

**Revitalizing Youth in the Body Politics of Contemporary Spanish Culture**

**by**

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**To Jeff**

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## Abstract

This dissertation establishes an immunizing model for conceptualizing modern Spanish masculinity through an analysis of texts by fascist theorists Ernesto Giménez Caballero, Juan Antonio Vallejo-Nágera, and cinema by José Luis Sáenz de Heredia. It then proceeds to expose how film and literature by the “children of Franco” challenges such hegemonic models of masculinity through readings of the films *La caza*, by Carlos Saura, *La mala educación* by Pedro Almodóvar, and *Pa negre* by Agustí Villaronga. The novel *Señas de identidad* and autobiography *Coto vedado* by Juan Goytisolo participate in this project of resistance from the realm of literature. I then demonstrate the legacy of the imposition of Francoist masculinity found in the current political period in Spain in films and a novel dealing with drugs and youth in the Transition, and films concerning the health of the body during the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Eloy de la Iglesia’s *El Pico*, José Angel Mañas’s *Las historias del Kronen*, and Pedro Almodóvar’s *Todo sobre mi madre* betray such continuities between old fascist and contemporary paradigms for conceptualizing the body.

This immunizing model of heroic imperial masculinity haunts Spanish culture in representations of the young male. The fascist victory of the Spanish Civil War brought with it cultural, educational, and medical apparatuses of biopolitical control. Such machineries were designed to “cure” the nation of leftist political ideologies, effeminacy, and the decline of the imperial race. For the regime, the greatest promise of a robust future for Spain resided in its youth. And, so, they became a primary target of its disciplining mechanisms. This revitalizing

mandate on youth of some seventy years ago still reverberates in new cultural production today. Traces of its contours are evident in depictions of the tumultuous development of the intellectual commitments, sexuality, and bodily health of the young from the Franco period to the Transition. I call the traces of this phenomenon evidence of a bad education, and it has marked narratives of growing-up as a boy in Spain since its authoritarian institutionalization.

## **Introduction**

Hopes and aspirations for the Nation's future rest on its vision for its youth. The fate of the young and the destiny of the state are so bound together in the national imagination that sites of youth—from the spheres of metaphor, art, literature, and film, to those of praxis and politics—are hotly contested battlefields for power. Such contests are strikingly apparent in modern Spain by means of comparison of the post-war totalitarian consolidation of administration over education and youth programs, and the installation of the censorship apparatus by the Franco regime, all the way to the contrasting liberal rhetorics and representations of youth in the Transition, leading to the status of the young in the contemporary democratic state. Franco insisted that the education of children in the precepts of Spanish national-catholicism and their indoctrination into his one-party rule was to be a major priority of his new regime, and so it should be no surprise that artists frequently use the perspective of figures of youth in an attempt to either reify, or to rethink and undermine his authority. Conversely, his death and the rise of democracy in Spain are often allegorized as a national coming-of-age, and the faces of the Transition and the budding democracy are cast as those of the young of the new state. Children, in Spain, come to embody the “unfinished business” of the Transition, both through recollections of childhoods, invoked from the Francoist past, and as open questions about the future of the body politic.

While scholarship has concerned itself with, especially, the female bildungsroman in post-war Spain, it has not sufficiently taken account of the role of the political in coming-of-age narratives, or how depictions of and prescriptions for the bodies of youth inflect on larger

questions and problems facing the national body. In other words, there has been inadequate inquiry into discourses and mimetic models surrounding youth in the Franco and democratic periods, aimed at forming good Spanish citizen-subjects, and the resistances, failures, successes, consequences, and echoes thereof, that reach all the way into contemporary art and narrative. Under Franco, forty years of social programming and rhetoric governing the young—from the education system, dominated by the Catholic Church, to the editing, banning, and distribution of films, books, and magazines by the state—had a profound impact on cultural production that reverberates into the present. Youth were mobilized in film and literature during the Transition period in attempts to rethink the bounds of collective relationality that remain limited in a neoliberal democratic system of governance.

This study seeks to shed light on contemporary concerns surrounding the imperative of growing up as a man, and coming-of-age in Spain, by taking a look at representations of youth in the post-war period under Franco, and then representations of boys in the democratic period, which it considers to be foundational moments that set the contemporary stage as points of reference in coming-of-age narratives. Artists' depictions of boyhood proffer continuities in the relationship between the male body and national community across the fascist and democratic periods that are characterized by an impulse towards the immunization of the male body/collective from “contaminating” feminine or politically impure elements. By focusing on youth and the pressures placed on the formative experience of coming-of-age, the study seeks to mine a rich field in order to uncover and compare the biopolitical aims of the different regimes of power. It will do so by taking a cultural-studies approach and examining narrative, film, and political rhetoric from the war, post-war, and Transition periods, and then it will consider these contexts as they relate to subsequent narratives of youth from within and outside of them.

In 1976, Phyllis Boring remarked that,

One of the notable characteristics of the Spanish novel of the post Civil War period is an increased emphasis on the world of childhood. Maurice Edgar Coindreau, one of several critics who has noted this tendency, states that, with the exception of *Lazarillo de Tormes* and his picaresque descendents, children did not have an important role in the Spanish novel until the present time. In general, Coindreau's statement is true. With the notable exception of Galdós, seldom in Spanish literature have authors portrayed children as well-developed characters ... Since the Civil War, a number of novels have been written which emphasize children and adolescents" (467).

Just as Spanish literature long ignored the child, scholars have largely ignored the phenomenon of its resurgence in Spanish cultural production. In her 2008 dissertation entitled "Novels of Female Development in Postwar Spain," Viktoria Hackbarth outlines what she sees as a new genre of the female *bildungsroman* that emerges in the postwar surge of women's writing. While Hackbarth takes interest in the plethora of representations of the girl child from this period, she is more interested in tracing the lines of what she determines is a new genre than she is in embarking on an analysis of the discursive conditions that bring about the cultural boom of youth narratives. Boring hypothesizes that the resurgence of the child in the post-war period is provoked by the need writers had to revisit a traumatic past, marked by the experience of war, in order to liberate themselves from its memory (467). She reads novels by Ana María Matute, Juan Goytisolo, Miguel Delibes, and Ramón Sender through this framework. Perhaps there is some truth to this speculation, as a supporting quote she provides by Goytisolo suggests (468). But that explanation does not account for the fact that, in 2010, over fifty years after the

publication of Goytisolo and Matute's first novels, Agustí Villaronga would release a film that would also recount the aftermath of the Spanish civil war through the lens of the fictional experience of a boy child. Villaronga, who was born in 1953 did not live through the war, himself, although he did have had a direct experience of living in the political regime with great staying power established in its wake.

In cinema, Marsha Kinder keenly identifies a recurrence of antagonistic relationships between directors—and characters in their films—and the state in movies made between 1973 and 1980 in Spain. According to Kinder, directors were positioned in an infantilized role by a state-supported paternalistic film industry, in which they were subject to constant surveillance, and thus they became rigorous self-censors. Such an oppressive climate for artistic production creates what she labels “the children of Franco”:

“the children of Franco,” is made manifest not only in the artistic praxis of the filmmakers as they struggled to assert their mature independence, but also in the representations on screen—of the precocious children who are both murderous monsters and poignant victims, and the stunted childlike adults who are obsessed with distorted visions of the past, both placed in the social context of a divided family that is fraught with sexual deviations and that functions as a microcosm for the corrupt state. (59)

This dynamic of antagonism between art and the repressive constraints of the state, represented through the image of the child facing a brutal education, translates itself into other modes of cultural production as well, such as prose, and still impacts Spanish art today when it is made by the “children of Franco.”

I suggest that we read the boom in youth narrative in literature and film following the Spanish Civil War as symptomatic of the anxieties Spaniards held, and continue to hold, about the future of the national body politic. The endurance of youth as a potent figure of cultural production to this day is a reflection of the Franco regime's emphasis on the forging of partisan political subjects through the cultivation of its youth, and, later, the young democracy's insistence upon youth as the representatives of its healthy future. Specifically, given the limits of the present study, its emphasis will be placed on 1) the Francoist formation of the male young as an enduring site of cultural reflection, an open wound, and 2) the boom of youth narrative invested in technologies of drugs and rearticulations of the collective brought about by disease amongst boys in the Transition and democratic periods. Beginning with the sketching of a model for understanding the logic of Francoist masculinity from theoretical materials, political discourse, and a film from the war and immediate postwar periods, the study will quickly shift into an analysis of cultural production from the 1960s to the present dedicated to challenging a legacy of imperial masculinity. The plethora of material from the democratic period that looks back to the Franco regime betrays the nature of the unfinished business of accounting for its ideological and social primacy in the culture of the contemporary Spanish subject. What is more, democracy brings its own complications to the processes of growing up and becoming-male that parallel the process of becoming-democratic that will serve as the point of departure for the second half of this study.

An immunizing model of male masculinity and collectivity is visibly potent and haunting both the fascist and democratic periods, and its presence betrays a consistent desire to reinvigorate the nation's youth that brings with it violent consequences for the young being initiated into society. "Revitalizing Youth" is largely an attempt to account for the functioning

of this mechanism across two different regimes of governance through the problematics of masculine domination and male homosocial power structures.

Masculinity provides a rich thematic nexus from which the remnants and traces of the Francoist past upon the individual and national body can be witnessed.<sup>1</sup> Its study and unveiling are particularly important because masculinity is regularly assumed to be authentic and uncomplicated, without artifice and transcending time. Although it is thought to be natural, it is rigorously taught, policed, studied and learned. It is both bound to a specific time, and it propagates, mutates, and resurges through lifetimes and generations as it is transmitted and reproduced. Judith Butler draws attention to the role of social context in the (re)production of gender in her seminal work, *Gender Trouble*, when she proposes:

Gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a *stylized repetition of acts*. ... This formulation moves the conception of gender off the ground of a substantial model of identity to one that requires a conception of gender as a constituted *social temporality*. (179)

As a collection of repeated stylized acts—unbound to a natural transcendent core—gender bears the traces of a specific time and place, it is a social temporality, not a biological inevitability. Fascism can be conceptualized as a rigid intensification and institutionalization of gender policing in its drive towards unity and fusion. In its glorification and mythification of a certain kind of masculinity it attempts to denaturalize and degrade all others, just as it attempts to occult its gender pedagogy.

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<sup>1</sup> Studies of Spanish Masculinities tend to focus on the Early Modern period. Some important exceptions to this rule include *Los invisibles : una historia de la homosexualidad masculina en España, 1850-1939*, by Francisco José Vázquez García and Richard Cleminson, as well as *Stars and Masculinities in Spanish Cinema: from Banderas to Bardem* by Christopher Perriam.

Gender, then, is not natural but relational, for Butler. It is taught and learned, incorporated by the subject through explicit and subliminal pedagogies:

acts, gestures, and desire produce the effect of an internal core or substance, but produce this *on the surface* of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principle of identity as a cause.

Such acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are *performative* in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are *fabrications* manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means.

That the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality. (173)

Gender is not an essential or natural characteristic of an individual, but rather the effect of gender is produced by reiterated performances of certain signifying acts. Practice makes perfect, and learning is necessary, for all sorts of performances. The performative acts, gestures, and enactments that sustain the illusion of gender are interpersonal and relational insofar as they can only have significance in relationship and dialogue with others, and these dialogues take place within a specific social context. They are neither acquired nor reproduced in isolation.

Gender is, as Butler demonstrates, a slippery category, and its conceptualizations are bound to linguistic, professional, national, and local spheres. These imaginary communities are made up of interlocutors: employers, coworkers, compatriots, teachers, and peers. Gender norms are not the same in different national contexts, nor are they the same within one nation among different occupational groups. Expectations governing masculine performances in the academy look quite different from those on the construction site, for example.

I would propose that gender is taught, policed and articulated through an immunization mechanism in a fascist state. Specifically, in Franco's Spain, a model of policing gender that overlapped with the policing of political acts and identity intensified and institutionalized archetypes of masculinity borne from the Legion and military culture of the early twentieth century. This conflation of body and state, gender and politics, is not surprising if one considers Roberto Esposito's fundamental definition of immunity in *Bíos*: "Not simply the relation that joins life to power, immunity is the power to preserve life" (46). A system of boundaries policing the border between man and woman, or partisan and ideological rebel, immunization "is a negative [form] of protection of life. It saves, insures, and preserves the organism, either individual or collective, to which it pertains, but it does not do so directly, immediately, or frontally; on the contrary, it subjects the organism to a condition that simultaneously negates or reduces its power to expand" (46). Virility was presumed to be a key to vitality for the fascist state, and so it immunized against the threat of expansion into gendered acts of effeminacy, homosexual acts, or leftist political acts. The gendered male was forbidden to expand into androgyny, or behavior coded as feminine. This process is not pronounced and made explicit *per se*, not like the "purification of the race" in the German thanatopolitical project of the extermination of the Jews, or the Spanish purge of the "Reds" from all positions of social legitimacy and authority. But, rather, it is an implicit (and nonetheless vital) correlate to these projects, found boldly in the fascist theories of governance.

Esposito, quoting Norbert Elias, explains the interplay between violent confrontation—as in war—in the name of the preservation of the collective and the reinforcement of the "interior" of the individual subject. "Thus, while physical conflict is subjected to a social regulation that becomes always more severe, 'at the same time the battlefield, is, in a sense, moved within. Part

of the tensions that were earlier directly released in the struggle of man and man, must now be worked out within the human being” (48-9). In wartime the Spanish nationalist fascists mobilized against a Republican enemy. In war and in peace the battle against the red was also a battle against impure ideological contaminants or effeminate gender inclinations in the individual subject. A failure, according to this view, to be a proper man, is a failure suffered by the state or the collective body as well. The individual subject is responsible for fighting the contaminating elements of himself, according to the auspices of the disciplinary mechanism of gender.

Once the centrality of life is established, it is precisely politics that is awarded the responsibility for saving life, but—and here is the decisive point in the structure of the immunitary paradigm—it occurs through an antinomic *dispositive* that proceeds via the activation of its contrary. In order to be saved, life has to give up something that is integral to itself, what in fact constitutes its principal vector and its own power to expand; namely, the acquisitive desire for everything that places itself in the path of a deadly reprisal.

According to this paradigm, effeminacy, homosexuality, or unbound gender and sexuality must be abandoned and fled from just like leftist ideology for the preservation of the state.

Rather than disappear with Franco regime, the immunitary paradigm, as it relates to the body and to gender, may only have been quieted from official political discourse by the push towards individualism and the free market that accompanied the transition to democracy. Masculinity is not institutionalized and policed in exactly the same fashion as it was under the fascist model. However, the legacy of that early masculine pedagogy comes back to haunt the work of many of the artists discussed in the pages that follow. What is more, it seems that the market, in its sovereign manipulation of the desires and mimetic models for youth and adults

alike, may have taken the role of the authoritarian leader in dictating unity, fusion, and conformity in gendered performances. Esposito posits,

Behind the self-legitimizing account of modern immunization, the real biopolitical function that modern individualism performs is made clear. Presented as the discovery and the implementation of the subject's autonomy, individualism in reality functions as the immunitary ideologem through which modern sovereignty implements the protection of life. (60-1).

The market now determines what is healthy, robust, good, and politically correct, and not the fascist regime. But the dictates of exclusion/inclusion and the policing of gendered borders do not become radically changed.

This dissertation reads masculinity and the policing of normative sexual behavior as it is articulated in relationship with the experience of youth in cultural production from artists born between 1930 and 1970 in Spain. It is organized as follows.

Inoculating Ideologies, chapter 1, attempts to propose a model for thinking through fascist masculinities by way of their articulation in theoretical materials from political, psychiatric, and pedagogical discourses from the period of the ascent of fascism during the 1930s in Spain, through the triumphalist cultural production of the early 1940's. Specifically, I read Ernesto Giménez Caballero's *Genio de España*, and Antonio Vallejo Nágera's *Eugenesia de la hispanidad y regeneración de la raza* as examples of fascist materials governing youth and masculine gendered performances. After attempting to account for such cultural logic through political discourse, I employ the same fascist theory to read the film *Raza*, written by Francisco Franco himself, specifically through its investments in the imperial formation of young boys.

Carlos Saura's *La caza* is then read as an anti-text to Franco's film that problematizes the legacy of imperial masculinity by imagining its potential apocalyptic ends.

The first chapter, like most of the book, unites an unlikely ensemble of characters. Ernesto Giménez Caballero was born in 1899, a student of José Ortega y Gasset, and a member of the Spanish Avant-garde. He founded the literary review *La Gaceta Literaria*, and in addition to this position in the intellectual scene he dabbled in writing, film, and aesthetic theory before turning to fascism and pioneering fascist thought and writing in Spain after travelling through Italy with his wife. He represents the fascist theory I incorporate into the chapter in addition to the work of Antonio Vallejo Nágera. Vallejo Nágera was a renowned psychiatrist, born in 1889, who gained prestige among the nationalists during the military uprising against the Second Republic. He was recruited by Franco to identify the "biopsychiatric roots of Marxism," in the Republican enemy, and is famous for his "professional" determination that the children of leftist parents should be isolated from them in order to avoid psychic dysfunction. The writings of Giménez Caballero and Vallejo Nágera dialogue together nicely because while the former was chosen to lead the new fascist state's approaches towards pedagogy, the latter was charged with developing standards and practices regarding the mental health of the young. Both men contributed to the shaping of rhetorics surrounding the proper education, health, and upbringing of youth.

Traces of their thought can be found, "translated" into art through a screenplay written by Franco for the historical melodrama, *Raza*. In *Raza*, Franco presents his image of the ideal Spanish fascist family and its cultivation of its young. Carlos Saura responds directly to this project over twenty years later by creating another war film, with the same actor, Alfredo Mayo, playing the protagonist. Born in 1932, Saura helped inaugurate, and perhaps most embodies,

what is known as New Spanish Cinema. Marsha Kinder classifies him as one of the directors whose artistic practices and inclinations were forged under the conditions of a paternalistic state-sponsored film industry. Saura believed he must always denounce the state in whatever manner he could. He might have seen *Raza* himself as a youth. Later in life he deconstructs the piece, and with it he challenges the Spanish model of an immunizing masculinity.

The second chapter picks up where the first ends, in a sense, by tracing the legacy of Francoist education—or what it will call bad education—in protohomosexual narratives of childhood that look back to the postwar period. Engaging the status of the child in queer theory, it proposes that imperial homosocial initiation forms the foundational educational disaster for the contemporary Spanish homosexual subject. Readings from novels by Juan Goytisolo, and films by Pedro Almodóvar and Agustí Villaronga constitute the material for this reflection.

Goytisolo, Almodóvar, and Villaronga do not belong to the same generation of artists. However, they are three homosexual men who were raised—or whose formative life experiences take place—during Francoism. Goytisolo starts out his literary career within the constraints of state censorship, writing from the perspective of the committed communist resistance from within the state. Born in 1931, Goytisolo does not acknowledge his homosexual preferences until late in life, after a self-imposed exile in France, and then Morocco. Along with an embrace of his sexual deviance, he lives his exile as a permanent position of critique of his home culture and oppressive politics. Pedro Almodóvar was born in 1949. He comes of age as a filmmaker during the 1980s transition to democracy after working for the phone company. Almodóvar's work reflects the frenetic pace and apolitical posturing of the *Movida madrileña* during Spain's Transition. Though, undoubtedly the displays of unbridled sexuality, and deviant sexual subjects that made him famous were not without some political relevance. The specter of Franco, or “old

Spain” arises in many of his earlier works, though often without specific commentary or critique. Rather than explicitly criticize figures of tradition, Almodóvar tends to make a mockery of them, with lesbian nuns, perverse traditional mothers, and corrupt police officers. In his later film, *Bad Education*, though, he engages more directly with the Francoist past in his portrayal of the rape of a young boy in a religious school in 1964. Agustí Villaronga was born in 1953 in Majorca, Spain. Although he is the youngest of these three artists, his films are quite regularly marked by the presence of authoritarian power and despicable paternal figures. Recently Villaronga’s cinema has been produced in Catalan, and his most recent film, *Pa negre*, even alludes to the linguistic politics of the Franco regime after the fascist victory.

While these men represent three different generations, or decades, of Spanish artists, their works share problematic relationships with hegemonic masculinity and authoritarian political figures. They have also resisted what some would call the hegemonic push towards embracing gay identity, even though they are openly homosexual. Their reflections on the childhoods of protohomosexual boys during Francoism demonstrate how the immunizing model of masculinity was imparted to young boys at the time, while they also demonstrate how those boys resisted or reacted against such a bad education.

Chapter three turns to drug cultures and masculine domination in the Spanish Transition and early democratic periods. *El pico*, a film by Eloy de la Iglesia, and the novel *Historias del Kronen* by José Ángel Mañas are analyzed as instances in which drugs are used as masculine currency in an attempt at the successful reinvention of the self. Eloy de la Iglesia was born in 1944 in Spain’s Basque Country. He revisits the region for *El pico*, which stages an unlikely, or queer friendship between the sons of a civil guard and a separatist politician. Eloy de la Iglesia was a member of the communist party during the seventies, and his political commitments are

recognizable in his cinema on social themes. José Angel Mañas is the youngest artist featured in the study, born in 1971. His youth during the eighties set the stage for the social reality he portrayed depicting the drug culture in Madrid in the early 1990s.

Finally, the fourth chapter is a reflection on the status of the child in recent Spanish cinema dealing with HIV/AIDS. Disease is examined as a site of reflection for rethinking kinship and the collective, through the mediating presence of the child, in films by Ricardo Franco, Pedro Almodóvar, and Miguel Albaladejo.

Examining works by artists whose cohort spans almost half a century, from the 1930s to the 1970s, I wish to challenge the stark separation normally granted to different literary movements and periods by reflecting on continuities in the experience of being brought up as a male in twentieth century Spain. Collectively, these chapters aspire to dissect representations of male youth and the “healthy” masculine body in contemporary Spanish culture, and to question the immunizing and revitalizing rhetorics often thought essential to its prosperity.

## Chapter I

### Inoculating Ideologies: Forming Fascist Masculinities

During the Spanish Civil War the nationalists began their quest to consolidate and centralize political power over the conquered territories of the Republican state through the imposition of an agglomerated apparatus of ideological control designed to win the battle for public opinion. The contours of this “educational” machine—as opposed to the explicit killing machine of the fascist army—might first be recognized in the historical record in the *Ley de Prensa* of 1938, imposing censure over the press, and reaffirmed through the creation of the state news, the *Noticias Documentales*, in 1942<sup>2</sup>. But the roots of its construction are evident during the early years of the Second Republic, and the reach of its propaganda mission extends well beyond its firm grip on news media. If the purpose of the fascist coup was to create a new political order, the far-reaching and multi-faceted task of the deliberate refashioning of the Spanish political subject—often brought about by the elimination of those in opposition through

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<sup>2</sup> See Keller, especially pp. 51-4 for a discussion of the disciplining mechanism of the *Noticias Documentales*. “Their main objective was twofold: to censor subversive, liberal ideas and to “preach” Francoist ideology to the masses [...] (51). The two objectives of the news reel, situated more broadly within the grasp of the Press and Printing law, that she identifies are: “First, to promulgate the Franco Regime’s totalitarian model of information and efficient communication for the explicit purpose of disseminating its ideology [...] The second goal involved validating the State’s natural origins through the creation of an official discourse— one that would infiltrate public life and the cultural consciousness of the nation through the camera, the screen, and, ultimately, the archive” (52-3).

the barrel of a gun, incarceration, or so-called rehabilitation<sup>3</sup>—would invest a great deal of energy in the formation of the young.

The allegiance of youth, their reproduction of traditional Spanish values, and their inheritance of the fascist revitalizing program of Spain's Catholic and imperial legacy were matters of great concern for the architects of the new Spanish state. Fascist theorists who wrote during the Second Republic subsequently influenced the policy of the nationalist zone during wartime, and their efforts participated in the shaping of the cultural pillars of Francisco Franco's dictatorial regime.<sup>4</sup> Ernesto Giménez Caballero and Antonio Vallejo Nágera,<sup>5</sup> two theoretical

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<sup>3</sup> Paul Preston devotes a chapter of *The Spanish Holocaust* to the revenge enacted upon wartime and ideological enemies of the regime entitled “No Reconciliation: Trials, Executions, Prisons.” He explains, “As Franco had demonstrated by the nature of his war effort and made explicit in interviews private and public, he was engaged in an investment in terror. With all of Spain in his hands at the beginning of April 1939, the war against the Republic would continue by other means, not on the battle fronts but in military courts, in the prisons, in the concentration camps, in the labour battalions, and even in the pursuit of exiles” (471).

<sup>4</sup> Julio Rodríguez-Puértolas lists the key collaborators in the first Spanish fascist review, *Acción Española*—subscribed to by Franco himself (65)—, they include the most important theorists of fascism for Spain: “Eduardo Aunós, José María de Areilza, Joaquín Arrarás, José Calvo Sotelo, Luis de Galinsoga, Alfonso García Valdecasas, Antonio Goicoechea, Ernesto Giménez Caballero, cardenal Isidro Gomá y Tomás, Agustín González de Amezúa, César González Ruano, Nicolás González Ruis, José Ibáñez Martín, Ramiro Ledesma Ramos, Ramiro de Maetzu, Pedro Murlane Michelana, José María Pemán, José Pemartín, Víctor Pradera, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, Juan Pujol, Pedro Sainz Rodríguez, Rafael Sánchez Mazas, Antonio Vallejo Nágera, Eugenio Vegas Latapié” (65).

<sup>5</sup> A student of José Ortega y Gasset, Ernesto Giménez Caballero was the founder of the avant guard cultural review *La Gaceta Literaria*. After travelling through Italy in 1928 he becomes the major intellectual advocate for fascism in Spain. Rodríguez-Puértolas says he becomes “profeta del fascismo hispánico” with the publication of “Carta a un compañero de la joven España” in *La Gaceta Literaria* (90). His most important books include *Genio de España. Exaltaciones a una resurrección nacional y del mundo* (1932), and *La nueva catolicidad. Teoría general sobre el fascismo en Europa: en España* (1933). But, in addition to being an accomplished novelist, he wrote extensively on art, education, politics, and film.

Antonio Vallejo Nágera, “durante la República, la Guerra Civil y después, gozó de gran prestigio profesional, poder institucional y ascendiente moral entre los militares y los psiquiatras fascistas” (Vinyes, Montse et al. 34). A military psychiatrist for Franco, and later first catedrático de Psiquiatría in the University of Madrid (Rodríguez-Puértolas 281), he designed experiments to prove that the defeat of the socialists was due to their psychological inferiority. His most important works include *Eugenesia de la Hispanidad y Regeneración de la Raza* (1937), *Política racial del Nuevo Estado* (1938), *La locura y la*

fathers of Spanish fascism, contributed to the production of a political culture—and a much broader discursive situation—both celebrating youth and aspiring to its strict regulation. They profoundly impacted educational, political, and medical discourses in Franco’s Spain. From their writings emerges a figure of the ideal citizen of the new Spanish state, one whom is implicitly male, explicitly youthful, and intrinsically linked to a transcendental notion of the Spanish man. They burden youth with the future of the nation—its realization and perpetuation—and the mandate for the embodiment of the perfect political subject. Their ideas serve as case studies outlining the new state’s urgent claims on the intellectual, physical, and moral development of the young, and the cultural impact of their mandates resonates through Spain’s contemporary history.<sup>6</sup>

This chapter seeks to trace the anatomy of the machinery of Spanish fascism’s demands on young men, and to unveil the cultural logic of fascist masculinity as it operated in Franco’s Spain. It will do so by examining theoretical texts that it claims constitute a point of entry for an understanding of the ideological apparatus of Francoist fascism with an eye towards the body, youth, and gender. Specifically, it will focus on exposing the pragmatics of cultural discourse surrounding Francoist masculinity to an analytical scrutiny that it has often evaded, even in its omnipresence. These prescriptive texts, written by two exemplary fascist authors, will then be mobilized to read a dialogue between two films from distinct historical moments of the dictatorship. One of these, *Raza*, was produced and sanctioned by the state during the Post-War

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*guerra. Psicopatología de la guerra española* (1939), *Higienización psíquica de las grandes urbes* (1941), and *Niños y jóvenes anormales* (1941).

<sup>6</sup> This chapter, and indeed the entire thesis project, argue that the influence on national education of such theorists contributed to the construction of a discursive situation governing Spanish masculinities. While such a discourse is never successfully hegemonic, its echos can be seen on aesthetic reflections on youth and growing up during the Franco period in works by contemporary artists, from the 1960s to the present.

years—it is literally a family melodrama and *bildungsroman* penned by Franco himself. The other, *La caza*, is an oppositional film by Carlos Saura from the context of the late dictatorship, which revisits the formative process of fascist masculinity with a critical eye. The employment of youth, as an ambiguous and shifting conjuncture of metaphor and political signification,<sup>7</sup> proves to be a particularly ripe site for an analysis of the biopolitical imperatives of the state. A critical analysis of pedagogical and mimetic models of fascist masculinity, as an organizing and regulating principle of gendered performances for youth, demonstrates to what extent the political interests of the nation are bound together with representations of and restrictions placed upon the activities of the bodies of the young.

#### FASCIST THEORISTS: IDEOLOGY INSCRIBED ON THE YOUTHFUL BODY POLITIC

In the 1930's—during one of the greatest periods of democratic, intellectual, and artistic innovation in its national history—fascist thinkers argued that Spain, as a nation, was sick. The government of the Second Republic was reviled by emerging radical reactionary thinkers as a symptom of the final throes of a long process of degeneration of the national political body.<sup>8</sup> In this view the nation was unhealthy and dismembered. Not only was it torn apart by statutes of

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<sup>7</sup> Lee Edelman effectively makes an argument for such a reading of the figural employment of children in political discourse in *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*.

<sup>8</sup> Preston discusses the generation of discussions about Spain's "problem" in *The Politics of Revenge*. He says of those searching for the cause of Spain's malady after the Civil War, "They fed off the similar attempts by the 'generation of 1898' to grapple with the so-called *problema nacional*. The turmoil of frequent civil wars in the nineteenth century, the revolution of 1868, the chaos of the First Republic in 1873 and the loss of Cuba in 1898 had stimulated an endless picking through the national entrails. Spanish history was presented variously as an eternal contest between the orthodox and the heterodox, between Spain and anti-Spain, between the traditional and the modern, between *hispanidad* and *europaismo*, between Catholic and liberal values (31).

regional autonomy,<sup>9</sup> but also divided in “two” between partisans of modern Republican values, and traditionalist, Catholic, and monarchical allegiances. The answer for the illness, proffered by this particular intelligentsia, was a New Spain uncontaminated by the old ideological divisions and thoroughly restored to a unified past defined by the conquests and political hegemony of Spanish Catholic imperialism. A temporal contradiction, among multiple others, is embedded in their political project—namely, that it seeks to be new and radically separated from recent history to such an extent that it is revolutionary in nature, and yet it simultaneously claims a reactionary, unmitigated, and mythically vertical relationship with the past. Figures of youth—instructed, formed, and disciplined in the “universal” tradition of Spain’s imperial heritage—emerged as a representational and political solution for the temporal disjunctures of the ideological tenets of Spanish fascism. Fascists looked to the young to restore the health of the body politic.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Cristina Moreiras reminds us in “España, raza y espíritu” that the anxieties of “’98” are heightened not only by the loss of colonial territories, but by the regional autonomy movements of the Basque country and Cataluña, citing work by Joan Ramón Resina (270).

<sup>10</sup> For example, Giménez Caballero’s first treatise on fascism is a “letter” directed to youth: “Carta a un compañero de la joven España” (1928). Similarly, Ramiro Ledesma Ramos will compose his *Discurso a las juventudes de España* in 1935. Stanley Payne writes: “Ledesma acknowledged ‘religious faith and Empire’ as ‘the two most powerful motivations of history,’ but insisted that Spanish nationalism could not be merely Catholic, for the Church failed to support it. Hence ‘the yoke and arrows, as an emblem of struggle, can be advantageously substituted for the cross to preside over the days of the national revolution,’ which would appeal to ‘the messianic consciousness of youth’” (138). Antonio Vallejo Nágera opens *Eugenésia de la hispanidad y regeneración de la raza* declaring, “Tiene en sus manos la juventud española la regeneración de España, a costa de renunciamentos y sacrificios. Son los jóvenes quienes deben dar un ejemplo que no puede esperarse de una masa social contaminada por los virus democrático y marxista” (6). These passages emphasize the symbolic hope such thinkers placed on youth as vital sources for the renewal of what they believe to be the legacy of Spanish glory—its Imperial history.

## ERNESTO GIMENEZ CABALLERO AND MASCULINE EDUCATION

Ernesto Giménez Caballero offers a cure for Spain's ills as he enumerates them in his 1932 text, *Genio de España: Exaltaciones a una resurrección nacional y del mundo*.<sup>11</sup> The reader is alerted from the book's preface that, "La paz moral y la sonrisa tranquila que el lector advertirá en el alma de este libro, le hará llegar a la conclusión única de que este libro lleva en sí: salud. (En el significado auténtico de saludación, de salvación.) Libro sano, este libro. Libro que por fin sale de "la atmósfera de hospital" en que los libros terapéuticos sobre la enfermedad de España, estaban oclusos desde muchos años" (8-9). (The moral peace and tranquil smile that the reader will notice in the soul of this book will make him reach the unique conclusion that this book carries in itself: health [In the authentic meaning of welfare, of salvation.] It's a healthy book, this book. A book that finally exits the "hospital atmosphere" in which the therapeutic books on the disease of Spain were mired for many years.) Giménez Caballero indicates that Spain is suffering from a disease, and that it has been sick for quite some time. The Nation, in this context, is imagined as being a type of body that can be inflicted with illness, an illness that manifests itself—the reader will later learn—in politics and historical events that adversely affect Spanish imperial hegemony. He also claims that—contrary to other texts that have diagnosed and offered remedies for Spain's illness—his book holds the cure. It offers health to the body politic, and even salvation.

Spain's illness is configured in Giménez Caballero's text as a disease emanating from a specific cause. And again, his work is proffered as a remedy in the book's introduction:

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<sup>11</sup> On Giménez Caballero, consult Douglas Foard's *The Revolt of the Aesthetes: Ernesto Giménez Caballero and the Origins of Spanish Fascism*. Also, see Enrique Selva's *Ernesto Giménez Caballero: entre la vanguardia y el fascismo* and *Ernesto Giménez Caballero y "La Gaceta Literaria" o la Generación del 27* by Lucy Tandy.

Y como sano, este libro, muy propenso al contagio de alegría, de fe, de luminosidad y de esperanza. Si este libro influye sobre los que lo lean no será para envenenarlos precisamente. Precisamente, todo lo contrario: para desintoxicarlos. Este libro va contra todos los estupefacientes que han hecho de España un pelele sin pulso, sin sangre y sin moral superior en la vida. Exaltaciones a una resurrección nacional– lo subdenomino. Esto es: desintoxicación de drogas infames, con que se le ha llevado a nuestro pueblo, siglo tras siglo, año tras año, a una palidez de cadaver, a una agonía de moribundo. (8-9)

And since it is healthy, this book is very prone to the contagion of happiness, of faith, of luminosity, and of hope. If this book influences those who read it, it will not be to poison them exactly. Precisely the opposite: to detoxicate them. This book goes against all of the stupefacients that have made Spain a sleeper without a pulse, without blood, and without superior morals in life. Exultations for a national resurrection, I subtitle it. That is: detoxication of wicked drugs that have brought our people, century after century, year after year, to the paleness of a cadaver, to the agony of death.

For Giménez Caballero, post-enlightenment, modern ideologies, and Republican political orientations are dangerous drugs that threaten the health of the body politic. He alludes to a lack of superior morals in Spain, which represent supposedly absent traditional values that have been eroded by the “use” of these drugs.

Giménez Caballero's view of Spain's history is one of a long process of decadence and degeneration from an Imperial ideal that he illustrates in his text by interrogating the concept of the legacy of "98." In this view the history of Spain since 1492 is filled with multiple defeats and moments of decay, or iterations of "1898"—the year Spain was defeated in the Spanish American War and lost its last major colonial holdings in the West—and the most recent of these "98s" is the inauguration of the Second Republic (26). Every loss of a Spanish territory throughout history, and every potential statute of regional autonomy in the Republic, is imagined in this paradigm as a splitting apart of the national body. "Si en 'lo corporal' del 'concepto de España,' los cinco 98 del siglo XVII (Pactos de 1648, 1659, 1668 bis y 1678) significan cinco desmembramientos: significan como retrocesos a una España medieval, rota otra vez en *pedaços sin travazón*— las 'crisis espirituales' de un Cervantes ... representan otros tantos partimientos del 'concepto maximalista de España' en el 'alma' de aquel 'cuerpo'" (45). (If in 'the corporeal' of the 'concept of Spain,' the five 98s of the seventeenth century [The Pacts of 1648, 1659, 1668 bis and 1678] signify five dismemberments: they signify retreats back to a medieval Spain, broken again into *pieces without joints*—the 'spiritual crises' of a Cervantes ... represent other similar partitions of the 'maximalist concept of Spain' in the 'soul' of that 'body'.)

Spain's ills, he insists, stem from those moments in history when it has had its territories diminished, or disjointed. It arises from a loss of national unity. The "desmembramientos," this ripping apart of the national body, could be interpreted as a gendered experience of castration in this formulation.<sup>12</sup> Offering himself as a prophetic voice to counter the diminishment of Spain's (masculine) standing, Giménez Caballero hopes that his words will be heard by "millares de gentes, de corazones juveniles, sanos, ingenuos y desintoxicados" (11). (millions of people, with

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<sup>12</sup> The gendered notion of land and territory is surfaces in EGC's own school textbook *España Nuestra; El Libro De Las Juventudes Españolas*". Spain is the "madre" tierra, here (22).

young hearts, healthy, ingenuous, and unintoxicated.) Youthful hearts are—in their fascist conceptualization—those that are free from the ideological contaminants of experience and age. They are constructed as pure, innocent, and strong. Youth are the key actors who can restore the health of the nation—they can still succeed at being complete men—and their success in doing so will depend on their assimilation of a fascist understanding of Spain’s historical situation, and its alleged transcendental destiny.

*Genio de España* insists that the cure to Spain’s ills, its political destiny, and, consequently, the mantle that must be taken up by its youth, is its absolute unity in what he will call Catholic fascism. Giménez Caballero identifies differences between Italian and German fascisms, and insists not only that Spain’s political reinvention through fascism should be unique to its national character and traditions, but also that it will serve a conciliatory and strengthening role between the German and Italian models of fascism. In a vertiginous collapsing of history, he proffers that Carlos V had already achieved this type of synthesizing capacity across nations as Holy Roman Emperor in the Sixteenth century (163-4). Spain has a providential role to play in the development of the European political ideology of fascism, according to his diagnosis, and a unifying stake in Europe once again. He opposes the racist hierarchy of German fascism to the “jerarquía humana” (humane hierarchy) espoused by Italian and Spanish fascism, which he claims functions on the basis of the spirit—independently of concerns about blood (162).<sup>13</sup> He most concisely summarizes the type of fascism he wishes to bring to Spain in the following formulation: “si yo hablo de bandera fascista en España, es bajo una sola condición: *que el*

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<sup>13</sup> His own anti-Semitism pours through his writing, though, and his aspirations for a return to a glorified Imperial Spain betray his stated logic that the Spanish idea of *raza* contains itself to the spirit. We will return to a discussion of racism as it relates to Spanish fascist thought later.

*fascismo para España no es fascismo, sino ca-to-li-cis-mo*” (317). (if I speak of a fascist flag in Spain, it is under one sole condition: that fascism for Spain is not fascism, but ca-tho-li-cism.)

The ambiguity of this principal declaration exemplifies an important uncertainty at Spanish fascism’s core. Spanish fascism is, the fascism-that-is-not purely fascism, but rather, Catholicism. This branding problem was not merely a tactic employed by Franco to ride the waves of shifting political seas, but rather it is an ambiguity already present at Spanish fascism’s inception. Debates abound about the appropriate political categorization of the nationalist uprising that destroyed the Second Republic,<sup>14</sup> which became the Franco Regime, and evolved as it maintained power for almost forty years in a frightening exercise and display of political dexterity, authoritarianism, and opportunism. Scholars such as Stanley Payne have gone to great lengths to elucidate the functional contours of generic fascism as a global political phenomenon, and Payne himself has demonstrated how Franco’s regime cannot pragmatically be conceptualized as a fascist state much beyond its inception in 1939, according to these shared criteria.<sup>15</sup> These efforts are important for a comprehension of the historical specificities of fascism and its many variants across Europe during the interwar and World War II periods.

But if we limit our study of fascism to functional parties, institutions, policies, and governing regimes that meet an exceptionally long and fixed set of criteria, we risk losing sight of its most dangerous potentialities. By the same token, if we insist on hermetically sealing it off in a distant time, containing it in a past that does not touch us, then we welcome its insidious return to public discourse. No—moving beyond its adherence to a complex, colossal, and rigid

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<sup>14</sup> Paul Preston discusses the slippery relationships between “fascism” and Francoism in the first chapter of *The Politics of Revenge*.

<sup>15</sup> See Payne for a detailed list of fascist government characteristics in, “Fascism as a ‘Generic Concept’” in Routledge’s *The Fascism Reader* (82-9). For an explanation of how the first phase of Spanish defascistization begins in 1941, see Payne “*Fascism in Spain*” (363-401).

body of parameters, the concept of generic fascism needs to be reworked by means of an enlarged and more sophisticated understanding of genre.<sup>16</sup> This conceptualization of genre moves it away from a static “state”—one identifiable by a series of ticks to an over-determined Nazi checklist—to a dynamic model defined by exchanges and flows of recognizable fascist currents in discourses of all kinds. A government’s declarations of what it is and what it does should not simply be taken for granted. But, rather, manifestations of fascist cultural logic ought to be recognized and dissected as such when they appear, regardless of the official categorical discourse. Such a model of fascism will preclude its traditional narration through a linear model of history—asserting that it appeared definitively in the interwar period, and vanished with the Third Reich—and will necessitate a consideration of the resurgence of fascist generic impulses throughout time and across multiple geographies.

Jean Luc Nancy provides an excellent key for the foundations of a nuanced and etiological approach to generic fascism in *The Inoperative Community*, and his formulation resonates deeply with Caballero’s text. For Nancy, fascism’s essence is its compulsion towards unity, its attempt to erase difference among the members of the body that it is constructing. It mandates a *fusion* that violently transcends atomistic particularities and rigorously insists on oneness. He writes,

Fascism was the grotesque or abject resurgence of an obsession with communion; it crystallized the motif of its supposed loss and the nostalgia for its images of fusion. In this respect, it was the convulsion of Christianity, and it ended up fascinating modern Christianity in its entirety. No political-moral critique of this

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<sup>16</sup> Conversations with David Halperin and Ross Chambers pushed my thinking about genre in this direction.

fascination holds good if the critic is not at the same time capable of  
deconstructing the system of communion. (17)

Giménez Caballero heralds this drive to unity, in his role as a precursor and propagator of Spanish fascism. He predicates: “Y que necesitamos *fajar* de algún modo— otra vez— estos miembros rotos y sueltos. ... Para *fajarlos* de nuevo sólo aceptamos: La reintegración de España a su ciclo secular e histórico! ! La vuelta de los ideales eternos de España por un *César* y un *Dios*” (318)! (And we need to bind in some way—again— these broken and loose members... To bind them again we only accept: the reintegration of Spain in its secular and historic cycle! The return of the eternal ideals of a Spain for one *Caesar* and one *God*]! This (re)union of the “broken members” is to be brought about by an erasure of ideological and territorial difference and dissidence, it will be an imperial binding together of the national will. The future of the nation’s soul lies with the nation’s future political subjects.

There are strong signs that Caballero’s prescriptions for the body politic in *Genio de España* are first and foremost appeals to the nation’s young. The first of these is his appeal to “youthful hearts” in his prologue (11). This cure, his political and ideological roadmap, is destined for the young. Furthermore, Giménez Caballero bemoans the reading curriculum of the Second Republic in his text: “En España no se leen las vidas de nuestros héroes” (185). (In Spain the lives of our heroes are not read). He laments that “la mentalidad miserable en que hemos venido viviendo ha impedido que esas vidas se escriban, se estatuicen, se dramaticen, se filmen, se difundan como lluvia de mayo sobre las almas tiernas de nuestra infancia nacional” (185). (the miserable mentality in which we have come to live has impeded that these lives be written, established, dramatized, filmed, and diffused like May’s rain over the tender souls of our national infancy.) The appropriate models of national unity are *heroic men*: leaders, warriors,

*conquistadores*, and intellectuals who have brought order and glory to Spain. But the Republic is not propagating this vision for the nation, or at least it is not choosing the *right* archetypes for Giménez Caballero's designs.

Politics, and especially a totalizing fascist politics, asserts that the young need *role* models. They are incited to admire and aspire to be someone, or something, in order to shore up their belonging to the national body in a responsible way. Many times, in a striking binary juxtaposition of the young and the "old," this admiration is directed towards dead men, who are the "most alive" (*más vivo*) essence of the nation in Giménez Caballero's formulation (193). He bemoans that the erring Spanish young of the Second Republic are not more like Mussolini's fascist youth: "Yo comprendo que las juventudes italianas tengan de su *Duce* una reverencia mítica, religiosa" (186). (the Italian youth have for their leader a mythical, religious reverence.) Italy has fashioned a unique model and purpose for its young, he says, and Spain had better do the same. After all this kind of masculine pedagogy has important historical antecedents. "El mundo antiguo," he explains, "tuvo buen cuidado de nutrir con fábulas y estatuas el culto de sus almas niñas" (185). (the ancient world took good care to nurture with statues and fables the cultivation of its childish souls.) Giménez Caballero insists that the Republic has not done an adequate job of educating Spain's youth in the essence of Spanishness, and this implies that it has not taught them to be quintessentially Spanish *men*. He demands that their education be improved.

The course of history was, lamentably, such that Giménez Caballero would see the violent echo of his ideas move from the realm of theory to that of praxis on the national stage in the military uprising that would become the Franco regime. This was not only the case for the fascist political structure that Spain would take, but also for its essential project of the formation

of its young. Franco signaled the importance of the education of youth in his 1940 speech inaugurating the *Frente de juventudes*, the regime's state-sponsored youth organization, in which he called it the "obra predilecta" (favorite work) of the regime:

El Estado, que guarda y restablece la efectividad de los derechos de la Iglesia y la familia en la educación, funda con esperanza su propia obra para la forja política y militar del hombre que ha de ser heredero de los sacrificios de nuestra generación. Cuantos medios tenga el Estado, deben volcarse en la vigilancia, custodia y apoyo al Frente de Juventudes, verdadera obra predilecta del régimen. Digo que será empeño inútil y peligroso el de quienes pretendan entorpecerla. (Sáez Marín 153)

The State, which guards and reestablishes the effectivity of the rights of the Church and the family in education, founds with hope its own work for the political and military forging of the man that must be heir to the sacrifices of our generation. Whatever means the State might have, they should be turned over to the vigilance, custody, and support of the *Youth Front*, the true favorite work of the regime. I say that it will be a useless and dangerous effort, that of those whom seek to hinder it.

Highlighting the restoration of education to the realms of church and family—a stark move away from the pedagogical missions of the Second Republic—Franco announces the creation of a new state sponsored political youth movement which will mold young men in a military tradition. This extra-scholarly organization was far from the only instance of the state's intervention in the development of its young. A dramatic overhaul and reorganization of the national education

system began as early as the first year of the Civil War, and Giménez Caballero would have his part to play in the new educational system.

Little more than a month after the start of the Civil War, in an official order of August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1936, Franco announced the suppression of coeducational schools, the purging of Republican educational materials, and an obligatory religious curriculum. (Sánchez-Redondo, 24). Over the next three years, the provisional nationalist government fired 50,000 instructors,<sup>17</sup> outlawed the use of regional languages, and completely dismantled Cataluña's educational corps (24). On September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1938, the "Law of Middle Education Reform" disposed of the Republican baccalaureate, and announced a "(n)uevo plan de estudios basado en una formación tradicional y espiritual, clásica y humanística" (26). (new plan of study based on a traditional, spiritual, classic, and humanistic formation.) The legal text of this new education plan for the state, as it was presented by Education Minister Pedro Sainz Rodríguez, was specifically framed in favor of "una total transformación en las mentalidades de la Nueva España." (a total transformation of the mentalities of the New Spain.) This new mentality would be the product of a pedagogy that refuted and actively reacted *against* Republican educational models, which insidiously promoted "la rusofilia y el afeminamiento todo ello en contradicción dolorosa con el **viril heroísmo** de la juventud en acción que tan generosa sangre derrama en el frente" (Consulted in Alvarez Osés, 248—emphasis added). (Russophilia and effemination, all that which is in painful contradiction with the virile heroism of youth in action that spills such generous blood on the front.) The state conceived of its educational program as a masculinizing venture for its young men. Republican education was a direct instigator of the effemination of Spanish youth and the degradation of macho heroics.

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<sup>17</sup> The new state would go on to fire an additional 6,000 teachers, suspected of "red" complicities. (Cerrillo, and Martínez Soria, 55).

In addition to producing masculine subjects—with a confirmed respect and admiration for the authority of the *Generalísimo*—the youth of Spain were to be constructed for sexual normalcy. Apparently too taboo to be discussed outright, this concern can be found at the margins and between the lines of relevant pedagogical and theoretical materials from the period. Once again, the example of Ernesto Giménez Caballero may prove illuminating. Giménez Caballero was granted influence and respect in the development of the educational programming for the New Spain. In fact he was invited to give a plenary keynote address on political education to the first “National Orientations for Primary Teaching Course,” that took place during the war, in Pamplona, for the entire month of June, 1938.<sup>18</sup> What is more, after the fighting ended he was permitted to write a textbook for elementary school children, entitled *España nuestra*. This was no insignificant honor—given that the regime’s first instinct was to impose a single textbook for all schools that would be read by all children. This lofty aspiration for a single textbook never materialized, though, due to practical and economic obstructions, and the state settled for a mandatory procedure of preemptive censorship and authorization by the government, the clergy, and the *Frente de juventudes* (Puelles Benítez, 52-3). Giménez Caballero’s scholarly text was published and disseminated. So the Franco regime demonstrated both confidence in Giménez Caballero and a major endorsement for his ideas by allowing him to speak to the future teachers of the new state and to write a textbook for its classrooms. He produced a book glorifying the Faith of the state, its leader, its obligatory sole language, its traditional literary and historic heroes, warriors, conquerors, and rigid gender roles.

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<sup>18</sup> He had not gotten over his obsession with youth and “illness” by 1938. He opened his talk about announcing, “aquí estamos los que queremos una juventud, no con enfermedades, sino con balazo, sanos de juventud” (Sainz Rodríguez, 426). [we who are here are those who want a youth, not with diseases, but rather with gunshots, a healthy youth].

Among those hailed in *España nuestra* is a young Galician boy of national folklore, Saint Pelayo. According to Catholic mythology this child martyr defied the sexual advances of a Muslim Caliph, and in so doing he earned a brutal death and eternal glory for Christendom. Caballero frames Pelayo's story in a section of the textbook entitled "Niños con alas" (152). (Children with wings): "También sufrió martirio otro niño famoso: el galleguito *Pelayo*, preso por el Califa Abderramán en Córdoba, como rescate. Un día Abderramán le llamó para hacerle su copero. Pero *Pelayo* prefirió antes la muerte. Y su cuerpecito fue disparado por una catapulta al otro lado del río. Mas su alma, con alas, voló a Dios" (153). (So too another famous child suffered martyrdom: the little Galician, Pelayo, prisoner of the Caliph Abderraman of Cordoba as a ransom. One day Abderraman called him to be his cup-bearer. But *Pelayo* preferred death first. And his little body was fired by a catapult to the other side of the river. But his soul, with wings, flew to God.) Pelayo refuses to present his chalice to Abderraman. Caballero glosses the explicit sexual content of the myth, but he makes an unmistakable reference to it in saying that he was called forth to present the king his cup. The fable's function is threefold: it reinforces a steadfast faith, a nationalist xenophobia and imperialism particularly revolted by the former Muslim domination of the Iberian Peninsula, and a phobic, knee-jerk response to any hint of male-male sexuality or pederasty. The correct role models for the New Spain are those that prove a firm Catholic faith, an appropriate imperial political orientation, and a sense of virile bodily propriety and purity that reflects the integrity of the body politic.

Giménez Caballero was not the only, or even the most influential, theorist to concern himself with the minds and bodies of the nation's youth. Antonio Vallejo Nágera's ideas concerning the young-generated during an extensive military psychiatric career and evolving

through Second Republic, Civil War, and the fascist victory—left a real and indelible mark on the children of Spain.

#### THE SUPER-ENDOWED YOUTH OF ANTONIO VALLEJO NAGERA

*Eugenesia de la hispanidad y regeneración de la raza* (*The Eugenics of the Spanish World and the Regeneration of the Race*) is a spiraling, and frequently terrifying, book that has pretensions to be—all at once—a medical text, political manifesto, philosophical monograph, and a work of cultural critique. Written in 1936 by military psychiatrist Antonio Vallejo Nágera, the work proposes another prescription for a cure of Spain’s “illness.”<sup>19</sup> The text’s original prologue, written one month after the Popular Front’s electoral victory, is especially pessimistic about Spain’s future and its moral and imperial decline: “Del grado degenerativo de la antaño viril raza hispánica sabemos tanto los médicos como los moralistas, sociólogos y políticos” (7-8). (Of the degree of degeneration of the formerly virile Hispanic race we doctors, moralists, sociologists, and politicians all know the same.) Again—as seen in the case studies of the manifesto and textbook of Giménez Caballero, and the law promulgated by Education Minister Sainz Rodríguez—an explicit crisis of masculinity is embedded in the perceived decline of the body politic. The decadence of the nation is a male problem, a symptom of national impotence. Vallejo-Nágera explains that, even though there is some evidence that Spanish youth are more invested in sports and athletic culture these days—positive developments in his estimation—everyday the “cretinism” of the race expands (7). There are more “Sanchos” than “Quijotes” in Spain (8). There are not enough of the right *types* of men. For the casual reader of Cervantes, endowed with a dose of pragmatic realism, this could be interpreted as a positive development.

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<sup>19</sup> In addition to the text by Vinyes, Montse et al. see *Juan Antonio Vallejo-Nágera: la difícil serenidad* by Fernando Claramunt López, and the fascinating *Médicos escritores en España, 1885-1955* by Alfredo J. Sosa-Velasco on Vallejo-Nágera.

But for Vallejo-Nágera, there is a tight relationship between the “figura corporal con la psicología del individuo” (8). (corporal figure with individual psychology.) By the same token, he sees the health and integrity of the nation’s individual subjects in a symbiotic relation with the robustness and vitality of the nation. Vallejo-Nágera mostly finds Sanchos in Spain, and he laments the dearth of men who might at least look like Don Quijote.

For this military psychiatrist, as for his compatriots, young men will save the Spanish race from decadence. Who else, after all, can fix the generational problem of Spain, if not those who embody the promise of future generations? Reinvigorated and clearly excited by the possibilities opened up by the Civil War, Vallejo-Nágera makes a call to arms for the nation’s youth in his revised prologue of 1937:

Tiene en sus manos la juventud española la regeneración de España, a costa de renunciamentos y sacrificios. Son los jóvenes quienes deben dar un ejemplo que no puede esperarse de una masa social contaminada por los virus democrático y marxista. Todavía flotan en el ambiente las inmorales corruptelas que carcomieron la sociedad española liberaloide y nos llevaron al alzamiento militar contra el abyecto Gobierno que la representaba. Vivirá alerta la juventud contra los corruptores sociales infiltrados en nuestras filas para restarle espacio vital, para pervertirla nuevamente. (6)

The Spanish youth have in their hands the regeneration of Spain, at the expense of renouncements and sacrifices. It is the young who should give an example that cannot be expected from a social mass contaminated by the democratic and Marxist viruses. Still, floating in the air, is the immoral corruption that gnawed at

liberal Spain and brought us to the military uprising against the abject Government that represented it. Youth shall live alert to the social corruptors, infiltrated in our ranks to wrench away vital space from them, in order to pervert them once more.

Medical terminology quickly seeps into this political critique, and it positions the stakes for the national body—interpreted as a physical body—as intrinsically linked with the fate of the young. The use of a medicinal language grants authority to Vallejo-Nágera’s diagnosis for Spain, just as it will reinforce his cure. It allows him to transfer his scientific expertise onto an imagined national convalescent. “Liberal” values are responsible for Spain’s degeneration! Democracy and Marxism are viruses that threaten the health of the national body, and those who espouse these dangerous ideas are *corruptors*.<sup>20</sup> This move sexualizes propagators of oppositional political ideologies as perverse, and casts their beliefs as transmittable diseases.

An unhealthy promiscuity characterizes “liberal” democratic and Marxist thought to such an extent that they cause sexual deviance in their political subjects, or at least that is what Vallejo-Nágera’s argument suggests. While representative liberal democracy promotes lewdness and dalliances with impure ideas and contaminated persons,<sup>21</sup> according to Nágera’s viewpoint, communism actually *mandates* sexual deviation and promiscuity. Free love is an evil byproduct of the philosophy of the French Revolution, and obligatory sexual libertinism is a structural byproduct of communism (72). Russia is a hotbed of sex with multiple partners for its youth,

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<sup>20</sup> “Todavía flotan en el ambiente las inmorales corruptelas que carcomieron la sociedad española liberaloide y nos llevaron al alzamiento militar contra el abyecto Gobierno que la representaba. Vivirá alerta la juventud contra los corruptores sociales infiltrados en nuestras filas para restarle espacio vital, para pervertirla nuevamente.” (6) Notice how the language of political and moral corruption evokes the language of sexual seduction and perversion.

<sup>21</sup> His discussion of sterilization laws in the state of Michigan, at the time, and promiscuity as a result of the optional “choice” of sterilization in certain states in the US, betrays this belief about the corrupting perverse dangers of liberal democracy (62-9).

Vallejo-Nágera asserts. There is even one *young* girl who could not clarify for her father who was responsible for her unexpected pregnancy, “porque cada domingo se le asignaba una pareja distinta, a fin de fomentar los sentimientos de camaradería” (73). (because every Sunday they assigned her a new partner in order to foment sentiments of camaraderie.) This travesty was reported in a daily newspaper in Madrid, he claims. Far from being an irregular or exceptional case, this is proposed to be the rigid norm and requirement for the “red” youth:

Con arreglo al principio antes enunciado de que todo joven comunista puede y debe satisfacer sus necesidades sexuales sin obstáculo de ninguna clase, en los barrios obreros de Leningrado y de otras grandes poblaciones rusas, desde hace unos años a esta parte, se realizan atentados contra las mujeres, que se designan ‘violaciones colectivas’ (74).

In accordance with the aforementioned principal that every young communist can and should satisfy their sexual needs without obstacles of any kind, in the workers’ neighborhoods of Leningrad and other great Russian towns, for some years now, there are attacks against women, that they call ‘collective rapes.’

The rules for sexual propriety have been turned upside down in Russia, according to his account, which serves to sensationalize Soviet life by appealing to the structural and deep-seated sexual anxieties of the Spanish populace.<sup>22</sup> There is no respect for a gendered *honor*, *honra*, or respect for women in Russia.<sup>23</sup> The political ideology of communism is sexualized and attacked as deviant and perverse. And, of course, without a “healthy” sexuality, what hope is there for the

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<sup>22</sup> Klaus Theweleit discusses the currency of the “Contagious Lust” of Jews and Bolsheviks in Nazi propaganda in the second volume of *Male Fantasies*, in a section entitled by that name (7-20).

<sup>23</sup> Giménez Caballero explains the concepts of *honor* and *honra* for his schoolchildren readers in *España nuestra* (221-2).

eugenic vitality of a race? For Spain to continue following in the footsteps of Russia would be for it to doom itself to the destruction of the hispanic race, the degradation of the Spanish genotype, and the obliteration of the nation.

Vallejo-Nágera offers Spain a healing eugenic program to avert the national body from its tragic fate. He insists in differentiating his “soft” and “positive” eugenic designs from the brutal racism of the German variety. In fact, Spain’s eugenic program as he outlines it is, supposedly, not racist at all, since he acknowledges a large variety of bloodlines constituting the makeup of the population of the Peninsula.<sup>24</sup> Spain admits, accepts, and transforms a variety of bloodlines into its own Hispanic caste, both in Europe and abroad in its imperial ventures.<sup>25</sup> Germany, he claims, is mistaken in promoting “atrevidas medidas legislativas por *mera* preocupación antisemita” (82–emphasis mine). (bold legislative measures for a *mere* anti-Semitic preoccupation.) Vallejo-Nágera suggests that Spain has other ways of dealing with its “Jewish problem” than to traffic in the dangerous business of a national “negative eugenics” project. And that Jewish problem is really just a nuisance, in any case, that Spain has been handling efficiently for some time now.<sup>26</sup> Our fascist author has to reconcile social Darwinist discourses concerning the superiority of races with his Catholic beliefs, or an insistence on the “filosofía tomista” (Thomist philosophy), according to which, in his own words, “el hecho de la

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<sup>24</sup> He later, though, attributes the degeneration of the race to a eugenic pattern begun due to a “false conversion” of the jews during the Inquisition. This shows how his rhetoric and “evidence” shifted even further into an explicitly racist anti-Semitism as it became more in vogue among fascists at the onset of WWII. “todo empezó” (la degeneración de la raza) con la conversión de los judíos en el siglo XIV, una conversión falsa, explicaba Vallejo Nágera, de conveniencia, efectuada con astucia, que “no modificó el genio de la raza, no modificó la ancestral psicología sionista, sus típicas avaricia, falacia, filisteísmo y maldad” (Vinyes et al., 38)

<sup>25</sup> Moreiras, in “España raza y espíritu,” exposes this racism of fascist discourse that attempts to sublimate itself in the spirit by proclaiming disinterest in the body. She explains it is “(r)acista en la medida en que creía con una fe ciega en la superioridad espiritual de la raza española” (269-270).

<sup>26</sup> This fascist myth is also articulated in Giménez Caballeros school textbook under the telling heading of “Grandeza y eficacia de la Inquisición” (217).

existencia es un beneficio que supera al de la no existencia” (55). (the fact of existence is a good that supersedes that of nonexistence.) This is accomplished by transposing the hierarchy of races from a physical matter, bound up in the body and in blood, to a spiritual matter, tied to metaphysical transcendence and imperial prowess. Forced sterilization, and other eugenic interferences in reproduction, such as the use of contraceptives, are unacceptable to those who hold staunch Catholic beliefs (72). Spain is not racist, he proclaims, it is not *Spanish* to *unnaturally* inhibit the propagation of various bloodlines, whatever their defects. The Spanish way, it is implied in very different, laudatory language, is to colonize those inferior peoples and convert them to Catholicism, submitting them to a Spanish cultural paradigm.

So in order to avoid offending God by perversely approaching the betterment of the race through brash biological manipulations, Vallejo-Nágera proposes an alternative, racist, plan that he designates a “positive eugenics.”

A nuestro entender, para impulsar la regeneración de la raza, mejor que selección de los biotipos, perfeccionamiento de los fenotipos, mediante una acción constante sobre cada individuo para mejorarlo física y moralmente. En esta acción consiste la eugenesia positiva, pues otra es materialmente imposible, y más imposible todavía reglamentar la reproducción de los humanos como la de los animales. (77)

In our understanding, to impulse the regeneration of the race, better than the selection of biotypes, is the perfecting of phenotypes through a constant action on every individual to better him physically and morally. This is what positive

eugenics consists of, because any other kind if materially impossible, and it's more impossible still to regulate the reproduction of humans as with animals.

The solution to this biological problem of the degeneration of the race is not a direct intervention in the human anatomy of the populace, but rather an intensive “perfection” of the environment and requisite formative conditions in which the race gestates outside of the womb— a direct intervention in the social fabric that coddles, or suffocates, the budding Hispanic masses. Vallejo-Nágera evokes a very serious discipline when insisting on a “constant action” on individuals, emanating from their environment, in order to produce a superior *hispanidad*.

But what—or whom—is it exactly that this perfect education produces? Will all Spaniards benefit from it equally? And how will the new age of the Hispanic race promised by this positive eugenic program be ushered in? Vallejo-Nágera insists on the creation of a caste of *superdotados* (super-endowed): “La nación que quiera velar por el porvenir de su raza debe crear una aristocracia eugenésica, no constituída exclusivamente por atletas, sino por selectos autoperfeccionados y ansiosos de superarse, tanto en la esfera corporal como en la espiritual y moral” (122). (The nation that wishes to watch for the future of its race should create a eugenic aristocracy, not constituted exclusively of athletes, but by select self-perfecting men anxious to outdo themselves as much in the corporal realm as in the spiritual and moral ones.) His first prescription to achieve this goal echoes Giménez Caballero’s call for a renewed obligatory cultural curriculum of the lives of Spanish heroes: “Divulguemos en el pueblo, en la masa juvenil principalmente, vidas heroicas que puedan ser otros modelos de ‘yo ideal.’ Imite la juventud a los selectos y superdotados, no a los ídolos de la plebe” (120). (Let us divulge in the people, in the youthful masses principally, heroic lives that can be other models of the “ideal

self.” Youth should imitate the select and super-endowed, not the idols of the proletariat.) These *superdotados* are men from national history whom serve as role models for other men.

As models, they are the finest embodiments of the values of their race, faith, and victorious conquering state. In due time this national masters’ seminar in imperial masculinity will, in turn, produce more *superdotados*, and these men will revitalize the masses of Spain like vigilant antibodies within the immune system of a sickly national body. And Vallejo-Nágera intends that quite literally: unlike their counterparts in the traditional aristocracy these super-endowed will not look down on their inferiors, “[p]orque el selecto no debe menospreciar a sus prójimos inferiores en dotes, antes al contrario, debe amarlos, para estar más cerca de ellos, y poder inyectarles o inocularles su pronta esencia” (126). (because the select should not belittle his fellowman, inferior in gifts, but rather, on the contrary, he should love them, in order to be nearer to them and able to inject or inoculate them with his keen essence.) Men loving men will bring about the reproduction of a vital masculinity, the key remedy to Spain’s national malaise. Male mimetic desire, forcibly<sup>27</sup> injected in the masses, will beget the regeneration of the Hispanic race. While this self-inscribing pedagogy is articulated in an undeniably homoerotic language, it should not be mistaken for a communication of homosexual desire. Homosexuality, for Vallejo-Nágera, is equivalent with impotency and the end of a lineage. He explains, “(l)a selección de los homosexuales es automática, por ser en ellos frecuente la infecundidad” (16). (the selection of homosexuals is automatic, due to frequent infertility in them). This love is not properly homosexual, because it denies itself a sexuality. Its male-male erotic investment lies in the spiritual fusion promised by ideological oneness, and the fantastic perfection of the

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<sup>27</sup> Antonio Vallejo Nágera Laments that other philosopher’s of Spain’s malaise did not inject the solution themselves (8).

masculine self—the complete domination of the state in the world, manifest in the robust individual subject.

While Antonio Vallejo Nágera never became Minister of Education his standing in the military did grow, and so as the military's dominion over Spain expanded in wartime, so did his influence over the state's relations with young Spaniards. In August of 1938, thirteen days after Dr. Nágera petitioned the provisional government for resources, Franco authorized him to create a military "Cabinet of Psychological Investigations," in order to study "las raíces biopsíquicas del marxismo" (Vinyes et al., 30-1). (the biopsychological roots of Marxism.) Less than two months after its inception the Cabinet released a study confirming the psychosocial inferiority of the Republican enemy, as proved by tests performed on prisoners of war. On the basis of this "research" Vallejo-Nágera would go on to advocate, "pues si militan en el marxismo de preferencia psicópatas antisociales, como es nuestra idea, la segregación de estos sujetos desde la infancia podría liberar a la sociedad de plaga tan temible" (40-taken from *Locura y Guerra*, 1939). (that since the preferred Marxist militant is an antisocial psychopath, as is our idea, then the segregation of these subjects from infancy could free society from such a terrible plague.) The law conformed to his appraisal, and eventually enforced the separation of prisoners of war and ideological dissidents from their children. This program developed under the auspices of a broader social welfare unit, congenially designated *Auxilio Social* (Social Aid). Historian Angela Cenarro, who directly references the pivotal function of Vallejo-Nágera in the endeavor, explains:

Although the Francoist welfare system was publicly presented as the regime's 'maternal arm,' it proved to be a particularly effective tool for wielding power over the children of the defeated [...] War orphans,

children of poor families, abandoned children and prisoners' offspring—the main objects of the regime's regenerationist obsession— were institutionalized in these *hogares* (public youth homes). The decree of November 23, 1940 regulating the protection of war orphans allowed the state to separate children from their parents if 'there were sound reasons to consider that the child's moral formation was at risk.' (45).

The Vinyes team confirms the extent of this mission's reach: "El resultado fue que en 1942 estaban tutelados por el Estado en escuelas religiosas y establecimientos públicos 9,050 niños con sus padres o madres en la cárcel" (59). (The result was that in 1942 there were 9,050 children, with their fathers or mothers in jail, who were wards of the state in religious schools and public establishments.)

In her research on the narrated memories of children who were captive subjects of the state's *Auxilio social* programs, Cenarro comes to the conclusion that the regime failed to exercise a hegemonic dominion over the cultivation of the subjective identities of these youth:

The narratives of "Auxilio Social children" confirm that the totalitarian dream of 'national community' was never fulfilled. The ruling elite failed to establish hegemony over the inmates [...] Although the regenerationist project had been carefully thought out by doctors, psychiatrists and the professional elite working in prisons and the welfare system, it was hardly applied in practice.<sup>28</sup> [...] Fissures in the power system were instrumentalized by the young to seek out alternatives to the dictatorship's project and to construct a dissident identity. (56)

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<sup>28</sup> The regenerationist project Cenarro is referring to has roots in the history of Spanish reactionary thought. Joaquín Costa and Angel Ganivet are perhaps most emblematic of the regenerationist group invested in the restoration of Spain's imperial project (Rodríguez-Puértolas 62).

Her research exposes the moralizing “positive eugenics” project as a fallacy, not only because its execution was imperfect—these children were, after all, the most “contained” young subjects at the mercy of the pedagogy of the state, their exposure to the indoctrinating tenements of Catholic and fascist ideology was as close to perfect as possible—but because its failure demonstrates the limits and vicissitudes of even hegemonic pedagogical power. This failure to mold subjectivity and produce the *superdotado* does not negate the traumatic foundational character of *Auxilio Social* as formative experience for these people. After all, Cenarro located some of her interview subjects on an Internet forum where such “children of Auxilio Social” shared their memories and life stories (42).<sup>29</sup> The experience of growing up a ward of the state’s ideological programming mechanism generated a shared identity that it never intended to create. And this uncomfortable identity has (re)surfaced, thanks to technology and a (largely) evolved political situation, over 60 years after the project’s “failure!”

Most children were not captive to such intense surveillance, indoctrination, and tutelage on behalf of the state as those governed by *Auxilio Social*. But none escaped the reverberating consequences of the drastic reforms to the educational system inaugurated by the victories of the fascists. A religious and political education was required for their upbringing. The broader implications of the state’s inevitable failure in its pedagogical designs for its youth—the impacts of what Almodóvar’s formulation might qualify as its obligatory *Bad Education* for its young—are impossible to quantify.<sup>30</sup> We cannot reach into the Spanish psyche and scientifically extract

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<sup>29</sup> The website belonged to “Carlos Giménez— author of the famous comic strip *Paracuellos* based on the Auxilio Social children’s home at Paracuellos (Madrid) where he himself was institutionalized as a child...” (42).

<sup>30</sup> I proffer the title of Almodóvar’s 2004 film here as a heuristic, following Lee Edelman’s lead in his forthcoming book *Bad Education: Queerness and Radical Evil*. The divergence of my ideas about “bad education” from Edelman’s will become clear in the second chapter. For now, I am using it as a place-marker for one interpretation of the title of Almodóvar’s film, which is that the “bad education” it is

the remains of the failures and achievements of this indoctrinating programming. But we can begin to understand its *cultural* resonances by identifying the traces of this ideology, this compulsion towards a proper, political, inoculating masculinity, as they echo throughout time in the cultural production of Spain after the Civil War. Without according it an undue amount of power, but by acknowledging its import on the pragmatics of cultural discourse, on the formative experience of contemporary Spaniards, we can begin to understand the impact of this *Bad Education* on contemporary Spain by tracing its resurgence in cultural artifacts. And it will not fail to appear both in official state-endorsed cultural materials and independent artistic endeavors.

One instance of such a project is found in the novel *Eugenio o proclamación de la primavera* (*Eugene or the Proclamation of Spring*), written by Rafael García Serrano and published through a formal mechanism for Falangist propaganda in 1938. *Eugenio* is a Spanish Civil War *romance*<sup>31</sup> that tells the story of a youth who unambiguously accepts, participates in the construction of, and posthumously comes to define a transhistorical ideal for the Spanish man. García Serrano inserts himself into the plot and material of the narrative by using his own first name for its telling—he is supposed to have been Eugenio’s friend, one of his comrades and admirers—thereby adding authority and a realistic dimension to a piece that hyperbolically exemplifies the fictitious nature of the memoir genre.

García Serrano’s story proposes a method for handling the dead of the war, a memorialization in the service of power, that approximates a reading of it with the

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referencing is the Catholic, nationalist education the protagonists received in the boarding school where one was raped by a priest.

<sup>31</sup> The author/narrator, Rafael, and protagonist, Eugenio, make the claim that the text is a *romance* from within the text (23).

announcement by Franco, two years after its publication, of the construction of the *Valle de los Caídos* (Valley of the Fallen).<sup>32</sup> The *Valle de los Caídos* is a monument to the dead of the Civil War, carved of stone, that produces models of exceptional behavior and situates them in an authoritative position of eternal glory granted to them under the auspices of Catholic dogma interpreted through a nationalist ideological framework. Housing the remains of some of the dead on both sides of the conflict, the compound incorporates the “losers” into the new symbolic affirmation of the body politic as it was re-organized by the fascist victory. The monument was visited frequently by Franco, with much fanfare, on the occasion of the death of José Antonio Primo de Rivera, who is repeatedly celebrated as the state’s founding model.

The *romance* begins with a solemn dedication, *In memoriam* to José Antonio Primo de Rivera, other dead fascist leaders, and, finally, it is dedicated “En la memoria de todos los caídos antes de la Guerra. En la memoria de todos los camaradas que murieron por la Revolución Nacionalsindicalista...Presentes.” (In memory of all of those fallen before the War. In memory of all of the comrades that died for the National Syndicalist Revolution...Present.) This tribute, like the monument in *El Valle de los Caídos* does not conjure up the dead, they are not haunted by them. Rather, they stake a vertical claim of unity with the deceased by insisting on their “presence.” If the dead are present, they are not intervening from another place or space in time, they are not witnessing, they are not troubling the status quo. Presence positions them firmly within a predetermined order of meaning. Rafael clarifies the differences that are to be found between those dead memorialized from a position of power, and those others who are lost to history: “Había conseguido aclarar la cuestión bécqueriana. Sus muertos se quedaban solos. Y los nuestros no. Forman guardia. Siguen en la hermandad caliente de cada corazón” (63). (I

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<sup>32</sup> Kathleen Vernon approximates the monument project for the war’s dead and the state-sponsored production of *Raza* in “Re-viewing the Spanish Civil War: Franco’s Film *Raza*” (26-7).

was able to clarify the Becquerian question. His dead were left alone. Ours were not. They stand guard. They continue in the warm brotherhood of every heart.) García Serrano's text is a "song" to a dead young man, evoking praises for masses of other dead who form part of the fascist camp, that asserts its universal authority in its overdetermination of the meaning of a specific boy's death.

That boy, Eugenio, is a young revolutionary who never strays from fascist ideology, brutally promotes and defends the idea of the imperial "race," and whom is ultimately shot and killed by the "reds" at the end of the story. Eugenio's obsession with a vital and robust Spain, announced by his name—derived from the Greek *eugenes*, or well-born, "*bien engendrado*" (23)—aligns his political project with a particularly Spanish manifestation of the fascist concern for eugenics. As a project designed to ensure vitality, eugenics is equally obsessed by the shadow of death in its supposed aim to support the flourishing of life. For Eugenio, it is a political project designed to eliminate dissent and create political unity.<sup>33</sup>

In his youthful exemplarity, Eugenio is always very close to the idea of death in the text. We know he is exemplary, and that he represents an intervention in a political contest for determining the meaning of symbolic associations between the young and the dead, by virtue of the work's subtitle. It reads, "ésta es como la historia del muerto que yo hubiera querido ser" (this is like the story of the dead man that I would have liked to have been.) The work fetishizes death. Eugenio discusses various "types" of death with Rafael before the war, and he chooses

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<sup>33</sup> In a 1938 footnote to his *Genio de España*, Ernesto Giménez Caballero asserts that the true historical unit, the one that marks and defines history, is not "the generation," but rather he claims that it is "el ciclo espiritual" (the spiritual cycle). He explains this cycle as a transmission of fire across time and space, and he claims that a hero who represents the spirit of the Spanish race will always emerge in times of crisis (87). Like García Serrano, Giménez Caballero establishes immanent links between the living in the dead and separates Spaniards from one another along similar "eugenic" lines—those that embody the spirit (or, perhaps, the politics) of the "race," and those who do not.

what his own will be. “Y Eugenio ha elegido la muerte de voluntad” (And Eugenio has chosen the willful death.) That voluntary death, an expression of his will, is one that fulfills the requirements of fascist Spain’s formulation for an imperial race unified in a common purpose. Before the armed conflict has even begun, the significance of Eugenio’s death, what it means in its relationship to time and the state, is already decided. Eugenio is a perfect martyr for the fascist cause.

Martyrs, of course, are accompanied by their own erotics.<sup>34</sup> This *romance* is romantic in the sense that eros, unity, and death find themselves inevitably bound to one another in the plot due to the pressing temporal imminency of eternity/infinity brought about by the predestination of the death of the protagonist. But the love story being told is not between Eugenio and his girlfriend, even though it serves as a model for chaste and exemplary behavior. It is not about Rafael and his own romantic endeavors with the opposite sex, either. They fail to live up to the model set by his friend. Rather, the love story is the *romance* that Rafael is writing to Eugenio’s memory, it is the same-sex admiration dripping through his prose, the mimetic desire he has for his comrade, that constitutes the material of the narrative. The triangulation of desire is so blatant in the text, because the text wishes to promote this triangulization, its blatant mise-en-scène is a product of the text’s authorial drive to reify and enforce that model. It is a text of homosocial didactics.

Rafael most admires Eugenio’s constancy and resolve. He describes his friend, writing, “Se sentía capaz de levantar una barricada para él solo o de lanzar un manifiesto viril...Era fuerte, sano, valiente” (“He felt capable of raising up a barricade by himself or of launching a virile manifesto...He was strong, healthy, valiant”) [20]. His virility consists of his strength,

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<sup>34</sup> Various novels by Juan Goytisolo and Terenci Moix demonstrate the erotic significance of the martyr for young Spaniards of the pre to post civil war eras. See, specifically, *Señas de identidad* (discussed in Chapter 2), *El día que murió Marilyn*, and *Sadístico, esperpéntico, e incluso metafísico*.

good health, and resolve. There is an easy naturalness to his actions that corresponds to these aforementioned virtues. Eugenio does not take the time to think, and thereby avoids contaminating his actions, when responding to a situation: “Pero Eugenio no da tiempo a nada. Sus ojos adivinan debilidades y acude a la brecha. Piensa siempre en revolucionario y no tolera que los demás piensen de modo distinto a él” (59). (But Eugenio does not give anything time. His eyes discern weaknesses and he attends to the breach. He is always thinking like a revolutionary and he does not tolerate that others think differently than he.) Why would Eugenio be generous with his time, why would he pause to contemplate anything, when time is already ordered and decided by his fascist ideology?

Eugenio’s lack of reservation and natural demeanor carry over to his relationship with Rafael. This is displayed by the manner in which they hug one another.

Pero cuando dos camaradas como Eugenio y Rafael se abrazan, es rito emocionado y oferta de los brazos para la ayuda que nace al tacto de los codos, de uniforme y firmes. – Por eso, ha dicho Eugenio, no existe táctica en nuestro abrazo. La táctica es un problema intelectual y el nuestro es golpe de sangre, arriba de corazones. (48)

But when two comrades like Eugenio and Rafael hug one another, its an emotional rite and offering of help that is born from the touching of elbows, in uniform and solid. Because of this, Eugenio has said that there is no tactic in our hug. Tactics are an intellectual problem but ours is a blow of blood, a rising up of hearts.

There is an ecstasy that manifests itself in this contact, this emotional rite, which is perhaps best explained as an instance of an acting-out of the unity that their political dogma already proclaims to have achieved between members of the body politic. This touching is a performance of the presence that they are supposed to share, not only with each other, but also with their dead role models. It is an outlet for an expression of the desire that Rafael displays for Eugenio throughout the text. When Eugenio says that there is no “táctica” (tactic, strategy), in their embrace, he is disavowing the “tacto” (touching) mentioned by Rafael, and privileging the fantasy of their union or fusion over the distinct ordering and difference implied by touching.

The young martyr Eugenio claims to have reached a knowledge and understanding about the choices he had to make between living a bourgeois life and being a revolutionary the first time he fired a pistol. It was at that moment that he knew he was ready to kill a communist. This was the day that Eugenio became a confirmed revolutionary (62). Brotherly love, for him, is intrinsically linked to violence against those who fall outside of the fraternity, and even violence mitigating love and admiration within the fraternity. He recalls watching two boys playing cowboys one day. One kisses the other on the cheek affectionately, and then proceeds to beat him. He says of the incident, “podría ser episodio sexual” (62). (it could have been a sexual episode.) In acknowledging the underlying erotic impulses that both motivate and restrain the homosocial interactions of his peers, Eugenio betrays the key for understanding his relationship with Rafael. Or, maybe, it is that Rafael is betraying his desire for Eugenio. In any case, this pornography of predestined martyrdom is channeled towards violence and same sex admiration, rather than any forms of explicit erotic love, or overt expressions of sexuality.

Eugenio is a youth who sacrifices himself for the fascist cause in order to be memorialized as an exemplary model of manly conduct. His exemplary status is really achieved

through death and immortalization via the narration of his story. He is an aesthetic rendering of the *superdotado* fantasized by Vallejo Nágera. Franco was invested in a similar aesthetic rendering of a heroic model masculinity, but he was determined to see it shine on the big screen offered by cinema.

#### BODIES, BINARIES, AND BULLETS: FASCIST MASCULINITIES IN *LA CAZA* and *RAZA*

*La caza* (*The Hunt*, 1965), by Carlos Saura, is a film about myths so large that they violently unravel under the weight of their own contradictions, dragged along by the hand of time as they exhaust the energies necessary for their own perpetuation.<sup>35</sup> One such fabrication exposed by the film, which constitutes a metaphorical nexus upon which hinge multiple others concerning the nation, history, and the hegemonic social order of the Francoist state, is that of the “Spanish Hero”. This hero is particularly gendered, a masculine archetype promoted and policed by the cultural production of the ideological apparatus of the dictatorial regime, whose prototype can be found in the character of José Churruga from José Luis Sáenz de Heredia’s *Raza* (*Race*), made over twenty years earlier in 1942.<sup>36</sup> Churruga, like his naval-commander father, serves as an exemplary instance of a fantasized embodiment of the Spanish fascist state-sanctioned ideal for all of the men of the body politic. José Churruga embodies one of Giménez Caballero’s heroes, one of Vallejo-Nágera’s *superdotados*.

*Raza* glorifies and reaffirms the ascent of the transcendental Spanish hero. But, by the end of Saura’s film, his protagonists belonging to the generation of “victors” from the Spanish

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<sup>35</sup> On Carlos Saura’s cinema, see *The Films of Carlos Saura: the practice of seeing* by Marvin D’Lugo, *Blood Cinema* by Marsha Kinder, the recent *Carlos Saura, una trayectoria ejemplar*, by Robin Lefere, and *Carlos Saura*, by Manuel Hidalgo.

<sup>36</sup> For insight into Sáenz de Heredia’s cinema consult *El destino se disculpa: el cine de José Luis Sáenz de Heredia*, edited by José Luis Castro de Paz and Jorge Nieto Ferrando.

Civil War are physically destroyed, and the cultural logics of the fascist masculine ideal have been deconstructed both visually and through narrative. The literal corporal remains of these men, and, similarly, the dogmatic force of the fascist masculine archetype, however, endure at the end of the piece as menaces fled by a terrorized youth who is trapped in a freeze-frame. This non-ending leaves the problem of fascist masculinity as an open site of struggle, interrogation, and contest for both the film and 1960s Spain.

The acuity of Saura's exposition of the inner-workings of fascist masculinity as ideology-personified lies in his film's slow, careful, and sustained examination of a number of male fantasies.<sup>37</sup> Just as his protagonists are visually exposed in sharp contrast by the severe light of the sun, the lens of the camera they have brought to document their hunting adventures, and the scopes of their rifles, so too are multiple masculine myths—most notably promoted in the regime's cinematic production by the film *Raza*—brought under scrutiny by means of contrast with their failing negations. These include fantasies about the nobility of the hunt—unequivocally linked to the nobility of battle—the honor of the soldier, the transcendent bonds of male friendship, the veneration of women, and the health, robustness, and integrity of the body of men. The differences are striking in the ways in which *La caza* handles these commonplaces of the rhetoric of fascist masculinity, and the ways in which this rhetoric is constructed, performed, and embodied in Heredia's postwar family melodrama—most tellingly written by Francisco Franco himself.

Close consideration of various points of contact and mutually oscillating negation between *La caza* and *Raza* reveals the violent consequences of the practice of the core tenants of the logics of fascist masculinity. Specifically, they elucidate how such logics are governed by a

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<sup>37</sup> I borrow the expression from Klaus Theweleit's two-volume study of masculinity in Nazi Germany, entitled *Male Fantasies*.

violent immunizing practice that seeks to reinforce community by the destruction of that which is not shared, or not supposed to be shared, by the collective of men, especially through self-sacrifice.<sup>38</sup> Fascist masculinity, in this case, is dependent upon an institutionalization and enforcement of a cult of hero worship that establishes a model by which masculine performances are to be evaluated by communities of men. The gender requirements of the group are to be internalized by individuals, who must eliminate contaminating, non-conforming, elements from themselves, just as members are called to sacrifice themselves for the cause of the state. And those who fail to embody the ideals of the body politic are labeled as enemies and violently expelled from the collective. This logic of immunization, carried to an extreme, is destined to fail to maintain the binary mechanisms by which it operates, mainly the discrete categorizations of “friend” and “enemy,” “masculine” and “effeminate,” “robust” and “degenerate,” “healthy” and “sick,” and “pure” and “perverse.” Thus, the future of the hegemonic political order built upon such shifting hierarchical foundations is one susceptible to self-implosion, just as its individual members are prone to self-destruction in their attempts to embody its ideals.

Roberto Esposito says the following in his explanation of the immunitary paradigm:

Now the hermeneutic advantage of the immunitary model lies precisely in the circumstance that these two modalities, these two effects of sense—positive and negative, preservative and destructive—finally find an internal articulation, a semantic juncture that organizes them into a causal relation (albeit of a negative kind). This means that the negation doesn’t take the form of the violent subordination that power imposes on life from the outside, but rather is the intrinsically antinomic mode by which life preserves itself through power. From

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<sup>38</sup> I am taking cues here from the theoretical work on *Immunitas* and Biopower by Roberto Esposito, and also by the formulation of Carl Schmitt’s definition of politics.

this perspective, we can say that immunization is a negative [form] of the protection of life. It saves, insures, and preserves the organism, either individual or collective, to which it pertains, but it does not do so directly, immediately, or confrontally; on the contrary, it subjects the organism to a condition that simultaneously negates or reduces its power to expand. Just as in the medical practice of vaccinating the body, so the immunization of the political body functions similarly, introducing within it a fragment of the same pathogen from which it wants to protect itself, by blocking and contradicting natural development. (46)

Homosocial bonds, in this model, are necessary for the reproduction of hegemonic masculinity, but they must be demarcated from erotic desire by competition and limited to their just measure. In the context of the Francoist collective of men, they are to be warriors without slipping into in-group violence. But the degeneration of other demarcations of self and other unravels the logics of immunization and threatens their acceleration into immunizing *violence*. While Franco's *Raza* struggles to occlude the apocalyptic potential latent in the politicization of starkly constructed gender binaries—binaries overlapping multiple others along the lines of friend/enemy—Saura's *La caza* exposes its full self-destructive potency.

In "Ageing and Coming of Age in Carlos Saura's *La Caza*," Sally Faulkner explores Saura's film as a challenge to Spanish masculinity through the optics of ageing and old age. Faulkner posits that the film emphasizes the datedness of the Franco regime as a response to visible anxieties about ageing on behalf of the latter, as evidenced by the state-commissioned biopic *Franco, ese hombre (Franco, that Man)* [1964]. The 1964 "documentary" that emphasized the vitality of the ageing *caudillo* was also directed by Sáenz de Heredia, the

architect of *Raza*. “Ageing and coming of age,” Faulkner writes, “key sources of anxiety in Francoism in 1960’s Spain, are probed in *La Caza* through a critique of masculinity. Saura overturns in this film the kind of homosociality described and prescribed by the consensual Francoist cinema of the 1940’s” (463). *Raza* is the most emblematic example of this cinema, and, consequently, one of her most compelling arguments hinges upon the figure of the exposed and aged body of Alfredo Mayo in *La Caza* that presents a significant contrast with the presence of the younger Alfredo Mayo as *Raza*’s hero, José Churruga.<sup>39</sup> Faulkner points out that Mayo was involved with Saura’s project from the earliest stages of its conception, and so his being cast in the lead role should be recognized as a deliberate invocation of his previous leading roles—such as the one in *Raza*. While it is clear that *La caza* problematizes the kind of homosociality typical of the collaborative cinema of the 40’s—and an intimate display of the body of an ageing Alfredo Mayo participates in this project—more analysis informed by the tensions between the regime’s model-film and Saura’s challenge to it is necessary in order to uncover the ideological foundations and functioning of fascist masculinity.

If the screen presence of Alfredo Mayo represents the most blatantly obvious link between *La caza* and *Raza*, or Saura’s clearest evocation of the regime’s cultural production, many more subtle technical, and especially thematic, parallels exist between the two films. The ominous drums that lead the march that opens *La caza* and underlie its entire soundtrack also open *Raza*, and re-emerge when Pedro Churruga, the naval commander father of Franco’s

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<sup>39</sup> Faulkner notes in her study that Marvin D’Lugo was the first scholar to comment that the casting of Alfredo Mayo in the role of Paco strongly evokes his performance in *Raza*, during the period in which he was celebrated as embodying the “*galán del franquismo*,” (the handsome young man of francoism) [Faulkner 464].

exemplary family,<sup>40</sup> is leading his ship into an impossibly difficult battle in the Spanish American War, from which it will not escape. However, while the tensions created by the dark and resonating two-toned drumbeat are relieved in *Raza* by the lofty sounds of a stirring brass movement—evoking militaristic triumph and glory—the drums provoke a flat and constant tension in *La caza* that is never dispelled. This characteristic of the soundtrack of *La caza* seems to corroborate Faulkner’s observation that the cinematic language of the film often lingers in the realm of the “time-image,” as it is described by Deleuze, rather than that of the “movement image” (474). In other words, “time and space are no longer subordinated to action” in *La caza*, as evidenced by the static nature of its soundtrack that does not change as the plot develops (474). On the other hand, the orchestration of *Raza* produces sensations of movement and transcendence that correspond with the films transcendent narratological aims. Enthusiastic brass celebrates heroic victories, dark deep melodies accompany treachery and villainy, and music reaches its culminating climax along with the action in *Raza*, just to be sure we have understood the didactics of the scene.

Saura’s focus on the tedious and anxiety-producing minutiae of the present, pointing to the ghosts and silences of a dark past, contrasts remarkably with *Raza*’s sweeping, hyperbolized, and exaggerated evocations of history that produce a sensation of linear dynamism for the film. Just as the drums are sublimated into brass in *Raza*’s soundtrack in order to signal military triumph and glory, the use of montage in the film is employed to evoke a sense of both upward historical trends and continuity. On multiple occasions in *Raza*, newspapers with readable headlines are filmed stacking up upon one another in the foreground— building a carefully constructed narrative about national history— while choice foundational scenes from the

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<sup>40</sup> Kathleen Vernon suggests the Churruga family is modeled after a compensating fantasy version of Franco’s very own family (28).

protagonist's family life are highlighted in the background behind the transparent newspapers piling up on top of them. This is montage in its most frenetic and explicit manifestation, constructing the film's narrative, a narrative of history, by rapidly piling up headlines on top of one another, and consequently referencing its own historical authority at the same time that it is being constructed. The headlines announcing the Spanish defeat in the "War of Cuba" are replaced by those heralding the Second Republic (a historical lapse—ignoring the Primo de Rivera dictatorship—of no insignificance), which are substituted with headlines announcing assassinations of the clergy, workers' strikes, unrest in the cities, and, finally, the nationalist uprising. In the meantime, the film's children are growing up—attending their military father's funeral, their first communions, their own military initiations, and marriages.

Montage plays a very different role in Saura's film, where it most notably is employed in the disembodied and eroticized gun-loading sequence that precedes the first hunting episode. It is also mobilized to intensify dialogue between protagonists Paco and José by cutting from one of their faces to the other in a dramatic mirror-like fashion, while tensions between the characters mount. Here, montage constitutes a rumination on a presence of the present. It grants time an intimate immediacy. While it certainly constructs its own narrative, it offers multiple and uncomfortable angles upon one happening, estranging the viewer from their own assumptions about what it is they are seeing, or what is going on. This differs radically from *Raza's* use of montage to add historical weight and authority to the film's narrative.

Just as *Raza's* family melodrama is accorded the prestige of historical exemplarity through the film's use of montage, the masculine performances of its hero-men are similarly granted an authority rooted in hegemonic notions of history. If Alfredo Mayo's character, José, is the film's principal pedagogical model and protagonist, he is explicitly framed as being an

ideal example of a male soldier who derives his source of authority and exemplarity through an astute understanding and embodiment of his role in its continuity with transhistorical notions of the history of the Spanish warrior. Before being an exemplary soldier, he is an exemplary student of the regime's notion of history. Franco sought to establish a hegemonic narrative of history in *Raza*, in which all of Spain's Imperial past inevitably led to the nation's logical culmination in his fascist government. This notion of history was not without specific consequences for expectations regarding gender performances. Figures from Spain's past are treated in the film as if they are both alive and present, and willing collaborators for the political purposes of the regime. Carefully crafted versions of their (his)stories are evoked to propagate models of manly behavior. The film's didactical pretensions are painfully clear, and made explicit by the device of beginning the film in 1898, or thirty-eight years before the principal dramatic material of the Civil War.

When the film begins the members of the Churruca family, who will become archetypes of various sorts of conduct during the Civil War, are still children. As children, they are taught many lessons, both by their mother and father, who position themselves as being at odds with the values displayed by a "decadent and immoral" (Republican) society. Through this device, José is not the only model for masculinity found in the film, but rather his father is the first model of proper male behavior, with a specific pedagogical agenda, who evokes an infinite number of preceding male models representing a glorious past that is recovered and employed as a moral justification for all the present/future conduct of the Spanish soldier-male, or the fascist victors of the Spanish Civil War.

Pedro Churruca, Franco's (fictional) father, makes his first appearance in *Raza* during the festivities celebrating his return to Spain on his penultimate naval voyage during the Spanish

American War. Before his ship returns, his wife, Isabel, has already been shown carrying out the instructive work of preparing the children for the many challenges and moral quandaries life will present to them. While the young José and Isabel are portrayed as preternaturally well-behaved children, bright and eager to learn what their mother and father have to teach them, the middle-child Pedro is a trouble-maker and a mischievous liar who is disinterested in the pedagogy of his parents. It is no surprise that Pedro will go on to represent the Republican cause as an adult until his sacrificial conversion to the Falange at the end of *Raza*. José, the good boy, becomes the nation's hero *par excellence* when he grows up. Before Pedro Churruca, Senior, arrives home, young Isabel is found fighting with Pedrito about a bird that he is holding captive in his hands. When their mother is interrupted from her preparations for her husbands return due to their fighting, young Isabel explains that she wants Pedro to let the bird go. Isabel, the mother, makes young Pedro release the bird, and methodically explains to him that, "*los animales no son indiferentes al dolor y no se les debe hacer sufrir.*" (animals are not indifferent to pain and they should not be made to suffer.)

The scene sets up young Pedro as intrinsically flawed and naturally cruel—opposing his character to the alacrity and goodness of young Isabel and model José—as it simultaneously seeks to neutralize critiques of violence and suffering that the film provokes by preemptively co-opting them and directing them towards the representative of the Republican camp. Moreover, as it identifies the Republican as the perpetrator of cruel violence for the film, it establishes that the *real* victims of violence are “defenseless” creatures or the animals, women,<sup>41</sup> and children who

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<sup>41</sup> The role of women in the film, in terms of the agency afforded to them as actors in the Civil War as contrasted with their roles as caretakers, conveyors of the regime's ideology, and critics of violence against the defenseless, is as unstable as the film's insincere and partial critique of violence. While the mother Isabel defers to her husband as the example of heroism the children ought to follow, even as she actively argues with other men about politics during young Isabel's wedding, José's girlfriend Marisol is

participate in the staging of this specific critique. The men- who are purposefully excused from having to comment on this critique- will always be cast in the binary of enemy perpetrators of violence: Republicans, communists, etc., or those who heroically fight to combat the enemy. In this way, the film elides the possibility for a critique of the logics of violence itself, and makes wrongdoers, rather than victims, out of the Republicans. In doing so it protects the myth of the nobility of war, and just battle, by means of only criticizing attacks against the naturally meek: the female, or those othered by virtue of their exclusion from the otherwise-just realms of battle and war. This tenuous and insidiously incomplete critique of violence (that intentionally reinforces masculine domination) is maintained throughout the film by the glorification of battle that only lapses during depictions of cowardly (Republican) executions of violence against “innocent” priests and the *school children* in their care.<sup>42</sup>

While the Republicans are framed as guilty of perpetrating cowardly violence against the meek, the film takes great pains to construct a genealogy of those who carry out “just” and righteous violence in the name of—and for the interests of—Spain. When Commander Churruca finally has time alone with his family, his children have some questions for him about the death of a young man on his ship, whose grandfather they know from their town. After explaining to them that he had to risk the life of one of his marines in order to save the whole ship during a storm, and assuring young Pedro that the boy was not chosen to die because he was “*el más malo*” (“the worse one”), José asks a peculiar question. He wants to know if it is true that a marine puts on his military regalia when he is going to die. His father responds affirmatively, saying: “Así es, si se pone de gala para sus grandes actos ¿cómo no lo va a hacer el día solemne

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the catalyst for his escape from behind Republican lines, and the nationalist, Pilar, a bit-part, “sacrifices” her hair in order to look like a boy and carry a message across enemy lines for the Falangists, etc.

<sup>42</sup> Vernon notes, ironically, that the cinematography in this scene references the work of Soviet director, Sergei Eisenstein, while one might expect the film to more readily pay tribute to the Nazi filmmaker, Leni Riefenstahl (33).

de su muerte gloriosa? Cuando le corresponde a uno morir se muere con toda la arrogancia, con toda la despreocupación, y con toda la grandeza.” (That’s right, if they dress up for their great acts how could they not do it on the solemn day of their glorious death? When it is time for one to die he dies with complete arrogance, with complete carelessness, and in complete glory.)

The didactics of the lesson are twofold. First, the elected dead are those on the side of the prevailing traditional ideals of Spain. They are those who die while fighting to maintain the Empire, and those who will later die fighting for the nationalist cause in the Civil War. They are honored by the discourse of the arrogant death. The prime son José Churruca will later face his firing squad (one that fails to kill him, nonetheless) with a defiant hand in the air. In doing so he demonstrates the potency of the rhetorical power of the image of the honorable death. Secondly, the lesson underscores the importance of a willingness to perform one’s duty and fight for a nationalist cause no matter what the conditions, odds, moral questions, or possible outcomes. The good soldier must be ready to bravely and heroically sacrifice himself, in utter contempt and disregard for death, in order to contribute to the cause of the whole body politic.

Pedro Churruca reaches back into the family tree during his lesson in order to provide solid examples for his boys. He first cites an episode that reserved their family a place in Spanish naval history. One of the ancestors in the Churruca line, another naval commander, sought to hide his wounds from his men during the Battle of Trafalgar of the Napoleonic Wars, while he encouraged them to keep fighting. He made them raise up the flag as he was dying in agony. This discussion of their ancestor follows a lesson about the fierce Almogavar soldiers under the crown of Aragon during the *Reconquista* of the Iberian peninsular. They were, according to Churruca, the best fighters, chosen for the most difficult tasks:

Eran guerreros elegidos, de los más representativos de la raza española, firmes en la pelea, ágiles y decididos en el maniobrar, su valor no es igualado en la historia por otro pueblo [...] Almogávar será siempre el soldado elegido, el voluntario para las empresas arriesgadas y difíciles, las fuerzas de choque o de asalto.

They were elected soldiers, the most representative of the Spanish race, firm in battle, agile and decisive in maneuvering, their valor is unparalleled in the history of the world [...] the elected soldier will always be an Almogavar, the volunteer for the risky and difficult tasks, the shock and assault forces.

Here the narrative plays the same role as that of the newspaper-pile montage employed at other points in the film. The film is collapsing very different instances of soldiers and warriors throughout Iberian history into one archetype to be employed for the purposes of providing a model of ideal masculine conduct. Franco does not take the pains in his narrative to explain that the soldiers of Aragon could not possibly be coherent representatives of a nationally imagined Spanish race, because such a figure would be a blatant anachronism, but rather his father narrates the tale with such ease and by conveying such an air of authority that it does not seem necessary for him to justify his historical incoherence.

The father, Pedro Churruca, will also go on to repeat “history” when under fire at sea during Spain’s last stand in the Spanish American War. He, too, encourages his men to attack and raise the flag in an impossible fight when defeat is imminent. He provides a model in his own actions that dutifully follows the models of the stories he has already shared with the film audience and his children. For his boys, in order to grow up and become good soldier-men, must be ready to sacrifice themselves for Spain just like their father and ancestors before them. Other

examples of willing readiness, self-sacrifice, and defiance in the face of death in the film include José's preference to face the firing squad (from which he miraculously escapes alive) rather than support the Republican cause in a court of law. The doctor who helps him recover from his bullet wounds also does so at great personal risk, in an attempt to cleanse himself of his past *izquierdismo* (leftism). Even the backward brother, Pedro, eventually comes around to the nationalist cause, defiantly proclaiming fascist moral superiority after admitting to helping them win a battle, and thereby securing his own death at the hands of the Republicans. But no character has been a better student of this specific brand of history than Alfredo Mayo's José, the proud and triumphant warrior who survives the Civil War, helping to bring about the fascist victory. His own son watches him march proudly in the celebratory parade, which his mother tells him can only be described as "*raza*."

There is no indication that Mayo's character, Paco, in *La caza* has had such an outstanding war career as *Raza*'s José, but *La caza* is the story of any small group of friends who emerged alive as victors on the fascist side of the Spanish Civil War. The first remarkable difference between these war "heroes" and those from Sáenz de Heredia's film, is that they do not at all possess such a clear and easy relationship with history. In fact, there largely pervades a pact of silence between Paco, José, and Luis regarding their war days and the suicide of their friend Arturo. This suicide is alluded to several times during the film, but never fully explained. Perhaps they maintain this silence because Paco's young nephew Enrique is present during the hunt and they do not want to betray their group's intimacy, but it seems more likely that there is something unpleasant about this past that haunts them— it is a subject matter they would rather avoid. The ghostly void of the past is first evoked by the setting of the hunt, a battlefield from the war. Luis says at one point, "aquí murió mucha gente [...] ahora solo quedan los agujeros."

(many people died here [...] now there are only holes.) This setting, along with the war rifle that Luis uses for the hunt, and the skeleton of the war casualty found in the local cave by José, all reinforce the rabbit hunt as a metaphor for the war they once participated in. These inconvenient remains point to the void of the gang's military past that the young Enrique will attempt, mostly unsuccessfully, to learn something about.

The film's didactical turn, if it has one, does not promote Paco, or any other soldier, for that matter, as a heroic example for the young Enrique. Rather, what the youth slowly learns through the course of the film is precisely that he should not too easily fall into the trap of worshipping his uncle as a hero. Luis informs the boy at one point that he does not know Paco as well as he does, thereby implying that he should not assume what he thinks about Paco is true. Luis also explains that everyone needs to get ahead in the world and that we all depend on other people to help us do that—thereby implying that Paco is dependent on the generosity of the boy's father and not thriving by virtue of his own merits alone. In this way, the deliberately unraveling personal histories of the protagonists work to slowly undermine the official history of the character of the protagonists of the fascist victory as it was portrayed by the earlier collaborationist films, such as *Raza*. *La caza* does not end its challenge to the masculine ideals proposed by *Raza* with its critique of the film's tidy understanding of history, however. It extends its challenge much further to expose the inevitable result of the fascist “rules of engagement” for violence, the myth of the super-endowed male, and notion of a unified, transcendent future for the body politic.

If the incident between the children in *Raza*, involving the bird, serves as a lesson regarding the proper outlets for violence and domination—while it reinforces the establishment of the hierarchy of masculine domination—the animals present in *La caza* are doing very different

types of work. The bird in *Raza* was associated uniquely with the children who were fighting over it, and the mother who made the young boy set it free. But the animals in Saura's film cross this rigidly defined border of association and become signifiers that attach themselves closely to the male protagonists of the film, thereby disturbing divide between animals and humans.

At the beginning of *La caza*, Saura does a close-up on a cage of ferrets owned by the groundskeeper's mother. She explains to José that the ferrets are always anxious, "se pasan el día gruñendo y removiéndose sin parar ... están como locos y alguno se va a escapar." (they are whirring and scurrying about all day without end ... they are acting crazy and one of them is going to escape.) The ferret cage, the container that keeps them enclosed in a tight and stifling space, will later become an unmistakable visual reference for the framing of Saura's close-ups on his protagonists, Paco and José. Like the ferrets, Paco and José start to go crazy and, recognizing their own vulnerability, they attempt to discursively cast animality onto others. The easiest victim of this recasting is the disabled hunting groundskeeper Juan, who has a limp. "El cojo tiene cara de hurón," (the gimp has a face like a ferret,) Paco says. Women are also victims of this animalization. They degrade them by saying that they act like piranhas and, similarly, have the faces of vampire ferrets. But, ultimately, these echo the words of the sickly old lady describing the ferrets to describe their *own* subjective positions. José says at one point, when he realizes that Paco is not going to help him financially and he begins to suffer from the delirium of the heat, "Nos estamos asando vivos aquí encerrados." ("we are grilling ourselves alive here locked up"). This reference back to the ferrets foreshadows that the men are at risk of attacking one another, like the ferrets are prone to do. It further blurs the line between man and animal in the film.

While it is clear that the war friends are the masters of the hierarchy of characters in the film—including the children, Enrique and Carmen, and the disabled groundskeeper Juan, and his mother—the disturbance of the boundary between man and animal in the narrative betrays that the violence of these men cannot be contained neatly between themselves, or their war enemies, or the rabbits they are chasing after. Rather, a warning is sent out that this violence is messy and unpredictable. When the boundaries between man and animal begin to erode for our heroes, the comforting distinctions between self and other, friend and enemy, masculine and failed masculinity, erode as well.

This danger, the realization that man attacking animal is not so easily or quickly distinguishable from man attacking man, becomes most poignant when Paco shoots and kills one of Juan's ferrets as it helps them chase the rabbits out from the holes they hide in. It is clear that Paco intentionally murders the ferret, both to exert his dominance over Juan (at this point we know that Paco is a credible threat to humans in addition to animals), and to express his uncomfortable reception of the presence of Juan's disability. Juan's "limp" threatens his own sense of manhood as it is defined by his own— and his nation's— fantasy of bodily integrity. As Faulkner points out, he is seen at various points in the film looking in the mirror and disapprovingly taking in the sight of his own aging body (466). In addition to verbally degrading Juan during the hunt because of his walk, Paco prophetically proclaims, in reaction to the physical irregularity: "Prefiero morirme antes de quedarme cojo o manco." (I'd rather die than be lame or a cripple.) He later imagines that if he were to step in a rabbit trap he would have a limp like Juan, who, he conjectures, must eat diseased rabbits. The disabled body cannot be a male body in this fascist cultural paradigm, and if maleness, vitality incarnate, is not attainable, then why go on living?

The rabbits of the hunt represent yet another instance of a blurring between the man/animal binary. After all, because of the geographical context of the battlefield, the men's hunt for rabbits is immediately a reference back to their previous battles with the Republicans in the Civil War. They were charged with exterminating them as well. Furthermore, the figure of the rabbit, and the myxomatosis that the species is suffering from,<sup>43</sup> becomes a recurring matter of discussion and debate for the hunters during the film. It is important to note that the disease is not only "natural," but a eugenics project. It is a human-inflicted form of population control. First, they have a discussion about the merits of the choice of the rabbit as an object of the hunt. Luis claims that the rabbit is a defenseless creature that is not hard to hunt, but Paco insists that the weak and "*parados*" have no business living. Luis later goes on to suggest that "Por eso, alguien ha dicho que la mejor caza es la caza del hombre." (For that reason, some people have said that the best hunt is the hunt of man.) His suggestion both gestures to *Raza*'s construction of war as a noble enterprise while it undermines the fascist claim to only enact violence and force suffering upon "manly equals." The willingness of Paco to destroy the weak (animals or humans), and the way in which he closely associates Juan with the ferrets—just as the film visually aligns Juan's mother and Carmen with the ferrets, pigs, and donkey—destroys the illusion that the victors of the Civil War are only violent in combating vital masculine threats to the political order. Indeed, gender exposes itself as an insufficient line upon which friendly and enemy lines are drawn.

Similarly, while *Raza* positions women on a pedestal as the prizes of their husbands, conveyors of political ideology, and agents in the war for the fascist cause, the treatment of women in *La caza* undermines the fascist rhetoric of the exaltation of woman. In addition to their being verbally made-animal—into ferrets and piranhas—they are clearly cast into the

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<sup>43</sup> The disease is described as a manmade import from France.

thankless role of the object of the male gaze and, subsequently, male violence in the film. José and Luis are suffering marital strife when the story begins and they are quick to talk about the impossibility of man coexisting with woman. This initial vocalization of frustration with the opposite sex provides a glimpse of the lashing out against them to come. After the grandmother tells José that Carmen needs to come inside to feed the ferrets, we find her outside, feeding the pigs, where she is subject to Enrique's gaze, before becoming one of the subjects he shoots with his camera. This gazing, between children and through the lens of a camera, appears to be innocent enough, and perhaps this framing has something to do with the possibilities associated with their youth and their mutual curiosity for one another. But the use of Carmen as a subject for Enrique's photography is reoriented through their perusal of soft-core porn magazines. Then it is cast into the form of a female mannequin, which is brought back to the campsite by Luis for use as target practice with photos of women on it. As Marsha Kinder first noted, woman ceases to be shot through a camera and becomes targeted through the scope of a rifle.<sup>44</sup> The rapid descent from youthful observation and play to brutal violence being enacted upon the photographs of nude women and the likeness of the female body in the mannequin serves to undermine the myth of the veneration of women that is supposed to accompany the Spanish hero.

The logic of fascist masculinity as it is constructed and portrayed by the film *Raza* involves a strict demarcation of a body of men that can be easily distinguished from those who do not share what Roberto Esposito might describe as a fascist masculine *munus*. This *munus* might be thought of as including the male sex, bodily integrity and strength, imperialist and

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<sup>44</sup> Kinder eloquently describes the correlation between the male gaze and violence in the film in the following manner: "The close-up also specularizes the violence by marking the victim as the object of the look— not only the ferrets but the targeted rabbit who is first seen in extreme close-up and Juan's young niece Carmen who is the object of Enrique's erotic gaze. Although Enrique is less experienced with a gun than the older men, he still controls the gaze through his camera and binoculars, which (D'Lugo argues) help establish him as spectator-in-the-text and the key witness to the final shootout" (161).

nationalist political ideology, and a normative sexuality. While *Raza* clearly establishes a territory for men that is discrete from that of women, children, the elderly, the sick, and animals, *La caza* problematizes all of these neat binary divisions and throws them back at the figure of the retired male soldier. The failure of Paco and his friends as men and soldiers challenges the underlying fascist ideology that dominates his culture. It does this through its descent into (broader) violence, where violence is supposed to be contained against Republicans and other men in the collaborationist cinema. In Saura's film man is animal, the body of man is fragile, and man is not a gentleman. There is no honor. Soldiers are not noble figures with transcendent histories, they are dangerous killers. The immunizing mechanisms of communities that Esposito describes, as eliminating that which is not shared in common by the body of men, is exposed in its Spanish Francoist manifestations in *La caza* for the violence that it enacts upon those who are excluded from the male body. But men themselves are not excluded from the logics and the oppression of the processes of immunization in Saura's film. On the contrary, they are subject to the violence of immunization themselves. Therefore the film destabilizes the romantic notions of male friendship and individual heroism put forth by Sáenz de Heredia's film. It undermines the fantasy of the *superdotado*.

In *Raza*, soldiers sing about their love for one other, and their love of war, and Spain, while literally holding each other in their arms. They also tease—in song—about how they would rather be fighting other men than fighting with their wives and mother-in-laws. The embittered friends in *La caza* take their performances of this group logic (praise of violence, masculine communal fusion, and depreciation of women) to its hyperbolic ends, assaulting women as they pursue masculine camaraderie and sportsmanship. The destructive potential of this programming, or this set of embodied cultural beliefs, rears its ugly head when friendships turn

sour. Their massacre of each other does not originate externally, due to a dispute or problem between the group of friends, however. Rather, the problem—the impetus for brutal violence towards those identified as “friends” in the film—begins with an animosity and revolt that the men have for *themselves*. José confirms this observation when he rhetorically asks himself, after the camera takes a photo of the group in their pitiful “trophy” pose with the rabbits they have captured, if “maybe they all have the myxomatosis.” He goes on to express his disdain for Paco, whom he thinks has managed to maintain his manly figure, even though Paco will later express disdain for his own appearance and ageing while looking in the mirror. The camera has snapped a picture of the victors of the Civil War, and what we see is not pretty. We are alerted that there is an intrinsic problem at play from the ugliness of the photography and cinematography.

José’s concern that he might be infected with the myxomatosis, like Paco’s fear of becoming lame, is not a random effect of the sun. They are reverberations of the brutal fascist disdain for communists, those who are constructed as weak, and those gendered as non-men, or non-human, internalized and cast back upon the “heroes” themselves. The regime-imposed immunizing mechanism that served to justify violence against those defined as enemies in the war reveals itself as incapable of maintaining that binary divide between outside and inside in Saura’s film. The logical consequence of such an ideological charge is self-destruction: starting as violence directed towards those easily identified as others, and moving towards the group of friends who begin to annihilate each other in order to destroy what they hate about themselves. What Marisol sees in the triumphant parade at the end of Sáenz de Heredia’s film she tells her son can only be described as *raza*. Carlos Saura’s *La caza* exposes *Raza*’s inner workings and redefines them twenty years later: as fascist contagion—myxomatosis and (self)-destruction.

Thirty years after the start of the Spanish Civil War, *La caza* engages with potential scenarios depicting the aftermath of the pedagogical project of fascist masculinity undertaken by the Francoist state. The film is clearly displaying the possible consequences of such a project, carried out to its extreme logical conclusion, as violently disastrous. But it is less sure of the ability of future generations to escape such dangerous cultural logics. This is evidenced by its freeze-frame, trapping the youth who was witness to the bloodbath. What has he learned? What can he do to escape the same fate? There are no answers to these questions. What they show, though, is that the masculinist, pedagogical, and “eugenic” project—outlined Ernesto Giménez Caballero and Antonio Vallejo-Nágera, and promoted in the cultural production of the state—resonated through thirty years of Spanish history. Saura is not the only artist to explore the human ramifications of such a *bad education*. While he worked to expose its ugly contradictions and inherent violent logics, others would demonstrate how it could be subverted, ignored, and perverted by those it was supposed to teach.

## Chapter II

### **The Homosexual Child as Antisocial Monster in (Post)Francoist Cultural Production**

Over thirty years after the end of the Spanish Civil War, the homosexual child emerged in peninsular cultural production as an interrogation of the indoctrinating apparatuses of the Franco regime and the cult of heroic masculinity. To the present day, many films and narratives probing the human trauma of the war, and the ensuing state violence in both its brutal and ideological variants under National Catholicism, center themselves on young men who desire other boys. These protohomosexual children are monstrosly constructed as potential disruptions of the good functioning of the body politic for Francoist Spain. The menacing flow of their social negativity is bound up in ambivalent relationships with homosocial and state pedagogical discourses regulating youth. Narratives of protohomosexual childhood allow for the imaginary re-staging of first encounters between inexperienced boys and specific discursive social imperatives for becoming a man. Some eschew social legitimacy and legibility by violating homosocial norms in the pursuit of their bodily desires, until their entire identities are consumed by their sexual difference. Others learn from violations of the masculine code and channel their now-disciplined desires in accordance with stringent social constraints. Most of the stories portray a process of education about the management of homosexual desire within a phobic social order that the boys precariously navigate through adulthood. Along the way, they face difficult decisions regarding public solidarity with other marginal subjects, or the treacherous pursuit of power that is always won at the cost of defeating others in an unjust state. The recovery of the queer Spanish child of

the *posguerra*, through narrative and film, represents an intervention against traces of fascist and homophobic ideologies across interwoven temporalities. State fascism is not the only target of its critique, however, but also the potential fascism latent in the individually narrated protohomosexual subject—or the subject’s terms of engagement with a heterosexist, macho, and fascist society. Perverse child monsters from the past collectively offer morality tales for new politics and pedagogies of being different together in the present.

Some critical attention has been paid to representations of especially the female child as an important locus in the post-war novel, and there is a growing body of work dedicated to the study of queer themes, artists, writers, and filmmakers from Spain. Among this scholarship, however, portrayals of queer youth have evaded extensive study. In his 1997 book, *The Hispanic Homograph*, Robert Richmond Ellis considers the childhoods of authors Juan Goytisolo and Terenci Moix— as narrated in their respective autobiographies—as examples of what Lee Edelman calls homographesis: that is, the antagonistic processes by which society engraves stigma and difference onto the bodies of homosexual subjects, and strategies of reading and writing through which artists “de-scrib[e] the identities that order has so oppressively inscribed” (10). Ellis, Paul Julian Smith, and Alfredo Martínez-Exposito all acknowledge the strong anti-identitarian impulses of these writers, and others, that reflect a broader resistance to gay identity that dominated Spanish epistemological approaches towards homosexuality until very recently. But they stop short of locating youth, and its education, as allegorical vessels through which currents of disidentification and dissent from the ruling order of the state and its heroic masculinity are conveyed in these narratives. In order to de-scribe such an identity, laden with sexual and political consequences—one imposed by state power, stereotypes, religion, science, and history—a radical revisiting of the site of foundational learning is necessary in order

to attempt to undo, or at least rigorously question, the formational work that has been done. Such a reflection can be found in the novels and autobiography of Juan Goytisolo, and films by Pedro Almodóvar and Agustí Villaronga.

Another exception to the general silence surrounding the prevalent representations of homosexual children is Gema Pérez-Sánchez's analysis of Ana María Moix's 1968 novel, *Julia*, in *Queer Transitions in Contemporary Spanish Culture*. Silence is the space that Pérez-Sánchez excavates as a site rich with lesbian desire, accessible only to the reader who "understands"/*entiende* how to read the relation of Julia's youthful experiences. The problem of knowing vs. not-knowing how to identify lesbian desire in the text parallels the relentless and violent gender pedagogy of learning to become woman that Julia must face at home in its narration. Pérez-Sánchez identifies the queer valences of the *mala educación* or "miseducation" imparted to Julia by her anarchist grandfather, Don Julio, against the grain of her traditionalist milieu (52, 58). But, ultimately, the protagonist's impulses towards educational anarchy and a "masculine" mastery of Latin cede to her paralyzing nightmares of infantilization and silence at the hand of her repressive family.

Silence predominates here, Pérez-Sánchez suggests, due to an utter social disregard for and ignorance of lesbianism in 1960s and 1970s Spain. If male homosexuality was the love that dare not speak its name, under penalty of detention and rehabilitation—first under the *Ley relativa a Vagos y Maleantes* (Law of Vagrants and Thugs) revised under the Franco regime in 1954 to specifically include homosexuals, and recodified and reinforced in 1970 as *La Ley de Peligrosidad y Rehabilitación Social* (24-28) (Law of Social Danger and Rehabilitation)<sup>45</sup>—then

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<sup>45</sup> The original *Ley relativa a Vagos y Maleantes* was enacted under the Second Republic on August 4, 1933, and did not include "homosexuality as a dangerous state," until its Francoist revision on July 14, 1954 (25).

lesbian desire was not predominantly recognized by the state as having any existence. Using the scholarship of Alberto Mira, Pérez-Sánchez explains that:

out of the total four thousand official cases opened up in Spain throughout the active life of the Law of Social Danger and Rehabilitation (the actual, unofficial number of detainees and registered homosexuals reached fifty thousand), only two of the detainees were women. Unable to conceive of female sexual pleasure independent of male heterosexual pleasure, lesbianism was erased from the sexual horizon of late Francoism. (33)

The absence of lesbianism from the cultural consciousness of Francoism allowed for Ana María Moix to communicate female homosexual desire through silences in her text right under the nose of the state censors. Julia suffered from a remorseless heterosexist pedagogy of womanhood while demonstrating a great aptitude for a kind of learning that posed a threat to the logic of patriarchy. Ultimately, it is her subject position as woman in the Franco regime that limits her ability to wield queer learning and lesbian desire as a threat—for it is not legally recognized as such—and constrains it to tortured silence.

*La mala educación*, miseducation, or bad education, is a recurrent theme from post-war narrative that extends itself across decades of artistic reflections on the Civil War and the Franco Regime. As a conductor of tensions about being and becoming under the many disciplining pedagogical institutions of the state, its ambivalent formational permutations are most fully apprehended through portrayals of queer boys. For Spanish cultural production—at least, I would submit, in the abundant literature and cinema from the Francoist opposition—*la mala educación* can be conceived as a rubric for signaling a negative value judgment on the traditionalist education imposed on all students by the state. It is, in the first instance, merely a descriptor for

a traditional, Catholic, and imperial institutional educational apparatus. Fulfilling the other sense of the term in Spanish, it simultaneously represents an instantiation of misbehavior that defies a hegemonic norm and threatens to come to define the perpetrator's identity. Innocently enough, repeated bad behavior, or *mala educación*, begets the *mal educado*. But in its more sinister translation to sexual politics, the initiatory premodern act of sodomy threatens to beget the modern sodomite, invert, homosexual, or *maricón*. In the context of narrative opposed to the Franco regime, educational deformation is often celebrated, but it is the site of an intense ambivalence as is evidenced by its frequent artistic resurgence. Miseducation, perhaps predictably so, is the binary antagonist that does not easily detach itself from education outright.

Queer studies, with its strong investments in deviance, provides a few rubrics for thinking through this nexus of pedagogy, becoming, dynamics of power, and their relations with sexuality. David Halperin, for example, proposes “Deviant Teaching” as a heuristic for discussing the radical threat of intellectual, personal, sexual, and subjective transformation posed by educators of the western canon, from Socrates to George Stevens's *Shane*, to the state's impressionable young. All teaching threatens to degenerate into deviant teaching, following his argument, but not necessarily due to the menace of sexual contact:

I want to argue that it is not the possibility of sex at the scene of instruction that is necessarily anxiogenic in and of itself. ... In certain traditions, after all, the attraction of the male teacher to the male student has been considered a potential advantage as well as a potential danger ... If, then, sex turns out to be a perennial focus of anxiety in the paedagogic *imaginaire*, that is because it serves to materialize, to condense, and to express the larger, generalized, free-floating anxieties about deviant teaching that in many traditional cultures cluster around

the male education of boys and that reflect the structural tension between the family's or the in-group's proprietary claims on each boy and the rival claims on him by men belonging to an out-group whose intervention in his upbringing is required for the successful reproduction and transmission of masculinity across generations. I'll go on to speculate that such anxieties about deviant teaching come to single out the issue of sex and to focus obsessively on it in particular when the initiation of boys into manhood takes place within a specifically heterosexual and heteronormative society. (155)

The reproduction of masculinity, with all of its performative mandates, political commitments, normative sexual requirements, and rights of passage, cannot merely take place in the home at the site of the family, but must be achieved in the public sphere—the domain of men. Teachers, or initiators, are suspect, though, following Halperin, because their motivation for overseeing the pedagogical process does not emanate from mere kinship with the child. And their methods, however orthodox, require a dangerous play of seduction to induce gendered mimesis. Halperin explains, “The problem of male initiation in heterosexual and heteronormative culture is getting boys to desire masculinity without also desiring men—or without desiring men too much, too long, in the wrong way, or for the wrong reasons” (164).

Becoming a man requires desiring to be a man, which is uncomfortably close to desiring men. Therein lays, in a heteronormative society, the injunction of the closet, and the imposition of heterosexual/homosexual opposition rigorously guarded by practices of policing, secrecy, disclosure, and exposure. Eve Sedgwick hypothesizes, in *Epistemology of the Closet*, “that a whole cluster of the most crucial sites for contestation of meaning in twentieth-century Western culture are consequentially and quite indelibly marked with the historical specificity of

homosocial/homosexual definition ... For any modern question of sexuality, knowledge/ignorance is more than merely one in a metonymic chain of such binarisms” (72-3). The consequences of such binary overlappings make coming to knowledge in modernity—the new education of the forbidden fruit—susceptible to being synonymous with an understanding of the demarcations between heterosexual and homosexual definition.

But homosexual definition, itself, is a slippery term consisting of its own binary set of designations. Sedgwick famously signals the inherent incoherence of homosexual definition as such:

It holds the minoritizing view that there is a distinct population of persons who ‘really are’ gay; at the same time, it holds the universalizing views that sexual desire is an unpredictably powerful solvent of stable identities; that apparently heterosexual persons and object choices are strongly marked by same-sex influences and desires, and vice versa for apparently homosexual ones; and that at least male heterosexual identity and modern masculinist culture may require for their maintenance the scapegoating crystallization of a same-sex male desire that is widespread and in the first place internal. (85)

The scapegoating of homosexual desire, effeminacy, or deviance signaled by Sedgwick is a proper learned behavior that generates performances of heterosexual masculinity through the policing of ones own gendered performances and that of others. It betrays to what extent a successful masculinity is contingent upon the outperforming and domination of other men. Miseducation, in this paradigm, is a failure on the part of the “universal male subject” to engage in purely homosocial behavior with other men—falling into the treacherous domain of homosexuality. Yielding to seductions inviting unacceptable sexual practices, ways of being

gendered, or just good old-fashioned misbehavior—and the necessary corollary of getting caught “in the act” of them—threatens the male subject’s belonging to the body of men and represents an act of miseducation on his behalf. Sexual deviance can be taught, or learned, and reinforced with practice. That is, after all, how you get to Carnegie Hall. The policing of bad education, or homosocial misfiring, betrays a set of anxieties about belonging to a national community whose investments in the construction of the child as a sexual subject cannot be underemphasized. Sexual perversity and deviance are easily cast as treasonous behavior against the body politic, or the community of men. Much is at stake in the enforcement of both a way of teaching and a manner of learning that perform the universal–homosocial–requirements of manhood while evading deviant minoritizing practices and their accompanying stigma.

Kathryn Bond Stockton provides a model for thinking through the question of temporality in relationship to narrations of homosexual youth in *The Queer Child*. Considering artistic and political discourses surrounding children, and what she calls the protogay child in Anglo-American cultures, she writes:

In this concept “protogay” I see a host of unexplored temporalities, theories of metaphor, moving suspensions, shadows of growth, and oddly *anti*-identity forms of reaching toward “gay,” all of which are waiting to be investigated. [...] Since they are “gay children” only after childhood, they never “are” what they latently “were.” Obviously, then, I deem children’s protogayness a bold and material commentary on Derrida’s notion of delay. [...] here I suggest that the ghostly gay child, to use Derrida’s words, “makes us concerned not with horizons of modified...presents, but with a ‘past’ that has never been present, and which

never will be, whose future to come will never be a production or a reproduction in the form of presence.” (14-15)

In her project, Stockton reads all children queerly, contending that they grow “sideways,” rather than upwardly, and her notion of the “protogay” child serves to specifically delineate those who demonstrate some hints of same-sex desire from other children. “Homosexual,” however, is the more suitable term for a discussion of Goytisolo, Almodóvar, and Villaronga, given their consistent resistance to gay identity. Delay is the space inhabited by representations of protohomosexual youth. It affords an opportunity to reread a childhood, or an imagined past, through the lens of a recognition of the inevitability of undercurrents of homosexual desire and a deviant subject position. Fantasies and memories of pivotal life experiences, teachable moments, and habit formation intertwine in the narration of becoming-subject within the confines of the pedagogy of the Francoist state. This is where bad education can be located, rethought, and theorized in its narration by the contemporary homosexual Spanish artist.

While Stockton’s queer youth are “reaching toward gay,” Lee Edelman famously and rigorously opposes queerness to the child. In *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* he demonstrates how representations of the child are mobilized by political discourses seeking to reify the future of the body politic, or—in his own words—he reveals reproductive futurism’s dependence on the child. What is queer, on the other hand, is that which is always accelerating towards social dissolution, negativity, or the death drive. As such politically saturated terms with polarized meanings, queer and child are incommensurable. Edelman succinctly summarizes his argument, acknowledging, “Indeed, at the heart of my polemical engagement with the cultural text of politics and the politics of cultural texts lies a simple provocation: that *queerness* names the side of those not ‘fighting for the children,’ the side outside the consensus by which

all politics confirms the absolute value of reproductive futurism (3). Rather than “reach towards gay” from a phantom past, like Stockton’s protogay child, Edelman’s child is definitionally opposed to all that is queer.

In his upcoming work, *Bad Education: Queerness and Radical Evil*, Edelman will elaborate that the child either stands resolutely distinct from the homosexual in the symbolic order, or it risks embracing the bad education offered by queerness: compulsion to disorder, negation, and nothingness.

It follows that queerness, as the figure of such a radical unbecoming, maintains an indissociable link to the logic of education. Queerness, wherever it shows itself, can’t help being pedagogical; it refutes, by its mere appearance, the coherent “reality” that cedes it no place. Or rather, that gives it the place of the null: the place, that is, of what nullifies. (3)

If embraced, queerness pushes away at the social order and leaves behind universal heterosexual male subjectivity for its alternative, which Edelman posits as nothing. But minority identities have been cultivated over one century of homosexuality, and when a subject with homosexual desires has declined or not been afforded access to other organizational clusters of identity then positions of critique, dissent, marginality, or secrecy have frequently provided alternatives to real (if not social) death. The genius of Edelman’s work is the identification of the risks and stakes inherent in the relationship of the child with learning, bad education, and queerness. Beyond the hegemonic symbolic death to which the queer is condemned, though, and the binary pair of queer and child, exists the underbelly of sexual respectability, marginalized, hidden identities, and shifting positionalities which all threaten dominance in the learning process. Will homosexuality or homosociality prevail in the youth, a universal model of manhood or its black

sheep minoritized evil twin? Following Stockton's consideration of the queer *as* child, in dialogue with Edelman's astute evaluation of the politics of representations of the child and the queer should provide tools for an analysis of representations of protohomosexual youth in their first encounters with sexual dissidence.

In the early 1960s, a slow but strengthening wave of novels treating the subjects of youth, homosexuality, and the stakes of this kind of bad education emerges in Spanish literature. It will pick up speed and break after the dictator's death in 1975 into an accelerated frenzy of cultural production dealing with the young and homosexuality. The censorship of these texts by the Francoist regime, and even for a period after his death testifies to their perception as threats to the state. Among the narratives, works by Juan Goytisolo stand out for the ways in which they reflect back onto earlier periods of Francoism that coincide with the authors' youth, to recover the stories of young protohomosexual boys whose miseducation stands in defiant resistance to late Francoism. Decades later, after the Transition, filmmakers Pedro Almodóvar and Agustí Villaronga will similarly look back to incorrigible prothomosexual youth under Francoism from contemporary Spanish democracy to make artistic, political, and personal interventions through a reflection on bad learning within their works.

Queer youth may often be constructed monstrously, and symbolically accelerated towards dissolution because of such negativity. But the narrative material from Spain suggests that their negativity is succinctly bound up with the traditionalist order of Franco's National Catholic education. Their desire is for that order's destruction, and the management of their sexual desires and object choices takes place within a competing set of social scripts that they must learn to navigate. Pushing away at the social order, their narration participates in a project

of critique and a potential building of a community of difference in its temporal delay. A few case studies of such narratives will demonstrate this point.

In *Señas de identidad (Signs of Identity)* [1966], the memory of the prothomosexual child, Álvaro, returns during the exiled adult narrator's visit to his hometown in Catalunya while perusing a family photo album. *Señas* is the first novel in Juan Goytisolo's Álvaro Mendiola trilogy, which includes *Reivindicación del conde don Julian (The Vindication of Count Julian)* [1970], and *Juan sin tierra (Juan Lackland)* [1975].<sup>46</sup> The narrator's exile in France, his Catalan origins, and the story of his family point to autobiographical elements of Goytisolo's life, but the novel makes no claims to autobiography. As fiction it only makes a claim to socio-cultural relevance: "Los personajes y sucesos de esta novela son producto de la imaginación del autor. Sólo es real la geografía física, política y humana de los lugares en que se mueven" ("The characters and events of this novel are a product of the imagination of the author. Only the physical, political, and human geography of the places in which they move are real") [8]. Even though the child portrayed in the novel is not Goytisolo himself, the distance between author and narrated child is kept short by scenarios evocative of the author's past, and the claim to contextual realism is bolstered by passages from his later autobiography. Indeed, Goytisolo will later approach autobiography as another fictional genre aimed at a narrative reconstruction of the past. Locating and undoing the markings, or signs, that are the product of the "physical, political, and human geography" of post-war Cataluña is the fictional project of the Mendiola trilogy. Such a project can be conceived as a master's thesis for a bad education that sets out to deconstruct years of state pedagogical programming.

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<sup>46</sup> A plethora of good and important work on Juan Goytisolo has been written. See, among them, *Understanding Juan Goytisolo* by Randolph Pope, *Cultura herida: literature y cine en la España democrática* by Cristina Moreiras Menor, *Significant Violence: Oppression and Resistance in the Narratives of Juan Goytisolo* by Brad Epps, *Juan Goytisolo the Case for Chaos* by Abigail Lee Six, and *Juan Goytisolo the Author as Dissident* by Alison Ribeiro de Menezes.

Álvaro travels back through his memory to young Alvarito and the stories he was told about his great grandfather, a slave and plantation owner in colonial Cuba, evoked by a photo album. He is also haunted by memories of life during the Civil War, when his father was killed by Republican forces. His thoughts then drift on to his youth during the post-war era. Mozart's *Requiem* is spinning on the record player as he browses through the album and he notices that the pictures of his mother's side of the family, who sympathized with leftist politics, have all been removed from the family history. In *Camera Lucida* Roland Barthes explores and develops the links between photography and death, and therefore suggests how photography might have haunting properties, in his formulation of its essence as that which "That-has-been" (77). The photograph captures a moment in time that is lost to history—it memorializes an instant that has already passed once the photograph is viewed. Specifically referring to situations in which there has been a great trauma inflicted upon a certain society, Ross Chambers formulates, in *Untimely Interventions*, that:

Aftermath cultures, though, are melancholic in character; in them, mourning can never really be complete for the reason that trauma, although it has happened and has the status of a historical event, is never over. And we know that years later, rummaging in a little used drawer or prowling the attic, we can come upon an object—some trinket, perhaps—that reminds us of the person who died, and be reminded—overcome with unexpected, and unexpectedly strong, emotion. (xxix)

Already endowed with a haunting property of delay and untimeliness by virtue of its containing photographs, the Mendiola family album constitutes an especially rich object that acutely pulls the protagonist, and, consequently, the reader, back to the site of a national and personal trauma.

The family album brings back traumas, and not trauma, because Goytisolo does not identify the Civil War as the unique site of violence and trauma in national history as it relates to the family history of his protagonist. The image of the great-grandfather, the successful model of masculinity, “ejemplar y dominante,” (19) (exemplary and dominant,) the slave and plantation owner, is signaled out as Álvaro’s first impossible role-model. (This description aligns itself closely with one of Goytisolo’s own great-grandfather). Álvaro later goes on to debunk the mythology of his ancestor as a gracious and loved slave-owner by recounting the official version of the story of how he lost his plantation and authority over his slaves—who lamented the loss of such a benevolent master—and then declaiming it as false (428-430). Cristina Moreiras discusses the ethics of Goytisolo’s relationship to mourning and the past in his autobiographical works and fiction, writing, “Duelo, para Goytisolo, es entonces la posibilidad de llegar al silencio y, desde él, a la promesa de futuro en la medida en que éste recoge las memorias de los desaparecidos y las transforma en narrativas” (165). (Mourning, for Goytisolo, is then the possibility of arriving at silence, and, from it, to the promise of a future to the extent that this future recovers the memories of the disappeared and transforms them into narratives.) Just as the official discourse concerning the family slaves is debunked and silenced by Goytisolo to entertain other narrative possibilities, so too are discourses surrounding the proper roles of children and the education of the child during the Civil War and post-war periods.

Kathryn Bond Stockton claims that the work of Henry James “reveals how the budding intellectual is a masochistic child. This is someone whose verbal delights attach themselves to talk of pain and whose masochism, even more remarkably, leans on the masochism of a pedagogue whom he loves, pursues, and admires” (63). Stockton explores masochism as a framework for thinking through childhood sexuality because it is generally non-penetrative and

may represent, for contemporary Western Culture, a space where children play with and explore erotic impulses. Young Álvaro, too, delights in appropriating the discipline enforced upon him and extends it beyond its intended purpose to suit his own fantasies of self disruption that make way to a glorified self. He thinks torture and persecution will bring him fame and renown because he will become a Saint and a Martyr of the church. In his brief quest to die for Christendom, Álvaro demonstrates how what is supposed to be “good education” can be received, interpreted, and repurposed by children “badly.”

When Álvaro encounters a photograph of his caretaker, Señorita Lourdes, in the album—with an unidentifiable book in her hand—he immediately associates it with a book that she used to discuss with him. Undoubtedly a bedtime nursery school classic, it was a book of *Historias de niños mártires* (23). (*Stories of Child Martyrs*.) Álvaro recalls being overwhelmed with emotion as Señorita Lourdes reads to him about burned, mutilated, and tortured children who remain constant in their resolve to affirm Christ in the face of pagan rulers. There is a very clear-cut ideological and didactical purpose for the book. Unwavering youth are the most vehemently promising symbol of the future of the Christian body of believers. But young Álvaro reads too far into these episodes, and he becomes perversely over-engaged in the material:

Mediocre universo el tuyo, pensabas, de niño sano, consentido y ocioso, habitante de un mundo ordenado, sin riesgo ni posibilidad de heroísmo; aplastado por el peso de tantas criaturas tempranamente destinadas a la muerte y a la Gloria eterna ... sin advertir siquiera en tu vida ninguna de las señales premonitorias que, indefectiblemente, señalan a las almas piadosas la presencia de un ángel de Dios en el mundo y que, en el libro de lectura de la señorita Lourdes, solían manifestarse desde el nacimiento mismo del futuro santo: visitas celestiales,

apariciones del Niño Jesús entre dos jarrones de porcelana de Sèvres,  
persecuciones injustas, enfermedades dolorosas, salud frágil. (25)

Your universe is a mediocre one, you thought, of healthy, spoiled, and idle children, living in an ordered world, without risk or the possibility of heroism; flattened by the weight of so many young children destined to death and eternal Glory ... without even finding in your life any of the preminatory signs that, inevitably, signal to pious souls the presence of an angel of God in the world and that, in Miss Lourdes's book of readings, tended to manifest themselves from the very birth of the future saint: celestial visits, apparitions of the Baby Jesus between porcelain vases from Sèvres, unjust persecutions, painful sicknesses, and fragile health.

Álvaro is so affected by the lesson that he craves the oppression of the martyrs, the ecstasy of their determination from a position of metaphysical certainty, and, especially, the glory that is awarded to them for their saintly performances. He fixates on the life of the child martyr as a narrated act of glory. But he despairs his lack of in-group credentials. To be a good candidate for martyrdom he should be suffering, or at least marked for future glory. His comfortable bourgeois status weighs against his celestial prospects.

When the Civil War breaks out, young Álvaro sees in it the arrival of his moment to achieve the eternal fame of a child martyr. Thrilled to be suddenly thrown into a conflict that his nanny casts as being one between good and evil, he recognizes it as an opportunity for persecution. “El fabuloso mundo de las persecuciones y torturas, de los sayones que se encarnizaban como lobos sobre el cuerpo desnudo de las víctimas te había sumido en un mar de

dicha y zozobra, incrédulo tú aún ante el fulgor y magnitud del sueño tan presta e inesperadamente realizado” (28-9). (The fabulous world of persecutions and tortures, of executioners that materialized like wolves over the naked bodies of their victims had immersed you in a sea of bliss and anguish, you were still incredulous before the glow and magnitude of a dream so rapidly and unexpectedly realized.) The feverish devotion of Señorita Lourdes and her quickness to interpret the arrival of the war as a staging of the conflict between God and Satan render the arrival of the Republican Guard in his Barcelona neighborhood a theatrical event for young Álvaro. He now has an opportunity to star in his own “tale of child martyrs,” and he devises a plan with Señorita Lourdes for overcoming the secular armed forces.

They march together—dressed in white, holding relics, and chanting the names of Jesus and Maria—to a burning church guarded by anarchists, and proclaim that they want to enter it and pray. Álvaro admits that “Por el momento pensabas más en tu traza que en toda otra cosa, al acecho del instante grandioso en que la coronita ingrávida iba a volar sobre ti” (32). (For the moment you thought more about your semblance than anything else, in wait of the grand moment in which the weightless crown would fly over you.) Fame weighs most heavily on his mind. When the group of bemused anarchists refuses them access to the burning church, he desperately shouts that he is a martyr. Sent home, unharmed, by the “bad men,” Álvaro cannot help but interpret his failure to be tortured as a “Fracaso de tu carrera de santo en ciernes” (33). (a failure of your career as a saint in the making.) Note how Álvaro, the narrator, consistently refers to himself in the second person, doubling back on his own recounting of events and distancing himself from the protohomosexual child of the past. Shortly thereafter, he liberates himself from his “supersticioso y masoquista” (superstitious and masochistic) religious education thanks to the contradicting realities of life that he observes (34).

Hitching his fortunes to a career as a martyr, Álvaro is disappointed when he fails to follow the models provided to him by the likes of “Inés y Tarsicio, Pelayo y Pancraccio, Eulalia y Dominguito del Val” (32). The episode is illustrative of the ambivalence of bad education. His failure stems not primarily from his inability to perform some modeled behavior, but also from the anachronistic nature of the lesson. Fame, his underlying motivation, does not correspond with the requisite pious intentions of the saints. But the context of 1936 Barcelona was not one that would readily allow for his spectacular persecution according to the script that he had in mind. The pedagogue of the episode, Señorita Lourdes, is cast as a ridiculous mystic. She is fired by the family after risking the child’s life in such an irresponsible manner. Both child and teacher are at fault for being too literally invested in a narrative lesson that proves itself to be a fraud.

As Álvaro grows suspicious of other official narratives of history; when he begins to distrust the religious education being imposed on him, he becomes very interested in people and things that deviate from the norm. He admits that he comes to recognize this attribute in himself in hindsight, as the disillusioned returning visitor-in-exile. Nevertheless, he is compelled to think that there were moments in his childhood when he was drawn to what represented deviance from the traditionalist bourgeois mores that were taught to him. This thirst for deviance is foreshadowed by his semi-erotic worship of the sacrificed body found in his obsession with the child martyrs.<sup>47</sup> The most poignant episode of this youthful attraction to what was labeled as bad, and the one most saturated with implications for considerations of gender and sexuality, is found in his fascination with the farm hand at his uncle’s estate. Jerónimo is suspected by his aunt of being a maquis, or one of the members of the clandestine armed resistance to Franco.

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<sup>47</sup> Thanks to Juli Highfill for this observation.

From the moment his aunt declares that she suspects Jerónimo of being a maquis—and she does not seem to have much reason to suspect him except for the fact that he is a quiet peasant with a serious look on his face—young Álvaro becomes obsessed with spying on the man and learning as much about him as he can. Over time they establish an unconventional friendship that holds erotic significance for the young boy. Every night he goes to the hay shed where Jerónimo sleeps and joins him in his rest. “¿Qué había en común entre él y tú?” (What was there in common between he and you?), Álvaro asks, “Sólo el tuteo amigo y la sonrisa, la llaneza del gesto y el acuerdo animal, más allá de las palabras. ¿Confiaba en ti? Seguramente. Más de una vez extendiste el brazo durante su sueño y presentiste, agradecido, el bulto bienhechor del revolver en su cinto” (50). (Only friendly informalities and his smile, the simplicity of the gesture and the animal agreement, beyond words. Did he trust you? He surely did. More than once you extended your arm during his sleep and you felt, grateful, the reassuring bulge of the revolver in his belt.) Goytisolo’s discussion of Álvaro’s growing practice and acknowledgment of his homosexuality throughout the trilogy contextualize the touching of the bulge of the revolver as an imagined preliminary sexual gesture.

If sexuality is still only implicit here as it relates to the protohomosexual child, even if it is strongly alluded to, same-sex love is not. When describing Alvarito’s reaction to the news of Jerónimo’s disappearance, Álvaro says he was very distressed: “la noche en que lo esperaste en vano y él no regresó. Volviste a tu habitación aterido, con una ansiedad y un tormento que no reconocerías sino mucho más tarde, enamorado ya de Dolores ...” (51). (the night in which you waited for him in vain and he did not come back. You went back to your room frozen with an anxiety and a torment that you would not recognize until much later, already in love with Dolores...) The incident, the trace of the memory of young Álvaro and the maquis, situates the

protohomosexual Álvaro as a child that both desired and loved men. A consideration of this trace should have implications for the ways in which one reads the Mendiola trilogy.

A lot of critical energy has been devoted to the image of the repeated sodomitical rape of young Alvarito by the older Álvaro/snake charmer/Julián in *Reivindicación del conde don Julián*. Goytisolo has been accused of “pedophobia” by Ryan Prout, and ventriloquised misogyny by Brad Epps, for example, for the rape of the young boy and Isabela la Católica who is transmuted into the mother of Álvaro in *Don Julián*. But Gema Pérez-Sánchez acknowledges, “Goytisolo’s use of sodomy is politically strategic: by sodomizing Alvarito, Don Julián seeks revenge on Francoism; he attempts to mirror, or to do back to the dictatorship what it had done to the general population, that is, to place it in the passive, bottom position” (90). In light of a rereading of the bad education of young Álvaro as he is narrated in *Señas de identidad*, one might add to Pérez-Sánchez’s argument that, beyond, taking revenge upon the traces of the fascist regime that he finds in his childhood self, Goytisolo’s narrator might be conceived as also enacting a wish-fulfillment for the protohomosexual youth in consuming his sodomization by an older, deviant male. This wish-fulfillment is hyperbolized and violent, and so the arguments of the aforementioned critics cannot be completely disregarded or disqualified. But the *esperpento* tone of the trilogy and the delightful anti-identitarian perversity of the child in *Señas* suggest that critiques of the significant violence in Goytisolo’s work may be dismissing the sites of its most profound and most interesting critical potentiality.

Young Álvaro’s sodomization in *Julián*, and other episodes of sexual education and initiation in *Señas*, resonate in Goytisolo’s first autobiographical tome, *Coto vedado*. In it, he recounts his molestation as a young boy by his grandfather. A Nationalist air raid in Barcelona during the Civil War killed his mother. The post-war years saw her parents living with him, his

father, and his brothers in their home. During the night his grandfather would leave his wife in the next bedroom and visit young Juan to kiss, fondle, and masturbate. “No sé cuántas veces,” (I do not know how many times) he explains, “en las cálidas noches de junio que precedieron al verano y nuestro viaje a Torrentbó, el abuelo reincindió en sus manoseos. ¿Cinco, diez veces? Yo había adoptado la ingenua estrategia del sueño y me evité así el espectáculo de su enojosa y reiterada manipulación” (122). (in the warm nights of June that preceded summer and our trip to Torrentbó, grandfather relapsed in his fondling. Five, ten times? I had adopted the ingenuous strategy of sleep, and thus I avoided the spectacle of his annoying and reiterated manipulations.) Juan is annoyed and surprised by the nocturnal visits of his grandfather and his own molestation. After the initial visit, he pretends to be asleep in order to avoid having to watch the event. One day he takes the precaution of preparing a stack of books from the library to hurl at the grandfather should he attempt to enter into his room that night.

Airborne books turn out to be an unnecessary tactical innovation, though, because Juan reluctantly confides the secret of these visits to his brother José Agustín before their return to Barcelona from Torrentbó. He insists that his brother not tell anyone about what is going on, and that he can take care of it himself. In spite of that plea, José Agustín informs their father of the fondling, and the ensuing reaction is ugly. The grandparents are ordered to move out of the house. Goytisolo describes, “Su partida, humillante para todos, coincidió, creo yo, con la súbita agravación de la salud de la abuela” (124). (Their departure, humiliating for everyone, coincided, I believe, with the sudden deterioration of Grandmother’s health.) While the molestation itself is surprising, disturbing, annoying, and upsetting for young Juan, his father’s reaction to it and the ensuing reorganization of the family is described as traumatic.

History and pedagogy irrupt on the scene of this homosexual incest, ushered in by the father, to intervene in its potentially disastrous effects on the future of the youth's masculine credentials. He mobilizes them, first, by revealing to Juan the shameful past haunting the grandfather: "el abuelo desempeñó antes de la guerra un cargo muy importante en la Diputación provincial hasta el día en que fue sorprendido tocando a un muchacho de la familia en una caseta de los baños de San Sebastián. El público quiso lincharle, decía mi padre aprobadoramente" (123-4). (Grandfather held an important position before the war in the provincial deputation until the day in which he was surprised touching a boy from the family in a bathroom stall in San Sebastián. The public wanted to lynch him, my father said approvingly.) The occasion of Goytisoló's molestation is, first, an object lesson in homophobic history imparted by the father to his son. The hidden past of the grandfather is suddenly disclosed to the young boy to account for his conduct, and to impart in the most serious terms the weight of its ignominy. In fact, the father did not even want the grandfather in their house living with them, but, "[p]or respeto a mi madre, él había tenido que tragarse su repugnancia a aquella conducta afeminada y falta de hombría; pero su última hazaña colmaba los límites de su paciencia, exigía un castigo ejemplar" (124). (out of respect for my mother, he had had to swallow his repugnance for that effeminate and unmanly conduct; but his last feat exceeded the limits of his patients, and demanded an exemplary punishment.) The grandfather has a past marked by a sexual act that led to his public shaming, forced early retirement, and imposed a permanent challenge to his masculinity. He is quickly cast as an effeminate. The father feels the lesson is necessary because Juan has now been brought into direct contact with this perverse history. It is as if by being touched by his grandfather young Juan is at risk for contamination by his deviant sexuality, and disposed to suffering a similar rejection from the masculine collective.

A systematic “persecution” of the grandfather is inaugurated by Goytisolo’s father after this event that comes to define family life in the Goytisolo household for almost twenty years until both die (124):

El episodio del abuelo y la reacción que suscitó en la familia tuvo de seguro para mí un efecto traumático. La fobia visceral de mi padre a los homosexuales—cuyo símbolo execrable encarnaba su suegro—alcanzaba a veces extremos morbosos: había referido con gran satisfacción a José Agustín—y éste se había apresurado a repetírmelo—que Mussolini mandaba fusilar sin contemplaciones ‘a todos los maricones’ ... (126)

The episode with grandfather and the reaction that it provoked in the family surely had a traumatic effect for me. My father’s visceral phobia of homosexuals—whose execrable symbol was embodied by his father-in-law—sometimes reached morbid extremes: he had told José Agustín with great satisfaction— and he had hurried to repeat it to me—that Mussolini ordered that ‘all of the faggots’ be executed, without reservation...

The trauma that marks the autobiographical narrative is one that is linked both to the “episode” with the grandfather and the reaction it provokes from the family. One aspect of the trauma is inextricable from the other. Given the shift in language, from the “annoyance” and the “surprise” caused by the molestation to the “morbid extremes” of the “visceral” homophobia of the father, it seems that the latter’s reaction is more heavily charged with a weight that will echo into the future for the narrator.

In fact, Goytisolo explains that he comes to pity the grandfather for the suffering he incurs at the expense of his sexual proclivities. When he hears about Mussolini's execution of homosexuals he reacts: "Aunque por aquellas fechas yo no tenía la más remota sospecha de mi sexualidad futura, la noticia, en vez de exaltarme, me llenó de malestar. La conducta del abuelo conmigo me parecía, desde luego, censurable; pero el castigo, campaneado jubilosamente en casa, despertaba en mí sentimientos de injusticia y reprobación" (126). (Although at that time I did not have even the most remote suspicion of my future sexuality, the news, rather than elate me, filled me with uneasiness. My grandfather's conduct with me seemed, since then, censurable; but the punishment, jubilantly proclaimed at home, awakened in me sentiments of injustice and reprobation.) Young Juan identifies injustice in the way Mussolini treats homosexuals in Italy (presumably while remaining ignorant of their treatment in Franco's Spain), and he aligns this murderous behavior with the punishment his grandfather is undergoing at home for his pederastic episodes. He reproaches his grandfather for his conduct with him. But he identifies the bad education being imparted to him not only as the fondling by his grandfather, but also as the homophobic injustice and disciplining mechanisms being imposed on his grandfather, and himself, in the name of his own protection. He imagines his father sharing the news from Italy with his grandfather, and the latter not saying anything:

Esta conformidad suya al juicio ajeno, aceptación sumisa de su condición natural de paria, incapacidad de reaccionar a los ataques que continuamente sufría provocaron mucho más tarde en mí una inmensa piedad por él. Su pederastia compulsiva, ruborosamente oculta por décadas, la había vivido como una tragedia íntima: un vicio condenado por la religión en la que creía y la sociedad que le rodeaba. Careciendo del temple moral necesario para asumirla. (126)

This conformity with outside judgment, submissive acceptance of his natural condition of pariah, incapacity to react to the attacks that he continually suffered, provoked much later in me an immense pity for him. His compulsive pederasty, bashfully hidden for decades, he had lived it as an intimate tragedy: a vice condemned by the religion he believed in and the society that surrounded him. He lacked the necessary moral character to assume it.

In the future he regrets that his grandfather is not able to conceptualize his pederasty as anything other than sin and a shameful desire worthy of social reprobation. He cites this long and silent suffering as a catalyst for his own determination to publically disclose his homosexuality later in life. The traditionalist homophobic education imparted on the grandfather by his surroundings and his religion is one that Juan attempts to escape later in life, and his molestation by his grandfather is one instance in which it is most seriously conveyed to him in his youth.

Beyond the hand of his grandfather, young Goytisolo's bad education will continue in his youth during his first prolonged stay away from his family as a student in Madrid. There, he befriends a group of Colombian students who are also studying in the post-war capital, and he begins to spend all of his nights drinking with them. Young bourgeois society in Barcelona had not revealed such vertiginous pleasures to him. They run through the nocturnal life of Madrid, its bars, and dirty neighborhoods. Juan begins to feel contempt for clean, tidy, wealthy urban spaces, and develops a "pasión, en cambio, por el caos callejero, transparencia brutal de las relaciones sociales, confusión de lo público y lo privado, desbordamiento insidioso de la mercancía, precariedad, improvisación, apretujamiento, lucha despiadada por la vida, medineo fecundo, imantación misteriosa" (221). (passion, by contrast, for street chaos, the brutal

transparency of social relations, confusion of the public and the private, the insidious overflowing of merchandise, precariousness, improvisation, being crammed, the merciless fight for life, fertile city-dwelling, mysterious magnetization.) This new preference for marginal urban spaces parallels his future desire to seek out the company of macho, working-class immigrant men.

Before the student Goytisolo comes to realize his inclination for Arabic men, he has a first homosexual experience with his Colombian friend, Lucho. One night, while they are out drinking and both are intoxicated, Juan indiscreetly caresses Lucho in front of a waiter. He caresses him and brings him back to his place for the night. The public revelation of the incident the next day provokes his surprise and fear: “lo que oscura e instintivamente temía desde que dejé de ser niño, se había producido con sobrecogedora puntualidad. Me sentía desnudo, inerme, vulnerable, expuesto sin razón ni culpa a la reprobación y el escarnio. Lo que más me ofendía y sublevaba era que el episodio hubiera ocurrido sin ninguna intervención de mi voluntad” (224). (that which I secretly and instinctively feared since I stopped being a child had produced itself with overwhelming punctuality. I felt naked, helpless, vulnerable, exposed without fault or reason to reprobation and shame. That which offended me and revolted me the most was that the episode had occurred without any intervention of my will.) He feels as if he were a spectator to an event that, indeed, he does not really even remember. But the waiter at the bar informed Lucho that his friend was behaving inappropriately with him, and the policing mechanisms to ensure that this homosexual behavior does not manifest itself again go into full force. The other Colombians make snide remarks about Juan and his fondness for Lucho. Out of all of this macho disciplining, of particular interest is the sexual initiation that Lucho makes Juan undergo to reestablish the bounds of a masculine heterosexuality.

One night Lucho takes Juan to a bar with two prostitutes and begins to boldly fondle and caress them. Reading this display as a pedagogical cue, Juan is inspired to perform a similar courtship of one of them. He remarks, “Yo interpreté aquello como una orden silenciosa y, cambiando de asiento, me acomodé junto a Mely” (226). (I interpreted that as a silent order and, changing seats, I accommodated myself next to Mely.) He begins to kiss, tickle, and tease her, noting that “Lucho había sacado entre tanto los pechos a Fernandita, pero advertí que vigilaba mis progresos con el rabillo del ojo. Su aprobación implícita y mi ansiedad por abolir la memoria de mi pasada conducta, me animaron a seguir su ejemplo” (226). (In the meanwhile Lucho had taken out Fernandita’s breasts, but I noticed that he was monitoring my progress from the corner of his eye. His implicit approbation and my anxiety to abolish the memory of my past conduct animated me to follow his example.) A scene of quadrangulated desire establishes itself here as a pedagogical site where Juan is taught how he can restore the limits and bounds of homosocial bonding with his friend. While he appears to have mastered the lesson, in the short term, its success is undermined by its narration as a performance in the autobiography. What is more, a future episode in a party where Lucho invites Juan to come to bed with him and he declines poses itself as a mystery for the narrator. Was it a final test to ensure good heterosexual conduct between them, or a lascivious invitation to abandon homosocial conduct in the privacy of a dark bedroom?

Whichever the case, the lesson of heterosexual machista education proves itself to be a farce—even if a vital one—at the disposal of the young homosexual man attempting to pass as normal. His failure to master his own body and control its actions under the influence of alcohol is an instance of sexual deviance that threatens his belonging to the masculine collective, and it does not go unnoticed or uncommented by his friends and their social acquaintances. Juan

realizes that his social legitimacy is at risk, and he does not want to be tainted by an association with femininity that cast so much shame and suffering on his grandfather. The lesson of this series of masculine pedagogical encounters is so intense as to prevent him from following his desire and joining Lucho in his bed when beckoned. To do so would have been to fail the test of his belonging to the collective of men, and even if his friend truly loved him he would be susceptible to his betrayal and public punishment due to his previous conduct.

In his novel and autobiography, Goytisolo's recovery of queer youth participates in his process of refuting the political history of contemporary Spain through his recollections of its bad education. Álvaro's ultimate decision in *Señas*, to forever be a foreigner in exile from his homeland and separated from his compatriots, is made in tangent with the work he does to recover traces of his present marginal sexual identity from his past. The protohomosexual child inhabits the space of the dead of the losers of history—unwritten and in memory. Similarly, the author Goytisolo chooses to live as a Spanish expatriate. He writes from a dislocated position from whence he launches a devastating far-reaching critique of all of Spanish history and culture, as rotten to the core. The remnants of his representations of childhood paint portraits of boys who wished for the spectacle and fame of martyrdom over the pleasures of the bourgeoisie, and of men who wish they could have enjoyed homosexual love as a boy.

Almost four decades after Goytisolo's recovery of the protohomosexual child in *Señas*, Pedro Almodóvar's *La mala educación (Bad Education)* [2004], engages with similar problematics surrounding children, Francoist education, death, and hospitality to those who have been erased from History.<sup>48</sup> Protagonists Ignacio and Enrique are youths during the 1960's,

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<sup>48</sup> Almodóvar criticism is its own cottage industry by now. See *Un canibal en Madrid* by Alejandro Yardza, *Desire Unlimited: the Cinema of Pedro Almodóvar* by Paul Julian Smith, *Pedro Almodóvar* by Ernesto R. Acevedo-Muñoz, *A Companion to Pedro Almodóvar* by Marvin D'Lugo and Kathleen M.

while Goytisolo's narrator is an adult at that time. Álvaro's concern with his education and formation springs from his adult perspective in the 60's, however, and thereby conceptually links both the film and the novel to that decade. Reading the protohomosexual child through them suggests that the interest in recovering the protohomosexual child from a Francoist religious education has endured over time. Like Goytisolo's novels, there are elements that link Almodóvar's film with his autobiography. Two homosexual children who went to Catholic boarding school together during the dictatorship are the characters at the heart of its plot.

Long before the release of *La mala educación*, aspiring filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar took on the subject of his own youth under Francoism in a short story called "La visita" (*The Visit*). In the screenplay to his 2004 film, *La mala educación*, he explains, "En el año 73, más o menos, escribí un relato furioso en el que me vengaba de la educación religiosa que había recibido en un colegio de curas veinte años antes" (11). (In 1973, more or less, I wrote a furious tale in which I avenged myself of the religious education that I had received in a secondary school run by priests twenty years before.) This revenge plays out as the narration of a story in which a boy who was molested by one of the priests at such a school returns to blackmail his former aggressor. Such a confrontational visit lies at the heart of a plot that will become the film *La mala educación*. Its writing took on additional layers in 1995 and evolved until its cinematic release in 2004, some 30 years after its initial conceptualization. It is important to note that, at its outset, *Bad Education* was conceived as an artistic revenge against a religious education. Like Goytisolo's novels, it is a project interested in dismantling an institution of Franco's Spain through the mediating presence of the protohomosexual child.

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Vernon, *Post-Franco, postmodern* by Kathleen M. Vernon, and *All About Almodóvar, a Passion for Cinema*, edited by Brad Epps and Despina Kakoudaki.

The initial “visit” to the priest of Almodóvar’s screenplay becomes a pretext for two additional visits within the film, which becomes a film-within-a-film. In the new plot the original storyline is delivered as a movie script. Allegedly this delivery is made by Ignacio, one of the boys described in the script, who is supposed to have written it. Ignacio delivers it to Enrique, the boy whom he loved but was separated from by a priest that molested him as a youth when they were in Catholic boarding school together. We later learn, though, in Hitchcockian fashion, that it is not Ignacio who presents himself at the film director Enrique’s studio, but rather his younger brother Juan who is pretending to be Ignacio. Juan goes by the name of Angel, and is desperate to land a starring role in a film directed by the famous Enrique, so he poses as his dead brother in order to convince him to take on Ignacio’s story as a movie project. A third visit in the film comes when the adult priest—now the publisher, Sr. Berenguer—shows up on the set for the production of the film-within-the-film to reveal the truth of the real ending to Ignacio’s life story. Ignacio was not killed by Padre Manolo at his school for his attempt to blackmail him as it is recounted in the interior movie. Rather, he was murdered by Berenguer in collaboration with his brother Juan so that he would stop pestering them for money, and so that the boy could be rid of his embarrassing, junkie, transsexual older brother.

The device of the “visit” became so central to the film’s construction, that sometime in the 90’s Almodóvar slightly deviated from his original purpose of “avenging himself of his religious education,” to narrate a dark tale of multiple visits by uninvited guests. Indeed, the title for the piece evolved from the 1973 “La visita,” to the 90’s version of “Las visitas,” before obtaining its final title of “La mala educación” (11). So, the “bad education” referenced in the film is not only the religious education imposed upon the boys, or the queer molestation of Ignacio, but it is also the misbehavior of the uninvited guests. It is the impertinence of their lies

and stalking behaviors that intrude upon the other characters of the story. The unwelcome sexual advances, the blackmail, the hustling, the insistence on the payment of debts, making amends, taking revenge, and fratricide all represent instances of bad behavior that teaches, or provokes, other bad habits. Ignacio and Enrique are faced with the choice of learning how to function within the homosocial bonds of Francoist Spain, or be abused. Both attempt to refute such a choice, but navigating the consequences of attempting to do so constitutes their own bad education.

The action of the film is spread across three different time periods. The film-within-the-film takes place in 1964. This is the period of the youth of the protagonists, set in the second half of the Franco Regime. The second time of the narration is 1977, the year that Ignacio finishes writing his short story, “La visita,” and attempts to use it to blackmail his former literature professor Padre Manolo. By this time, after the death of the dictator, Padre Manolo had abandoned his clerical position and transposed himself into the publisher Sr. Berenguer. The “present” of the film is 1980. Filmmaker Enrique Goded is beginning to achieve some renown, and he has his own production company named “El Azar SA” in Madrid. This period of the *Movida madrileña* corresponds, of course, with Almodóvar’s own rising star. Marvin D’Lugo notes that each of these years hold a specific resonance in Spanish political history:

As noted, the early scenes in Enrique’s production office are set in the Madrid of 1980, the beginning of Spain’s prodigious decade of political and cultural transformation. The year 1977 saw the first postdictatorship general elections. Although Almodóvar explains the cinematic significance of 1964 for his own creative formation, the year has a broad political resonance as well, as it recalls the Franco regime’s self-congratulatory celebration of “twenty-five years of

peace.” Notably, 1977 and 1980, become ‘present-tense’ frames from which the 1964 childhood love between Enrique Goded and Ignacio Rodríguez is narrated. (359-60)

The multiple temporalities of the film both problematize and reinforce the relationship between *Bad education*, and the Franco Regime. On the one hand, each of these years is related to a historical event bound up with the dictatorship in its relevance. On the other hand, each of the “visits” across these distinct temporalities constitutes an instance of “bad behavior.”

For Edelman, in his forthcoming book, bad education is the work of nullification that queerness offers to the propagation of the child as a promise for the future of the body politic. In this view, the child and its education are supplements that seek to conceal the constructedness of the social order and the void that it organizes:

The Child, that is, like the photographic image of Ignacio on the poster, enforces the law of desire’s disavowal of the excess that cannot be bound—the excess that presses for a “radical break” from every ideational content, from anything we could know. The object of desire, as imaginary entity conceptualized as a “one,” makes desire itself the ultimate object of reproductive futurism: the desire that propels us forward in fantasizing our survival by means of an object we imagine as filling the void on which the drive insists instead. The temporality thus established, the temporality of the law, defines the very movement that keeps turning zero into one. (26)

The zero, the anus, dissolution, queerness, and death, constantly threaten to undo the one, the child, the signifier, and reproduction in this formula. Edelman reads a number of zeros and ones throughout the film, beginning with the film’s poster in which a defiant Ignacio crosses his arms

and seems to represent a one in front of a red zero.

Edelman's analysis is a brilliant reading of anality and the pedagogical compulsion towards symbolic negativity offered by the queer in the film, and indeed in society more broadly. But it can be supplemented to account for other important numerals in *Bad Education*. The film is full of pairs, just as Edelman's zero and one constitute a dualistic pair. Or, as Paquito, Zahara's friend from "La visita" says, "¡Ponme otra, ya sabes que yo creo en la pareja! Dos polvos, dos rayas, dos amigas. 'Dos en la carretera,' 'Dos cabalgan juntas,' 'Dos Passos'" (46).<sup>49</sup> (Give me another, you know that I believe in the couple! Two fucks, two lines, two girlfriends. 'Two for the Road,' 'Two Rode Together,' 'Dos Passos.')

This reiteration of *two* reflects the pairs in the film: Ignacio and Enrique, Ignacio and Padre Manolo, Juan and Angel, good vs. bad education, the Franco Regime and Democracy, the pair of brothers, and the two love triangles.

The problem of Manichean dualism is reflected in the splitting apart of the first frame of credits at the beginning of the film. And then later, again, after the first time he is molested by the priest Padre Manolo, the child Ignacio falls on a rock and a trickle of blood runs down his face until the frame splits apart in two. Like a curtain pulled away from where his countenance is divided by the blood, the angelic boy's face is torn apart. The off-camera voice of the child Ignacio explains in the film-within-the-film about the episode: "Un hilo de sangre dividía mi frente en dos. Tuve el presentimiento de que con mi vida ocurriría lo mismo: siempre estaría dividida y yo no podría hacer nada para evitarlo" (59). (A string of blood divided my face in two. I had the premonition that the same would happen with my life: I would always be divided and I would not know what to do in order to avoid it.) At its core, the narration determined to

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<sup>49</sup> The mention of "Dos Passos" (like other references in the film discussed later in this chapter) invokes the Spanish Civil War, since the author, John Dos Passos, is known for his turn to anti-communist politics after his experiences in Spain during the war. Thanks to Juli Highfill for making this observation.

avenge itself of a religious education makes a strong argument for reading the importance of two, or dualism, in its articulation.

Before we attach ourselves too closely to the pair, to Manichaeism, to good and evil, and to bad and good education in the film, though, we should consider a word of warning from Almodóvar. In the prologue to the film's screenplay he writes: "Pero no hay dos sin tres, para completar este juego de espejos múltiples, necesitaba una tercera visita, la del Padre Director del colegio donde se conocieron Enrique e Ignacio, su profesor de Literatura, enamorado locamente de Ignacio y que expulsó a Enrique para evitar su competencia en el corazón de Ignacio" (11). (But two cannot exist without a third, in order to complete this game of multiple mirrors, I needed a third visit, that of the Director of the middle school where Enrique and Ignacio met each other, their literature teacher, crazy in love with Ignacio, and who expelled Enrique to avoid his competition for Ignacio's heart.) Almodóvar reminds us of the third visit in the film, and of all of its other trios, starting with the love triangle between Enrique, Ignacio, and Padre Manolo. The original love triangle is a paired mirror of that which will later arise between Juan, Enrique, and Sr. Berenguer. Three visits, three time periods, love triangles, and three Sara Montiels appear in *Bad Education*. All point to the importance of the third term for the film.

In fact, the insertion of a third variable may have been essential to the project of refuting the "bad education" Almodóvar suffered in his religious schooling all along. Regarding the three decade revision process of his original concept for the screenplay, he writes, "Por primera vez no he tenido prisa durante el desarrollo de un proyecto, el paso del tiempo le ha sentado bien a *La mala educación*, cada nueva versión que terminaba me alejaba más de la idea original y mi perspectiva era más completa, *menos maniquea*, más rica, y más negra" (12-13—emphasis mine). (For the first time I have not been rushed during the development of a project, the passing of

time has sat well with *Bad Education*, each new version that I finished distanced me from the original idea and my perspective was more complete, *less Manichean*, richer, and darker.) Three decades after writing his revenge tale, the artist cannot merely reproduce the logics of good and evil—or the melodramatic structuring imperatives of Francoism—and proclaim the molested boy the new hero of the democratic state. He must complicate the bounds of history itself and recast the possible futures of the homosexual boy. He must forgive, or forget, the debt owed to him by a society that only offered him a bad education.

Sr. Berenguer's unexpected arrival on the set of "La visita," complicated the dualist trap established by the first two visits. They posit Zahara/Ignacio against Padre Manolo, and Angel against Enrique. Sr. Berenguer comes to the production of the film to relay the true story of Ignacio's demise to Enrique, and to recover the debt that Angel owes him. Enrique's film depicts Padre Manolo's henchman, Padre José, breaking Zahara's neck in a desperate attempt to ensure her silence and the protection of the priest and the Church from her calumnious accusations. This version of the narrative maintains the original framework of bad rapist priest and good innocent boy. "Soy el malo de tu película" (119), (I'm the bad guy from your movie,) Berenguer announces when Enrique demands that he identify himself post-production. Similarly, the narrative between Angel and Enrique maintains a dynamic between a lying brother and ambitious actor seeking to profit from his brother's death to achieve fame, and a director in need of a compelling story and curious about the true fate of his first love. Sr. Berenguer's revelation of the truth surrounding Ignacio's demise complicates this dualist scheme. Rather than hiding the murder of Ignacio, he wants to uncover it. Unconcerned by the public revelation of the Francoist past, he seeks to cover the debt owed to him by Juan. He is still following his desire and lust for the boy.

Three boys are depicted by the film: two homosexual youths, Ignacio and Enrique, and Ignacio's younger brother Juan. All three of them are exposed to the "pedagogical lesson of queerness" described by Edelman. In addition to being molested by Padre Manolo, young Ignacio falls in love with Enrique. The two boys masturbate each other in the cinema while watching Sara Montiel in *Esa mujer*. Juan (Angel), while heterosexual, is driven by his ambition and pursuit of a better life to prostitute himself to Enrique in order to play the starring role of his transsexual brother in his film. Enrique, who knows that Angel is not in fact Ignacio, wants to see how far his ambition will push Juan. So he uses him for sex and rewrites the ending of Ignacio's screenplay so that Angel will have to reenact his brutal murder. This is not the first time that Juan has hustled, we learn in the third visit. When Sr. Berenguer meets with Ignacio to discuss the blackmail he wishes to avoid, he becomes fixated on Juan as the new object of his desire. At this point he has a wife and a child, but he borrows two million pesetas in order to placate Ignacio with small bits of money and spend more time with Juan. One week, while Ignacio is away, Berenguer offers to pay for Juan's acting school tuition, and begins buying him all sorts of gifts in exchange for intimacy with him. Juan is well practiced in homosexual hustling before he ever meets Enrique.

Juan comes by his hustling honestly, for his brother had attempted to "sell" himself to Padre Manolo in exchange for his keeping Enrique at the school as a student when they were caught in a bathroom stall together one night. After performing a mass with the priest, he promises that if he lets Enrique stay at the school he will let him do whatever he wants. He explains, "Me vendí por primera vez en aquella sacristía para evitar la expulsión de Enrique, pero el Padre Manolo me engañó. Me juré a mí mismo que algún día cobraría esa deuda" (79). (I sold myself for the first time in that sacristy to avoid the expulsion of Enrique, but Padre

Manolo tricked me. I swore to myself that one day he would repay that debt.) Thus begins a long chain of debts and a demand for repayment that fuels Ignacio's blackmailing of the reinvented Bergenguer. The two new lovers, Juan and Berenguer, conspire to kill Ignacio because he continues to threaten blackmail, and drains Juan's family's scarce resources with his heroin addiction. The murder is Juan's idea, and he plans and organizes the specifics of the crime, but Berenguer must play the role of executioner.

In "All about the Brothers: Retroseriality in Almodóvar's Cinema," Marsha Kinder advocates for a reading of the text through the lenses of other Almodóvar films about fraternity. She convincingly argues, as does Marvin D'Lugo, that the film represents a demonstration of the filmmaker's interest in the past and the legacy of the Franco regime, because of its portrayal of the fratricidal brother. She argues,

Despite Almodóvar's earlier disavowal of the Spanish civil war and the recurring conflicts between the "two Spains," he still dramatizes the masochistic and murderous dimensions of a culturally specific fraternity: not across the grand sweep of Spanish national history, but within the cloistered halls of lecherous priests and nuns and within the hothouse atmosphere of fraternal family melodrama and dark noir romance. (292)

Her argument can be pushed further, because of the extent to which this individual family incidence of fratricide posits itself as an allegory for the Spanish Civil War and the subsequent fortunes of its victors and losers. The importance of reading the narrative allegorically is underscored by some subtle visual clues that Almodóvar drops along the way.

One of these cues is the "cuaderno de Formación Política y Nacional" (notebook of National and Political Formation,) from Ignacio's school days that contains a drawing that he

made of young children hoisting up a Spanish flag. He shows this drawing to the former Padre Manolo (his molestor), now the publisher Sr. Berenguer, as the latter attempts to satisfy Ignacio's need for money in order to avoid blackmail, and perhaps more importantly to ogle his younger brother Juan. The National flag in the drawing, though, is curiously missing the Imperial Eagle that was emblazoned on the flag during Francoism. He says the name of the drawing is "Niños de España" ("Children of Spain"). The apparition of the National and Political Formation notebook reinvokes the Francoist past, and with it the notion that this current struggle between brothers echoes back to a previous conflict within the national body.

The missing eagle from the flag finds its way back into the film, too, during the scene where Juan and Sr. Bergenguer are plotting to kill Ignacio. Kinder points out the allusions to *esperpento* that the setting for this conversation makes through the giant puppet figures in place that are staring at the future assassins as they hatch their insidious plot (281). She does not mention, however, how at the precise moment when they decide to kill off Ignacio, they are standing in front of a giant gold Imperial Eagle, the eagle missing from the flag in the earlier sequence. The presence of the eagle at the moment of the determination to kill off the brother Ignacio is a clear reference to the Franco Regime, and it aligns Ignacio with the dead of the Civil War.

Ignacio survived the oppression of his religious education and two traumas—the first being his molestation by the priest who ran his school and was in love with him, and the second being his separation from Enrique with whom he was in love—only to be killed off by a recurrence of Francoist oppression symbolized by its re-articulation through the figure of Padre Manolo who is reincarnated as the publisher Sr. Berenguer, and the original impulse to fratricidal violence represented by Juan. The child Ignacio and the adult Ignacio both haunt the text. It is

worth noting that the portrayal of Ignacio as an adult makes the figure of the transsexual out to be a spectral ghost of the transition, when it seemed to represent the possibilities for a new political future in Almodóvar's earlier work.<sup>50</sup> Here, the transgendered boy is deformed to monstrosity by his bad education, before he is killed off by the remnants of the Francoist past during the Transition.

In addition to the dualist roles of Francoist murders and fratricidal victim, the narrative requires an accounting of the third “queer” boy, Enrique. And here the vanity of the director shines through. Separated from the realm of debts and collecting, counting and accounting, Enrique Goded closes the door on Juan and the dark past that he represents. The final freeze frame of the film outlines the post-narrative futures of all of the characters:

Después del estreno de ‘La Visita’ Angel Andrade se convirtió en el galán de moda, su reinado duró una década. En los años 90 su carrera sufrió altibajos. Se casó con Mónica la chica de Vestuario. Actualmente trabaja exclusivamente en series de televisión.” “El Sr. Berenguer (antes Padre Manolo) no desapareció de la vida de Angel Andrade (antes Juan). Empezó a pedirle dinero y a chantajearle hasta que una noche murió atropellado por un coche que se dio a la fuga.<sup>51</sup> El vehículo lo conducía Angel Andrade.” Enrique Goded continúa haciendo cine con la misma pasión.

After the premiere of “The Visit,” Angel Andrade became the hottest leading man, his reign lasted a decade. In the 90’s his career suffered ups and downs. He married Monica from wardrobe. He currently exclusively works in television

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<sup>50</sup> See Patrick Paul Garlinger

<sup>51</sup> Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?

series. Sr. Berenguer (previously Father Manolo) did not disappear from the life of Angel Andrade (previously Juan). He began to ask him for money and blackmail him until one night he was run over by a car that went astray. Angel Andrade drove the vehicle. Enrique Goded continues to make cinema with the same passion.

One of the most compelling aspects of Almodóvar's film is his representation of a protohomosexual childhood and its first pedagogical encounters with homosocial violence. Violence manifests itself in many ways throughout the film, and most dramatically through assassination. But Ignacio and Enrique deviate from homosocial norms on a few occasions. Ignacio refuses to block a goal that Enrique is going to score in a soccer game, the two of them go to watch Sara Montiel in *Esa mujer* and masturbate one another in the cinema, and finally, they wake up at night and move away from the rows of beds to which they are confined in the dormitories to have a private chat. Out of love for Enrique, Ignacio is compelled to enter into a male pact, or informal contract, with the priest that will spiral into violent consequences later in life. School and his pedagogue remain the foundational site of his gender and personal trouble, and he believes they, hold the solution to his future happiness.

In the end, the Bad Education represented by the school is the site of Francoist violence that has carried itself into the society of the transition to democracy. This original miseducation results in Ignacio's murder, which is a mirror of fratricide from the new democracy. Enrique, as the director of the film-within-the-film, occupies the privileged position of he who gets to tell the official version of how the story ends. But even he is not immune from participating in the deceit and the deception of a lover, Juan, in order to "reach his end" of knowing the truth about the death of Ignacio. His shutting the door of his house to block out Angel represents an attempt

to extricate himself from this thread of his life which he has memorialized in his film, “La visita.” As is often the case in Almodóvar’s films, there is not an easy answer to the question of who was the victim and who was the villain of the film. Rather, all of the protagonists have proved themselves susceptible to the misfirings of bad education.

The opening sequence of *Pa negre* presents a strong argument for Edelman’s reading of the symbolic antagonisms between the child and the queer. The credits unfurl on the wall of a dimly lit cave at the beginning of Agustí Villaronga’s 2010 film.<sup>52</sup> What appear at first to be shadows of bats sharpen, revealing that the winged creatures are in fact *birds* inside the grotto. The film’s title and the cavern swirl into the wheel of a merchant’s carriage. A man guides it by horse through a wooded area, when an aquiline hooded figure surprises and attacks him. It is impossible to make out any of the assailant’s features under monotone, wide sleeves, gloves, and a dark hood that give him a birdlike appearance. The assailant kills the man and throws his dead body into the covered carriage where the viewer finds a young boy cowering and whimpering. Covering the eyes of the horse, the cloaked figure leads it to the edge of a mountainous cliff. He beats the head of the animal with a sledgehammer, and the beast and cart fall tumbling down the long crag into the forest below. There, another youth, Andreu, discovers the tattered remains of the transport and the fatally injured boy with eyes wide open and mouth stammering. Culet manages to emit a single word, “Pitorliua,” before the horror of the scene sends his peer fleeing to notify the boy’s mother.

From the anus of a cavern, a sinister, birdlike monster, “named” Pitorliua assassinates an innocent boy to inaugurate Villaronga’s film. The *Pitorliu*, or *Lullula arborea*, is a

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<sup>52</sup> For critical analysis of Villaronga’s work, see Cristina Moreiras’s *Cultura herida*, as well an article by Jacques Terrassa entitled “La Guerra Civil en Mallorca, ¿una amnesia nacional? Reflexiones en torno al incipit de la película *El mar* (1999) de Agustí Villaronga,” and another by Andrés Zamora, “Perversiones Españolas del Holocausto. Tras el cristal de Agustí Villaronga.”

Woodlark. But in Andreu's village, Pitorliua is known among the children as a monster that lives in a cave and runs naked through the woods at night. Specifically, a schoolgirl explains, he is "Un pajarraco. Bueno, mitad persona, mitad pájaro, pero de esos que no se sabe si son una cosa o la otra hasta que se aparean."<sup>53</sup> (A deformed bird. Well, half person, half bird, but of the kind that you do not know if it is one or the other until it mates.) But the first bird the viewer encounters after the assassination of Culet is the seal of the Imperial Eagle of the Franco Regime, emblazoned on the report a civil guard is filing that details what Andreu saw and heard in the woods that day. When he discloses to the officers that Culet mentioned Pitorliua, they ask him what that word means to him. At first, he answers that it is a small bird. After they encourage him to reveal anything else he might know about the subject, he replies that Pitorliua is a legendary monster of the woods that lives in a cave. The officials dismiss him from the room to speak privately with his father, Farriol. They tell him that the whole "accident," the death of Dionís and his son, Culet, reminds them of the Pitorliua affair.

The distance between where Andreu has been taken to snack on his black bread and coffee, and the room where the men are discussing the "Pitorliua" story in relation to the murder, emphasizes the disparity in knowledge between child and adult. Rather than demystify the meaning of "Pitorliua" for Andreu, he is directed to leave the room while it is discussed in its fuller implications amongst the initiated. The importance of what the child knows and does not know, and his relationship with the police, is emphasized earlier in their encounter when the civil guard tells Andreu he is sure that the boy knows how to sign his name, being the "good student" that he is. Learning the truth about Pitorliua will parallel the protagonist's own coming of age in

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<sup>53</sup> The original dialogue of *Pa negre* is spoken in Catalan and Spanish. I have chosen to quote the Spanish subtitles of the film for dialogue in Catalan, and the original Spanish dialogue when applicable, due to my inability to consult a screenplay of the Catalan text at this time. Scenes of institutional education until are conducted in Spanish until otherwise noted because that was the state-mandated language of instruction.

the film. What is more, this revelation will provoke his abandonment and treason of family and caste in favor of white bread and hot chocolate.

Nineteen minutes after the start of the film, a secondary title screen appears announcing “el retrat d’un assassí d’ocells” (the portrait of a bird killer). This exceptional rupture in the movie both announces the blending of Emili Teixidor’s novels, *Pa negra* and *Retrat d’un assassí d’ocells* in the narrative, and it brings us back to the original birds and cave of the opening credits. By now, Andreu’s mother has threatened to kill all of his father’s birds while he exiles himself in France. (Warned to be careful after the murder of Dionís, and threatened for his leftist political engagements, he decides to flee Spain). They raise birds in cages, scattered throughout their attic. However, the new title screen and cave announcing a bird killer do not lead us back to Farriol’s birds, nor to the opening’s “Pitorliua,” but to Andreu’s new school in the village where his grandmother lives. He has been taken there because his mother cannot care for him alone during his father’s exile. In this instance, the wall of the cave appears to become a sheet of paper blotted with black ink. The teacher is reciting a lesson, in Spanish, that the students are copying, on the “Vae victis”— or, woe to the vanquished ones. “La victoria nunca es neutral ni inmerecida,” (Victory is never neutral or unmerited,) he says. “Hay que alejarse de los vencidos, como se aleja uno de la peste. ‘Vae victis.’ (One must distance himself from the defeated like one runs away from the plague. Woe to the vanquished.) After he finishes reciting the text for the students to copy, the instructor switches to speaking Catalan and pulls a flask out of his desk. After a quick drink, he tells the students that he always favors the victors, because they have more merit for “knowing how to win.”

The instructor’s linguistic code shifting, tone, and requisite medicinal drink after the imperial lesson betray, however, that he does not belong to the group of victors of the civil war.

He is practically incredulous while reading the words on the page that he is charged with imparting to his pupils, but his deference to the ruling state power is conspicuously displayed. The first bird-killer the second portion of the film introduces to us, then, is the Franco regime itself. The imperial victor has “known” how to win (the war) and impose its ideology over its institutions, even when they are manned by reluctant subjects. The mandate to separate oneself from the defeated, like one would run from the “plague,” functions as a directive to purge dissident ideology from the individual subject and to marginalize all of those others who do not correspond with the fascist imperatives.

Andreu comes to personally understand the high costs of belonging to the caste of the defeated when, later that afternoon, a young girl teases his entire family for embodying the definition of losers:

Ratas vosotros! Que de rojos que sois terminaréis como Pitorliua, escondidos en una cueva como monstrous. ... Desgraciados! Como perros! Que no tenéis ni padre ni madre. Y tú, Núria, acabarás en el bosque, corriendo desnuda como una golfa. Como tu tía Enriqueta con su bicicleta, que se ha metido el luto por el culo y se lo hace con los guardias civiles. Putones, que sois unos putones sin vergüenza!

You rats! Like the reds that you are you will end up like Pitorliua, hidden in a cave like monsters. Disgraces! Like dogs! You do not even have a mother or a father. And you, Nuria, you will end up in the woods running naked like a slut. Like your aunt Enriqueta with her bicycle, who has stored her dowry up her ass and does it with the civil guards. Whores, you are shameless whores!

Leftist political ideology and marginalization after the civil war aligns itself with sexual deviance for the townsfolk who judge Andreu's family. They are poor indentured servants to the wealthy Manubens family of Barcelona. They tend to the master's country home that is mostly utilized for storage now. It is collecting dust just as the stigmatized family is struggling to survive the consequences of the civil war. Andreu's mother works at a factory, and as a leftist activist his father risked his entire future on an outcome to the conflict that never came to fruition. His cousins lost their parents to the civil war for the same reasons. Nuria discovered her father hanging from the rafters of their house after he destroyed the bridges when the nationalists advanced on their town. All of the young cousins are living at their grandmother's house now, like orphans. The girl who chides them did not have to be particularly bright to understand that the day's lesson was aimed at this family. It is too easy to signal them out for stigma.

But young Andreu does not even understand the mechanics of sex yet, so he cannot grasp the full force of the accusations that are being lobbed at him and his family tree. Cousin Nuria will later offer to educate him on this point personally, much to his dismay. But Andreu does know that they are poor. He asks his mother, when they go to request help from Sra. Manubens—after Farriol has been accused of the murder of Dionís—why they have to dress like they are poor when they are, in fact, impoverished. She required him to look dirtier and to wear clothes with more tatters than usual to inspire the pity of the family's benefactress. And Andreu certainly understands that his family is disdained for his father's ideals and politics. But he does not yet comprehend why the villagers scorn his aunt for riding her bike into the woods to meet civil guards, or the truth of the horror behind the Pitorliua legend. While he is instructed to abandon the defeated like the plague—and as he comes to realize that his family embody both this defeat

and threaten a stigmatic contamination in the eyes of their social milieu—a consumptive boy becomes the object of his affections.

Just after the schoolgirl teases Andreu and his family, he wanders off from the rest of the group, following a naked boy who is running through the woods. The celestial youth crouches down to drink from a stream, and when he lifts his back erect he scrunches his shoulders up and down in an avian motion just before running off. Andreu follows him to the sanatorium of Los Camilos. His aunt washes sheets for the tuberculosis patients there, and scolds the children for playing near them where they could be infected. But this does not deter Andreu from speaking with the boy from the woods during a business visit to the hospice. The auratic patient tells Andreu that he sometimes “moves his wings” to prepare himself to fly when he gets bored and wants to set fire to the world as he knows it. He makes this declaration from behind the bars of a window that evokes the birdcages seen in Andreu’s attic earlier in the film. In Spanish “plumas,” or feathers, are designated to indicate femininity in a man, and in a few Hispanic countries a “pájaro,” or bird, is a homosexual man.

Andreu lacks a lexicon for describing his desire for this young man, but it is not long before his older male cousin, Quirze, supplies him with one while simultaneously admonishing him for his impertinent curiosity. He sees Andreu sneaking food to Los Comilos one day, and scolds him for this contact with the sickly boys:

Por qué les llevas comida? No ves que están podridos? ... Podridos como las manzanas o las peras, que por fuera parecen buenas pero están llenas de mierda. ... Parecen angelitos, pero saltan como demonios de una cama a otra. ... Para aliviarse la calentura. Algunos se mueren de tanto meneársela. –Pero si todos son hombres. –¿Y qué? Algunos se ponen del revés y hacen de hembras. *Como*

*Pitorliua.* ¿No has oído hablar de los maricones? ... A ver si acabarás como uno de ellos, con tanto estudio y tanta mandanga. (my emphasis)

Why do you take them food? Don't you see that they are rotten? Rotten like apples or pears, that look good outside but are full of shit. They look like little angels, but they jump like devils from one bed to another, to relieve the heat.

Some die from jacking it too much. –But they are all men. –So what? Some turn over and act like bitches. *Like Pitorliua.* Haven't you ever heard of faggots?

We'll see if you end up like one of them, with so much studying and nonsense.

Andreu's introduction to homosexuality is mediated through the sanatorium of Los Comilos. His cousin conflates homosexual sex with the consumptives suffering from tuberculosis, a disease he insists is brought about as punishment for their unnatural vice. Knowledge, proximity, contact, and curiosity are flagged as warning signs that Andreu could end up being just like the boy that he is visiting. Pitorliua is a *maricón*. Andreu's friend from the sanatorium is coded as one too, and Andreu could be next. The legend of the bird-monster begins to unravel quickly and reveal the underpinnings of its feathers.

The murdered Dionís's wife discloses to Andreu—in a critical turning point of the narrative—that Pitorliua was actually a boy named Marcel Saurí while they are visiting a cemetery that houses his grave in their village. Saurí was the lover of the brother of Sra. Manubens, and a friend of Andreu's mother. She has old pictures of him, in an angel costume, resembling the boy from Los Camilos. His pristine white wings evoke the avian fantasy of the consumptive cherub. After the war, the town was becoming aware of the illicit encounters between Saurí and Manubens in the Baumás cave. Sra. Manubens paid Farriol and Dionís to

scare the young Saurí away in order to avoid public scandal. In an attempt to frighten “Pitorliua,” a mob led by the leftist henchmen-for-hire descended upon the cave, and they castrated Marcel with cords used on swine genitalia. The wife of Dionís reveals most of the truth to Andreu, but he discovers the rest on the wall of the cave where his father’s name is written next to Dionís, and the floors are still stained with blood. Farriol sold his services to suit the social prerogatives of the Manubens in order to survive and provide an income for his family. The ideals of social justice that he so often preaches to his son now appear to the boy as shattered on a foundation of inhuman violence. And, more significantly, it is violence against a boy with whom Andreu readily identifies himself through an old photo and his contact with the consumptive patient. This foundational lie, about Pitorliua, has ruined his image of his father who will now be executed for the murder of Dionís. Upon discovering the truth, Andreu runs to the attic in a fit of rage and kills all of Farriol’s birds. He is the third “assasí d’ocells,” after Franco, who slaughtered the “reds,” like animals, and his father, who castrated Pitorliua like a pig– or mutilated the boy with *plumas*.

Pitorliua, the assassin of the film’s opening sequence, turns out not to have been a queer monster after all. It was not the queer demon that was responsible for Culet’s murder. Rather, it was Farriol concealing his identity in the mythos of the bird-man. Homosocial violence in the guise of a queer subject perpetrates the film’s opening murder, which is only a distant echo of its foundational scenes of slaughter. Farriol was hired for this hit job by the Manubens, who were being blackmailed by Dionís, and to earn some money he assassinates his longtime comrade. He agrees to guard the Manubens’s secret, even at the cost of his own death, when he is accused of the murder as long as they agree to adopt his son and raise him as their own child. Education in a good school is the key to advancement and survival for his son in Farriol’s eyes. They fulfill

his wishes, for reasons at first unknown to Andreu, who accepts his new wealthy family and way of life as a means of surviving, and flying away from a world of lies, disappointment, and black bread. Their culpability is concealed from the rest of the world, but Andreu knows that they are responsible for his father's death. The film argues that the cruel tutelage of a homophobic and unjust society; full of deception, hidden secrets, and the horrible truth about his father's actions has deformed him so that he is now a monster. In the final schoolroom scene, in a new, wealthy, and private school, the instructor is giving a lesson on Polyphemus from the *Odyssey*. The camera focuses on Andreu as the teacher outlines, "Polifemo del odiseo representa lo monstruoso, porque tiene un solo ojo, y porque es un gigante, y también, y esto es lo más importante, porque su naturaleza humana se había corrompido hasta convertir en un ser de naturaleza diferente a la que antes tenía, que llevaba escondido." (Polyphemus from the *Odyssey* represents the monstrous, because he has only one eye, and because he is a giant. And also, and this is the most important, because his human nature had corrupted itself until converting him into a being of a different nature from that which he had before, that he held hidden inside.) After the lesson, his biological mother comes to visit him, and he receives her coldly, dismissing her early, and breathing on the window to erase her presence as she leaves through the hallway.

Villaronga's protagonist Andreu undergoes a monstrous conversion catalyzed by a series of revelations that characterize his coming to understand the unjust brutality of masculine collectives, and the policing of homosexual desire through homosocial normativity. While traditionalist society, the victors of the Franco Regime incarnate in the Manubens, are found to be at the origins of this example of homophobic violence—the Pitorliua affair—it surpasses their responsibility because Andreu's own revered father is its perpetrator. The recognition of his own father's history of homosocial violence in the service of power is a foundational experience of

*mala educación* for the boy. Without a place to go for safety or exemption from such masculine prerogatives, Andreu treacherously reaches for higher ground. Perching himself upon the social ladder, and despising those whom he has come from below, it is unclear if he will knowingly allow his previous life experience to ever inform his relationship with others again. Bad education sometimes produces lurid results.

Collectively, the texts and films of this chapter invite a supplement to Edelman's compelling reading of *Bad Education*; his analysis of Almodóvar's film, and his theorization of queerness as the pedagogy of the null, the non-mechanical motor of social dissolution. While homosexual practice within them is certainly a deviation from homosocial norms, and rigorously policed and coded as *misbehavior* or *mala educación*, it does not constitute the foundational educational disaster for the post-war Spanish prothomosexual boy subject as it is articulated in this corpus. Rather, it is their initiation into violent homosocial bondage, represented in these texts in its symbolic and literal alignments with Imperial projects of instruction, which inserts itself at the core of their epistemes. Goytisolo has a grandfather whose punishment for pederasty is sanctioned by the popular Mussolini himself, and Juan's knowledge of this shaming experience haunts him while carousing with alluring youths in Madrid. Ignacio barter with his molester priest at the school where he reproduced drawings of fascist tributes to Spain. He offers his body to the priest to keep his true love close to him, but it was an impossible exchange from the outset because it would have required sanctioning boy-love in a space dedicated to teaching boys to become proper men. The bargain sets into a motion a history of debts, accounts to be settled, and accounting that reverberates through the murder and adult lives of the lovers. There is blackmail to be paid. Angel commits to assassinating his brother in front of the Imperial Eagle and enters into a homosocial contract with similarly treacherous consequences. Andreu's

coming-to-knowledge of homophobic violence, coupled with the imperial lesson of the *Vae victis*, push him to become the monster that created such violence in the first instance—a member of the ruling class victors of the civil war. Bad education is the initiation—whether achieved, or failed, it is inevitable—into the hegemonic societal order of men, in addition to being the queer misbehavior of the protohomosexual boy. The deviant desires of the queer boy open up a space for critique of homosocial bonding, and a reflection on its educational origins at the foundations of the masculine collective.

Repeated conjurings of the protohomosexual child, from the 1960s to the present, in the works of Goytisolo, Almodóvar, and Villaronga, suggest that the homosexual artist is compelled to revisit past instances of bad education to challenge the conditions of homophobia in the present. Queer boys present a tenuous challenge to Franco's inoculating pedagogy in their estranged relationships with imperial masculinities, their flirtation with the feminine, their disdain of dogmatic religious education, their ambitions for artistic transcendence, and their dangerous desire for the same sex. They risk failing to reproduce the ruling values of the Nation through sexual propagation, and they menace contaminating their peers with their perverse desires. But sometimes they are compelled by society's unjust logics to become little perverse monsters.

### Chapter III

#### Narcotic Pleasures, Violence, and the Re-articulation of Machismo in the Spanish Transition to Democracy

*Contar ciervos en el llano  
es deporte de poeta  
de hombre es buscar avaro  
placer en una cuchara,  
oro en el excremento  
para que el aullido muera.*

*El jaco es una ramera  
que susurra en la oscuridad  
en mis manos, cuando me pico  
cae el cabello de una mujer.*  
-Leopoldo María Panero

To claim that the Transition in Spain ushers in a new age of the body is not to contend that the dictatorship was not also heavily invested in the body. On the contrary, it was fully engaged in the construction of a political body, precisely by means of enforcing and policing an inscription of a masculinist state doxa upon the bodies of youth. But the Transition produces and witnesses a re-articulation of the meaning of the body under a new set of terms, realized through more liberal possibilities for art and self-expression, and portrayed with a new set of traits and youthful protagonists. The fascist and National Catholic body was emblematically bound to the likes of *Eugenio*, and José Churruca in Franco's *Raza*, the fascist male body is mobilized as unified, strong, young, spirited, valiant, heterosexual, and willed towards death in the service of

the Nation. The new transitioning democratic body, however, is wounded,<sup>54</sup> sodomitical, excessively libidinous, androgynous, transgendered, frenetic, junkie, suffering from withdrawal,<sup>55</sup> infected, drunken, pierced, heterogeneous, stylized, fluid, and suicidal. Cultural representations of youth in the Transition, and especially the period characterized as the *Movida madrileña*, sometimes represent one character as a body replete with all of these characteristics at once, or moving from one to another in an anti-identitarian condition of flux.

Indeed, much of the cultural production of the Transition can be read as a frenzied rumination on the mutational possibilities for biological bodies, and their intersections with new technologies, brought about by drastically different political conditions and the open question of possible futures for the body politic. Perhaps it is for this reason that Patrick Paul Garglinger, in his essay "Sex Changes and Political Transitions: Or, What Bibi Andersen Can Tell Us about Democracy in Spain," finds that the transgendered celebrity and "Almodóvar girl" Bibi Andersen comes to embody the Spanish Transition to democracy. Andersen's gender transition began in the 1970's with a regime of hormone injections employed to begin the process of erasing the traces of her masculine past. Garglinger's choice of Andersen as the symbol of the Transition par excellence is interesting because it exemplifies a recurrent locus of representation that lies at the intersection of the body, its transformation or recalibration through drugs and technology, and the problem of gender in narrativized re-articulations of national and individual bodies.

Hormone use, like that of other drugs, serves as a vehicle for the production of an enhanced or different type of self, and this is the case whether the effects of the substance last for

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<sup>54</sup> See Cristina Moreiras-Menor's *Cultura herida: Literatura y cine en la España democrática*

<sup>55</sup> See Teresa Vilarós's *El mono del desencanto: Una crítica cultural de la transición española (1973-1993)*.

long or short terms. In this case, estrogen pushes the subject away from the masculine body and towards a feminine one. This transformation might be considered significant at the level of national allegory as a move away from a “hardened” militarized past towards a “softer” democratic future, composed of heterogenous parts existing together. Like the transgendered body’s hormone regime, drug-use more generally during the Transition reflects and participates in the “pacto de olvido” (“pact of forgetting”) that characterized the political role of memory established during the regime change. The agreement to erase forty years of dictatorship from public discourse and memory, to form a new state founded in the dismemberment—but not destruction—of the old order, and to forget the atrocities of the past regime finds itself echoed in the ever-accelerating use of mind-altering chemical substances in the *Movida*. Drugs heighten the excitement, bodily sensation, and perception of the present moment, they help us break with the unpleasantness of the memory of the past, or even with physical pain experienced due to the wounds of the past, and they drive persistently towards the new, the different, and the potentially liberated self.

One would at least hope that the self brought about by chemical enhancement would be new and improved, but, just as it has already been demonstrated in Peninsular Studies that the results of disremembering are uneven in regards to the reformulation of the national body, similarly, I will argue, boozing, snorting, tripping, and shooting up, produce disparate results for the reinvention of the self. Cristina Moreiras-Menor opens *Cultura herida: Literatura y cine en la España democrática*, her study of the politics of memory and the cultural production of the Transition, by comparing the initial experience of democracy in Spain to the euphoria of rolling on ecstasy, “donde se produce la alegría de la novedad tanto como del desapego de un pasado doloroso y no deseado” (15). (in which a happiness is produced by novelty as well as a rupture

from a painful and undesired past.) The subsequent disillusionment with the imperfections of democracy is compared to the decline of the drug's effects and the body's eventual entry into withdrawal, "hasta una completa desilusión al enfrentarse a la evidencia de que la democracia no solo ha traído la libertad, sino también un afecto herido cuyo origen se encuentra en la incertidumbre que la propia democracia trae consigo, pasando por una fase donde la 'ganancia democrática' se experimenta desde una importante experiencia de disminución" (15). (continuing to a complete disillusionment upon facing the evidence that democracy has not just brought liberty, but rather also a wounded affect whose origin is found in the uncertainty that democracy itself brings with it, passing through a phase where the 'democratic high' is experienced along with an important experience of decline.)

Liberty, it turns out, is neither absolute, nor does democracy represent an unadulterated space of freedom for the body that has broken with the repression of the past. Rather, in a regime change from authoritarian politics to democracy, biopolitical power shifts from the power of the sovereign to rule over life and death, and to ensure the biological propagation of the body politic, to the dictates of the market that will present consumers with choices structured within the same terms for life-enhancement, health, and vitality.<sup>56</sup> In drug consumption, the market in question is not the official market sanctioned by the state, but precisely in falling outside of the state's approval and circulation, it is strongly tied-up in the democratic state's biopolitical

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<sup>56</sup> Timothy Campbell cites his translation of Roberto Esposito's, "Totalitarismo o biopolítica:" "If for Nazism man *is* his body and only his body, for liberalism, beginning with Locke, man *has* a body, which is to say he possesses his body— and therefore can use it, transform it, and sell it much like an internal slave. In this sense liberalism— naturally I'm speaking of the category that founds it— overturns the Nazi perspective, transferring the property of the body from the State to the individual, but within the same biopolitical lexicon" (xxxvi.)

blueprint for its citizenry by virtue of its negative exclusion from it.<sup>57</sup> A close-reading of texts narrating the drug-user's body, with an attentiveness to the matters of drug consumption, gender, and the individual's relationship to the national and biopolitical regime, will prove useful for tracing the contemporary biopolitical situation of the Spanish cultural subject, and its relationship to the inheritance of the biopolitical legacy of the Franco regime.

*La mala educación* also represents the Transition through the body of a transsexual, but in this story the emblematic character of the Transition meets an untimely demise. The film ends after Sr. Berenguer reveals to the audience and to Enrique that he murdered the latter's childhood friend Ignacio with the assistance of Ignacio's brother Juan, who now goes by the name of Angel. Each of the characters in this bloody love triangle is in some way doubled, or split between temporalities. Ignacio has taken significant steps in the process of transitioning from man to woman, and needs money to complete his sex change. In addition to the drug regime he presumably subjects himself to for the sex-change, he is also a junkie with a heroin addiction that he cannot shake. He mentions the prospect of rehab at more than one point in the narrative. Ignacio's gender change runs parallel in time with the national Transition from dictatorship to democracy, and his remarkable gender difference coincides with a transition from his portrayal as a child to his portrayal as an adult in the film. The publisher, Sr. Berenguer, is a reinvented identity for Father Manolo who served as the director of the Catholic school Ignacio attended when he was a boy. It was in this capacity that he fell in love with and molested Ignacio, just as

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<sup>57</sup> Kane Race, in his study *Pleasure Consuming Medicine: The Queer Politics of Drugs*, aptly notes: "As well as featuring at large in recent moral panics concerning sexuality and race, drug discourses reveal much about how bodies are geared up in the present of the global market, which bodies are prescribed and which abandoned. If globalization purportedly dismantles many of the constraints of the nation-state, drugs [*sic.*] control stands out as a striking example of the ruthless ways in which the machineries of citizenship, its borders and controls, are clamped back down, in a sort of imperial insistence on the nation's contours and forms. As I will argue, drugs are fit for incorporation within an amoral consumer logic, as commodities par excellence, such that one is tempted to rephrase Michel Foucault's remarks about sex: Do not think that by saying yes to drugs, one is saying no to power" (10-11).

he will later fall in love with Ignacio's youthful and beautiful brother Juan. Juan becomes an Angel of death who is able to advance his personal and career ambitions by eliminating his brother.

While the two assassins of the tale are coded as duplicitous—living secret double lives and taking on false names in the hopes of gaining celebrity or avoiding attention—Ignacio is undoubtedly the character who is most symbolically entrenched in, and whom indeed embodies, the concept of transition. In addition to his gender transitioning, he asserts the authority of the new political and cultural era of the Transition in the story he writes entitled *La visita*, in which he narrates his return to bribe the priest who molested him as a child in order to obtain money for his sex change. When Father Manolo insists that nobody will believe his story because he, as a priest, is invested with moral authority and not the transsexual author Ignacio, the latter firmly interjects: “No, la gente ha cambiado. Estamos en el 77. Esta sociedad valora más mi libertad que su hipocresía.” (No, people have changed, we're in '77. This society values my liberty more than your hypocrisy.) Juan enacts the scene in Enrique Goded's film, *La visita*. While Ignacio's sex change is anticipated in the film by his performances as a boy soprano, a castrato of sorts, it is the radical socio-political change brought about by Franco's death, in 1975, and the transition to democracy, that enables Ignacio to embark on his gender transformation, a transition, which, significantly, remains incomplete. His murder by his brother and the former priest halts his sex change. They kill him by supplying the junkie Ignacio with deadly ultra-pure heroin, causing him to quietly overdose like many others of the decade, and leaving no trace of their guilt.

The Transition is rendered abject and ghostly through its embodiment in Ignacio, and its historical legacy is left suspended as a point of interrogation by his assassination. The adult Ignacio is portrayed as an androgynous “creature” that Sr. Berenguer barely recognizes from his

youthful days. The priest recounts to Enrique, “Aquel no era el Ignacio que tú y yo amamos.” (That was not the Ignacio that you and I loved.) Almodóvar’s screenplay for the film describes his vision for this incarnation of Ignacio:

En persona está mucho más deteriorado. Es alto, extremadamente delgado, el pelo largo y desordenado, dentadura en pésimo estado y más femenino que masculino. Lleva una bata, generosamente abierta, que muestra un buen par de tetas, duras como pelotas. En el amplio canalillo sobresalen los huesos de las costillas. (124)

In person he is much more deteriorated. He is tall, extremely skinny, with long and disordered hair, teeth in an abysmal state, and more feminine than masculine. He is wearing a bathrobe, generously open, that shows a good pair of tits, hard like balls. Rib bones protrude from the ample cleavage.

Ignacio is the opposite of a paragon of health, and through him the historical moment of the Transition is painted as one of decadent monstrosity. Berenguer also seems to be rejecting the feminine traits that Ignacio has developed, his breasts, his hair, and his transgendered appearance. We witness him injecting heroin into his overworked veins in a scene foreshadowing his death, and the piercing of his skin, the exposure of the injection is framed to elicit the same sense of abjection that Sr. Berenguer experiences for this transformed pupil. Ignacio’s heroin use is rendered murderous by a malicious reappearance of the vestiges of Francoism, represented by the former Father Manolo who supplies him with the deadly drugs, and the resurgence of the fratricidal impulses of Civil War embodied in his brother Juan.<sup>58</sup> The

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<sup>58</sup> Marsha Kinder points out the recurring tensions surrounding fraternity in Almodóvar, and specifically the impulse towards fratricide in *La mala educación*.

work of the Transition is left unfinished, in this allegorical formulation, due to its abrupt and malicious interruption by actors reflecting remnants of fascist cultural and political impulses, and conflict within the national family. In this conflict drugs are used as a weapon against political transformation.

Through this assassination by means of a targeted distribution of drugs to an unwanted enemy, Almodóvar's fairly recent look back towards the Transition and the inheritance of the Franco period in *La mala educación* reproduces an urban legend that circulated during the Transition. According to the legend, the state was clandestinely promoting the trafficking of strong narcotics into the Basque Country in order to quell radical separatist sentiment and activity there.<sup>59</sup> Although the veracity of this claim is doubtful, and not the concern of this investigation, its currency as a national myth was strong enough to provoke a reaction out of more than one artist. In his 1992 collection of poems, *Heroína y otros poemas*, Leopoldo María Panero flatly rejected the possibility that the state was directing heroin towards the Basque Country.<sup>60</sup> Contrary to Panero, in his desire to portray transgressions beyond regional and political marks of identity that are positioned as intrinsically in conflict, Eloy de la Iglesia, in his 1983 film *El Pico (The Shot)*, and its sequel *El Pico 2* (1984), foments the mythic connection between the state and the circulation of addictive substances towards a region conceived as a threat to national security.

Both Panero's poetry and De la Iglesia's films portray drug use as reflecting a will towards the death of the self, one that might have the potential of opening up the individual to new forms of community. But in conjunction with its tendency to propel the subject towards

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<sup>59</sup> "Droga y Política." DVD Special Feature, *El Pico*, by Eloy de la Iglesia.

<sup>60</sup> On Leopoldo María Panero, read *El contorno del abismo: vida y leyenda de Leopoldo María Panero*, by J. Benito Fernández, and *Leopoldo María Panero, el último poeta*, by Tuá Blesa.

death, drug use is also representationally bound to a problematic reproduction of masculinity and the body politic through normative sexuality. In other words, machismo, it seems, is as closely tied to and invested in the liberal market as it was exhibited and enforced by the sovereign, and it is a major force of resistance to the transformative potentiality of the new biopolitical order. A reading of José Angel Mañas's 1994 novel *Historias del Kronen* further corroborates the thematic interstices between drug use, masculine domination, and a preoccupation with the question of sexual normativity, whose intersections represent one of the biopolitical contexts for and political valences of drug use during the Transition and into democracy. While community building, especially through hormones, for example, or perhaps through heroin in the monastery in the case of Almodóvar's *Entre Tinieblas*, seems to be another potential objective for and result of drug use in the Transition,<sup>61</sup> in the aforementioned case-studies the problems of death and the reproduction of masculinity in order to exert a mastery over the market for drugs destroys any potential achievement of a new community. If biopolitical power has shifted away from the sovereign, and towards the "people" via mediation by the market(s), it remains subject to the structuring dictates of a prevailing machismo, in these examples, that destroy the potential genesis of mutually vulnerable communities by recourse to an auto-immunitary response.

After disavowing the myth of the drugging of the Basque people by the state, Leopoldo María Panero proposes both a philosophical reading of heroin use, and an alternative enemy that represents, for him, a much greater threat to the well-being of the individual than the narcotic:

Pero detrás de la trágica pantomima del suicidio, que es lo que en pocas palabras formula la heroína, aparece algo mucho menos respetable que se llama todavía proyecto hombre. Algo que empuja más hacia la muerte que la heroína y con

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<sup>61</sup> For a discussion of one such instance in Australia exemplified through gay tea dance parties, specifically during the AIDS crisis, see Kane Race's *Pleasure Consuming Medicine* (28).

muchísima menos valentía: la destrucción sistemática y metódica de la propia imagen, de la propia estima y del propio respeto hacia uno mismo como hombre: esto es lo que se llama proyecto hombre. (409)

But behind the tragic pantomime of suicide, which is what, in few words, heroin constitutes, appears something much less respectable that nevertheless is called project man. Something that drives more towards death than heroin and with much less bravery: the systematic and methodical destruction of the self image, of self-esteem and of the very respect towards oneself as a man: this is what one calls project man.

For Panero, heroin use is a tragic and spectacular reproduction of suicide. In other words, it is a vehicle for experiencing something like suicide, an escape from the political and personal conditions of everyday life, through the senses. Opposed to this individual drive towards death, and, implicitly, the reinvention of the self, is the systematic destruction of the self by “project man.” While “proyecto hombre” is undoubtedly a reference to the NGO, Proyecto Hombre, established in Spain in 1985 to prevent, treat, and rehabilitate those suffering from drug addiction, Panero’s insistence on writing the name in the lower case and the political references he includes in the piece suggests that there is more behind his use of “project man.” Proyecto Hombre’s main goal in its rehabilitation of its patients is to reinsert them into the social order as fully functioning individuals.<sup>62</sup> The “project man” that Panero is referring to is not just the NGO, then, but might also be read as the dominant social order that demands its citizens fulfill certain roles. While not the state, per se, it is the cultural and social normativization of bodies

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<sup>62</sup> See, <http://www.proyectohombre.es/>

and the citizenry, which frames humanity that presents the most salient danger to the well-being of the individual.

Underlining reactionary ideas for eliminating the drug problem, Panero acerbically notes, “Así, uno de los sistemas que se han ideado para la liberación de la droga es la prohibición de los vaqueros, de las anillas, del pelo largo, en otras palabras de la juventud, que no espera ver cambiada su agresividad natural por un sistema que sustituye la droga por algo que es igual que ella, la esperanza del suicidio” (409). (So, one of the systems they have invented for liberation from drugs is the prohibition of jeans, rings, and long hair, in other words, of youth, that does not wish to see its natural aggressiveness changed for a system that substitutes drugs for something that is the same as them, the hope of suicide.) Panero locates youth at the figural epicenter of what is identified in public discourses as the drug crisis. He is challenging the easily proposed correlation between the sartorial signs of youth in rebellion and drug-use, and suggesting that if the state prohibits certain markers of dissident identities, then it will simply be instilling a true will towards self-destruction in individual subjects that is already to be found mobilized in heroin use.

Finally, Panero contends that, “el proyecto hombre realiza al fin esa ‘plot theory’ que el marxismo imaginó proviniendo del papeleo del Estado, culpable de todo menos de eso” (410). (the project man finally realizes this “plot theory” that Marxism imagined emanating from the paperwork of the State, guilty of everything but this.) Now, for the poet, the new scapegoat for the nation, that which inspires disgust from the body politic and serves to divert the attention of its citizens away from the poor material conditions of the political present, is the self-medicating body of youth in revolt. This identification of an enemy replaces the urban legend’s claim of a government-sponsored introduction of drugs into the Basque Country acting as the “opium of the

people” with the notion that the people are first distracted by their concern with problematic youth.

For Panero, it is not the use of narcotics but the discursive mobilization of the notion of a “drug problem” that poses the real threat to the integrity of the national political body. But if the “man project” is opposed to heroin use in Panero’s text, both curiously share the characteristic of the exclusion of women from the collective body. Or, at least, Proyecto Hombre does so in its name. The poems opening this present essay demonstrate that Panero’s heroin-user is a male, perhaps an avatar for the poet himself. This possibility is confused, however, by his insistence that the sport of the poet is to count deer in the fields, while that “de hombre es buscar avaro/ placer en una cuchara/ oro en el excremento/ para que el aullido muera” (414). (of man is to seek miserly/ pleasure in a spoon/ gold in excrement/ so that the howl dies.) Real men pursue the satisfaction of bodily needs and desires, following the poem. If the heroin-user is a male who is attending to the needs and desires of his body, the heroin itself is coded as feminine on multiple occasions. “El jaco es una ramera/ que susurra en la oscuridad/ en mis manos, cuando me pico/ cae el cabello de una mujer” (415). (Junk is a whore/ who whispers in darkness/ in my hands, when I prick myself/ the hair of a woman falls.)

It is not just any woman who comes to embody heroin, either, but a prostitute, one who loses her hair as the man injects her into his body. The act of the drug’s injection itself inspires a certain aura about it both in prose and in its depiction in film. There is an abject curiosity elicited by the needle’s piercing of the skin and penetration into the vein, the pumping of fluid and blood and their eventual retreat into the vein. In another poem, Panero paints the image of “horse” dividing life into two with a sword upon its injection. What remains is, “a un lado el placer sin nada/ y al otro, como mujer vencida/ la vida que despide mal olor” (415). (on one side

pleasure without anything/ and on the other, like a defeated woman/ life that emits a bad odor.) The consumption of heroin, in this formulation, is like the consumption of sexual desire that drives towards the—usually temporary—abandonment of one’s social obligations for the pursuit of pleasure. But what is odd is that this formulation of heroin as a commoditized female betrays precisely the narcotics role in the social, even as its use is described as an individual and self-negating practice. For if horse is a prostitute, then it has to be bought, sold, bargained for, and competed for with other men. It does not remain outside of its own realms of circulation, marketing, and competition. There is no romance between man and woman in this collection of poems. Rather, it is romantic in its florid accounts of the interactions between man and heroin.

Eloy de la Iglesia wished to promote a radical political project in *El Pico*. In his original conceptualization of the film, it was to be a story committed to the opening of new communities and mutations for the body politic through the narration of homosexual love between a member of Spain’s Civil Guard and a Basque separatist.<sup>63</sup> De la Iglesia’s project was impossible to pursue, according to his own telling, due to the continued effects of the old censorship mechanism of the dictatorship through the Transition that prevented him from realizing his preferred version of the film in 1983. He chose to reformulate the story as one centered around two young males in Bilbao. The lead, Paco, is the son of a commanding officer of the Civil Guard, and the other, Urko, is the son of a prominent Basque separatist politician. Rather than being united by an explicit homosexual love—although the character of their relationship, the physical contact between them, and the camera’s framing of their menage à trois with a prostitute all suggest sexual tensions and desires between them—these boys are romantically bound together by their shared heroin use. They deal drugs together to get money to buy narcotics, they share

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<sup>63</sup> See “Droga y politica,” Eloy de la Iglesia.

sex with a woman together, they shower together, they snort cocaine together, they shoot-up for the first time ever together, and, eventually, they become addicts, recover, relapse, and become assassins determined to procure more horse together.

The substitution of a homosexual romance for a heroin addiction on De la Iglesia's part is rather ingenious since both the "perverted" homosexual and the addict have bodies that have been theorized as being propelled by a death drive,<sup>64</sup> and they have been traditionally subsumed in Spanish society by the etiology of what Teresa Vilarós calls "el cuerpo infectado español" (25). (the infected Spanish body.) According to Vilarós:

Es precisamente la capacidad que tiene el cuerpo infectado de situarse más allá de la obediencia—y por lo tanto la posibilidad de reto que en este sentido ofrece—junto con la posibilidad de extender esta desobediencia por medio del contagio, lo que se torna inadmisibile para el represivo estado terapéutico. Desde las persecuciones a las sectas de iluminados del siglo XVII a la persecución explicitada en forma conjuta en el estado franquista contra judíos, masones y comunistas, la disidencia cultural, lingüística, religiosa, política o sexual ha sido traducida y reprimida siempre en España por el Estado como cuerpo contagioso. (250-1)

It is precisely the capacity that the infected body has to situate itself beyond obedience—and in doing so the possibility of a challenge that it offers in this sense—together with the possibility of extending this disobedience by means of contagion, that becomes inadmissible for the repressive therapeutic state. From the persecutions of the Illuminati sects of the seventeenth century to that enacted

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<sup>64</sup> See Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*, for a theorization of the relationship between the queer and the death drive.

by the Francoist state upon the ensemble of Jews, Masons, communists, cultural dissidence: linguistic, religious, political, or sexual, has always been translated and repressed in Spain by the state as a contagious body

It is relevant to note that all of these bodies mentioned by Vilarós have been effeminized by the State, by virtue of their perceived contagious potentialities, and discursively extricated from the masculine sphere by means of an immunizing mechanism.<sup>65</sup> Their delegation to a categorization of contagion and effeminacy facilitates their subjection to the quarantine and persecution that Vilarós details. The addict's body and the homosexual's body are both effeminized due to their inability to participate in homosocial practices of honor. In the context of De la Iglesia's film, they threaten to create links between communities that are constructed in terms of political opposition (namely, nationalist and separatist communities).

While the boys are not explicitly coded as homosexual in the film, they do prostitute themselves, apparently on multiple occasions, to a celebrated Basque sculptor in order to earn money so as to procure more heroin, and they strike up a very complicitous relationship with this individual. Paco and the sculptor are shown in bed together, presumably after making love, smiling and holding each other before Paco gets up to get his fix. His prostituting himself brings

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<sup>65</sup> Timothy Campbell notes in his introduction to his translation of Roberto Esposito's *Bios, Biopolitics and Philosophy* that "Immune is he—and immunity is clearly gendered as masculine in the examples from classical Rome that Esposito cites—who is exonerated or has received a *dispensatio* from reciprocal gift giving. He who has been freed from communal obligations or who enjoys an originary autonomy or successive freeing from a previously contracted debt enjoys the condition of *immunitas*. [...] Immunity connotes the means by which the individual is defended from the 'expropriative effects' of the community, protecting the one who carries it from the risk of contact with those who do not (the risk being precisely the loss of individual identity)" [xi]. In the cases of the homosexual, the addict, and the separatist, they have been expelled from the masculine *munus* due to the threat they represent to the integrity of the nationalist and masculine body. Their differences, of loving men, practicing anal sex, seeking to promote a peripheral regional identity, attending dissident political rallies, inciting violence, seeking pleasure in narcotic use, and injecting substances into their bodies are what pose a danger to the logics of the masculinist national communal body. These expressions of difference are what must be destroyed or contained by the immunizing mechanism of the national body in order to prevent the contamination of its members.

him into a homosexual contact that he does not reject with any disdain, once he has had a few drinks, and also after he flees from the house of his father and needs somewhere to stay. When Paco's father the Civil Guard commander realizes that his son has been lodging with a "maricón," even after he has learned that the sculptor has helped detoxify him from his heroin addiction, the officer immediately interrogates the artist: "¿¡Que ha tenido usted que ver con Paco!? ¿¡De qué le conoce!?" ... No le cuente nada, este individuo no es de fiar." (What have you had to do with my son? How do you know him? ... Do not tell him anything, this individual is not to be trusted!)

The sculptor does not contest or contradict the commander's distrust, but rather, accepts it and reaffirms his distance from the body of the national police. "Tiene razón el comandante," he says, "no me cuentes nada Martín. Los individuos como yo, nunca gozaremos de la confianza de la Guardia Civil." (The commander is right, do not tell me anything Martin. Individuals like myself will never enjoy the confidence of the Civil Guard.) The father's homosexual panic is especially remarkable, given that by this point in the narrative he has more or less come to terms with his son's heroin addiction, and he has become determined to take absolutely whatever steps are necessary<sup>66</sup> to help him both overcome his addiction and avoid facing social recriminations for his habit. It is no coincidence that the scene in which Paco "comes out" to his father as a heroin addict evokes both the unveiling of the open secret of "homosexuality"—visually depicted by his disclosure of his injection marks to his father—and the patriarchal rebuke against dissident

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<sup>66</sup> This determination to help the boy by any means, even through the violation of the laws and codes of honor he is sworn and determined to protect, is captured cinematographically in a shot in which the commander is walking into his dispatch in the headquarters of the Civil Guard. As he walks into the building, the camera lingers on a sign above him with writing superimposed on the national colors that reads "Todo para la patria" ("All for the Fatherland"). This visual reference serves to confirm both this determination at the level of individual and family melodrama, and its allegorization onto the national body, clearly alluding to the drug-trafficking state myth. It is also corroborated by the observation of the sculptor, who proclaims his surprise at seeing the Basque politician and the Civil Guard commander together, saying "A lo que se ve, cuando se trata de defender a la familia, todo es posible" (It would see that when it comes to defending the family, anything is possible").

masculine behavior. But for all of the father character's dynamism in regards to his son's drug habit, Paco's father cannot accept that he has been in the company of a "faggot," and, what is more, he seems to immediately suspect the sculptor of having corrupted the youth.

All of the commander's preoccupations about his son's sexual and masculine identity seem to be exaggerated and misplaced, though. Even if Paco has whored himself out to a "maricón," and even if his body is clearly represented as being that of an "addict"—replete with withdrawal symptoms, cold shivers, etc.—the narrative development of the plot insists on the assertion of Paco's masculinity. By the end of the film he even participates in the reproduction of patriarchy and the state through his drug use and trafficking. While his friend Urko dies of an overdose near the end of *El Pico*, Paco survives and is, at first, protected by his father from the consequences of his role as Urko's collaborator in the assassination of a drug-dealing couple. The friends murder the dealers after they relapse together and are bent on doing whatever it takes to procure more of the drug. But this couple is not just any pair of drug dealers, they have tight ties and a mutually beneficial arrangement with members of the Civil Guard, and it is implied that they are working in conjunction with the police to supply heroin to the volatile region.

In *El Pico 2*, the sequel to the first film, Paco is separated from his father again, first by force when he is taken to prison for the murder of the dealers—he is released due to his father's negotiations with corrupt judges and threats to the witness of the crime—and then by his own volition when he leaves home to become a delinquent and continue satisfying his cravings for heroin with a friend he has made in prison. Again, he is sodomized in his attempt to procure more heroin, this time through prison rape. But Paco ultimately winds up in an oedipal situation that reasserts his masculinity in which he enables the assassination of his father in a final shoot-out. He ends up replacing the drug dealer and his family that he murdered, with his own family.

He and his wife have a baby, and they work together in collusion with the Civil Guard that his father belonged to moving more drugs. Ultimately, heroin's effect of giving "la paz" (peace<sup>67</sup>) that Paco describes in the first segment of *El Pico* serves no use in procuring peace for the social body, because Paco must enact violence, and reinsert himself into the patriarchal sphere that he has "come out" of in order to procure more of the drug for himself. In De la Iglesia's film masculinity, the state, the family, and drug use, are mutually compatible and supporting elements of the body politic all along. Perhaps this is not surprising given the fact that De la Iglesia reports he was attempting to rid himself of his own heroin addiction during the making of the film, and due to his insistence on the possibility of the veracity of the myth of the state supplying narcotics to the Basque Country.

*Historias del Kronen (The Kronen Chronicles)* [1994] by José Angel Mañas is another text that links drug consumption to a culture of masculine domination that is enabled and regulated by the impulses and dictates of the market and the frenetic youth culture that arises out of the late stages of the Transition, during the consolidation of democracy. If masculine domination surfaces in *El Pico*, especially in the drug dealer's abuse of his wife, it is tempered—albeit reinforced—by the adoration that all of the family, including Paco, demonstrates for Paco's dying mother. In Mañas's novel, however, there is no respite from or softened mitigation of misogyny. Carlos, who appears to be the main character, and his group of male friends, refer to all women as "cerdas" (pigs). Carlos does not demonstrate any respect for his mother, nor does he demonstrate any respect for the women he sleeps with, courts, or abuses.

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<sup>67</sup> The political implications of the word choice of "peace" as a description for the effects of the drug are made explicit in the film when Paco describes the peace that heroin use brings as "esa paz de que tanto hablan" ("that peace of which they speak so much"). The viewers recognize the political discourse he is referring to from the sound-bites from the news that appear at the beginning of the film, discussing the prospective of sustained peace for the Nation and the Basque Country, government negotiations with ETA, etc.

This disrespect for women, which accompanies a depreciation of family, history, politics, and anything but “movida” and “marcha” is portrayed alongside of a desire to obtain more drugs, to drink in more bars, and to sleep with more women. But often the quest for more drugs takes precedence over the desire for sex. One of Carlos’s friends proposes that they should leave Spain and “irse a Amsterdam y montar un burdel con dos o tres putas. Tu novia y la mía, Miguel, por ejemplo, y que nos den las pelás luego para ponernos” (58). (go to Amsterdam and set up a bordello with two or three whores. Your girlfriend and mine, Miguel, for example, and they will give us the money then so we can get our fix.) He is suggesting that they pimp out their couples in order to have more money in order to procure more drugs. When one of the girlfriends objects and says that they could also pimp out the men to make money, there is a firm rejection of this possibility. “Tú eres mi novia y yo meto, no me importa dónde, pero no me dejes meter. A mí la mierda no me la busca nadie” (58). (You are my girlfriend and I stick it in, it doesn’t matter where, but I don’t let anyone stick it in me. No one messes with my shit.) When Carlos’s friend Roberto hears this statement he turns pale because he is a homosexual, and he apparently is not as put-off by the idea of sodomy, but he does not “out” himself to the group. In fact, his homosexuality remains an open secret to everyone but the reader through the very end of the novel. Roberto is often complaining about how the guys are always chasing girls, and whenever they reproach him for being odds with the group and not participating in these pursuits he claims that he is not weird, just a misogynist. Like in Panero’s formulation of woman as heroin, in this text, falling in love with a girl is like being hooked, and woman is a drug. Roberto claims, talking about Pedro: “Para él esa tía es como una droga, necesita estar a todas horas con ella” (89). (For him this girl is like a drug, he needs to be with her at all hours.)

While some “weak” men cannot separate themselves from the women they are in love with in the novel, Carlos and his friend Miguel do not understand why anyone would immigrate from Morocco to Spain when smoking marijuana is so easily achieved in Morocco. They lament the fact that they cannot smoke in Spain, and Miguel complains, “–Si es que esto es Europa: el cinturón de seguridad, prohibido fumar porros, prohibido sacar litros a la calle....Al final, ya veréis, vamos a acabar bebiendo horchata pasteurizada y comiendo jamón Serrano cocido. Yo es que alucino” (204). (Yes this is Europe: the seatbelt, no smoking pot, no drinking in the streets...In the end you will see...we are going to end up drinking pasteurized horchata and eating cooked Serrano ham. I can’t believe it.) Miguel draws attention to the new biopolitical regulations placed upon consumers, enacted not just by the democratic Spanish state, but by the country’s recent entry into the European Union. He draws attention to the regulation of what consumers put into their bodies. But it is not just the state’s restrictions that are prohibiting Miguel’s enjoyment of drugs. When—after Miguel’s rant about the new restrictions imposed by the EU—the apathetic, apolitical, and well-off Carlos tells Miguel that he does not want to discuss politics with him anymore, just sex, drugs, and rock and roll, Miguel firmly reminds Carlos of how he needs money to enjoy all of those things. “Hablemos ahora de drogas: me encantan, me encanta estar colocado, pero resulta que para eso tengo que tener dinero, y mi dinero no se lo pido a papá como el señor Carlos, sino que tengo que ganármelo en el trabajo” (205). (Let’s talk now about drugs: I love them, I love to be high, but as it turns out I need to have money for this, and I can’t just ask daddy for my money like Mr. Carlos, no I have to earn it by working.) Miguel draws attention to the fact that his own employment of his body and its relationship to the bodies of other men is regulated not just by laws governing consumption but also by his

relationship to the demands of the market. Competition, winners, and losers, all determine who gets to consume what, and under what terms, in the liberal biopolitical regime.

The novel's most disturbing episode occurs when Carlos kills a diabetic friend, Fierro, at the latter's birthday party in front of all of his friends by tying him down and force-feeding him a bottle of whisky, while Carlos himself is high on coke, acid, and a considerable amount of alcohol. The drugs are employed by the group of friends as an excuse for this murder, they render it an "accident," and they facilitate the friends' replication of the "pact of forgetting" that was a foundational moment of the Transition. "Los del grupo lo sabían todos" (Those in the group they all knew it), Roberto tells his psychologist, "incluso David y Guille, que habían venido para la ocasión. Era como un pacto mudo uniéndonos. Nadie cambió la versión que habíamos acordado" (236). (including David and Guille, that had come for the occasion. It was like a muted pact uniting us. Nobody changed the version that we had agreed upon.) All of these friends decide that they are going to protect Carlos and themselves by insisting on telling the story that Fierro died because he started to drink alcohol even when he knew he should not be doing so because he was diabetic.

In addition to being a diabetic, Fierro was a masochist, and also a homosexual. He was a more obvious homosexual than Roberto, even though everyone also suspects Roberto's sexuality throughout the narrative, and Carlos expresses disgust for Fierro after he has realized he has killed him. He is disgusted with him because he is weak and he has ruined the high of the drugs, and of the excited movement of the evening. He screams at the dying boy, "Mierda de Fierro. Otro débil. ¿Cómo te atreves a montar todo este cisco por un poco de güisqui? Debería darte vergüenza. Eres un débil. ¡UN DEBIL!, ¿ME OYES? ¡UNA MIERDA DE HOMBRE! MERECE QUE TE ESTAMPE LA CABEZA CONTRA EL SUELO Y QUE TE LA PISOTEE

HASTA QUE TE MUERAS DE VERDAD” (223). (Shithead Fierro, another weakling. How dare you create a stink for a little bit of whisky? You should be ashamed. You’re a weakling. A WEAKLING! DO YOU HEAR ME? A SHIT OF A MAN! YOU DESERVE TO HAVE YOUR HEAD SLAMMED TO THE GROUND AND WALKED ON UNTIL YOU DIE FOR REAL.) Fierro was actually dead, and even though Carlos insists to his friends that he was joking after he says this, nobody could have possibly believed him.

The texts of Pedro Almodóvar, Leopoldo María Panero, Eloy de la Iglesia, and José Angel Mañas offer up ample material for reflection on the interstices between the reformulated biopolitics of the democratic state in Spain, the use of drugs in the youth cultures of the Transition, and the violence reproduced by a machismo that seems to emanate from competition for drugs within both the underground and the free markets. While further inquiry is necessary to determine whether or not there were also cultural uses of drugs that served to foment new and alternative forms of community in the Transition, such as communities in which women are granted an equal role with men and communities open to contact with those traditionally delimited as contagious bodies, the materials in these case-studies all point towards a production of masculine violence that originates not in the use of these substances themselves, but in the quest to obtain them in the market and sustain their use.

These texts, then, propose a form of continuity between the biopolitical situation of the dictatorship and that established during the democracy. This is not to say that the situation of the body was the same under the dictatorship and the Transition, it is not, there are definite mutations in the exercise of biopolitical power across the two political regimes. But, rather, it is to point out that the liberation brought about for bodies after the death of Franco, the jolt of ecstasy that brought about a state of euphoria and a new sense of possibilities for the body and

the body politic, did not liberate the cultural sphere and, therefore, the body, from the impulses and confines of machismo, masculine violence, and masculine domination, which reproduce themselves in the democratic era as echoes of the violence of the authoritarian regime.

## Chapter IV

### **Maculate Conceptions: Children and HIV/AIDS in Recent Spanish Cinema**

In the late nineties, after nearly two decades of silence on the subject, Spanish Cinema finally brought HIV/AIDS out of its celluloid closet.<sup>68</sup> And, in its first explicit engagements with the virus and representations of the human suffering caused by AIDS, it brought along a slew of children. HIV-positive children, children who avoid transmission of HIV from their mothers, children who “neutralize” the virus in infancy, and children who witness the effects of AIDS populate the films touching the matter. Why are portrayals of the young aligned with HIV/AIDS in these movies? What cultural discourses account for their consistent presence in the small cinematic archive naming the disease?

Beyond representing perinatal HIV transmission as a social problem, the uses of binding kids to HIV/AIDS in these films are twofold: first, they fulfill a redemptive function—promising a future beyond adult mortality, unharmed by the ravages of the pandemic. This optimistic mobilization of youth risks enacting a politically retrograde occultation of the current and historical suffering inflicted by HIV/AIDS. Portraying children and HIV also presents a vehicle for disturbing dominant cultural phobias around HIV transmission itself. In their bodily rejections of viral inheritances, and in their receptivity towards alternative configurations of the family, these films employ children to denaturalize maternity, paternity, and the threat of the inevitable organic lethality of HIV/AIDS in favor of emphasizing new technologies and matrices

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<sup>68</sup> Almodóvar references AIDS in a cursory manner in *Tacones lejanos* in 1991.

of care. While not denying pain and suffering, such cinematic representations mark a gradual turn away from what have previously been described as “fatal strategies” for representing HIV/AIDS in Spanish cultural production. Maculate conceptions, portrayals of children with HIV/AIDS in Spanish cinema forgo the political strategy of revealing the most piercing, the most difficult visible realities of AIDS, such as visible pain, lesions, and wasting, in favor of evoking alternative communities and affinities of support between vulnerable, permeable bodies.

Critics have consistently remarked that the most salient characteristic of the cultural response to HIV/AIDS in Spain over the course of three decades has been silence.<sup>69</sup> Explanations for this hush range from the initial prevalence of infections amongst intravenous drug users, to the lack of a politically visible LGBT community in the first years of the pandemic. Homosexuals, according to this narrative, favored the strictures of the post-Franco closet—in which everything was permissible as long as it was not spoken—to the marginalizing stigma that inevitably accompanies minority communities in identity politics.<sup>70</sup> The liberalism of the eighties—which coincided with the identification of the pandemic—and its significance as

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<sup>69</sup> In 1995, Ricardo Llamas writes: “Salvo testimonios excepcionales como los de Alberto Cardín, Pepe Espaliú y Manuel Piña, y los incansables alegatos contra la marginación y el estigma que desde los Comités Ciudadanos Anti-SIDA se lanzan periódicamente, diríase que en España nadie ha tenido o tiene sida. Por lo demás, voces distorsionadas y rostros ocultos en la penumbra. ... Como decía en 1992 un grupo madrileño de liberación sexual y de lucha contra el sida, La Radical Gai, esta enfermedad parece ser “El mal de los fantasmas” (XII).

Smith echoes his observation, in 96, remarking “Spain has the highest increase in rate of HIV transmission in Europe; and it has the second highest incidence of HIV infection of any European Union country. Yet the epidemic has been overwhelmingly silent, invisible” (Vision Machines 101).

<sup>70</sup> Alberto Mira writes, in “Esta noche...SIDA,” “... en un país como España, donde el armario es una institución y el respeto a la intimidad del homosexual se ha llevado a cotas algo absurdas tanto por parte de homosexuales a quienes no preocupa llevar una doble vida como por parte de heterosexuales a quienes no quieren ver otras opciones de deseo, por miedo a que la suya propia quede cuestionada ... Manifestar la condición de seropositivo comparte mucho aspectos con la problemática de declararse públicamente homosexual ... Aquí conviene recordar la intervención de Pedro Almodóvar en el program de Mercedes Milá ... En defensa del derecho a la intimidad de Miguel Bosé, Almodóvar adujo que si bien le parecía perfecto que Magic Johnson hubiera hecho pública su condición, no se podía pedir a nadie que lo hiciera ...” (152).

the first decade of democracy after a long dictatorship, also may have motivated a national will to avoid connotations of a divided or sickly body politic. Whatever the causes, it has been observed on repeated occasions that Spain did not produce a literature around AIDS like France or the US, or an activist movement with the energy or organizational efficacy of ACT-UP.

If the media “strategy” of silence around HIV/AIDS was, indeed, intended to prevent the circulation of phobic discourses about and responses to Persons with AIDS (PWA), it failed miserably, as one would expect. This is evident, for example, in a series of newspaper article vignettes that betray local anxieties around the pandemic, often articulated in the form of rumor until metastasized into national news. Ricardo Llamas outlines panic headlines related to AIDS in schools in *Construyendo sidentidades*:

“Una guardería de Lérida exige la prueba del sida a una niña negra” (El País, 22/12/91). Y la niña debió demostrar la limpieza de su sangre (también roja, también pura) para acallar el clamor. “42 alumnos de preescolar de un colegio almeriense dejan de ir a clase por creer que una niña tiene sida” (*ibid.*, 13/1/95). Según se extendía el rumor, más niños eran mantenidos en casa por sus progenitores. La niña ya había demostrado su pureza, pero padres y madres exigían un segundo “análisis de urgencia”; todo ello tan ilegal como irracional. (29)

“A nursery in Lérida demands an AIDS test of a black girl.” (El País, 22/12/91). And the child had to demonstrate the purity of her blood (also red, also pure) to calm the clamor. ‘42 Almerian preschool students stop going to class, believing that a girl has AIDS’ (*ibid.*, 13/1/95). As the rumor extended, more children were kept home by their parents. The child already had demonstrated her purity, but

the fathers and mothers demanded a second “emergency test”; all of which was just as illegal as it was irrational.

Mira similarly notes the hysteria and preoccupation surrounding AIDS and children:

“recordemos la proliferación de noticias en torno a niños seropositivos. De repente en diversas zonas de España, algunos niños empezaron a verse acusados, justo o injustamente, de *tener el sida* (149). (let’s remember the proliferation of news surrounding HIV-positive children.

Suddenly in diverse zones of Spain, some children started to see themselves accused, justly or unjustly, of *having AIDS*.) Mira argues that such a focus on children took emphasis away from risk groups that needed information and help.

Gossip, value-judgments, and mythologies abounded about AIDS while the government and health authorities remained silent, producing an “epidemic of signification,” not unlike that which Paula Treichler critiqued in the US. If reactions to the epidemic were “silent,” then it is only because they were muted—whether due to administrative order or group consensus—by the national television, the publishing industry, and film production apparatuses. Otherwise, AIDS was a favorite topic for wagging tongues. It generated discourse while appearing to be silent, and it was mobilized to signal out and accuse bodies.

Artists were not entirely silent in the face of HIV/AIDS in Spain either, but most worked from the margins of institutional cultural production. By now, scholarship from inside and outside of the peninsula has demonstrated the pandemic’s impacts on Spanish literature, theory, local activism, and photography. Though the creators who engaged the pandemic were the exception rather than the rule, their work collectively points towards a common approach for representing AIDS in Spain. Paul Julian Smith groups such approaches under the provocatively titled rubric of “fatal strategies:”

Spanish tend to appeal to indirect and metaphorical techniques ... the latter (such techniques) stress the need to achieve a reconciliation with death, even to the extent of replicating those myths of AIDS which educators seek most energetically to undermine: the generalized horror of the body and of physicality; the fantasy of unlimited transmission (in Haro,<sup>71</sup> by mosquito); the obsession with decay and putrefaction. I call this tendency (after Baudrillard) ‘fatal strategies,’ in the twin sense, suggested by his translator, of inevitability and mortality. (104)

A morbid embrace of death, destruction, and the precarity of the body defines Spanish cultural responses to AIDS. Making spectacle of that which is to remain hidden—the suffering, wounded, dying body—is a strategy for insisting on a political visibility and attention towards the harm caused by AIDS.

Without resorting to such generic etiquettes, Smith is underlining the *esperpento* and *tremendismo* currents in such work. His analysis proposes continuities in AIDS representation with a Spanish tradition of social critique through abject distortion and displays of brutal violence inflicted on the body. He reads this trend in a novel by Eduardo Haro Ibars, cultural theory by Alberto Cardín and José Miguel G. Cortés, and performance art by Pepe Espaliú. Similarly, Brad Epps, in *Significant Violence*, analyses the 1988 novel *Las virtudes del pájaro solitario* by Juan Goytisolo as an AIDS allegory that portrays “a disturbing picture of the demise of what Goytisolo presents as homosexual pleasure: what was once the ‘flaming and fleeting paradise’ of the sauna has now given way to the ‘apocalypse of the black chamber’ or dark room” (424). In other words, rather than challenge the contaminating association between homosexuality and HIV/AIDS in homophobic discourse, Goytisolo chooses to intensify it. He aligns homosexual contamination and suffering with the “mystico-poetic” tradition of San Juan

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<sup>71</sup> Smith is referring to the work of Eduardo Haro Ibars, specifically a short novel entitled, *Intersecciones*.

de la Cruz, and offers them as occasions for the shattering of the self (390, 440). While doing so, Epps remarks, Goytisolo “refigures death, the final term in the equation (*desire=disease=death*), as something less fearful, less final; that he flecks the ruin of history with a glimmer of redemption (422). Goytisolo too employs, then, a “fatal strategy” for allegorizing HIV/AIDS.

Patricia Keller and Jonathan Snyder have noted the puncturing visual qualities of the work of photographer Alberto García-Alix, who evokes AIDS bodily wasting and illness in his portraits. “By questioning how these photographs urge a viewer to look at and turn away from displays of wounded, injected, and otherwise unsightly bodies,” they demonstrate the ways “in which photography interrogates modes of seeing, as well as the medium’s potential to make visible a pandemic that by and large remains ‘unseen’ within a so-called ‘cultural stage of activity’ in contemporary Spain” (3-4). The provocation of visual fascination and repulsion towards vulnerable flesh, or the sacralization and abjection of the body, in the exposition of HIV/AIDS in Spanish photography, then, also parallels the “pleasure in immoral ecstasy and spirals of intensity, insisting on the monstrous and the secret” (104) identified by Smith in cultural responses to the pandemic.

Although, as it should now be evident, critics have explored a variety of artistic mediums that lend credence to Smith’s “fatal strategies,” analyses of Spanish film have been strikingly absent from such discussion. In fact, in 1996 Smith remarks, “In Spanish cinema (still substantially state-supported), there have been no mainstream films which have served to promote discussion of AIDS in the public sphere; nor have there been major independent filmmakers willing or able to tackle the theme” (101). This was about to change in 1997, with the release of *La buena estrella*, directed by Ricardo Franco. But such a shift would not be

dramatic enough to merit much consideration from novelist and AIDS activist Ibon Larrazabal, who dismissively writes in his 2011 *El paciente ocasional: una historia social del SIDA*, “El cine español apenas ha abordado el tema del VIH/sida, si bien la enfermedad ha sido un elemento básico (aunque no el fundamental) en algunas películas como *La buena estrella*, de Ricardo Franco (1997), *Todo sobre mi madre*, de Pedro Almodóvar (1999), o *Cachorro*, de Miguel Albadealejo (2004)” (159). (Spanish cinema has barely touched the theme of HIV/AIDS, even if the disease has been a basic element (although not fundamental) of some movies like *The Lucky Star* by Ricardo Franco (1997), *All About my Mother*, by Pedro Almodóvar (1999), or *Bear Cub*, by Miguel Albadejo (2004).) *El bola* by Acheró Mañas (2000), and *El orfanato*, by Juan Antonio Bayona (2007) could be added to this cursory list. What is remarkable about this archive, is that in addition to representing the small totality of films discussing HIV/AIDS, all of these movies are heavily invested in a reflection on the child. But criticism has failed to account for a discussion of HIV/AIDS in Spanish film. Larrazabal devotes, for example, his chapter on “AIDS in Cinema” to films and television movies from the US, UK, France, and Australia.

Given the flagrant absence of HIV/AIDS from previous cinematic production, we should be more careful in deciding how fundamental an acknowledgment of the disease is to these films. In such circumstances, even the most fleeting reference could be read as central. What is more, the observation that official discursive silences around the pandemic did not prevent an “epidemic of signification” through rumor, gossip, and urban legend, means that earlier cinema in which HIV/AIDS are not mentioned, but the “fatal strategies” described by Smith are displayed, might betray the pandemic as an undercurrent of reflection.<sup>72</sup> But identifying the trace of such cinema produced in the wake of AIDS panic, or the insertion of the pandemic in the

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<sup>72</sup> Thanks to David Caron for teaching me how one can read films from the 80s and 90s in this way.

cultural imaginary, lies beyond the scope of this chapter, even if it will gesture towards where such an endeavor might begin. Rather than attempt to systematically account for traces of HIV/AIDS in Spanish cinema, I will develop a model for thinking about its influences, both explicit and metaphorical, through the repetitive mediating presence of the child in the small film archive that dares to mention HIV/AIDS in Spain. The three films Larrazabal dismisses nicely synthesize this archive, with *La buena estrella* springing from concerns of the early 90's, *Cachorro* representing a reconceptualization of the pandemic in the new millennium, and *Todo sobre mi madre* artfully reflecting on the bodily precarity of the family at stake in all three.

First, though, let us examine two antecedents in Almodóvar's cinema which evoke HIV/AIDS before *Todo sobre mi madre*. In 1986, one year before the release of Adrian Lyne's *Fatal Attraction* in the US, Pedro Almodóvar created a film that provided a much more challenging, and ironic, reflection on desire, death, and violence, entitled *Matador*. The American press would almost instantly characterize the former as a morality tale on the dangers of promiscuity and marital infidelity in the age of AIDS. So far *Matador* has evaded any such association with HIV/AIDS. This could be because it is a comedy, but it seems more likely due to the close identification in the film between the fatally intertwined lovers and Spain itself. (The movie opens to a renowned and retired Spanish bullfighter masturbating to scenes of gore and violence against women— bloody slasher flicks which include a homemade snuff video). Almodóvar is exploiting AIDS-era associations between desire and death. But, rather than link such a drive with homosexuals, or heroin addicts, as both the official and unofficial discourses require, he turns it back on an iconic cultural figure of Spanish tradition, the *matador*, and his lover, the liberated female of the Transition. Thus, in 1986, Almodóvar too employs the fatal strategy, but only to subvert it and cast it off as belonging to the nation. A strict *Opus Dei* cilice-

wearing mother, juxtaposed to a runway-walking mother, and a fashion show entitled *España dividida* confirm the chain of association. It is not homosexuality or pleasure-seeking in itself that kills; they are not the *matador*. It is pleasure-seeking in violence that kills.

Five years later, Almodóvar directly references HIV/AIDS in *Tacones lejanos*. After a scene of “unsafe” sex, that will lead to pregnancy, the camera cuts to a newspaper with a photograph of a bloody bullfight. An elderly, mother, browsing the paper and looking for articles on her favorite celebrities to add to her scrapbooks, says, off-camera “Uy los toros, pobrecillos.” (Oh, bulls, poor things.) She then tells her son, a judge who performs multiple characters who act as his own informants—and whom was one of the participants in the aforementioned sex scene—, “Me alegra de que has vuelto a casa ... Ay, Eduardo, hijo, qué mala cara tienes, ¿estás malo tú también?” (I’m glad you have come home ... Oh, Eduardo my boy, you look bad. Are you sick too?) He responds that they are both fine, implying that she is a hypochondriac. She says with all that he is out and about “no me extrañaría que hubieras cogido algo. Te has hecho ya la prueba del sida?” (I wouldn’t be surprised if you caught something. Have you taken the AIDS test yet?) She then announces that if he has not had the test, then she will get it. Irritated, the son asks, “¿pero tú sabes como se contrae esta enfermedad mama?” (Do you know how this disease is contracted mom?) “Tengo derecho, como todo el mundo a saber si soy seropositiva. No sé tú, pero yo no puedo vivir con esta incertidumbre,” the mother retorts. (I have a right, like everyone else, to know if I am HIV positive. I don’t know about you, but I cannot live with that uncertainty.)

*La buena estrella*, by Ricardo Franco, opens in a slaughterhouse. The viewer witnesses a number of cows being run through a factory line, in which each of their limbs and organs are removed or cut into pieces by various tools and machines, manned by blood-stained workers.

This sequence concludes by introducing the protagonist, a butcher named Rafael, who has come to purchase some meat in bulk. Simultaneously, it prepares us for a number of dismemberments that typify the narrative. Unlike the visual massacre of the dead cow, most of these other bodily amputations take place off-camera in the distant past, or at another location—except for the dramatic climax of the film.

On his way home from the abattoir, Rafael saves a girl nicknamed “la tuerta” (one-eye), from a brutal beating at the hand of her boyfriend, Daniel, by threatening him with a butcher’s knife. Such a knife castrated Rafael, we later learn, in an occupational accident, and left him unable to reproduce. Marina, the girl he saved, is pregnant when he brings her home. She lost her eye when she was a young child, fighting with another girl who stabbed her with a fork. Violence appears to be a constant in her life. Daniel was beating her because he wants her to abort the child they conceived together. They were orphans, fused together in the school of hard knocks to the point of becoming fatally entwined lovers. In the foundations of the plot, then, there is an eye that has been stabbed, testicles that have been castrated, and a fetus that someone desires to abort. The images of the butchered cow reveal themselves to be ridden with anxiety about the precarity of the body.

Similar anxiety is demonstrated about the future health of the unborn child. Rafael invites Marina to live with him after rescuing her, and to form a family by claiming her future child as his own. Because of the rough life Marina and Daniel lived on the streets, and the latter’s incursions into crime and drugs, there is concern that Marina and the baby might be HIV-positive. Eager to make love, she insists that Rafael read the results of her HIV-test after his return from work one day. “Anticuerpos HIV, negativo,” he says, “muy bien ahora puedes estar tranquila, que a tu niño no le va a pasar nada malo.” (HIV antibodies, negative, very good, now

you can rest assured that nothing bad is going to happen to your child.) But no such easy tranquility lies in store for the couple. Rafael is intrinsically unsure about his ability to satisfy Marina due to his castration. Unable to perform like her lifelong boyfriend, he is never confident about their lovemaking. To complicate matters much more, after he is released from jail, Daniel shows up at Rafael's house, looking for Marina. He has been beat up on the streets, and does not have anywhere else to go. A bestial passion exists between them that nobody can do anything to prevent. In spite of himself, Rafael lets Daniel live with them for a few days. The visit inevitably turns into a few weeks, and then longer. Rafa leaves Daniel and Marina alone one night, taking their daughter to his sister's house, only to return early and unannounced to find them in bed together.

Rafael still does not throw Daniel out of his house, though, because he is eager to keep Marina. They reorganize their family life in the eyes of the town, claiming that Daniel is Marina's brother and having him work in the butcher shop. Rafael, who had claimed Estrella, the child, as his own daughter, even proposes to take a walk one evening, in order to leave Marina and Daniel alone—insinuating that they could make love in his absence. Unexpectedly, though, Daniel follows him to a tavern where they drink together. He comes to feel some fraternal complicity for his generous host. Underlying tensions, of course, remain. Hunting rabbits in the fields brings Rafa to raise his shotgun at Daniel and tell him that he is thinking about how easy it would be to kill him and leave his body in the field where nobody would find it. He cannot kill Daniel, however, because he is incapable of living with the consequences of murder. Daniel volunteers to leave, as long as he is given a bit of cash for his departure. But when he finally does set out on his own, Marina follows. She abandons child and family until

Daniel is incarcerated for gang violence and crime. When she returns to Rafael's house, she is pregnant with his rival's child for a second time.

Prison life is predictably hard on Daniel. Rafael goes to see him during visiting hours, after his second daughter with Marina has already been born. Their encounter takes place with a thick sheet of glass situated between them so that they cannot have any physical contact with one another. Its separating effects are highlighted when they place their hands upon its sleek surface as if to touch one another. But the ensuing dialogue is framed such that they are always both visible with their heads close together, as the camera shows one of them and the other's face is visible in the reflection of the glass. When one of them is speaking, then, the other's reflection is always captured in the same shot. Daniel starts the conversation optimistically, stating that Rafa knows that "conmigo no pueden ni podrán por mucho tiempo tenerme aquí encerrado." (They aren't able to nor will they be able to keep me locked up here for long.) When Rafael asks what this uncomfortable member of his family needs, he jokingly requests a helicopter. In addition to insisting upon his future freedom, Daniel tells Rafa, "Sabes, aquí hay un montón de tíos de ETA, pero conmigo no se meten." (You know there are a ton of ETA guys in here, but they do not mess with me.) At the start of their conversation, Daniel is both displaying himself as a man capable of keeping dangerous criminals from bothering him, and as a man who is about to reclaim his freedom. But a cough betrays his health throughout the course of the dialogue and undermines the image of robust virility he is expending himself to convey, exposing it as theatre.

When Rafael suggests that Marina visit Daniel sometime in the same manner, the inmate insists that he keep her away from the prison because he could not bear for her to see him in this state. Then he admits, "Rafa, tu eres el único tío legal que he conocido en mi vida." (Rafa, you are the only great guy that I have ever known in my life.) He goes so far as to say that he has

more “cojones” (balls) than men who proclaim how macho they are. Daniel suggests that Rafael has recovered his manhood from castration. But there is something else, he implies, that makes him an incomplete man: “Pero eres un bicho raro, por eso a ti te puedo decir, que han podido conmigo, me han derrotado.” (But you’re an odd duck, that’s why I can tell you, that they had their way with me– they destroyed me.) Rafael is odd in Daniel’s eyes because he has tolerated his presence in his family life, in spite of his making a cuckold out of him. Rafael even implicitly consented that he sleep with his lover, Marina. It does not make sense, according to his set of values, that Rafael would not be jealous enough of Daniel to confront or even kill him. The fact that he can tell Rafael to take care of “nuestras mujeres” (our women), is enough evidence to support his being a man functioning outside of the parameters of masculine honor. What have “they” destroyed that belongs to Daniel in prison, and why can he report what happened to Rafael for being an odd man?

When he is called back to his cell, at the last moment before departing, Daniel admits what has really been “destroyed.” “Hostias. Esta gripe me está jodiendo. Me han roto el culo colega, ahora soy menos hombre que tu.” (Shit. This fever is fucking with me. They broke my ass, brother, and now I am less of a man than you are.) The facade of a free, robust, and embodied masculinity has been shattered as if it were the glass separating the two men itself. Framing their faces together–highlighting the potential homoerotic pulses of their complicity for one another–is reconstituted in this admission as symbolizing homosocial mimetic reflection. Having his “ass broken” in prison makes Daniel less of a man than the castrated Rafa, according to the social gender hierarchy as he understands it. He is looking at his castrated rival, and decides that the other has “more balls” than he does because Rafa shows up to take responsibility for him and now he has been anally violated in prison. We the spectators are looking at both of

them looking at each other simultaneously, as Daniel comes to the foreboding conclusion that being a raped man in his social milieu makes him nothing of a man at all.

The juxtaposition of the fever—which he invokes right before his confession—with his disclosure of rape, implies that Daniel’s sickness emanates from this bodily piercing as well. Suddenly the butchered cows, the stabbed eye, the castrated member, and the HIV-antibodies test, all resonate in the “breaking” of Daniel’s anus—possibly perpetrated by the ETA terrorists already mentioned in the conversation—and insinuate that he has contracted HIV and is sick with an AIDS-related illness. Rafael must fear the same fate for his “friend,” because he makes the sign of the cross as Daniel returns to his cell—appropriately dismissing him from his confession.

That Daniel is sick due to AIDS, is further corroborated when he is released from prison because of an unnamed health condition that is rapidly worsening and leaves him without much time left to live. Having no other family, or home, Daniel is brought back in an ambulance to the house of Marina and Rafael during one of their daughter’s birthday parties. He does not have the strength to walk out of the ambulance without Rafael’s assistance, his body is wasting, and he is taken to convalesce in their bed. His return to their home will not last long. Daniel asks Rafael to grant one request and kill him. “Quiero morir como hombre, no como una mierda.” (I want to die like a man and not like a piece of shit.) Again, his relationship to his ill body is articulated as one of defeated masculinity. One night, when left alone with Marina, he insists that she take Rafael’s shotgun and shoot him in order to release him from his misery. Crying, she brings the rifle up the stairs, points it at him, and the camera fades to black just before we hear the gunshot. Marina dies—of a broken heart, we are led to believe—shortly thereafter. She dies before she can be tried for the murder of Daniel. Rafael says that he, too, would die of sadness, if it were not for his determination to take care of their daughters: “Para que quizás así, pueden tener la buena

estrella que nunca tuvieron sus padres.” (So that maybe they can have the good fortune that their parents never had.)

Ricardo Franco’s film, like other cultural production dealing with HIV/AIDS in Spain, relies on a “fatal strategy” for representing the disease. While one man, Rafael, comes to terms with the reorganization of the traditional family unit— accepting another male lover to compete with the affections of his beloved into his house— that other man is unable to cope with his illness. In this way, the film presents two men faced with the introduction of another into their lives, and their ensuing strategies for coping with this uninvited guest. Both cases cast the introduction of the other as an affront to one’s masculinity. Daniel “plagues” Rafael’s household and symbolizes a threat to its functioning within the social order. The menace then is raped and threatened by his own body’s immune system. But while Rafael manages and survives Daniel, the latter is unable to bear the shame brought about by his illness, and the social implications of his suffering from a disease that undermines his masculine credentials. It will be more manly for him to die from a gun wound, according to his priorities, than from AIDS. This inability to face life is brought about not only by his physical suffering, which is made explicit visually and audibly in the film, but it is also articulated through his perceived degradation of his own masculinity and his inability to reorganize the way he thinks about himself as a man. Ultimately, the castrated “bicho raro” is left to care for the children. Their young girls are explicitly framed as a hope for a better future.

*Cachorro*, (*Bear Cub*, 2004), by Miguel Albaladejo, similarly positions a child as a promise for a better future, but abandons the fatal strategy. Perhaps its creation seven years posterior to that of *La buena estrella*—whose conception dates back even further—which saw seven years of progress in antiretroviral cocktail therapies, converting AIDS into a chronic rather

than fatal disease, for many, is responsible for this shift. Albaladejo's film opens to a series of family photographs, framed and positioned throughout an apartment. The first is an image of a gay "bear" couple—that is, a couple of corpulent, hirsute men—embracing each other as if for a social portrait. One member of this couple, we will later learn, is now dead. The following photographs all seem to be taken from family life: a child is seen in one, an adult male in a black and white portrait in another. Drug paraphernalia and poppers are visible next to the photographs as well, along with condoms and lubricants on the tables where they are positioned. Reflected in the photographs, two bearish men are engaging in all sorts of sexual foreplay on a bed. The family members in the portraits appear to be watching them. The camera cuts to a direct shot of the action when the foreplay ends, and the "top," or insertive partner, reaches for a condom. Little is left to the imagination as we watch the man go through each step and remove the condom from its packaging, position it for placement above his erect penis, and apply lube once it has been placed. It is clear that the filmmaker wants to underline this sealing off of the penis from the sexual act, and the containment of its fluids. The top inserts himself and thrusts until another bear emerges from the bathroom where he has been taking a shower. Pedro, the recently washed man, insists that the other two hurry and finish because he is rushed. "¿Tu familia no sabe que entiendes?" (Doesn't your family know that you are gay?), asks the top. Pedro explains that they do know, but that he does not want to greet them in his apartment with a ménage a trois. After taking just a second to catch their breaths, the other two bears depart and Pedro prepares his apartment for the arrival of his sister and nephew. This preparation includes hiding all evidence of drugs, porn, and gay sex—including picking up a number of condoms from the floor and throwing them away, and stashing pornographic magazines in drawers with drugs.

Good housekeeping aside, the arrival of Pedro's sister, Violeta, suggests that she is much more liberal and liberated than he is. She is about to depart on a trip to India, and uncle Pedro is to watch her beloved son, Bernardo, during her absence. Bernardo is nine, and his mother is convinced that he is gay. The discussion of his nephew as a sexual subject, with a sexuality, makes Pedro very uncomfortable and irritable. His life consists of a very specific routine, as he explains to Violeta, "Pero si sabes que no hago nada especial. Voy a la consulta, salgo con mis amigos, ligo, y me parece que ya está." (But you know that I do not do anything special. I go to the office, I go out with friends, I hook up, and I think that's about it.) He does not visit her in their hometown much at all, and he likes keeping to himself in Madrid. But he is happy to be a responsible uncle and watch the kid while his sister is out of town, and he makes a point of sealing his life off from his gay friends, lovers, and habits while she is away. One more serious lover does spend the weekend with the uncle and his nephew, taking the child to the amusement park, where Pedro informs his lover that they can never be together long term and form a family unit. The absence of the partner in the photo looms large in the friendly, detached, and almost cold way in which Pedro communicates this impossibility to his lover.

Pedro's sense of responsibility for his nephew, and the boy's quarantine from the potentially contaminating effects of the mixture of his sexual life and gay cultural identity, is allegorically paralleled at his dentist practice one day during Violeta's trip to India. Another one of his bear friends, a schoolteacher, comes to have his teeth cleaned. While his teeth are in good condition, Pedro warns him that the back of his tongue is clotted with fungus. His patient does not want to take a prescription to remedy that problem. Rather, like Violeta might—given her tastes for infusions and nontraditional healing methods—he says he prefers a homeopathic solution to the infection. Pedro reminds him, though, "Sabrás que no debes chupar nada ni meter

la lengua en ningún sitio porque se contagian a cualquier mucosa.” (You know you should not suck or put the tongue anywhere because it contaminates any mucose membrane.) By informing his friend that he ought to contain his mouth from whatever pleasures it may seek out until the infection clears, he convinces him to take on a pharmaceutical solution for eliminating it as a problem. In the same way, Pedro succeeds in sterilizing his life for what he feels is the good of his nephew, dedicating himself solely to his care while his mother is away on vacation, and keeping him away from his gay friends, their drugs, and his usually parade of sexual partners. Just as he was horrified by his sister’s suggestion that her son is gay at such a young age, he tries to shield him from the potentially corrupting influences of the signs of his adult sexuality and pleasures.

Or at least this is his intention, until it becomes clear that Violeta will be away for a very long time. She has been caught by the Indian customs and border patrol with illegal substances, and they have imprisoned her indefinitely for her crime. Her drug escapade is a huge disappointment, but not a big surprise for Bernardo, who already knew how to roll a joint thanks to her tutelage. The ministry of “Asuntos Exteriores” (Foreign Affairs) is in charge of her case, and they are not optimistic about the possibility of her return, or her freedom from jail in India. The camera deliberately pauses on the “Asuntos Exteriores” building sign, alluding to the distance now in place between these distinct members of the family, and also referencing the themes of reception and hospitality of the foreign, in their relationship to family, that are established by the opening sequence of the film.

Bernardo, although distressed by the absence of his mother, would be content living with his uncle. Pedro erects another wall in his apartment to give the boy his own room, separated from the rest of the house, which the child decides to paint pink. This time a physical wall is

literally constructed to contain the privacy of the nephew, and to establish a space that is cordoned off as belonging to just him. One night, Pedro's friends manage to "kidnap" the pair to celebrate his birthday. It is the first time that they manage to integrate themselves into their friend's life with his nephew, and the boy meets all of the eccentric bear characters amongst gossip, gay pop music, and big shirtless men dancing. Rather than be too mortified or excited by this scene, he ends up falling asleep early on a couch, and a friend offers to babysit him while the uncle goes to enjoy the night. Everything seems to be back in place, with the new addition of the boy: Pedro is working as a dentist, caring for his nephews, going out with his friends, and, now, even having sex again—at least when his nephew is safe asleep at home.

But another complication challenges this reorganized, precarious, family. Bernardo's paternal grandmother, Doña Teresa, is attempting to spend time with him once again. Violeta has been angry with her ever since the death of the boy's father, and she has prevented her from seeing her grandchild. Doña Teresa takes advantage of Violeta's vacation in India in an attempt to see Bernardo while he is staying at Pedro's house. The young boy refuses to spend time with her, because he knows his mother would not like it. Determined and resourceful, Doña Teresa quickly learns about Violeta's imprisonment when it occurs, and seeks to come to an arrangement so that the boy can split his time between her house in Valencia, and Pedro's apartment in Madrid. When Pedro refuses this arrangement, following the expressed wishes of his nephew, Teresa resorts to more forceful methods of persuasion. She hires a private detective who follows him after his birthday party, and takes photos of him having oral sex with another man under a bridge somewhere in a darkened Madrid. Undaunted by the blackmail, Pedro claims that the man he is coupled with in the photos is the head of children's services for the city.

Doña Teresa finds more convincing means to force the uncle to give up custody of her grandson, however. She obtains his private medical records, and discovers that he is HIV-positive. Her search for his records suggests that she suspected he was ill, and this might be due to the disappearance of his former partner. The phobic response towards the death of a gay partner shapes her strategy of blackmail. Teresa threatens to disclose Pedro's HIV status to his patients, who she claims are unaware that their dentist is HIV-positive. What is supposed to be worse, she promises to reveal this news to Bernardo, who reveres Pedro. To placate her and barter for her silence, Pedro consents to place Bernardo in a boarding school in Valencia where they will split holiday custody and visits with the boy.

If her outrageous blackmail were not bad enough, Teresa reveals Pedro's HIV status to Bernardo while he is at boarding school. His uncle is sick and hospitalized. Bernardo is not at all surprised by the news, on the contrary, he is furious with his grandmother. We learn that Pedro is not the only HIV-positive member of the family. Rather, Violeta, Pedro and even Bernardo are all HIV-positive, and the boy's mother explained this to him some time ago. Bernardo claims that, when he was young, "yo también nací con los anticuerpos y luego se me quitaron y me curé sin tomar medicinas ni nada." (I too was born with the antibodies and later they went away and I was cured without taking medicine or anything.) Teresa is convinced that because of Pedro's condition, he will not be able to care for Bernardo during his vacations, but the boy explains that it is actually he who has been entrusted with the care of his uncle. "Cuando yo estaba con él le cuidaba y le hacía de comer, igual que a mi madre. Si de verdad se ha puesto enfermo es porque tú me has traído aquí. ... Yo le cuidaba, imbécil. Tú no sabes nada." (When I was with him I took care of him and made him food, just like my mother. If he really has gotten ill it is because you brought me here. ... I took care of him, you imbecile. You don't

know anything.) In a shift of roles, the child, quarantined and protected as a vulnerable subject, proclaims himself the caretaker rather than the ward of his uncle.

*Cachorro* ends with a funeral, but it is not a funeral brought about by an AIDS-related illness as the production intentionally attempts to provoke us to believe. In 2004 the fatal strategy is abandoned by Albaladejo for a reflection on illness as a catalyst for a new configuration of family. Doña Teresa dies of old age while Pedro is a high school student in Valencia. It is still not clear if he is heterosexual or homosexual, and the film is quite content to keep this information about the boy undisclosed and his sexuality ambiguous. Pedro is still alive and healthy, and goes to visit the boy who is grieving his grandmother's death. Violeta even reconciled with her ex-mother-in-law before the woman died and writes her son to explain to him how touched she is by the care and love she has demonstrated for him in her absence. Pedro never does couple again, to our knowledge, but he is emotionally committed to the family he has formed with his nephew, whose mother is apparently indefinitely detained in India.

Two games of uncertainty are at play in this closing sequence. The first is that, at the funeral for the grandmother, we only see a coffin and the boy Bernardo with his friends. There is no sign of either the uncle or the grandmother. It is only when the uncle arrives later, in a taxi, to comfort Bernardo, that we discover that it is not his death that is being eulogized, but that of Doña Teresa. The second game, that has already been mentioned, surround the non-disclosure of Bernardo's sexuality. Albaladejo literally places him between a boy and a girl when his uncle pulls up to greet him. He then says goodbye to both, effusively, kissing each on the cheeks and hugging them tightly. While we know that the grandmother has died and the uncle lives, it is still unclear as to whether or not the boy is gay. What is made explicit, though, is that through all of those years, whenever the grandmother kept him from his uncle, Bernardo wished her

dead. Now, she has died, her grandson is stricken by grief, and Pedro jokes that his nephew made it happen through the concentration of his morbid wishes. “Ahora te tienes que concentrar y pensar en una vacuna. Venga, no le des más vueltas. La mujer se ha muerto porque se tenía que morir, como nos va a pasar a todos.” (Now you need to concentrate and think about a vaccine. Come on, don’t think about it any more. The woman died because she had to die, like we all will.) HIV is brought back into a conversation about death, but this time not as its agent, or any agent of shame that might bring about a fate worse than death (as in *Estrella*). Pedro tells his nephew he has to come up with an inoculation to prevent HIV infections in the first place. It is an allusion to a future without HIV, and one that simultaneously aligns all deaths as being equal and inevitable.

From the miraculous reversal of Bernardo’s HIV-positive status, to his caring for his uncle, and the latter’s insinuation that he will one day invent a vaccination: the child in *Cachorro* represents a future free from HIV/AIDS. But, the film is perhaps more concerned with Bernardo’s relationship to a reconfigured system of kinship and an ethics of care that entails opening oneself up to others and navigating systems of bodily vulnerability. Both child and uncle redefine their relationships to one another when national borders prevent a pre-established family unit from functioning as it did in the past. New borders, walls, and techniques for coexistence are built up to manage novel conditions of cohabitation. No matter how many walls are constructed, the precautions that are made for safe passage beyond borders and back, or where the child is shipped off to study, the boy cannot be contained from persistent, evolving, and organic challenges presented by life. Nor can he be easily repositioned in his intimate connectedness with family and friends.

Bernardo is not the first child to “neutralize” HIV as an infant in Spanish cinema; that designation belongs to the third Esteban to appear in Almodóvar’s *Todo sobre mi madre* (1999).<sup>73</sup> It is telling, however, that these two movies share a figural representation of the once-HIV-positive child while presenting sustained reflections on love, loss, and transitions compelling the re-imagining of families. Almodóvar’s film provides, in my opinion, the most artful and compelling representation of a rearticulation of kinship and collective, brought about by transitions and transmissions from one precarious body to the next in this archive of HIV and cinema in Spain.

*Todo sobre mi madre* follows the various flights from and returns to Barcelona of the principal mother of the movie, Manuela—played by Cecilia Roth—after the death of her son Esteban. The latter’s untimely and tragic death when he is struck by a car while attempting to get an autograph prompts her first return to Barcelona. Much of the film is devoted to witnessing Manuela’s life in grieving, which is also represented as her living through art and with unexpected friends. The pretext for the plot movement is her search for her son’s father after the former’s death. Esteban senior is a macho transsexual man dying of an AIDS-related-illness. An Argentine national, he moved to Spain with Manuela in their youth. After leaving Argentina together, perhaps as exiles of the Dirty War, they made a life for themselves in Barcelona.<sup>74</sup> But Esteban, the father, left for Paris one day to obtain breast implants in the first of a series of surgeries that would transform him into a woman with a penis. It is not her lover’s transition, however, that prompted Manuela to flee for Madrid, but his unbearable domination of the

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<sup>73</sup> Many scholars have contributed fascinating work on “All About my Mother.” In addition to the scholarship mentioned in this section, see Susan Martin-Márquez’s article “Pedro Almodóvar’s Maternal Transplants: From *Matador* to *All About my Mother*,” and Julián Daniel Gutiérrez-Albilla’s contribution to *A Companion to Spanish Cinema*, “Becoming a Queer (M)Other in/and/through Film.”

<sup>74</sup> Manuela mentions Videla’s arrest as a current news topic while she is visiting Huma and Agrado during an AIDS convention in Barcelona where she has taken the child Esteban.

minutiae of her life and his draining of her spirit. Lola, as her partner is now called, relies on the resources of those that surround her. When Manuela first left Barcelona on a train for Madrid she was pregnant with Esteban/Lola's son, whom she names Esteban. Manuela returns to Barcelona to give Esteban a portrait of their dead son, but her purpose is delayed and reconfigured by a series of chance encounters that transform her time in Cataluña into a stage where she can begin to come to terms with the loss of her child.

Shifting positionalities, travels, transplants, transitions, transmissions, translations, and porous borders, then, characterize the very heart of the preoccupations of *Todo sobre mi madre*. Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit summarize this thematics as such:

Not only will there be all sorts of movements or crossings throughout the film (from country to country, from city to city, from one sex to another, between different sons, among different mothers); the repetition of the trans motif takes place within its first appearance. Rather than prefiguring the importance of the motif with just one version of it (the donation of Esteban's heart), Almodóvar juxtaposes three cases of the organ-transplant example, and the second of the three is a theatrical rehearsal of an aspect of organ-transplant procedures.

Movement in *All About My Mother* will be inseparable from repetition. (253-54)

It is also important to note that filming in Barcelona represents a first-time transplantation of the manchego director himself, whose cinematic point of reference has traditionally been in Madrid. The observation that movement is inseparable from repetition in the film accompanies the various iterations of Esteban found in its plot, the reviewing and rehearsal of scenes from Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire* in its Elia Kazan film version, and theatre by Federico García Lorca that mirrors elements of Almodóvar's own drama. Esteban senior

transitions to Lola, and a child is born and given his former name of Esteban. Manuela moves from Argentina, to Barcelona, to Madrid, and then back to Barcelona. She performed in *A Streetcar named Desire* as a youth in Barcelona, then she watches a touring production of the show in Barcelona with her son Esteban, she returns to see the tour in Barcelona after his death, and she finally ends up performing in *Streetcar* again after one of the performers falls sick while she is working as the lead's personal assistant.<sup>75</sup> Repetition and movement, transitions, and unexpected company fill the film.

Manuela explains at one point that her life has been *marcada*, "marked," by *A Streetcar Named Desire*, for she has fled an abusive husband-turned-wife much like Stella from *Streetcar*. She also performed the role of Stella opposite her husband, back when he was still a man, and will go on to play Stella on stage again alongside a new friend, the actress Huma Roja. Both Huma and Manuela enjoy the support and encouragement of the transgendered prostitute *Agrado*, who is as agreeable as her name implies. Manuela reunites with this friend from her past in Barcelona by chance, while looking for Lola (the new name of Esteban the father), at a prostitution site for transsexuals. *Agrado* is being aggressively abused by one of her clients, whom she threatens with a knife, when Manuela discovers them and beats the abusive client over the head with a rock that she has placed in her purse. Although *Agrado* is grateful for the assistance, she is concerned for the man's well-being, and she lifts him up and redirects him to the spot where he can find the perversion he was seeking in the first instance. Hospitality to the other and openness to spontaneity and improvisation define her character. This is visible in the many jobs she takes on over the course of the narrative, from prostitute to personal assistant, and

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<sup>75</sup> Nina specifically underlines, in the dialogue of the film, how her actions are like those of Eve Harrington in one of the inter-texts of the film, Joseph Mankiewicz's *All About Eve* (1950).

in her improvisational storytelling that entertains theatergoers when the actresses that perform *Streetcar* are unable to make it to the stage one evening.<sup>76</sup>

During her time in Barcelona, Manuela will also encounter a nun named Rosa, to whom she is introduced by Agrado. Rosa is pregnant, but she cannot bear to share this news with her own mother (also Rosa). She has no desire to live in her house with her strict mother, and her father who is suffering from Alzheimer's and cannot remember her name. She imposes herself on Manuela, after leaving her convent for a leave when she is supposed to be travelling on a mission. It is at this time that Manuela learns that the father of Rosa's child is actually Lola. She makes sure that Rosa has an HIV test performed during the first doctor's visit of her pregnancy, and the results are positive. Rosa has a dangerous condition affecting her pregnancy that requires complete bed rest, and she does not survive childbirth. After making Manuela her own surrogate mother, and finding peace with her biological mother, Rosa names her child Esteban and leaves him to Manuela before her death.

At the end of the film the third Esteban, the infant who neutralizes the HIV he inherits from his father, Lola, and mother—the nun, Rosa—is presented as an exemplary case that is being studied by doctors seeking to understand the virus and how to eradicate it. Manuela explains in a letter to Agrado and Huma: “Vuelvo a Barcelona después de dos años, pero esta vez no vengo huyendo. Voy a un congreso sobre el sida organizado por Can Ruti. Mi Esteban ha negativizado el virus en un tiempo record y quieren investigarlo.” (“I am returning to Barcelona after two years, but this time I am not fleeing. I am going to a conference on AIDS organized by Can Ruti. My Esteban has neutralized the virus in record time and they want to investigate it.”) Later, she elaborates to the same friends, “El caso de Esteban demuestra que el virus puede

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<sup>76</sup> This inability to perform on the stage due to personal crisis echoes another of the inter-texts for Almodóvar's film, John Cassavetes's *Opening Night* (1977).

desaparecer, todavía no se sabe cómo, lo están investigando, pero es un milagro.” (“Esteban’s case shows that the virus can disappear, they still do not know how, they are investigating it, but it is a miracle.”) A miracle it is, indeed. Agrado is not surprised by the news, because she had been praying for the child. Almost as miraculous, though, is the fact that the new Esteban comes to be Manuela’s adopted son in the first place. After all, her encounter with the nun, Rosa, is the product of chance. That Rosa would insist that Manuela care for her as a daughter, and that she would die in childbirth, too, are a series of preposterous coincidences that all lead to Esteban the “replacement” of Manuela’s first son, Esteban. Aside from ending the tale of loss with an optimistic outlook for the future, Esteban’s “neutralizing” of HIV is perhaps designed to relieve some of the anxieties and traumas surrounding transitions and transmissions in the first place.

Rather than chance or coincidence, the narrative insists on the productive qualities of hospitality, reception, and improvisation as responses to the inevitable unraveling of life and its difficulties. Preposterous or not, the plot is driven by a series of redefinitions of maternity, friendship, masculinity, femininity, and fraternity/sorority. Bersani and Dutoit foresee this tension between coming undone and reestablishing a relationship to boundaries in the opening credits of the film:

The remarkable beginning of *All About My Mother* announces the dissipation of the real and of the identities that the real at once shelters and constrains. That dissipation is, as it were, decoratively performed by the liquefied script of the credits. Names and functions appear on the screen like inflated bubbles, and they disappear by slowly collapsing into themselves. Liquefaction can be contained, but it is inherently a loss of boundaries, a flowing out of frames. The first image we see is that of a plastic bag of intravenous fluid; we follow it flowing drop by

drop through the IV tubing. The containment of falling drops is, a few moments later, more humorously exemplified by the diaper ad on TV that precedes the showing of *All About Eve*: as numerous dry, diapered infants are shown exercising and jumping around, children's voices sing the reassuring message: "Not a single drop! With Dodotis you won't feel a drop." Names as droplets, intravenous drops, drops of urine: *All About My Mother* begins with appealingly light reminders of the beauty of liquidity, its life-saving virtues, and the relative ease with which an undisciplined flowing can nonetheless be contained and absorbed. (254)

"Undisciplined flows that can be nonetheless contained and absorbed" manifest themselves in the film as shifting maternal, sororal, and romantic kinship relations, transitions between male and female, viral infections via bodily fluids that become neutralized, and scenes of grieving that transfer to sites of gradual healing. The trope of the loss of the child, first realized in Esteban's death and then reiterated through Rosa's death in childbirth, the homage to Federico García Lorca, and HIV status, manifest themselves as a foundational points from which the rearticulation of family might occur. If the opening credits foreshadow a fluid loss and shift in identity, then, the closing dedication of the film and the screenplay's opening tribute form a unique type of collective in which maternity, femininity, and masculinity are denaturalized.

In its construction of collectivities of those dependent on strangers, of the lovesick, the mourned, and the mourning, *Todo sobre mi madre*, proposes a specific gendering of suffering and pain, and a specific mode of representing it. Within the logic of the film, the distressed, the grieved, and the grieving are either feminine or effeminate. They are women, HIV-positive persons, homosexuals, or gender-deviant men, and their pain is represented in the mode of

melodrama, interrupted by comedy. This vision of the subjects and victims of loss, and frustrated desire, is best exemplified by the juxtaposition of homages to hysterical women, maternity, and homosexuals in the film, and it is especially apparent in its backward glance towards the figure of Federico García Lorca.

Almodóvar's film ends with a touching dedication to a few famous women actresses, transgendered persons, and mothers. The text reads: "A Bette Davis, Gena Rowlands, Romy Schneider...A todas las actrices que han hecho de actrices. A todas las mujeres que actúan. A Los hombres que actúan y se convierten en mujeres. A todas las personas que quieren ser madres. A mi madre." (To Bette Davis, Gena Rowlands, Romy Schneider....To all of the actresses who have played actresses. To all women who act. To the men who act like and transform themselves into women. To all of the people who want to be mothers. To my mother.)

Set in plain white script, in front of a red theatre curtain, this dedication is just as much a *pre-text* for the film project as its postscript, even while it appears right before the closing credits. The movement of the camera away from the curtain behind the writing, centering it in the frame, suggests that the viewer is about to witness it opening in an upward movement, rather than a curtain call. Slowly, the curtain rises and the credits roll on a black background. This travelling backwards in anticipation of a theatrical beginning is perplexing at the end of a film, as if the idea were to make a beginning out of the end. Perhaps this positional ambiguity makes sense, though, given the reference that a dedication inherently makes to the beginning of the work. After all, dedications often come before a piece, rather than after it.

From the hyperbolic reach of its honorees, to its inappropriate length, Almodóvar's dedication is more than just an homage to maternity, strategic dissimulation, and icons of unruly

and archetypal femininity. In its excesses, this dedication turns back towards its author and pays homage to the film itself, or rather, it performs, again, another utterance of what the film is “all about,” namely: hospitality, improvisation, community enacted through, art, and humorous ambivalence in overflowing feminine sentimentality. These provide means for coping with loss, absence, unfair, unjust, or just unbearable circumstances.

As viewers, we might be inclined to laugh at what could be a preemptive and preposterous Academy Awards speech. Or perhaps we cry for the dignity that the dedication accords equally to the most marginalized and the most socially respected and established forms of femininity and maternity. It includes a wide array of persons by virtue of its jump from the transgendered, the ostensibly repressed, and the potentially infertile, to the artist’s *own* mother.<sup>77</sup> In its inclusivity and given its position as a conclusion for the film, the dedication forms a community amongst its honorees, the director, and the viewer by grouping them all together. The discerning viewer will recognize, however, that this final homage is merely one in a thematically consistent series of both implicit structural tributes, and more obvious nods and gestures towards a corpus of maternal loss and mourning, and feminine dissimulation, constructed throughout the film.

An entire study could be devoted to the inter-textuality between *All about My Mother*, *All About Eve*, *Opening Night*, Almodóvar’s own *The Flower of my Secret*, and Tennessee William’s play, *A Street Car Named Desire*, in its 1951 film version by Elia Kazan. Indeed, scholars, such as Esteve Rimbau and Patrick Garlinger, have already done some of this work. The plot is circular, but also runs diagonally, recycling its own material and constituting itself with scenes, dialogue, and even costume from other films and theatrical works that both reflect and build upon its own logic. If Peter Brooks claims that the melodramatic mode “*at heart* represents the

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<sup>77</sup> According to Rimbau, and Bersani and Dutoit, Almodóvar’s mother died shortly after he shot *Todo*.

theatrical impulse itself: the impulse towards dramatization, heightening, expression, acting ” (xi, my emphasis), then Almodóvar specializes, here, in a self-reflexive brand of melodrama that simultaneously calls attention to itself as a spectacle of sentimental excess, and yet succeeds in commanding the emotional complicity of the viewer.

Much of *All about My Mother*’s inter-textual material is drawn from popular film melodramas of feminine excess, like *Streetcar*, populated by divas coping with aging, celebrity, tumultuous love affairs, and frustrated desires, or films about feminine sociability. Gena Rowland’s cape in *Opening Night* is referenced in Huma’s evening apparel, off stage, while she repeats to Manuela the line from *Streetcar*–“Whoever you are, I have always depended on the kindness of strangers”–when the latter agrees to help her find her addict girlfriend on the streets of Barcelona. Agrado declares that three women alone in a big apartment always reminds her of *How to Marry a Millionaire* when she goes to Manuela’s apartment to celebrate her performance in *Streetcar*, and finds her there with Huma and Rosa.

The mention Almodóvar makes in his dedication of Bette Davis, Gena Rowlands, and Romy Schneider are at once gestures towards great divas (camp figures), and compelling inter-textual references. Bette Davis plays Margo Channing in *All About Eve* (1950), and Huma claims that she gave herself the name “Huma” because she was inspired by watching Bette Davis smoke when she was a child. Miss Davis makes an appearance in *Todo sobre mi madre* in a dubbed version of *All About Eve* during the opening sequence of the film. She is talking about how her so-called fans are really autograph hounds. Channing goes on in the original to become a desperate figure of femininity while worrying about the devastating effects of aging and vocally expressing her suspicions that a young actress (Eve) is attempting to steal the heart of her long-time lover and take her place on the stage. Her fears are justified, but her accuracy does not

prevent her from being labeled as paranoid, and her misgivings are coded as tantrums that do not ultimately prevent her dethroning by Eve. Davis's character also leaves herself open to the charges of narcissism, which the characters in *All About My Mother* avoid through their generosity<sup>78</sup>.

Gena Rowlands also plays an aging actress in John Cassavetes's *Opening Night* (1977). Her character undergoes a nervous breakdown when she finds herself unable to portray a woman in a theatrical piece who is suffering a nervous breakdown because of her age. She interrupts preview rehearsals in New Haven with hysterical fits, improvising and rewriting the script during performances, and she makes her co-stars look ridiculous when they do not know how to react to her. In order to successfully open the show on Broadway and embody the character, the actress has to suffer a complete breakdown and arrives at the theatre completely drunk in order to pull off the part. Rowlands was 47 when the film was released, she is still in pictures today. Not only is she an actress who plays an actress, like the dedication mentions, but material from *Opening Night* also makes up part of the plot of *Todo sobre mi madre*. As Rowlands's character is leaving the theatre in New Haven one night, a swarm of young fans (evoking the scene from *All About Eve* in which Bette Davis talks about how fans are monsters) rushes up to her as she leaves, and one girl in particular insists on attempting to get an autograph from her once she is in her car and is hit and killed on the road. Rowlands also shows up to the opening of the show completely inebriated, and it is unclear whether or not she is capable of performing. This is the problem Huma has with Nina and her drug addiction. Rather than cancel the show, however, Rowlands' real flirtation with self destruction only serves to allow her to nail her performance.

The final actress mentioned by name in the dedication is Romy Schneider. Her son tragically died at a young age when he cut himself while attempting to climb over a fence at his

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<sup>78</sup> Thanks to Juli Highfill for this observation.

grandparents' house. Schneider was found dead in her Parisian apartment one year later, and it is suspected that she purposefully overdosed on alcohol and pills. In any case, after her son's untimely death she divorced and was driven to alcoholism until she died. Schneider's autobiography overlaps uncomfortably well with the themes of loss, grief, and celebrity that bind her to the other women honored and the plot of Almodóvar's film.

But the community that the film proposes in its use and refashioning of feminine melodrama is not only the domain of biological women. Rather, homosexual men, and specifically homosexual male artists, populate the text as well. In fact, Almodóvar's screenplay opens with quotes from Truman Capote, Tennessee Williams, and Lluís Pasqual, from the latter's tribute to Federico García Lorca. They are placed alongside, or perhaps opposite, the figures of femininity (who even include men), who form the dedication at the end. An excerpt from Capote is read in the film at the request of the second Esteban, Manuela's son, who aspires to be a writer. Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit have discussed how the boy is coded as homosexual (243), and that means he is in good company among the aforementioned artists and the director himself. The most striking reference back to a male homosexual artist is what is specifically referred to in the film as the "Homage to Lorca."

This is the penultimate homage of the film, the last before its dedication. If the tribute to Lorca in the interior of the film were merely an ode to the glory of a male poet, with all of its patriarchal implications, it would be terribly out of place in this world of feminine sociability and grieving. Even though he was at times called by the effeminizing name of Federica in his youth (Stainton 23), Lorca hardly seems to be a logical figural suite to the aforementioned divas, models of feminine hysteria, and maternity populating the filmic text, although perhaps he should be thought of as just that. Because following Rosa's burial in the film, and her mother's

discovery of her grandson in the arms of the transsexual “monster” who infected her daughter with HIV, Lorca’s work fits all too well.

When Manuela returns to Rosa’s mother’s house, where she and the baby are living, after their trip to a café where they have met with the boy’s father (also Manuela’s “ex”), the grandmother Rosa asks Manuela what she has been doing and says that she doesn’t like just any woman kissing the baby. Manuela explains that “that woman” is the baby’s sickly father. Rosa’s face takes on a look of shock as she exclaims “¡Ese monstruo es el que ha matado a mi hija” (117)!<sup>79</sup> A piercing chord sounds and the viewer is transported to a theatre where Huma is rehearsing a monologue from her upcoming production of *Haciendo Lorca*. She is receiving stage directions and kneading flour in a trough as she emotively reflects on children and loss:

Hay gente que piensa que los hijos son cosa de un día. Pero se tarda mucho. Mucho. Por eso es tan terrible ver la sangre de un hijo derramada por el suelo...Una fuente que corre durante un minuto y a nosotras nos ha costado años. Cuando yo descubrí a mi hijo, estaba tumbado en mitad de la calle. Me mojé las manos de sangre y me las lamí con la lengua. Porque era mía. Los animals los lamen, verdad? A mí no me da asco de mi hijo. Tú no sabes lo que es eso. En una custodia de cristal y topacios pondría yo la tierra empapada por sun sangre...

(118)

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<sup>79</sup> “Monstruo” is not the worst name used to designate Lola during the film. When encountering her for the first time in almost twenty years, Manuela tells her: “No eres un ser humano, Lola. Eres una epidemia.” This abuse of language fits the melodramatic mode of the film. The conflation of person with epidemic mirrors the phobic rhetoric of the 80’s and 90’s. However, Manuela does not go on to treat Lola in such a dehumanized way. She brings him a photograph of their dead son, and lets him read his diary while he holds and visits his new son from Rosa.

There are people who think that children are made in a day. But they take a long, long time. That is why it is so horrible to see the blood of one spilt on the ground... a fountain that runs during a minute but has cost us years. When I discovered my son he was laying in the middle of the road. I wet my hands with blood and I licked them with my tongue. Because it was mine. Animals lick them, don't they? I am not disgusted by my son. In a jar of topaz and crystal I would put the land soaked by his blood.

The grieving mother attempts to bodily ingest her blood, the blood of her son, when she discovers his dead body on the road. The monologue brings us back to Manuela's cries of anguish when Esteban is hit by the car. Although it is not noted in the screenplay, in the film the moving monologue is interrupted by Huma's sniffing, which seems perfectly in place until she asks the director if her cold is noticeable.

The reaction of Rosa the elder, the first mother by that name, to the knowledge that her grandson was being held by the wo/man who supposedly "killed" her daughter, strongly evokes the dramatic reactions of the "Madre," mother, in Lorca's *Bodas de sangre*, (*Blood Wedding*).<sup>80</sup> The latter has a visceral reaction to the presence of the unfaithful bride of the play, or a member of the Félix family who killed her husband and sons, and who ran from her son at their wedding celebration and ultimately led him on a chase that resulted in his death. The startling knowledge that Rosa acquires causes her to lose her breath, after she has deemed the "perpetrator" a monster, and her dramatic stifled speech is only interrupted by a dissonant chord that overpowers her anguish in the first scene, and *carries over* as a transition to the theatre where Huma is rehearsing a monologue. The dissonant chord directly establishes a link between Rosa and the

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<sup>80</sup> It is hardly possible, given the film's investment in fluidity, liquidity, heart transplant's, and HIV/AIDS that *Blood Wedding's* presence is a mere coincidence. In her monologue Huma speaks of licking the blood of her dead son from the ground.

“madre,” reminding us that the representation of her suffering is through the mode of melodrama. The music simultaneously points to the aforementioned fractures in gender and genre in its juxtaposition of two notes that do not blend harmoniously.

The monologue Huma is rehearsing is from Lluís Pasqual’s *Haciendo Lorca*, (*Doing Lorca*). Pasqual’s piece is a 1996 Spanish theatrical homage to the poet and playwright that was a composite of some of his plays performed by two famous Lorquista actors. It was staged during the switch to a right-wing government, and a subsequent return to state subsidization of more classical and conservative Spanish theatre. Paul Julian Smith says of the original production: “The actors Espert, and Alcón are the the last great masters with a direct line, a specific way of doing Lorca. It was now or never. Few of those present at the premiere of *Haciendo Lorca* could have failed to be aware of the role played by the playwright, by the actors, and by their director in the theater of the transition to democracy and of the subsequent ‘disillusion’ with the Socialist government” (142). The date of Pasqual’s production makes it contemporary to the creative phase and production of *Todo sobre mi madre*. Therefore, Almodóvar’s use of extracts from the theatrical homage should be understood as a reference to the same social context described by Smith—namely one in which an imminent shift towards a more conservative government brought a certain sense of urgency to the business of retaining the progress in sexual liberties and freedoms achieved during the transition. As far as I know, this is the first time Almodóvar references Lorca in one of his films, and his employment of Lorca as a figure could indicate some preoccupation with a possible cultural resurgence of homophobia and other types of fascism with the rise of the conservative party to power.

The monologue Almodóvar pulls from Pasqual’s show is almost identical to the one Lorca’s “Madre” gives early in *Bodas de sangre* while expressing what it is like to have and to

lose children. Her eldest son was killed by members of the Félix family in petty disputes, *and in the course of the action in Bodas*, her youngest son will be killed as well over a runaway bride, in knife fights.

Almodóvar's employment of Pasqual's revisioning of Lorca brings the homosexual poet into the film on several levels. First, his dramatic material becomes, like *Streetcar* and *All about Eve*, the text of Almodóvar's film itself. Lorca's mourning mother is Almodóvar's mourning mother, Rosa, who is a repetition both of her daughter, and of the other mourning mothers of *Todo sobre mi madre*. We could dismiss this repetition, which is evocative of rehearsing, as ventriloquism, or an irresponsible conflation and abstraction of different instances of maternal mourning if, and only if, the protagonists did not reflect on the importance of art and performance in their own lives, and if they did not challenge the very notion of a difference between performativity, spectacle, and authenticity themselves. Manuela's relationship with *Streetcar* comes to mind as an example of this challenge to the cheapness of repetition, as does Huma's modeling after Bette Davis. Of course, the most important gesture towards artifice as authenticity comes in Agrado's monologue for the disappointed *Streetcar* audience in which she describes that one "is most authentic the more one *appears like* what she has always dreamed of herself." Agrado's monologue is a gesture back to an actual event that occurred in Argentina featuring Lola Membrives, one of the actresses who interpreted Lorca's leading female roles during his lifetime. The electricity in the theatre was not working one evening and the show had to be cancelled, but Membrives promised that she would tell the story of her life to those who would stay and not ask for a refund. Apparently nobody moved. By including the scenario that sets up Agrado's monologue in his film, Almodóvar is gesturing yet again back to Lorca.

After contributing to an elaboration of a shared structure of feeling between Lorca's mother from *Blood Wedding* and Almodóvar's mother of Rosa in *All about My Mother*, the film uses Pasqual's version of Lorca's monologue to point back in homage to the dead poet himself. The screenplay indicates that Huma's next theatrical work is "Doing Lorca"; she is still performing it during Manuela's last return to Barcelona at the end of the film, and the subtitle of the piece is: "A homage to García Lorca, and to Esteban, a young man who died in the doors of a theatre, one stormy night."

By juxtaposing Lorca and Esteban in such an explicit manner Almodóvar is pointing back and offering tribute not only to the theatre of Lorca, and the mourning "madre," but he is paying homage to the death of the poet himself. This death was no ordinary death, as we all know, it was an *assassination*. While there is much debate about the precise reason for his murder, Lorca biographers Ian Gibson and Leslie Stainton both make reference to the political threat that Lorca posed to fascist leaders as an artist whose works often challenged traditional and conservative morality (although they did not necessarily always do so), and Lorca would also sometimes expressed leftist views in public that did not suit fascist ideology at the cusp of the eruption of the Civil War. They also both leave no doubt that there were homophobic intentions surrounding his murder. Or, at least, if the reasoning for the murder was not homophobic, its justification was. The commander who ordered the shooting later declared, in self defense: "he was a fag!"

If Almodóvar's second Esteban was a young homosexual who died of a car accident, and Lorca was a homosexual who was murdered, and Rosa has died of childbirth, Romy Schneider has lost her son, and Lola has died of an AIDS related illness, then Almodóvar has indeed constructed a queer community of the lost and bereft in *All about My Mother*. HIV/AIDS

represents, in the film, some of the most potent anxieties surrounding the undoing of identity, family, and blood. But it also is mobilized to relieve such fears in its connecting of new units of care and support amongst vulnerable bodies.

From *La buena estrella* to *Cachorro*, HIV/AIDS representation in Spanish cinema arrived late on the scene and evolved rapidly. Yet it has consistently been accompanied by the mediating presence of the child, concerns about the containment and integrity of the body, and reflections on the subject's position of kinship in the social body. Self-destructing masculinity in *La buena estrella* is countered by an estranged manhood in the same film, just as feminine networks of sociability in *Todo sobre mi madre* encompass circuits of care for mothers suffering loss, those suffering illness, and homosexuals suffering a phobic society. *Cachorro*, in a similarly utopic manner, envisions a future without AIDS deaths, or at least a future in which all deaths will be equally free from stigma. A revindication of gay identity is identifiable in the two later films, from Almodóvar's celebration of camp and queers to Albaladejo's insistence on the homosexual as a responsible parental unit. *Cachorro* promotes gays as protectors of children, and goes to special lengths to separate them from connotations of pederasty or pedophilia.<sup>81</sup>

The political valences of these various films seem to evolve from reactionary to progressive along with the chronology of their production. However, an analysis of their political positions proves less interesting and productive than a consideration of the type of relationality they propose as conducive to the "good health" of the family. This family is not just a nuclear unit, but a national one—as Manuela's gleeful reference to the Argentine dictator Videla's arrest on the day of her visit with Agrado and Huma makes clear. The contrast between the type of spontaneous community, and family, they form and that imposed by the Argentine

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<sup>81</sup> Pedro's schoolteacher friend, and dental patient, makes a comment that demonstrates how eager he would be to protect his elementary school students from a pedophile—as if he had to make this distinction so as to erase the possibility of his being a threat to the children as a homosexual man and as an educator.

dictator—famous for “disappearing” youths who were believed to be ideological dissidents—could not be clearer. The family, or community, found in cinema is open to unexpected guests and flows, sharing life with them, and being transformed by them. The fascist model is determined to immunize itself from the contaminating presence of the other.

Rafael invited Marina to live with him when he found her being beaten on the highway. Pedro built a room and a life for his nephew in the uncomfortable space of his own gay identity that had been marked for homosexual pleasures from the start of the film. And Manuela mothered two Estebans, and Rosa—while extending friendship to Huma, Agrado, and Lola even in the most difficult of circumstances. Children become a pretext in the cinema of the late nineties and early twenty first century for moving away from a mode of cultural production that celebrated the destruction of the individual subject and the social body in order to gain political visibility and representation for HIV/AIDS, to a mobilization of HIV/AIDS for rethinking kinship and collective in their relations to the inevitable ebbs and flows of life.

## Conclusion

In the 1960s, Spanish artists began to take an estranged look back to the processes of masculine formation and initiation they experienced under the Franco regime. Their works suggest a violent immunizing mechanism regulated homosocial conduct under fascist governance, and continues to govern masculine collectives today. While this immunization is intended to revitalize youthful subjects—and the nation—and to protect the young from the contaminants of homosexuality, “corrupting” political ideology, effeminacy, and a loss of self, its harmful consequences and misfirings are consistently represented in literature and film from contemporary Spain.

While fascism is not the origin of the immunization mechanism, the fascist period in Spain marks an intense period of its institutionalization and intensification. Representations of the child, and especially the protohomosexual child, have provided a space for critique and reflection on the pedagogy of hegemonic masculinities. The Transition brought with it new opportunities for gendered embodiment, but democratic society remains entangled in immunizing models for masculinity, now transposed to the normativization of subjects through the hierarchical dictates of the market.

Children and youth are still employed to symbolize optimism about better futures for the body politic. The *Movida madrileña* was sold to the world as a representation of a new Spain, epitomized by its youth. Recent Spanish cinema suggests that relief from the oppressive

communitarian strictures of immunizing masculinities may be found in a radical openness to the other, portrayed in films bringing the child into contact with HIV/AIDS.

The revitalization of youth proves itself to be a dangerous political project when it is unable to detach itself from aspirations for the vertical ascension of the masculine subject in any regime of governance. The queer narratives of the children of the Franco regime, and contemporary Spain, propose that youth's flourishing will come about through its rejection of violent immunizing practices, and a disposition of hospitality towards the radical other— the uninvited, the otherwise gendered, and the ill. Rather than war camaraderie, and the competitive feats of imperial masculinity, this corpus proposes a network of sociability that depends on the “kindness of strangers.”

At the time of this writing, youth unemployment in Spain is at 57 percent, and there is talk of another lost generation. The ingenuity of youth and its ability to surpass the expectations placed on it, and overcome or overturn the obstacles imposed on it, will determine the future of Spain.

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