined elements of

femininity, gender, and nationhood are organized. Arkinstall points out how the relationship between state and citizen mirrors that between mother and son (heavy with connotations of the Mary-Christ relationship) with the State and Church being represented by feminized bodies: the *Madre Patria* (Maternal Fatherland) and the Santa Madre Iglesia (*Holy Mother Church*) (48). These issues of a mother's biological destiny, gender, femininity, and the will of the state will soon be important in our discussion of Prado's 2006 novel, *Mala gente que camina*—the work we will use to open this chapter's exploration of fictional narratives featuring both issues of gender-related performance and motherhood.

Others have noted how the special emphasis the Francoist regime placed on the image of the mother as a reification of the rebuilder of the Spanish nation seems to have resulted in many filmic and literary texts emerging since the return of democracy that seek to highlight the difficulties experienced by daughters who grow up with "a mother figure who in one way or another, by trying either to perpetuate or to oppose the dictatorship's discourse, ended up exiled from/within herself" (Gámez-Fuentes 48). In the second section of this chapter, we will explore how several of these texts engage in a quest for representations of both mothers and daughters who manage to subvert these culturally scripted definitions of femininity (Arkinstall 47). One such narrative can be found in Caso's novel *Un largo silencio* (2000). Here, we find the story of a family of all women who are essentially punished for being man-less in a postwar society. Their husbands are either dead or gone, the one son of the family has behaved "disgracefully" by marrying beneath him and then dying, and the young, single women of the family are forced to look for jobs outside the home where they are ostracized and scorned for their inability to conform to the life script drafted for them by Franco's Spain. In addition to Caso's novel, which deals in part with the difficulties in handing down transgenerational memories and identity

between mothers and daughters, we will compare and contrast two other novels that also treat these topics. By incorporating Hirsch's work on transgenerational memories, we will see how in Chacón's *La voz dormida* (2002) and Riera's *La mitad del alma* (2006) we find two completely opposite stories of transgenerational memory and identity—in one story, the transmission of memory and identity from mother to daughter is completely frustrated and horribly complicated, with nearly disastrous results. And in the other, in spite of separation by death, the transmission of memory and identity from mother to daughter is handed down to the next generation, almost without issue. In the process of examining how postwar mothers struggled to "forge future generations," this chapter also examines several filmic narratives where mothers and daughters are in conflict in an intergenerational struggle in which the mothers strive to hand down a version of femininity the daughters may not find acceptable. These films frequently feature young female protagonists who question, push back against, or even reject outright the example or "performance" their mothers display for them.

In the final section of this chapter, we will explore what happens when the mother is completely removed from the postwar narrative. Sandra Schumm in her *Mother and Myth in Spanish Novels* emphasizes that during Franco's dictatorship, Spanish women often wrote novels featuring young female protagonists without matriarchal models, obligated to forge their own way in life and in self-discovery. She sees a direct connection between novels with motherless protagonists and Franco's postwar policies that strove to marginalize, silence, and make women essentially invisible (12). Schumm hypothesizes certain connections between literary and historical shifts in cultural paradigms. By glossing the Francoist version of the mother's role in Spanish postwar society, she conflates the shift in the mother's role in literature with the shift in the mother's role in society. She points out (and rightly so) that Francoist policies praised the

role of women in society as being mothers of children who would repopulate and make great the fatherland, while at the same time enacted laws which stripped them of their rights as individuals (8-9).

By highlighting how more recent works of fiction being written by Spanish women feature female protagonists who attempt to recover, understand, and learn from matriarchal wisdom, Schumm feels that these more recently published novels bear witness to the fact that patriarchal values have left voids in the world that undiscovered matriarchal values might help to fill ("Preface" x). While these motherless protagonists have more personal freedom to form identities outside that of their mothers, they are still frequently denied access to matriarchal wisdom and the lessons in self-determination that maternal heritage affords (Schumm 13). Hirsch stresses that "an acknowledgement of the specificity of maternal experience could offer a perspective crucial to feminist discourse" and that excluding the maternal story "causes particular blindnesses" (*The Mother/Daughter Plot* 196-197).

Citing a tradition of the motherless protagonists in Spanish novels dating back to Laforet's *Nada*, Schumm notes that more recent novels feature adult protagonists who seek somehow to restore the maternal role to their lives, such as Riera's narrator C in the 2006 novel, *La mitad del alma* (2). Schumm claims that twenty-first-century novels tend to rewrite the role of the mother by reconstructing, reconfiguring, or at the very least recognizing the significance of the subjectivity of the missing mother, which leads her to posit that this shift in the configuration of the absentee mother as a literary trope could indicate an effort to free women (as literary characters) from what has traditionally been a more subjugated role as opposed to a more equalitarian one (3-4). But what I have noticed in the narratives discussed here is that more often than not, we find a protagonist who turns *away* from her mother's example (or at least from

whatever traditional female role model is offered her), and seeks to replace her with a maternal role model who better fits her understanding of the world as she engages with it. We will find this tendency exemplified time and again especially in the filmic fictional narratives explored in this chapter (e.g. Ofelia in *El laberinto del fauno* [2006], Carol in *Carol's Journey* [2003], Ana in *El espíritu de la colmena* [1973], and Paula in *Ispansi* [2011]). On the other hand, faced with the negation and erasure of the mother, "daughters cannot be validated as women or mothers because they are essentially invalid roles—the daughter must deny who she will be. The identity problems that the young protagonists of postwar novels suffered continues in the older female characters of twenty-first-century novels by women because the mother is still emblematically ingested and unrecognized" (Schumm 15). We will see all these identity issues Schumm mentions play out in Riera's 2006 novel, *La mitad del alma*, as the narrator C struggles to fill the void left by her absentee mother.

In the final section of this chapter, we will focus on narratives dealing with the motherless, with orphanages, and even those in exile. By employing Kristeva's notion of the abject to highlight the way postwar Spanish women were faced with a version of femininity that could be construed as abject to their own vision of femininity, we will see how a gendered performance is still significant, and sometimes necessary for survival in extreme situations such as orphanhood or exile. The film, *Ispansi*, in addition to centering on these themes of orphanhood and exile, also offers a fascinating look at what happens to a woman's gendered identity when she alternately enters and exits Spain during the war and postwar years. Her gendered performance takes many forms as her environment changes and her role as a mother, as well as her relationship to her own mother, undergoes drastic changes as well.

A mother's performance: *Mala gente que camina*

In *The Spanish Holocaust*, Preston talks about how after the war, "the sequestration of the children of Republican prisoners, not just of those executed, became systematic" (513). Children were taken from their mothers in many prisons, but most infamously in the Saturrarán Basque prison and in the prison for nursing mothers in Madrid (Preston, *SH* 513), run by María Topete Fernández, a central character in Cañil's novel, *Si a los tres años no he vuelto*, a work previously discussed in more detail in chapter two. Preston estimates around 12,000 children were kidnapped from their mothers and placed into religious orphanages or state institutions for the purpose of brainwashing them into believing their parents were the true enemy (*SH* 513). Preston (as well as Cañil in her novel) mentions how the practice of taking children by force from their imprisoned mothers was a direct result of the "psychological research" done by Vallejo Nájera that determined that the health of the Spanish race required this separation of children from the threat of contamination by their 'red' mothers (Preston, *SH* 515). Vallejo Nájera also had a direct link with Auxilio Social, the Nationalist organization charged with plotting the destiny of the war orphans, through his friendship with Dr. Jesús Ercilla Ortega, medical advisor to the organization. Ercilla Ortega was also made clinical director of a psychiatric hospital directed by Vallejo Nájera. Finally, a law enacted in 1941 allowed legal name changes of Republican orphans, children of prisoners, and babies taken from mothers in prison immediately after their birth (Preston, *SH* 515).

Prado's 2006 novel, *Mala gente que camina*, deals directly with this issue of how children from Communist political prisoners were taken from their imprisoned parents and either adopted into Nationalist families or raised by Auxilio Social workers in orphanages or other institutions. Prado's narrator in the novel states that in the early 1940s, 12,000 children were fed

by Auxilio Social in convents, seminaries, and other religious and state institutions and by 1955, the number had grown to 42,000 (363-364). Prado's narrator, a high school literature teacher and principal, discovers via a connection to the mother of one of his students, several different versions of an unpublished novel, allegedly written by a woman named Dolores Serma during the immediate postwar era (at the same time that Laforet was writing *Nada*). In the novel *Óxido* (supposedly written in 1944) which the reader accesses only through the narrator's summary, the protagonist is a woman named Gloria who goes out looking for her missing son. Everyone in the city recognizes her, but no one knows her son. She says he went out to play in the street in front of her house but now is missing. She walks for days, all night, and tries to go into churches for help but finds their doors closed to her. In her efforts to record her search, she starts writing the names of streets and buildings where she has already searched on her skin. Prado's narrator quotes from Serma's novel and tells us that every night when she comes in from searching the streets all day, Gloria undresses, looks at herself in the mirror and sees "la nada, el mapa de la nada" (129). By the end of the novel, five years have gone by and Gloria is still searching. Instead of the names of streets and places she has been searching, she is now writing "palabras reivindicativas" (Prado 145) on her hands, forehead, arms and legs (visible places) and she plants herself in front of schools, churches, the Courts (in a manner of public protest, perhaps). Because of these actions, she gets more attention from the police than before and they arrest her, shave her head, make her drink "aceite de ricino" (a common punishment among the reprisals of the early postwar years), and Prado's narrator tells us how "la duchan con una manguera y la desinfectan con azufre. Gloria no puede olvidar el agua helada, dañina, el olor a jabón y a sulfato, las manos sórdidas sobre ella, frotando, hiriendo" (145). In their attempts to erase the

words on her body, the police (as representatives of the state) try to erase her as well—an all too familiar process as we saw in the prison narratives in chapter two.

Prado's narrator, Juan (whose name is revealed to the reader only at the end of the novel), describes how Serma wrote three different versions of her novel--green, yellow, and pink. In the green copy, the narrator finds a paragraph not present in the other two: "Yo no quiero escribir esto. No quiero que se sepa lo que voy a contar y sin embargo, por alguna razón, aunque sólo sea esta vez, necesito hacerlo. Escribir es hablar para los ojos, y yo voy a hablar para los míos. Sólo para los míos. Qué horrible es vivir en un mundo en el que la verdad puede destruir lo que han salvado las mentiras" (Prado 374). Serma's words remind us of Tomasa's in *La voz dormida* (discussed in more detail in chapter two), and how she needed to tell the truth of her story in order to survive, even while in solitary confinement with no one to hear. Prado's narrator tells the story of how Serma, now aged and in the final stages of Alzheimer's disease, is almost frantic that her papers, photos, and copies of her novel be recovered from Sanz Bachiller's house before the disease takes all her memory and identity away.

Prado's narrator struggles to justify how Serma could have worked so closely with Mercedes Sanz Bachiller in the Auxilio Social for 20 years and at the same time, could have written a novel like *Óxido*, which seems to criticize and denounce the practice of stealing children from their imprisoned communist parents. Little by little, Prado's narrator discovers the truth about Serma—how she worked for a Nationalist organization (i.e. the Auxilio Social) in order to help discover the whereabouts of her sister's son, whom she raises as her own without ever revealing her true identity (or political ideals) to him. Julia was Serma's sister and was imprisoned in Ventas for six years (starting in 1940) for being married to a communist,

Wystan,[15] an Englishman who fought with the International Brigades on side of the Republic. Serma never stopped trying to free her sister—for this reason, she affianced herself to Sanz Bachiller and the Auxilio Social in order to intercede on behalf of her sister. Prado's narrator says, "Previsiblemente, todo eso lo hizo para *dar una imagen* de persona afecta a los vencedores" (344, emphasis mine). In the green copy version of the novel that Dolores Serma wrote, Dolores says: "Mi vida entera es falsa. No hay nada mío que no esté adulterado por la *simulación* y el *engaño*. Tuve que cambiar los rostros de quienes más quiero por *máscaras* y apartarme de mi vocación para salvaguardarlos. ¿Me perdonarán si algún día llegan a conocer la realidad?" (Prado 374, emphasis mine). In this way, the reader is presented with the story of woman whose gendered performance allowed her not only to survive in a postwar Spain and hide her true identity as sister to a communist, but also her performance allowed her to free her sister from prison and recover her sister's child from the Nationalist family that had adopted him and then were not pleased with his difficult behavior.

Serma raises her sister's son as her own, never telling him that she is not his biological mother, so as to shelter him from the stigma of being a child of imprisoned "rojos." (Julia died in a mental institution without ever seeing her son.) Dolores, acting as stand-in mother, makes a very different choice from that of Pepita and Hortensia in Chacón's novel, or the Vega women in *Un largo silencio* (a work we will discuss presently). She chooses to hide the communist past from her sister's child, in order to give him a chance for a better life. She chooses the path of a gendered performance (even though it goes against her true convictions) because she feels it is necessary to best help those she loves. She is part of a large group of women in a postwar world

[15] Wystan was the Christian name of the Anglo-American poet, W.H. Auden

who make very difficult decisions about how to transmit both memory and identity to subsequent generations. In the next section of this chapter, we will continue our discussion of transgenerational memory and identity by focusing on narratives dealing specifically with mothers and daughters.

Mothers and daughters: transgenerational memories

"–Mamá. Tomasa añora también a su madre, al igual que Hortensia, que levanta la vista de su cuaderno azul. –Mamá. Y el quejido de Elvira es el quejido de todas." (*La voz dormida*, Dulce Chacón)

Marianne Hirsch talks about the concept of "postmemory" in her work dealing with Holocaust survivors—a term that she defines as being a form of memory characterized by "narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are displaced by the powerful stories of the previous generation, shaped by monumental traumatic events that resist understanding and integration" ("Surviving Images" 12). In the narratives discussed in this chapter that foreground women's postwar experiences as mothers and daughters, the task of transmitting these memories most often falls to mothers of daughters, as opposed to mothers of sons. Nash notes how in wartime rhetoric, "Mothers' concerns are directed toward their sons and not their daughters. Daughters remain quite invisible in this imagery of motherhood" (*Defying Male Civilization* 57). A mother of the Spanish nation in the postwar era was necessarily a mother of sons, at least as conceived by Franco's ideology, as women were encouraged to raise up strong, loyal-to-the-regime sons. What the novels and films discussed in this chapter do is to highlight and bring to the forefront the stories of mothers and their daughters in the postwar era. In stark contrast to the kind of wartime rhetoric that Nash writes about, what Caso does in her novel *Un largo silencio* (2000), to name one example, is to offer up the story of a group of

women (a mother, Letrita, and her daughters, one of whom has a daughter of her own) who return to their fictitious hometown of Castrollano on the Cantabrian coast in 1939 after two years of exile. They struggle, on their own, without male protection, to survive in Franco's New Spain. There are literally no men in the story, except for the portions that recount events which occurred before the present moment. All the men associated with these women (e.g. father, husbands, boyfriends) have either died, abandoned them, or been left by the women themselves. They very nearly starve to death as their plight is complicated, not just by being communists but also for being women and unable to find work.

Letrita, the matriarch of the family in Caso's novel, has a sister, Elisa, who at the age of fourteen is accepted, without the family having to pay a dowry, into a local convent. The family (especially the mother) is honored to have a daughter who will become a nun, because normally this would have cost them a great deal of money, but Elisa is accepted to the convent due to her skills at needlework and sewing. After six months, the difficult life in the convent causes her to get sick and die. Letrita, seeing this outcome, is determined to make her own way "al margen de la voluntad materna" (94). At the ripe old age of eleven, "comprendió que la crueldad de los arrogantes era uno de los más demoledores atributos del ser humano, y que la sumisión de los débiles equivalía a su aniquilación como personas" (94). This short episode speaks to a major point being made in this chapter regarding the relationship between mothers and daughters—time and again, in the films and novels examined here, we see daughters breaking away from their mothers' example and rejecting the image of "true, Catholic womanhood" that is presented to them—and deciding to forge their own way. Letrita becomes an atheist, communist, marries a socialist, and totally rejects the image of womanhood presented to her by her mother and forced on her sister.

The novel goes on to describe how one of Letrita's daughters, Alegría, mother of the young Merceditas, finally leaves her abusive, alcoholic husband after suffering for years while living with him. Before she leaves him though, one day she goes to visit a priest, thinking that if she "confesses" to someone, she might find a source of help. "Pensó que quizá hallaría alivio y consejo en las palabras del cura, a quien le expuso, con toda la suavidad de que fue capaz, su penosa situación. Pero la voz aquella, desde el otro lado de la celosía, se limitó a decirle que a menudo los matrimonios eran así y que los hombres—que tanto tenían que trabajar y luchar fuera de casa para mantener el hogar—padecían tribulaciones que se escapaban a la comprensión de las mujeres. Añadió que su obligación era sobrellevar con paciencia los desplantes del marido, y que debía pedirle a Dios que la ayudase a ser una buena madre, porque los hijos dulcificarían el carácter de los dos y templarían su relación" (76-77). Once again, we find the representative of the Catholic Church imposing this version of "true Catholic womanhood" on Alegría's life—urging her to remain a patient, long-suffering wife and above all, to become a mother as soon as possible so as to better her relationship with her abusive husband.

The women in *Un largo silencio* disagree on what to tell their youngest member, Merceditas, about the war and its aftermath and where they, as a family, stand, in the world that is now left for them to navigate. Young Merceditas comes home from the local swimming pool one day saying that there had been an argument and she is confused and hurt. Someone has told her that she is on the losing side of the war. She tells her mother, Alegría, that someone said "los malos somos nosotros, y que vamos a ir todos a la cárcel" (Caso 102). Alegría hesitates in what to tell her ten-year-old child thinking about what her mother would say—"Letrita cree que es mejor no darle demasiadas explicaciones… que no es bueno que Merceditas crezca odiando a nadie… opina además que no es justo que ella pague también por las cosas de los mayores, y que

deben dejarla tranquila hasta que pueda entender ciertas cuestiones y pensar por sí misma" (Caso 103). María Luisa, the sister whose husband is imprisoned at the end of war, thinks that Merceditas should be told everything and that the women should "educarla en las mismas ideas en las que han sido educadas ellas" (Caso 103). Alegría is crushed to think that her child will suffer in postwar society—"se le parte el alma cuando piensa en su hija señalada con el dedo por la calle, rechazada en la escuela, arrinconada por pertenecer a los derrotados" (103). We see all these mother-figures in this novel (mother, grandmother, aunts) struggle with the task before them—how do they help the young girl they are raising become a woman in postwar Spain? There is no easy answer and they are not united in their concepts of self-identity—not nearly as united as young Tensi's executed parents in Chacón's *La voz dormida*.

In a not completely dissimilar way, in Chacón's novel *La voz dormida* (2002), there is also a negotiation of transgenerational memories from mother to daughter in Hortensia's and Tensi's relationship. Even though Hortensia is executed shortly after the birth of baby Tensi, the notebooks she leaves serve to inform, educate, and inculcate her daughter with her political ideals and stories of war and postwar trauma experienced by her mother. Aunt Pepita, sister to Hortensia, serves as a link, or mediator, between dead mother and living daughter. Pepita reads the notebooks to young Tensi when she is too little to read them for herself and even negotiates how much of the "truth" about the past Tensi is exposed to when she attempts to keep Tensi from joining the Communist party by withholding certain bits of information from her, such as the scrap of cloth from the dress in which Hortensia was executed and the document containing her death sentence. Leggott points out that Pepita decides to pass on to Tensi the positive symbols of her parents' past (e.g. the earrings her father gave her mother and the blue notebooks) but deliberately shields her from the heritage of negative, traumatic memories (*Memory, War, and*

Dictatorship 47). As this maternal stand-in figure, Pepita facilitates and mediates the transmission of memories that the second generation receives. These memories can only be discussed within the private sphere of the family as to acknowledge them publicly would incur great risk for people with such strong connections to the resistance movement. Jo Labanyi talks about this "importance of the private sphere in keeping alive the memory of what cannot be discussed in public" ("Memory and Modernity" 100). Tensi, near the end of *La voz dormida,* when she is eighteen decides to join the Communist party because she has spent her lifetime reading her mother's blue notebooks. "Lucha, hija mía, lucha siempre, como lucha tu madre, como lucha tu padre, que es nuestro deber, aunque nos cueste la vida" (Chacón 357). Tensi heeds her mother's words, even though she had never seen her mother's actions. All the daughters discussed in this chapter will watch and listen to their mothers, and then decide what sort of woman they want to be, and what sort of Spain they desire to be a part of.

In *Un largo silencio,* the youngest member of the Vega clan, ten year old Merceditas, is aware that her mother, grandmother, and aunts are trying to protect her from the trauma of the family's political past by hiding things from her. The narrator tells us: "todos se esforzaron por ocultar la crueldad de las cosas, y evitaron mostrarle el miedo o la angustia" (Caso 101). The women must decide how to educate Merceditas—like Pepita in Chacón's novel, they become mediators in a negotiation for a reality she must eventually face. Will they shield her from a formal education within an institution created by a regime whose ideals they loathe (i.e. a Catholic school) or will they allow her to attend the school so that she can better acclimate to the nationalist society which has prevailed? The matriarch Letrita says she has spoken with her friend, a nun, who will accept the child into the local Catholic school for free. But María Luisa, the oldest adult daughter, objects, "La van a educar como ellos quieran. La harán sumisa, devota,

franquista. ¿Estamos seguras de que es eso lo que deseamos para ella?" (Caso 212). But when asked her opinion, Feda (the youngest adult daughter) says, "Si Merceditas se queda en casa y no va al colegio, le haremos creer que la vida afuera es igual que aquí dentro. Y cuando tenga que salir, se confundirá y le harán daño y se sentirá muy desgraciada. En cambio, si se educa con otra niñas, quizá se convierta en algo que a nosotras no nos guste, pero sufrirá menos" (Caso 212-213). This discussion over the line between the inner and outer world is a borderland that plagues many of the narratives examined here. The inner world of truth and freedom of expression versus the outer, other world of propaganda, image, performance, and perception—upon setting foot on the street or even before that, when just opening a window—one must think about how one dresses, speaks, acts, works, and plays. When Letrita asks Alegría what she wants for her daughter, she says, "lo que más me dolería es convertirla en una víctima de nuestras convicciones, por muy seguras que estemos de ellas… nuestra obligación es dejar que sea ella quien decida en el futuro qué clase de persona quiere ser… tenemos que elegir. Tenemos que hacer una renuncia. O nuestras ideas, o Merceditas" (Caso 214-215). This conversation comes from the epilogue at the end of the novel which is entitled "La renuncia"—the idea here is that something must be renounced: do you sacrifice your ideas or your child's future? Leggott posits that the women in Merceditas's world "acknowledge that attending school may make her life in a hostile postwar society more bearable, perhaps serving to lessen the burden of an 'impure' family history" ("Remembering" 164). In the end, the women decide to send the child to a Catholic school and let her make her own decisions when she grows up—this is a process we see many of the young girls in these novels and films going through—they must decide what sort of women they will be as they mature and make decisions of their own.

Interruptions in Transgenerational Memories: Riera's *La mitad del alma* (2006)

Hirsch uses the term "postmemory" to describe the way a second generation's memories of a traumatic event (experienced first-hand by the previous generation) are "delayed, indirect, secondary" (*Family Frames* 13). She says that "postmemory is a powerful and very particular form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation" (*Family Frames* 22). Much more so than in *La voz dormida* and even more than in *Un largo silencio*, the transmission of transgenerational memories from mother to daughter is terribly frustrated and complicated in Riera's novel *La mitad del alma* (2006).

Unlike the young Tensi in *La voz dormida*, the narrator identified only as C in Riera's novel can trust neither her own memories regarding the true nature of her mother's identity, nor can she trust the letters (nine complete and two incomplete) which come into her possession at a book fair when a total stranger hands her a folder containing these documents (plus a few photos of her mother in 1949 and a train ticket from Barcelona to Portbou, France). The letters appear to be written by her mother to a mysterious lover who may or may not have been the narrator's biological father. Whereas young Tensi can be sure of her parents' identity and mission in life, an identity and mission they managed to transmit to her even after their deaths, and in spite of the fact that Tensi never knew them herself, Riera's narrator is plagued with doubts about her parents' identity and mission in life. She knows that her mother's father was a *diputado* in the Generalitat in Barcelona during the war and so was forced to live out his days in Paris in exile. She knows that her father (or at least the man her mother married) was a Nationalist and a high ranking member of Franco's military. But she does not know if her father paid for her maternal grandfather's flat in Paris (as well as his in-home nursing care once he was debilitated by age

and infirmity). Nor does she know if her mother, who died in 1960 when the narrator was a child, was perhaps a double agent for both Franco's forces and the resistance movement in France. There is also the possibility that her mother's lover (whose existence C discovers only through the letters she is handed at the beginning of the novel) worked as a double agent with her mother.

While the dedication of Riera's novel reads simply "a mi madre," we realize that the narrator (who claims to be the author of the manuscript the reader holds), knows so little about her mother's identity and postwar activities that she, as a writer, found that her mother often took the form of a character in her writing, as well as in her dreams, where she always saw her mother in a train station but was unable to follow her. The narrator speaks confidentially and directly to the reader regarding this ghostly presence of the figure of her mother haunting her writing and dreams:

> …cuando empecé a escribir, a menudo, una mujer que acababa de bajar de un tren solía cruzar mis relatos. El personaje conseguía colarse en mis narraciones sin que lo hubiera previsto, ni tuviera pensado asignarle función o papel. Harta de su inútil presencia intenté ahuyentarla muchas veces, siempre en vano. Entonces decidí cambiar de táctica, acompañándola adondequiera que fuese pero, al salir de la estación la perdía… esa mujer no era un personaje de mi invención sino alguien impuesto desde fuera, un ser real, de carne y hueso, como usted o como yo. Tal vez ya no existía pero había existido, de eso estaba absolutamente segura, porque no en vano, en el sueño se apropiaba del rostro de mi madre muerta. (Riera 14-15)

Barthes, too, in his *Camera Lucida*, speaks of his desire to write about his mother so that "printed, her memory will last at least the time of my own notoriety" (63). He also spoke of dreaming about his mother and how frustrating this process was because he could not fully capture the essence of his mother in a "dream's disappointing status." He describes how he dreamt about his mother, but could not manage to dream *her* (66). In her attempts to reconnect with and know her mother better, C endeavors to write the mother in order to discover her—she

literally strives to give life to a literary character and in so doing, to give life to her "lost" mother outside of the pages which the reader holds.

In addition to writing the lost mother, another way Riera's narrator C attempts to connect with her dead mother physically is by using her monogrammed luggage and silverware (as her mother's name was Cecilia, the initials match her own). The narrator explains to the reader that she was "convencida de que al poner mi ropa donde tantas veces estuvo la suya, al repetir sus gestos imitándolos, al cerrar o abrir los herrajes con igual cuidado, prolongaba en cierto modo su existencia y la hacía revivir en mí" (Riera 32). The narrator repeatedly takes the same train route from Spain to France that her mother would have used, stays in the same hotels where her mother might have stayed, walks the same streets, talks to people who either knew or might have known her mother (if her true name was hidden from them as a spy), and even goes so far as to visit the site where her mother was hit by a bus and died an accidental death (or was it a suicide?). C even wears the last gift her mother gave her the last Christmas of her childhood they celebrated together before the mother's death—a watch. The narrator reveals that she has never taken that watch off throughout her life as if hoping to find some way to connect herself bodily to her mother—"Nunca hasta ahora se me había ocurrido pensar que, probablemente, con aquel regalo, se despedía de mí, dejando a la vez sobre mi pulso, en cada latido, la marca de su presencia" (Riera 111). So then, "cada latido" of that watch is like a heartbeat of the missing mother—for the narrator, the watch becomes a bodily stand-in for the mother she can never fully know, but who is never far from her "pulso."

Since C cannot speak to her dead mother directly, she seeks out two of her mother's closest friends. As mentioned earlier in Hirsch's discussion of postmemory, these women serve as mediators and creators of the imaginative recollection of C's mother's life. Unfortunately,

unlike Pepita in *La voz dormida* who presents young Tensi with a singular, unified postmemory, these women only manage to complicate and confuse the memories regarding her mother that C attempts to recover. The first friend of her mother's whom C visits is Esther Brugada, who is described as a "señorita" still wearing her mantilla as if it were 1950. Esther's brothers died in the war, there are pictures of Franco and the Pope covering her walls, and she tells C that her mother was a saint, that they both worked together with the Auxilio Social, that her mother went to mass, and even took communion daily. This is not the mother C remembers and so she continues her search for alternate memories. C encounters a completely different version of her mother in another friend's memories, Rosa Montalbán. Rosa talks about how she and C's mother learned to pretend they had always been a friend to the regime and tells C that they both had chosen to marry right-wing men simply in order to survive. "Rosa… alabó las cualidades de Cecilia… citó su capacidad de *simulación*, de *disimulo*... me contó que tanto ella como mi madre no tuvieron otro remedio que pasarse media vida *representando, haciendo comedia*… para ocultar que habían perdido la guerra delante de unos y hacerse perdonar que eran de los vencidos delante de los que conocían su procedencia" (Riera 77, emphasis mine). Rosa's description of C's mother (Cecilia) suggests that Cecilia was no stranger to the art of feigning a gender-specific performance in order to survive. Did C's mother choose to marry into a wealthy Nationalist family in order to provide for her exiled, Republican father and possibly even to contribute to the resistance movement in France? Or did she really just desire to cover up her family's Republican past with a marriage which would guarantee her a protected future among the ranks of the victors of the war? Or is Rosa's memory of Cecilia not to be trusted at all? This ambiguity in potential obedience to or defiance of patriarchal hegemony is something that Schumm takes note of in her reading of Cecilia as a "symbol of the duality and ambiguity that existed in the depths of the

personalities of the mothers who had to play the role forced upon them during Franco's dictatorship" (33).

When the narrator tells her mother's friend, Rosa, that she never knew that her mother had spent her life engaging in this sort of performance, Rosa responds, "No te preocupes, es natural, lo raro sería que lo supieras" (Riera 78). For Rosa's generation then, it seems that it was normal for daughters not to know or understand anything about the true nature of their mothers' decisions. Martín Gaite even comments on this phenomenon in the dedication of her *Usos amorosos de la postguerra española*: "Para todas las mujeres españolas, entre cincuenta y sesenta años, que no entienden a sus hijos. Y para sus hijos, que no las entienden a ellas." Thus, promoting a gendered performance and making choices which are often difficult for the next generation to interpret continues to permeate and resonate within the lives of protagonists in the works discussed here.

At one point near the end of the novel, Riera's narrator, C, reflects on her mother's choices: "¿cómo debo juzgar a mi madre, tratando de comprenderla o condenándola; aceptando que en su época y en su situación yo hubiera actuado de la misma manera?" (152). Schumm maintains that is it characteristic of twenty-first-century female protagonists of Spanish novels to "articulate forgiveness and understanding" for whatever wrongs they feel they have suffered due to their mothers' choices (18). C doesn't condemn her mother's choices (as we see from the passage above) but neither does she understand them. She even questions herself at one point as to whether her decision not to have children was a way to "punish" her mother for the lack of closeness in their relationship: "He condenado a Cecilia a no tener nietos, quizá de manera inconsciente he querido castigarla" (Riera 87). She just wants to know who her mother was but because she cannot determine for certain her mother's identity, she does not understand the

motivation for the choices her mother made in life. Unlike Hortensia in *La voz dormida*, who as a mother wrote to her baby Tensi about her life choices and explained, justified, and pleaded with her daughter to follow her example, Riera's narrator C has no such life map laid out for her by her mother and therefore has an identity crisis of such a great magnitude that she ends up in psychiatric care on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Through the blue notebooks she writes while in prison before her death, Hortensia transmits her memories successfully to her daughter Tensi but C is left holding a buzzing telephone receiver—the memories and knowledge of who her mother was and by association, her own identity have not been transmitted. In a poignant conversation with her sister-in-law near the end of the novel, C expresses how great this loss is for her: "Para mí la memoria es imprescindible. Sin memoria estamos muertos. La memoria es el alma de las personas y quizá por eso yo ando buscando la mitad de mi alma" (Riera 175). After first advising her to forget the past, her sister-in-law later softens a bit and says "quizá va siendo hora de que las mujeres nos planteemos cómo hemos vivido la relación materna, tan complicada, de amor y de odio, una relación sobre la que existen muchos tabúes" (Riera 177).

Her relationship with her mother is indeed so complicated, so filled with both love and hate, that Riera's narrator encounters several different versions of her mother (and by extension, herself) throughout the course of the novel. Leggott points out that many aspects of Cecilia's life do not conform to the "true, Catholic womanhood" prescription. She travelled back and forth to France, alone, ostensibly to visit her elderly exiled father, but could have used these visits to engage in an extramarital affair. During the course of her investigations, C alternately suspects her mother of being a double agent and/or an illegal smuggler of goods on the black market (*Memory, War, and Dictatorship* 99). As we have seen, C visits two different friends of her mother's for their versions of her mother's story, she encounters the mother of the letters, the

mother of the photos given to her, the mother of her childhood memories, the mother in the "La Guapa" descriptions of her old comrade from the postwar resistance movement in France. None of these can be reconciled with each other. There is no final assimilation, no perfect amalgamation. The mother remains fragmented, lost. No wonder a lost, fragmented narrator checks herself into a mental institution at one point in the novel, notably right after a long depression which keeps her secluded in her own home, afraid to look in any mirrors because she fears not being able to find her own reflection therein: "por el miedo de que el espejo me devolviera la nada, no el reflejo de mi cara, sino el vacío, un vacío del que sólo tal vez emergiera la boca de mi padre y sus bigotes" (Riera 134). This lack of a reflection in the mirror would seem to signify a dissolving, degenerating sense of self.

Dehiscence, a biological metaphor Lacan employs, is when a ripe structure of a plant spontaneously bursts open. Lacan uses this metaphor to describe the way the child's ego becomes fragmented as he ages and is alienated from the once unified fiction of his identity. The child retains the vestiges of this undeveloped state as he progresses through life—even as he reaches forward in an attempt to achieve the mirage of wholeness (Payne 31). The fictive unity of C's childhood memories and identity is called into question at the moment the stranger at the book fair hands her the letters and photos of her mother. As she becomes increasingly frustrated in her efforts to discover any solid truth about her mother's life and loyalties, her own sense of identity is further fragmented as well.

And the only reflection C fears she may find in the mirror is that of her father, not her mother (as mentioned above). Schumm claims that since her father was a high-ranking official in Franco's military, this fear of finding his reflection in the mirror instead of her own could be indicative of masculine domination haunting the narrator. Schumm goes on to suggest that the

image of the father's mouth in the mirror "suggests that C has unknowingly transferred her voice to her father. The unconscious projected image of her father is the authority that has taken power over her" and that this fear "echoes the situation of Spanish women during Franco's dictatorship, when women legally and psychologically had to silence their voices in deference to the fascist government and to their husbands and fathers" (Schumm 37-38). Her mother's friend, Rosa, spoke of the "doble vida" left-wing women of her generation were called on to employ. "La costumbre de callar nos ayudaba y la obligación… de servir a los maridos y secundarles en todo, también. Eran otros tiempos" (Riera 79). As we will soon see, it is through C's questioning of her patrilineal heritage and subsequent investigation of her matrilineal one that she endeavors to construct and tell her own story, thereby initiating the process of regaining and reclaiming her own voice.

Schumm suggests an alternate reading of this obsessive fear of not finding one's reflection in a mirror by implying that C fears that she herself is becoming a phantasm (35). Joan Ramón Resina recalls the popular idea that "one recognizes ghosts by their lack of reflection in a mirror" (*Disremembering* 3-4). Labanyi maintains that ghosts are what "opens up a hole in reality as we like to think we know it" ("History and Hauntology" 79). For C, her mother is the "hole"—the ghost that haunts her dreams, her life, even the text the reader holds. As the narrator reflects on this experience that had her teetering on the edge of madness she says, "Ahora me doy cuenta de que mi atracción por el vacío guardaba relación con el terror de que mi imagen no se reflejara en el espejo. Si no era nadie, lo mejor que podía hacer era buscar la nada" (Riera 137). Like Gloria, the fictional character searching for her lost child in Prado's novel, who looked into the mirror and saw only "la nada, el mapa de la nada" (Prado 129), C (a character

who is given only an initial, not a whole name) fears a complete dissolution of the self into nothingness, in the event that she cannot find her reflection looking back at her.

Also of interest in our discussion of the "mirror" passages in Riera's novel is the pediatrician's D. W. Winnicott's reinterpretation of Lacan's "The Mirror Stage" where he equates the mother with the mirror: "the precursor of the mirror is the mother's face" (111). For Winnicott, the visual confrontation occurring in the mirror is between mother and child. What the baby sees when she looks into her mother's face, is herself, and the ability to thrive as an individual depends on how the mother responds to the child's look (112-114). Hirsch says that "development depends on being seen, on being mirrored in such a way that growth can occur… The mother… reflects the child back to herself, so that the child might see herself as seen by the mother" (*Family Frames* 157). Hirsch notes how Winnicott goes on to liken the mother to a psychoanalyst who "mirrors" back to the patient what the patient brings to discuss. The mother is a "backgrounded figure against which and in relation to which subjectivity and individuality are formed. Looking is unidirectional and specular: when the child looks she sees herself; when the mother looks she sees the child" (*Family Frames* 157). But what happens when the baby does not get a response upon looking into the mother's face? Winnicott affirms that "there are consequences. First, their [the baby's] own creative capacity begins to atrophy, and in some way or other they look around for other ways of getting something of themselves back from the environment" (112). We note Winnicott's use of the term "creative capacity" in terms of the stunted aspects of personality development in the child. We recall that C mentions at the end of Riera's novel of having reached a point, even before the stranger handed her the letters, of not being able to write anymore because she felt "estéril" y "vacía" (217-218). As the female child matures, Winnicott declares, she looks into mirrors and needs to see something in particular or

else she will suffer pangs of doubt in regards to the mother's love and care: "when the average girl studies her face in the mirror she is reassuring herself that the mother-image is there and that the mother can see her and that the mother is *en rapport* with her" (113). But when C looks into the mirror, she either fears seeing nothing, or only the image of her father's face super-imposed onto her own. The mirror gives her nothing back that she needs in terms of connecting her to her mother and so she continues her search elsewhere.

Another place where C looks for insight into her mother's life and identity is in the handful of photographs she is handed at the beginning of the novel when a stranger gives her the packet containing her mother's letters. In the introduction to Hirsch's *Family Frames*, the author starts out talking about Barthes's *Camera Lucida* and how he goes looking for his mother in a pile of old photographs. Like C (in her process of sorting through other people's memories of her mother), Barthes says he was "struggling among images partially true, and therefore, totally false" (66). It is not until he comes across a "winter-garden photo" of his mother as a young child that he discovers the true essence of his mother (69). He describes how the photograph allows him not just to recognize his mother, but to discover her: "In this veracious photograph, the being I love, whom I have loved, is not separated from itself: at last it coincides… All the photographs of my mother which I was looking through were a little like so many masks… suddenly the mask vanished: there remained a *soul*… this air was the person I used to see, consubstantial with her face, each day of her long life" (109-110, emphasis mine). But in Riera's novel, C never manages to reach through time and space to discover the soul of her mother (not in the letters, nor the photographs, nor even her own dreams and memories)—in fact, she tells her sister-in-law near the end of the novel: "La memoria es el alma de las personas y quizá por eso yo ando

buscando la mitad de mi alma" (Riera 175). There is an undeniable sense of irrecoverable loss that pervades the novel. And even the photographs cannot fill the void left by this loss.

At the same time as C, the reader also confronts the umbilical cord represented by the photographs of her mother. There were five photographs in the envelope given to C—"todas," she says, "tomadas cuando no tenía nada que ver conmigo," with the exception of the one where her mother holds the infant C in her arms (Riera 29). In looking through pictures of his mother, Barthes, too, comments on how he could "read my nonexistence in the clothes my mother had worn before I can remember her" (64). The way C describes the majority of the photos as having nothing to do with her will be significant momentarily. C seems to focus on the two photos where her mother's gaze is averted from that of the person taking the photo. In the description of the one in which C says her mother appears to have married (as she is wearing an evening gown and fur stole, emanating wealth), C notes that her mother in the photo "desvía la vista hacia la izquierda, como si alguien que acabara de aparecer llamara su atención y se quedara quieta un instante para verle, aunque se trate de un truco, de una simulación para no corresponder al objetivo, tal vez por temor a que esa mirada inquisidora averigüe en la suya lo que no debe, lo que desde entonces esconde y yo trato de desvelar" (Riera 30). Like Barthes, C seeks to recognize her mother in the photo, and is frustrated when she finds her mother's gaze does not meet hers and is therefore incapable of offering her neither recognition nor consolation.

Hirsch mentions how that for Barthes, pictures and words, text and image, work together to "tell a complicated story of loss and longing" (4). Photography (taking the picture and then both looking at it and writing about it) is forever linked to the concepts of life and death. The concept of loss is central to both his and Hirsch's discussion of family photos—the referent is both present and absent—it has been here but it is not here now. "The referent haunts the picture

like a ghost (Labanyi): it is a revenant, a return of the lost and dead other" (Hirsch 5). For Barthes, the photograph is a type of umbilical cord—linking us to the lost family member in the photo (81). Barthes says that he does not consider the photograph a 'copy' of reality, but rather an "emanation of past reality; a magic, not an art… the photograph possesses an evidential force, and… its testimony bears not on the object but on time" (Barthes 88-89). For Riera's narrator C, the photographs she is given of her mother haunt her just as much as the aforementioned image of her mother that haunts her dreams ("Tal vez ya no existía pero *había existido*, de eso estaba absolutamente segura, porque no en vano, en el sueño se apropiaba del rostro de mi madre muerta" [Riera 15, emphasis mine]). For C, both the dream image of her mother and the photographic images of her attest to the fact that what once was here, but no longer is, did, in fact, exist. In like manner, Barthes says regarding the photograph of his mother: "the effect it produces upon me is not to restore what has been abolished… but to attest that what I see has indeed existed" (82). Sontag also emphasizes this iconic and indexical quality of photographs—how their existence furnishes evidence that the subject was present at one time: "The picture may distort; but there is always a presumption that something exists, or did exist, which is like what's in the picture" (5). On one level, the photographs seem to comfort C, in that they provide trace evidence of the prior physical existence of her mother—but in their iconic quality, in their resemblance to whatever memory C preserves of her mother (I am thinking here of the one where Cecilia's gaze is averted to something outside the frame), they withhold vital information from C and so further frustrate and complicate her search.

Following Lacan, Hirsch reminds us that "the subject represented in the photograph is always other to the one looking at the picture" (*Family Frames* 89). We have already discussed in chapter one how in Lacan's mirror stage the subject misrecognizes herself as a coherent

image, a false image, but one which is comforting in contrast to the fragmented bodily experience of the child. Looking at one's mirror image, then, is a complicated process which is not to be trusted as the image we see is an ideal, projected self. At the same time that the subject conceives of herself as an image, the subject is also seen/constituted from the outside by the Other—upon whose confirming look she depends. And that confirming look is usually the mother's look, Hirsch reminds us, still following Lacan (*Family Frames* 101-102). Therefore, whether it is in a photograph or a mirror, we all function as both subjects and objects—we see as we are being seen. "I see only from one point, but in my existence I am looked at from all sides" (Lacan, *Four Fundamental Concepts* 72). As Riera's narrator C hunts down all clues in her attempt to map her mother's identity, she encounters so many looks by which her mother is "seen." As has been mentioned already, there is the mother as seen by her daughter, the narrator. There is the mother as "seen" by her friends Rosa and Esther. Adding to the confusing mix is the mother as seen by her lover in the letter fragments the narrator shares with the reader, as well as the limited point of view of the old maquis who knew her only as "La Guapa." And C struggles to see herself (in the mirror, as well as in life) as she cannot find the confirming mother's look (not even in a photograph) for which she so desperately searches. Sontag also talks about how families use photographs to chronicle the connectedness of their lives (8) but in Riera's novel, C remains as disconnected from her mother as she was before she received the letters and photographs.

In her discussion of what she calls "imagetexts" (which includes photographs described in novels), Hirsch talks about how these "prose pictures" have the power of contestation—they can resist the hold of "conventional and monolithic familial gaze" (*Family Frames* 8). By using the term "monolithic," Hirsch is not saying that the familial gaze is static and invariable across

all cultures and time periods, but rather that there exists a "familial mythology" in every culture and every time period—that there exists "an image to live up to, an image shaping the desire of the individual living in a social group" (*Family Frames* 8). Hirsch uses the term "familial gaze" to define the image of the ideal family within a certain cultural or historical moment which has determining influence. She insists that this "familial gaze" positions us as subjects within the ideology of the family and then projects a screen of familial myths between the camera and its subject. "Through this screen the subject both recognizes and can attempt to contest her or his embeddedness in familiality" (*Family Frames* 11). In like manner, C attempts to deconstruct the series of familial myths she finds not only in the photographs but in the different versions of her mother she encounters and recalls throughout the course of the novel, such as the recollections recounted by her mother's friends, Esther and Rosa, her father's discussions with her about her mother, and her own memories and dreams. C begins to question and eventually contest her "ideal family" narrative with the alternate versions of her mother's life that the mysterious photographs and letters offer her. In an even broader sense, contestation is what all the films and novels discussed in my study offer the reader/viewer—they allow us, as audience members, to probe and contest the particular Francoist version of a familial mythology which was always centered on women's role in the family, as a microcosm of a larger building plan for a postwar society. These novels and films remind us of the power of counter-narratives (even fictional ones) and how their creation and dissemination has the power to chip away at deeply embedded cultural masterplots, thereby weakening their prejudicial stance (Abbott 188).

Hirsch also suggests that photographs occupy a "space of contradiction" between the myth of the ideal family and the reality of a family's daily existence (8). When we look at family photographs, we experience a sense of disconnection between some sort of idealized notion of

family life and what family life is actually like. For Riera's narrator C, as we have already mentioned, there is a distinct feeling of disconnection when she looks at the photos of her mother. The mother of her childhood memories is not the mother of the photographs she holds in her hand. Over and over she studies the clothes that her mother was wearing, the suitcase she carried in her hand, and tries to identify not only her mother, but something of herself in the pictures. Sontag talks about how photographs allow us to acquire the thing (or person) photographed. "We have in a photograph surrogate possession of a cherished person or thing" (Sontag 155). In the novel, C says she goes through life looking for "la mitad de *mi* alma" (emphasis mine)—she does desire to possess her mother but as her mother's gaze evades and eludes her, she can find nothing of herself in the photographs and C ultimately renders the photographs useless and foreign to her—saying they have nothing to do with her. We note that the photographs are discussed in detail only at the beginning of the novel and they never reappear in any later discussion.

Schumm sees the ambiguous ending to C's quest to find out more about her mother as a suggestion by Riera that "total reconstruction of the mother's history is not as important as the effort to make her more visible" and insists that "the recognition that there was hidden information" trumps any perceived failure at truth determination (26, 31). In a similar vein, Herzberger says that it is important to re-examine history if only for the purpose of exposing the "illusion of truth and wholeness" of our memories about it (*Narrating the Past* 85). Herzberger, following theorists such as Hayden White and Paul Ricoeur, talks about "the intimacy of historical and fictional narration" (*Narrating the Past* 6) by using a term called "scumbling" in which fiction and history are folded into one another, the lines between the two being necessarily blurred. When writers (of both fiction and history) engage in this narrative scumbling technique,

they are choosing which elements to include (and which to exclude) in their specific configuration of their story as they wish to tell it. In this way, "all knowledge of the past is perceived as contingent and discontinuous. It is of course uninterpretable *once and for all*, but always remains interpretable" (*Narrating the Past* 9). Labanyi further argues that it is the historian's task only to decontexualize the fragmented past, not reconstruct it, and in so doing, watch for new relationships to bubble to the surface ("History" 70). Riera's narrator repeatedly claims to be the author of the text the reader holds, insists that she is not writing a novel, and continually begs the reader to help her find out what happened to her mother. She says that if this were a novel, she would have made the details of her mother's life much more dramatic: "Si Cecilia Balaguer no fuera mi madre, si sólo fuera la madre de la narradora de este relato, si ésta y yo no coincidiéramos también al margen de estas páginas, puedo garantizarle que la habría caracterizado de manera más heroica..." (230). This constant blurring of the lines between historical and fictional narrative, between what is knowable about each separately and both together, is a most salient aspect of the experience of reading Riera's novel. The narrator's voice haunts us, will not let us rest, and leaves us feeling that all is not well by the time we turn the last page.

While there is some satisfaction to be had on the part of the reader by acknowledging, as Schumm points out, that at least the search for missing information about the mother has begun, Riera's novel's ending also emphasizes that the quest to restore the lost mother in Spanish novels is really a quest to uncover lost elements of history, identity, memory. Riera's novel reminds us that this quest is both personal and public, and that it will not soon be resolved but will continue to resonate with unanswered questions. It is not enough to be ambivalent toward your mother, your past, your history, your identity. The question demands an answer. Will Spanish female

novelists and their female protagonists continue to pose these questions and press for answers? And if they do continue to press for answers, what answers are to be found? In spite of the Dulce Chacóns (who skillfully craft powerfully contestatory fiction derived from historical testimony) and Tomasa Cuevas-es (who carefully record and preserve eyewitness testimony), perhaps there are some things which are lost, irrevocably lost, changed forever, gone—from a world deeply scarred by war, dictatorship, and long years of reprisals. Riera's novel reminds us that there are some lost things we can never bring back into our field of knowing. C cannot lay her mother to rest in peace—she fails in her quest to discover the details of her life and death, including in her novel's conclusion a desperate plea to the reader to continue the search: "Más que nunca le ruego que me ayude no sólo por lo que le he contado hasta aquí sino por lo que le añadiré a continuación" (Riera 239).

What C does recover is a way at least to begin to restructure herself without this missing puzzle piece of certainty about her mother's identity—by talking about what has been lost, she finds a way to maintain the structural integrity of herself as a subject. She says at one point after seeking psychiatric help, "Ahora sé que lo que más necesitaba era ser escuchada, que alguien aceptara que mi silencio angustioso era también una manera de comunicar. Claro que para recuperar mi *yo en el espejo*, para ahuyentar aquella chispa de locura, *tenía que recobrar las palabras*. Sólo si hacía el esfuerzo de verbalizar lo que me ocurría, podría empezar a llenar el vacío, volver a ver mi cara en el espejo, ser otra vez quien era" (Riera 136, emphasis mine). For C, there is a direct link between history and identity. To have lost hold on the story of her family, her family's history, was to lose her hold on her sense of self. In a similar, yet opposite way, for the imprisoned Tomasa whose story is part of Chacón's novel and is discussed more fully in chapter two, to speak about the past and recount her family history was her way of holding on to

herself, to resist the way the prison system sought to destroy her by locking her away from society and silencing her. These women must recover their own language here, as the language of Francoism had all but effaced any efforts at self-expression or self-identity. Indeed, C admits at the end of the novel that maybe the stranger who handed her the letters somehow knew that "la necesidad de buscar mi verdadera identidad me impulsaría a escribir de nuevo" (242) and so begins to recover her writer's voice, as well as her reflection in the mirror. In this way, as Everly points out, Riera shows us the power of language and writing to construct (and reconstruct) even the most personal of experiences (47).

Through the talk therapy she experiences in the asylum, C realizes that to speak and be heard is a way to "llenar el vacío" which allows her to "ver mi cara en el espejo" and then in turn leads her to "recuperar mi yo," even if that "yo" is fragmented and perhaps never fully formed. In the novel, C reminds us that "por eso yo ando buscando la mitad de mi alma"—the other half of the soul remains unfound—the ambiguous gendered performance required by Francoism in her mother's day has made its mark, created a gap, left a hole, and while there is not enough verifiable evidence to fully constitute the subject, the idea is that the process of self-construction, by abandoning all hopes of finding stability in said performance, has at least begun again.

Finally, Barthes's metaphor of the umbilical cord connecting photography to a type of maternity, in its life-giving properties, is also useful in concluding our discussion of Riera's novel here. Life and death are always inherently present in photography for Barthes. Hirsch says "Life is the presence of the object before the camera… death is the 'having-been-there' of the object" (*Family Frames* 20). It is her mother's life that Riera's narrator desires so earnestly to bring back into her field of knowing, but like Barthes looking at the winter-garden photo of his mother, it is her death that photography, while having the power to the resuscitate the past only

in the form of the ghostly revenant which the image provides, cannot completely overcome (*Family Frames* 20). The dichotomy of life-giving maternity and irreversible death of the camera's object is the inescapable reality by which Riera's narrator is nearly driven mad. The terrible separation from one's identity (i.e. her mother's past) is what Hirsch has named "this condition of exile from the space of identity" and affirms that it is a "characteristic aspect of postmemory" (*Family Frames* 243). In *La mitad del alma*, there is no maternal map for the narrator to follow—there is barely any evidence of a gendered performance to either accept or reject. This theme of maternal absence leads us to the final section of this chapter where we will examine tales of motherless daughters, orphanages, and exile while at the same time highlighting the malleable, often alienating nature of a gendered performance.

Orphans, exile, and abjection

In her famous essay *Powers of Horror*, Kristeva says that the abject is neither subject nor object but that "it has only one quality of the object—that of being opposed to *I*" (Oliver 230). She goes on to say that

> what is abject… the jettisoned object, is radically excluded and draws me toward the place where meaning collapses… And yet, from its place of banishment, the abject does not cease challenging its master… A massive and sudden emergence of uncanniness, which, familiar as it might have been in an opaque and forgotten life, now harries me as radically separate, loathsome. Not me. Not that. But not nothing, either. A 'something' that I do not recognize as a thing. A weight of meaninglessness, about which there is nothing significant, which crushes me. On the edge of nonexistence and hallucination, of a reality that, if I acknowledge it, annihilates me. (Oliver 230)

Kristeva speaks of the abject in terms of attraction and repulsion—me vs. not-me. The division between Spaniard vs. not-a-true-Spaniard was one that women experienced in a particular way, as has already been noted here in such seminal works as Morcillo's *True Catholic Womanhood.*

As Kristeva speaks of the human tendency to "jettison" the abjected material away from the subject's perceived boundaries of the self, so do the films examined here portray the story of the lost mother or homeland through the optic of an exile- or an orphan/orphanage-centered theme. For the daughters discussed in this section, the gendered performance exemplified by their mothers is abject, rejected by the generation of daughters growing up after the war who are now turning to alternate forms of mother-mentors, as well as forming their own definitions of femininity as they explore different options for what kind of Spanish women they want to be.

The young female protagonists in the films discussed here are either isolated or separated from their mothers in some way—if not physically, then on emotional/psychological planes. In *El laberinto del fauno* (2006), Ofelia's mother dies while giving birth to a Nationalist captain's child. Ofelia is certainly not her mother and will make very different choices from the ones her mother made, choosing instead to align herself with the enemies of her right-wing stepfather and steal the baby from him, ultimately sacrificing herself for her baby brother so that he might be brought up by Mercedes, the housekeeper/sister to one of the maquis who is hiding and fighting in the hills. Also among classic, seminal films that feature a maternal theme (or lack thereof) we find Ana as something of a lonely orphan-like figure in *El espíritu de la colmena* (1973).[16] In *Carol's Journey* (2003), Carol is soon to be motherless as her rebellious, dying mother returns to her hometown to make arrangements for Carol to live with her much more conservative sister. And in the more recently produced *Ispansi* (2011), Paula is a unique example of an exiled Spanish woman. She is disowned by her Nationalist family who refused to acknowledge her existence after she flees Spain at the end of the war with a group of communist orphans, among

[16] Another postwar filmic narrative featuring an orphaned daughter haunted by her own ghostly imaginations of her dead mother, as well as the violent, oppressive legacy of her dead father is Carlos Saura's *Cría Cuervos* (1976)

whom she has hidden her illegitimate "orphaned" son. Mother, mother-less, denied full access to motherhood, exiled, abject—her constantly changing gendered performance repeatedly insists that she confront the borderland of the abject, of what is me vs. not-me.

In Erice's *El espíritu de la colmena* (1973), little Ana struggles to connect to the women in her family—she seems different (especially from her sister, Isabel), isolated, alone. She tries to talk about spirits with her mother but does not seem to take much comfort from that conversation. She and her mother live very separate lives—though a small child, maybe only six or seven years old, Ana goes by herself to a deserted shack with a well that her older sister Isabel has once shown her. Ana ends up taking food and clothing to and caring for a wounded wanderer who has taken refuge in the shack (perhaps he is a maquis, or a former Republican soldier in hiding?). Meanwhile, Ana's mother has her own secret life that no one else seems to be a part of—she writes letters to an unknown person referencing their past life together and bikes alone to the train station to search the passengers' faces for something she never seems to find. Throughout the film she seems estranged from her husband—barely speaking to him, feigning sleep when he gets into bed with her, and only showing concern for him with small, distant, almost cold gestures (e.g. dropping his forgotten hat to him from an outside balcony as he is leaving the house one day). Only when Ana disappears overnight after the fugitive she has been aiding is captured and killed, does Ana's mother seem interested in connecting with her tiny daughter and attempting to find out what has been going on in Ana's life and head of late. Some have interpreted Teresa's (the mother's) actions near the end of the film as being both indicative of her regret at not being a good wife and mother as well as a decision to retreat into a more traditional feminine role in the home as she is seen burning the letter to her potential former

lover, caring for Ana during her recovery after her night in the woods, and covering her sleeping husband with a blanket (Deleyto 50-51).

Carol, in *Carol's Journey* (2003), also has trouble negotiating the clashing forms of socially generated feminine identity she finds represented among her own relatives. At the beginning of the film, her dying mother returns to her native rural village to make arrangements regarding the care of her young daughter, as her American husband, Carol's father, is away fighting with the International Brigades. Carol's mother, Aurora, is viewed with disdain even before arriving at the village when she attracts critical stares on the train by smoking. Maruja, her old friend and teacher, tells her later that only the men in the village smoke publicly. Carol quickly becomes friends with not only Maruja but also with Tomiche—one of the village boys with whom she climbs trees, rides bicycles, and roams the countryside in overalls and pants. After her mother's death, Carol goes to live with her mother's sister, her Aunt Dolores, who dresses only in black, would never wear pants, and would never be caught without her crucifix necklace. Carol incurs Dolores's wrath when she entices her young cousin, Dolores's daughter, on an outing with her group of all male friends. Dolores is furious when the girls return home, dirty and tattered, and scolds Carol severely. "Prefiero parecerme a ella que parecerme a ti," Carol responds when Dolores criticizes her friendship with Maruja. "¡Quítese esos pantalones! ¡Que pareces una miliciana!" Dolores snaps back. But Carol will turn away from the image of "true Catholic womanhood" proffered her by Dolores, who wants Carol to convert from Protestantism, prepare for her first communion, and become Catholic. Carol is lucky, even though she has lost her mother, she has the support of her grandfather who continually insists that Carol be allowed to decide for herself what her life will be like. Carol, like young Tensi in *La voz dormida* and Ofelia en *El laberinto del fauno*, has a mother-mentor in Maruja, who stands

in direct opposition to the feminine example her aunt represents; and when Madrid falls and her father is taken prisoner-of-war, she will leave Spain to travel to the United States to live with her paternal grandparents.

Others of these young protagonists will not have the option to leave Spain but will be forced to encounter even more of the abjection that death and corpses represent in the narratives explored here. Kristeva mentions having visited a museum in the remains of Auschwitz where she sees a pile of children's shoes and reflects upon how "the abjection of Nazi crime reaches its apex when death, which, in any case, kills me, interferes with what, in my living universe, is supposed to save me from death: childhood, science, among other things" (Oliver 232). When Ofelia in *El laberinto del fauno* (2006) encounters the Pale Man, there is a pile of children's shoes at the end of the banquet table. He and his emaciated body, with his ribs clearly visible, most certainly signify an insatiable, voracious, deathly evilness. Childhood cannot save you from evil, from the abject fascist Spain that seeks to devour Ofelia in the form of her fascist step-father for whom the Pale Man is arguably a metaphor. In a not dissimilar vein, Frankenstein's monster in El *espíritu de la colmena* could be seen as an anti-type for Ana's father whose steps are heard ominously thudding in his study as she and her sister whisper in the darkness before sleeping.[17] On the other hand, recalling our former discussion of Winnicott's theory of the mother as mirror, when Ana looks into the water near the end of the film, she see not her mother, but the monster. Such an observation has led some to conflate the mother with monster, rather than the father (Deleyto 50). At any rate, Ana seeks to confront the monster (as does Ofelia)—they are both aware of the border between themselves and not-themselves; death lingers at that border, as it

[17] Labanyi sees the father not as a monster but as part of the "living dead" surviving in Franco's Spain as she points out that his connection to his life as a Republican intellectual has been completely cut off, except for what he reads and writes in his private diary ("History and Hauntology" 76-77).

does for Kristeva, and threatens to engulf them, and indeed, anyone who is perceived as an enemy to Franco's Spain. Kristeva reminds us how

> refuse and corpses show me what I permanently thrust aside in order to live… There, I am at the border of my condition as a living being. My body extricates itself, as being alive, from that border… the corpse… is a border that has encroached upon everything. It is no longer I who expel, 'I' is expelled. The border has become an object. How can I be without border?... The corpse… is the utmost of abjection. It is death infecting life. Abject. (Kristeva in Oliver 231-232)

Ana, in *El espíritu de la colmena*, also encounters the borderland of the corpse of the man she had been aiding in the shack with the well. While her father confronts the actual corpse in the office of the local Guardia Civil, Ana goes to the shack to gaze upon the blood left there from the gunfight which ended her friend's life. Ana faces the border represented by the blood and struggles to make sense of it. While Ana tries to talk to her mother about spirits and to her sister about Frankenstein's monster and how to call it up, she speaks to no one about the fugitive in the shack whom she is feeding and clothing. She is too young and innocent to understand fully how to negotiate this boundary between me and not-me. In treating the fugitive as if he were an extension of herself—offering him friendship, food, and even her father's coat, she ignores the existence of any boundary.

We note how these girls can and do make choices, independent of their families and, most notably, independently of their mothers, as to how they will react to their border-monsters. Ana, at first cautious of the fugitive in the shack, as her sister Isabel has told her that this is where she has seen the monster, apparently decides the monster is not going to kill her as the monster killed the little girl in the *Frankenstein* film that she watched in town. Instead, for Ana the fugitive is not a monster, not a threatening abject, but someone she can and does come to trust and care for (if that is how we are to interpret her actions). Also, near the end of the film

after we have seen Ana look at a photograph album of pictures of Teresa when she was younger, perhaps before she was a wife and mother (Deleyto 49), and after Ana has been recovered from running away and being outside all night, we see her make her own decision to go outside her home and call to the monster in the night—in spite of the doctor's warning to forget what she has seen and experienced. In this way, Labanyi notes that Ana "breaks with the traumatized silence into which she has fallen" and into which her parents have been inscribed in the bleakness of a harsh postwar existence (Labanyi, "Memory and Modernity" 98).

Ofelia in the film *El laberinto del fauno* is another example of a young girl who dismisses her mother's version of womanhood and forges her own way (as discussed more fully in chapter three) —clinging instead to the housekeeper, Mercedes, and the resistant example that she presents, rather than accepting her mother's passive, self-sacrificing version of femininity. We see Ofelia's resistance to her mother's definition of life from the very beginning of the film when her mother tells her that she should put away her fairy tales. Her mother asks that Ofelia call Captain Vidal her father, "es sólo una palabra," her mother urges, but Ofelia never concedes. While Ofelia obviously loves her mother (we see her pleading with her unborn baby brother while still in the womb not to hurt her mother), she repeatedly does not follow her mother's wishes. She goes off on her quest to find the giant toad in the dying fig tree when her mother is preparing for a formal dinner with her husband and the local community leaders. Ofelia also repeatedly turns to Mercedes in her efforts to negotiate this new life in Captain Vidal's household. She asks Mercedes if she believes in fairy tales, listens intently when Mercedes cautions her against trusting the faun, and later admits that while she has known for some time that Mercedes is helping the *maquis* in the mountains, she (Ofelia) has no intention of betraying her to the Captain.

Near the end of the film, when Mercedes realizes she must flee the mill outpost in order to escape to the mountains where her brother and the others are fighting, Ofelia begs to be allowed to come along (her own mother has just died in childbirth and there is no longer any reason for Ofelia to pretend that she is part of the Captain's family). Mercedes has completely become a mother figure to her now, and Ofelia has chosen a very different path from the one her own mother chose. Her mother, Carmen, spoke earlier at the dinner party about how her first husband (and Ofelia's father) was a tailor who made the Captain's suits, and how after her husband's death they met again and married. When urging Ofelia to respect and obey the Captain she says, "no sabes lo bueno que ha estado con nosotras." As mentioned in chapter one, Carmen has obviously chosen to "survive" in Franco's Spain by marrying one of the war's victors. Ironically, her choice will destroy both her and Ofelia's lives, as she will die giving birth to the Captain's child, and Ofelia will die at the hands of the Captain himself. Carmen's body is only useful to her husband, to the state, if she can produce a male heir (the Captain insists to the Doctor that the baby will be male, even before the birth). Ofelia's choices, however, lead her to become something of a new (albeit temporary) kind of mother-figure to her baby brother after her mother's death, as we see when she removes him from the Captain's care and takes him to the labyrinth where she makes the right choice in refusing to let the baby's blood be shed by the faun. Ofelia does what her own mother could not do—her death at the hands of the Captain saves the life of her baby brother, as her blood becomes the sacrifice that enables her brother to escape a life of Fascist paternity. When Vidal is surrounded by the maquis and about to be shot in the head, execution style, Mercedes takes the baby from him, and steps back into the center of the frame, into the center of the group of maquis. Just as Ofelia had done when she took the baby from Vidal's private quarters in the mill, Mercedes now becomes the baby's surrogate mother,

and by association, the maquis become his surrogate family (as discussed more fully in chapter three). When Vidal makes his last request that his son be told how his father bravely died, Mercedes interrupts the oppressive patriarchal system she has been living under in Vidal's household, and by extension, in Franco's Spain, when she replies, "Ni siquiera sabrá su nombre." The baby's patriarchal heritage is now erased and replaced by a matrilineal line—and there is just enough time for Vidal's horror at this realization to register on his face before he is shot. Maroto Camino insists that "Ofelia's blood becomes the redemptive life-source of a newly born human being whose future, like that of twenty-first century Spain, will be marked by forgetting her half-brother's origin as the offspring of fascism. Ofelia can be considered the surrogate mother of a child whose memories of an oppressive past need to be transcended in order to forge a renewed future in a different universe" (125).

As previously noted, Kristeva's notion of the abject highlights the threatening, yet fascinating nature of the borderland. In chapter three, we discussed the precarious nature of the borderland inhabited by the maquis and their supporters. In the film *Ispansi* (2011), we find a story where the themes of borders, exile, changeable identities, motherhood, performance, and abjection all come into play. The main character here is Paula, a woman from an upper-class nationalist family, whose brother is clearly a member of the Falange. When she becomes pregnant through an ill-fated love affair with a nameless soldier, she hides the pregnancy from her family and gives birth in a hospital run by nuns. The nuns keep her secret and raise her son in their orphanage where his mother visits him faithfully (under the guise of doing her charitable, Catholic good deeds) until the war reaches Madrid and the Republicans evict the nuns and evacuate the children to the Soviet Union. Paula steals a communist ID card off the body of a dead maid who is killed by a bomb during an air raid and then uses this stolen identity to pass as

a communist volunteer who will travel with the children to the Soviet Union, just so she can keep watch over her son. She is a mother whose gendered identity is in flux (her family was wealthy and Nationalist and she could have stayed to live a life of ease in Franco's New Spain were it not for her secret pregnancy) but because she cannot openly acknowledge her son as her own, her Nationalist identity becomes separate from her, something that is just on the abject edge of her being, as she at first adopts a gendered identity that is distasteful to her, that of a communist woman fleeing Franco's Spain.

Kristeva talks about the relationship between the exiled and the abject when she affirms that "the one by whom the abject exists is thus a *deject* who places (himself), separates (himself), situates (himself), and therefore *strays* instead of getting his bearings, desiring, belonging, or refusing… Situationist in a sense… Necessarily dichotomous… he divides, excludes, and without… wishing to know his abjections is not at all unaware of them. Often… he includes himself among them, thus casting within himself the scalpel that carries out his separations" (Oliver 235). I cannot imagine a better description than this of Paula from *Ispansi*. At first, when she exiles herself to Russia (seemingly unnecessarily as she is from a powerful Nationalist family) with the fleeing communist orphans and their caretakers, she rejects the camaraderie and goodwill proffered her by her travel companions, especially after her son is killed (no one knew that this particular "orphan" was, in fact, her biological son given up to the orphanage as she had to hide her pregnancy and existence of her child from her family). To use Kristeva's words, she is certainly a "deject" who "strays," as her farewell letter read by her overbearing, ultraconservative father to her Falangist brother and mantilla-wearing, gossipy, ultra-Catholic mother causes her father to declare that she, Paula, from this point on, will cease to exist in the history of their family. Paula herself exhibits a dichotomous, conflicting self-configuration as she

at first wishes to die after the death of her son, and then waffles in her allegiance to her former gendered identity—a trait she exhibits when she is caught teaching Catholic prayers to some of the young orphan girls she is helping to care for in Russia. When she finally begins to "live" again, in large part in response to the love she finds she is capable of sharing with Carlos, a former Republican commissar who will live out the end of his days with her in Russia, she must confront her past and decide what the inheritance of her memory of Spain's history will be and what will be the nature and extent of her own connection to it.

Kristeva maintains that abjection "is elaborated through a failure to recognize its kin; nothing is familiar, not even the shadow of a memory" (Oliver 233). In *Ispansi*, Paula returns decades after the war to seek out her dying mother in Spain—a mother who lived under the heavy hand of her tyrannical Nationalist husband for years and was never allowed to speak of Paula again after the latter's decision to self-exile in Russia. When Paula does return to Spain years later, she finds her mother overtaken by dementia and old age, silent and slumped, still wearing her black mantilla, hands locked on a rosary, mind locked on mumbling a forgotten prayer. She cannot even recognize her daughter, nor can she respond to her daughter's efforts to make contact with her. Mother and daughter (and in like manner, Paula and Franco's Spain) are forever separated, forever abject to one another. When Paula attempts this reunion with her fascist family, she finds that while she is still capable of generating an acceptable feminine performance required by a postwar society (she has the clothes, jewels, family name, and notoriety to get noticed by high-ranking Nationalist military men at social functions), she feels keenly the border between me and not-me, between the gendered performance required to survive and prosper as a woman in Franco's Spain, and the freedom from such a performance offered her by a life of considerable penury in Russia. In the end she cannot bring herself to

assimilate, eventually choosing to turn her back on the gendered performance she once fiercely embraced (at the beginning of the film) as a daughter of a wealthy Nationalist family and returns to Russia to be reunited with her permanently exiled and impoverished Spanish communist husband.

Thus we have seen how there is an irrepressible need, it seems, to confront the abject, the performance, the border of what lies between me and not-me, and transmit the memory anyway. Kristeva insists that "fear having been bracketed, discourse will seem tenable only if it ceaselessly confronts that otherness, a burden both repellant and repelled, a deep well of memory that is unapproachable and intimate: the abject" (Oliver 234). At the end of Riera's novel, the narrator C speaks of the pressing need to complete Cecilia's story in order to complete her own because without this search for her mother's true identity and by extension, her own, she feels "estéril y vacía… me hundió en un pozo" (218). She is a sterile, empty well without memories, without identity, without her mother's story to fill in her own. Indeed, as many have noted, Erice's film is characterized by stillness, by absence, by silence. Erice, too, growing up after the war, is among those characterized by Marsha Kinder as the "children of Franco." His film leaves the viewer with a sense of desolation left to the survivors of the war. He described the 'absence' of his parents (which could easily be applied to Ana's parents) in this way: "A veces pienso que para quienes en su infancia han vivido a fondo ese vacío que, en tantos aspectos básicos, heredamos los que nacimos inmediatamente después de una guerra civil como la nuestra, los mayores eran con frecuencia eso: un vacío… una ausencia… hubo en ellos, para siempre, algo profundamente mutilado, que es lo que revela su ausencia" (qtd in Maroto Camino 87).

If we are not as lucky as young Tensi with her mother's blue notebooks clearly outlining her mother's story, it would seem, then, that we must *write* our mothers back into existence, back

into an identifiable form, in order to find the "yo en el espejo." We have seen how narratives in both novelistic and filmic forms highlight many facets of mothers and motherhood that are infused with elements of performance. It would seem that there are a plethora of ways to "write the mother back in" (as Schumm would say). One finds mothers who are not afraid to send their daughters out into Francoist society, trusting that their self-determining ideals will still be successfully transmitted to future generations (such as the Vega women in *Un largo silencio*), young female protagonists who reject the image of a performed femininity presented to them by their mothers (such as Ofelia in *El laberinto del fauno*), or others who struggle to even identify what their mothers' lives represented and so are incapable of choosing which aspects of their mothers' examples to either accept or reject (such as Riera's C).

One of Hirsch's main points in *Family Frames* concerns the power of images, photographs, and image-texts to open a space for contestation. She maintains that "writing, making pictures, and reading them can be seen as forms of feminine resistance" (215). The maker and reader of images intervenes in the ideological script of her own life and can perceive, confront, resist, and transform the ideologies that surround her. Most of all, she can remake, reclaim, and reveal the complex and painful struggle for identity (*Family Frames* 215). Michael Payne, in his Preface to *Reading Theory*, mentions how both Lacan's and Kristeva's writings bear witness to the conviction that "acts of reading have the power to transform and liberate human beings" who are subjects "only in the sense that they are born into structures of signification they have the power to disrupt, just as those structures have the power to undermine any sense of static identity or individuality" (ix). Authors such as the ones discussed in this study (whether they are writing about women's struggle to survive in the immediate postwar years or a

woman dealing with her confusing postmemories of the war era decades later) have managed to "open a space for contestation" to the Franco-era social construct of ideal Spanish womanhood.

Epilogue

si no veis a nadie, si os asustan
los lápices sin punta, si la madre
España cae –digo, es un decir–
salid, niños del mundo; id a buscarla!

César Vallejo, "España, aparta de mí este cáliz"

In the introduction to their *Spanish Cultural Studies*, Graham and Labanyi define the word "culture" as being inclusive of "both lived practices and artifacts or performances, understood as symbolic systems" (5). The notion of performance implies that all forms of signification are produced for an audience. Therefore, it has become commonly accepted to discuss these lived practices, artifacts, or performances as if they were 'texts' designed to be read. Labanyi and Graham caution that lived practices have a far more potentially deadly effect on human beings than any art object as many have perished in the 'texts' of war. On the other hand, they point out that all cultural forms—whether they exist as lived practices or artifacts and performances—have an underlying narrative: "culture can be defined as the stories people tell each other to explain what and where they are" ("Culture and Modernity" 5). Furthermore, they point out that culture is a site of power that is continually negotiated and contested. These fictional narratives discussed here revisit that site of cultural power, negotiating, and contesting the "stories people tell."

In the process of highlighting how history in postwar novels is always displayed as something "mutable and contingent," Herzberger reminds us how the historical novel "explores ways in which the past can be represented, which bits of the past should be reconstructed, and the meanings that might be given to them" and how "novels of this kind engage with time and

history to scrutinize the slippery terrain between narration and truth" ("Postwar Historical Fiction" 113). By employing the imaginative tool of fictional narration, a wide array of voices from the past becomes available to both writer and reader—a multiplicity of stories can be written and read around the same bits of historical evidence. In a work such as Dulce Chacón's *La voz dormida*, to reiterate one salient example, we find a unique instance of the voiceless speaking—in her particular weaving of fictional narrative combined with postwar oral testimonies painstakingly recorded and transcribed by Tomasa Cuevas, Chacón gives new life to the women who either died in Franco's prisons, or died without sharing with the world the story of what happened to them there. Another example of fiction's power to flesh out narration is the way Giménez Bartlett develops and enhances the life story of La Pastora—a character from real life who is given only a single line in Serrano's definitive history of the maquis. Rather than employing historiographic dissidence in their novels as means of narration (as did the early postwar writers), more recent novelists now tend to address history through a more "liberating admixture of fact and imagination," writing the past as they imagine it to have been (Herzberger, *Narrating the Past* 155).

The generations of women born under the Francoist dictatorship were indoctrinated with the regime's ideal of femininity and kept in ignorance of their foremothers' capacity for social change (Nash *Defying* 185). When novels and films (and other media productions) depoliticize women's experiences and focus instead on the effectiveness of the patriarchal regimes that oppress them, there is no room for the story of women's individual political and social agency to surface (Ramblado Minero 128-130). By engaging the optic of gender as a social construction and by highlighting the performative nature of gender, I have endeavored to demonstrate how the fictional narratives discussed in this work manage to "open a space for contestation" (Scarlett)—

as they allow us to revisit the site of oppression and give some voice to those who were at the time, voiceless.

In our quest to seek out places where agency might have possible for women, even while living under a repressive culture of "true, Catholic womanhood," we note that many of the titles of the novels and films discussed here speak to recovering, or at least, revisiting the site where loss has occurred: *La voz dormida* (a sleeping voice, awakened it would seem), *Un largo silencio* (a long silence, ended apparently), *El silencio roto* (a silence broken, obviously). Even the title of Giménez Bartlett's novel, *Donde nadie te encuentre* (Where no one can find you) implies that someone is lost, has been forgotten, and needs to be found. But the sense of irrecoverable loss permeates these texts too—there are some wrongs that cannot be rectified—in *La mitad del alma,* where is the other half of the soul? And in *El laberinto del fauno*, the viewer knows that they are watching only a temporary victory—the *maquis* and the women who aid them have triumphed only for the moment, they will not be the victors that history will record officially but their place in fictional narrative allows us to see an alternate ending to the way things might have been had the struggle gone differently.

Finally, as the lines above from Vallejo's poem remind us, Eagleton also recalls that in Lacanian theory, the mother's body is the original lost object—the driving impetus in any forward movement in the narrative of our lives. He rehearses with us the anecdote of Freud (in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*) watching his grandson in a pram play with a toy on a string, exclaiming "fort!" (gone) and "da!" (here) as he repeatedly lost and recovered the object. "Something must be lost or absent in any narrative for it to unfold; if everything stayed in place there would be no story to tell" (Eagleton 185). But what if what is lost is never found? Riera's novel ends with a desperate, haunting plea on behalf of the narrator for help from the reader in

continuing the search for more information about her deceased mother. This novel, more than any other discussed here, reminds us that Spanish post-civil war narratives cannot fully recuperate what has been lost, and that the door remains open for future storytellers to continue the search for ways to fill in the absences.

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