

UC Riverside

UC Riverside Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Weird Women, Strange Times: The Representation of Power Through Female Gender Portrayals in 19th and 20th Century Iberian Literature

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1p52r9c8>

Author

Neff, Rachel Anna

Publication Date

2013

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

Weird Women, Strange Times: The Representation of Power Through Female Gender
Portrayals in 19th and 20th Century Iberian Literature

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Spanish

by

Rachel Anna Neff

June 2013

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. David K. Herzberger, Chairperson

Dr. James A. Parr

Dr. Raymond L. Williams

Copyright by
Rachel Anna Neff
2013

The Dissertation of Rachel Anna Neff is approved:

Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I wish to thank my kind and patient dissertation director, Dr. David K. Herzberger. I stopped counting the number of drafts he read and commented on, because I'm fairly certain the actual number would constitute cruel and unusual punishment. I am so grateful for the time and care he invested in my candidacy; I hope to one day be even half the mentor he has been to me.

I would like to thank Dr. James A. Parr for serving on my committee, guiding me through several independent studies to improve my written Spanish, and for leading the amazing study abroad program in Spain where I worked at the Biblioteca Nacional. On a more personal note, I always appreciated how he shared his apple slices with me whenever I stopped by his office.

I also wish to thank Dr. Raymond L. Williams for serving on my committee, advising me on independent study projects, and introducing me to Twitter. The topics in his courses were always fascinating, and the discussions inspiring. The end of the seminar dinners at his house are something I wish to do for my mentees in the future.

I extend my gratitude to Dr. Marta Hernández-Salván for serving on my long paper committee and for introducing me to UC-Cuba. Even though I ultimately decided to study other countries, the experience doing archival research with the grant was invaluable for this project.

Although not part of my committee, I wish to thank Dr. Freya Schiwy for letting me explore topics for my long paper and for permitting me to write a significant portion

of what became the fourth chapter of my dissertation as final papers in her courses, in addition to teaching me how to properly incorporate endnotes.

I thank my parents, Timothy and Bernadette Neff. For my father for saying that quitting was easy, things in graduate school would be hard, and that I would just have to stick them out. For my mother for saying when I started graduate school that it was time to make my own decisions and live with them. Thank you for believing in me. I wouldn't have finished this without you.

Thanks to my sister and brother, Samantha and Spencer, who mean the world to me.

My thanks and gratitude to my maternal grandmother, Beverly Dawes, for being a constant source of love and support.

Matthew Larson, thank you for being my partner and best friend for the past seven years. You truly are my *media naranja*. Your love, kindness, encouragement, and small gifts of chocolate have gotten me through this entire graduate school experience. You are the wheel to my barrow.

To Amber Parrish, my dear friend, for writing letters and supporting me throughout all the ups and downs of the past decade of friendship.

Thank you to everyone in the Department of Hispanic Studies who became like an extended family over the past several years, but particularly: J'Leen, Jennifer, Alexandra, Alexander, Brian, Cinthia, Judy, Dulce, Raquel, Ruby, Diana, Liesder, Karen, Suria, Claudia, Yenisei, Enrique, and Luz.

To the good friends I made outside my department: Dr. Tony Yang, Alex Cortez, and Dr. Jim Burnette III. Thank you for the company at meals and for encouraging me throughout the thesis writing process. I will miss you all terribly.

A researcher is nothing without a good library, and for that reason, I wish to thank the following institutions for their collections: the University of California at Riverside, Princeton University Library Special Collections, Biblioteca Nacional de España, the Library of Congress, Auburn University, and Columbus State University.

Lastly, I wish to thank the informal dissertation writing support group that revolved around #phdchat on Twitter. It was great to meet other scholars and build a community during the writing process.

Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation to the family, friends, and mentors who encouraged my intellectual curiosity and supported me throughout this experience. I especially want to single out my late paternal grandmother, Dorothy Jane Hanson, who I promised on her 87th birthday that I would complete my PhD. Sorry you left before I finished.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Weird Women, Strange Times: The Representation of Power Through Female Gender Portrayals in 19th and 20th Century Iberian Literature

by

Rachel Anna Neff

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Spanish
University of California, Riverside, June 2013
Dr. David K. Herzberger, Chairperson

Examining the power dynamics present in the family unit, inverted portrayals of power dynamics with respect to socially constructed gender roles serve to deconstruct the idealized institution and, in turn, also reflect the political milieu of the nation. Starting with Valle-Inclán's "Tula Varona" (1895), we see how a failed courtship serves as the allegorical relationship between Spain and its colonies. Next, Unamuno's *Tres Novelas Ejemplares y un Prólogo* (1920) and *La tía Tula* (1921) illustrate how maternal relationships in the stories reflect a nation that is also reeling from political and economic instability. Third, the *chica rara* in *Nada* (1944) by Carmen Laforet, *Primera memoria* (1959) by Ana María Matute, and *Julia* (1970) by Ana María Moix reveals dysfunctional

families. Through these unhealthy family relationships, each of the authors subtly critiques the ideal family that the Franco regime strategically used to reinforce its legitimacy. Fourth, the children who attempt to poison their female caregivers in the films *De eso no se habla* (1993), *Cría cuervos* (1976), and *El verano de la señora Forbes* (1989) reconstruct the metaphor of the nation as family by connecting an authoritarian government to the role of parent and the passive resistance to the children's behavior. Lastly, the novel *La sombra del viento* (2001) and the movie *Beautiful* (2010) show how families in contemporary fiction and film reflect the national trauma of the Spanish Civil War. The original contribution to the importance of gender and power with respect to the family as nation allegory demonstrates how the masculine portrayal of gender breaks the taboo of biological sex rather than overtly questioning the abuses of government and power.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1	18
Wild Women of the West: Courtship in Valle-Inclán’s “Tula Varona”(1895)	18
Chapter 2.....	45
Blood, Birthright, and Inheritance: Unamuno’s Portrayal of Mothers, Aunts, Wives, and Sisters in <i>Tres Novelas Ejemplares y un Prólogo</i> (1920) and <i>La tía Tula</i> (1921).	45
Devilish Desire and Maternal Madness: <i>Dos madres</i> and <i>La tía Tula</i>	57
Marital Melodrama: <i>El marqués de Lumbría</i> and <i>Nada menos que todo un hombre...</i>	82
Conclusion	101
Chapter 3.....	107
Fear and the Fractured Family: Motherless Daughters in Three Postwar Spanish Novels	107
Chapter 4.....	142
Poisonous Progeny: Children Confronting Authoritarianism in Three Films	142
Poison as revenge: A failed attempt in <i>Cría Cuervos</i> y <i>El verano de la señora Forbes</i>	162
Conclusion	175

Chapter 5.....	180
Bestselling Barcelona: National Trauma and its Connection to Family in <i>La sombra del viento</i> (2001) and <i>Biutiful</i> (2010).....	180
Conclusion	210
Works Cited	213

Introduction

The use of family in literature has a rich tradition. Stories and tales often revolve around leaving and returning home, parents and children, and major life events. Further, we frequently see protagonists in terms of their relationship to their family or their lack thereof. Indeed, representations of the family form the underpinning of much of the world's literature. The appearance of family in literature is more than a reflection of consanguine ties; it also serves as a microcosm of society. For example, the formation of family is at the core of several creation myths across several cultures, and one of the earliest tales begins with Zeus conspiring with his mother to defeat his father. Other cultures and religions have stories that explain their origins, and the power dynamics reflected in them reinforce social institutions. For instance, the Western creation myth found in the Bible has two notable creation myths that lower the social standing of women. The first claims that God made Eve from Adam's rib, and the second blames Eve for the expulsion of humanity from the garden of paradise. Above all else, these stories reveal that clever women are useful as a means to an end, but this same cunning is also flagged as a reason to treat women with suspicion. In turn, these stories justify the second-class status of women through cultural texts that subjugate women. They also convey the ideal family structure as male-headed, with wives deferring to their husbands. Nevertheless, the exact definition of family and its constitution are variable based upon both time period and culture, even as the concept itself reflects the social mores and institutions of the country.¹

Probing the portrayal of women within the home often reveals a commentary on the world outside of their domestic dominion. Roberta Johnson examines the view of Spain's denizens towards gender and explains that "Gender formed an important part of both the theories of a Spanish national essence and the efforts to shape the body politic" (*Spanish Modernist Novel* ix). The concept of family lends itself to serving as a metaphor for the interaction between citizens and the state, especially since the literature portrayed "marriage and the family [as] the representational microcosm of the nation" (Johnson *Spanish Modernist Novel* 11). As Matthew Evangelista illustrates, common metaphors such as motherland, mother tongue, and the birth of the nation are emblematic of the "link between gender and nationalist movements" because "women in general and mothers in particular are responsible for inculcating the key characteristics that define cultural or ethnic identity," and "serve as 'boundary markers' between different national, ethnic, and religious communities" (1).² A harmonious and healthy family resembles a fair and egalitarian government, as much as an abusive family can resemble an authoritarian government. An imbalance of power can occur in the relationships between husbands and wives, parents and children, extended family members, and employers and servants.

The metaphor of the family-as-State or nation drives many narratives. Although the majority of modern countries are nation-States, the terms nation and state are not synonyms. A state is a sovereign land with a government, while a nation is a large group of people who share a language or culture; they do not necessarily inhabit the same state, though they may do so in some instances. A nation-State is a sovereign land with a

government that also has a large group of people with a common language and culture. Given that both family and nation help form identity, a number of aspects unify how domestic space reflects the larger national space: the role of authority and power, the role of women in the family and home, and the role of private and public spaces. Although Michel Foucault argues that the “state is not a household” (5), I would argue that a household can reflect and represent the power structure of the state. The most interesting power structure that literature illustrates through interpersonal interactions is that of authoritarianism.

The metaphor of the family-as-State questions notions of both gender and power. Often, the myth of the ideal family does not meet the social and historical reality. While it appears that family has a positive connotation, and that most people would associate the idea of family with positive emotions, Magnarelli keenly observes:

Paradoxically, although *family* tends to conjure up warm, fuzzy images, the Western tradition has a long history of familial conflict, starting with Cain and Abel and continuing through Abraham and his grandsons (Esau and Jacob)—memories we seem to push aside as we remember family. (21)

The notion of *family* in general seems to evoke pleasant feelings, but upon further scrutiny, many of the families represented in literature suffer from great losses or have violence within the domestic space or fear of violence outside the home. These foundational stories also create and reinforce gender norms and stereotypes with respect to the paternal or nuclear family.

The space of the home represents an intersection of society, state, and culture. The home is at once a private space, sheltered from the outside world, and a public space where other members interact and interfere with each other. As Sharon Magnarelli writes,

the concept of public and private are “Two sides of the same coin, [which] delineate supposedly separate sets of identifications and agencies throughout the subject and nation’s mediating spheres of civil society, including the market and the family” (11). The entire sphere of the domestic space serves as a site of and for conflict and violence. Additionally, it reflects larger cultural and social figures and norms. Thus when the house embodies an unsafe and oppressive environment, the struggles between those with power and those without have larger implications beyond the space of the specific context of the home.

The manner in which different members of a household interact with one another illustrates cultural expectations and national identities. In *Foundational Fictions*, for example, Doris Sommer carefully traces how the genre of romance novels in nineteenth century Latin America helped reinforce the concept of nationhood. The connection between romance and the republic established the legitimacy of the emerging nation and future ideals of that nation (Sommer 7). These national narratives also reinforced gender stereotypes, as female characters often acted frail and fragile.³ This same narrative technique is also observed by Jo Labanyi in Peninsular literature, and she argues that “The realist novel can be seen as a parallel attempt to map the nation” (*Gender and Modernization* 28). Portraying men as the builders of the nation and the women as the reproducers of the next generation created archetypes based upon socially defined roles of gender.

The importance of these socially defined roles are not lost upon Sharon Magnarelli, who points out that “the focus on home and family seems designed to shore

up our waning sense of family in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, when, or so we are told, the nuclear family and family values as we have come to know them are disappearing” (11). Further, she asserts that “There can be little doubt that our perceptions of family and home are of particular cultural import since as tropes they have come to have sociopolitical, national, or even international ramifications far beyond those individual units we label home or family” (12).

Margarita Saona explores the relationship between family and nation in *Novelas familiares: Figuraciones de la nación en la novela latinoamericana contemporánea*. She argues that “los términos familia y nación persisten en las novelas y sería inútil ignorarlos. Sirven aquí como puntos de partida para entender cómo se configuran las sociedades latinoamericanas en el imaginario de su narrativa” (12). The integral relationship between narrative and family emerges across Latin American literature. By exploring how the institution of family constructs identity and the idea of state and nationhood, Saona sets forth a framework that explains the connection between two entities that do not always seem to coincide. As she puts it, “Indagar las formas que familia y nación adquieren en estas novelas permite descubrir cómo la literatura ha configurado los procesos por los que las sociedades latinoamericanas han pasado durante las últimas décadas” (Saona *Novelas* 25). As she later concludes, “la pertenencia a la familia es indispensable para pensar la historia de la nación” (Saona *Novelas* 64).

Although Saona’s framework makes clear connections between family and nation, it does not entirely develop how gender, representations of gender, or the inversion of gender roles affects the concept of nation and state. Additionally, Saona does not fully

address how the space of the home reflects both the political milieu and the representation of the larger national space, especially when taking into consideration gender roles and expectations. The reversal or inversion of gender expectations, or rather women acting in ways that society deems masculine or men acting in ways deemed feminine, raises questions about identity and how domestic space reflects the larger national space as explored via the role of authority and power, the role of women in the family and home, and the role of private and public spaces.

Utilizing the family-as-State metaphor, Alexandra Schultheis explores how this metaphor is distinct from traditional literary categories (5). While the relationship between family and state may not be as widely explored as other traditional categories, the influence and importance of family in nineteenth and twentieth century Hispanic literature and cinema cannot be dismissed. Although she does not directly address Hispanic literature or cinema, Schultheis notes that perhaps we can link the metaphor's utility not only to its universality in literature across the world, but also to its propensity to "provide a common image for collective identification through a conflation of gender roles, cultural motifs, and national history" (6). In a similar vein, Ross Poole explains how national identity and family identity are interrelated:

we need to recognise that the nation is not the only moral community which privileges mutual responsibilities between members over those from outside the group. To be a member of a family, a group of friends, or even a university, for example, means that one has greater responsibilities to some than one has to others. To enter into certain kinds of human relationship simply *is* to acknowledge that the concerns of those who are also involved in those relationships will, in certain respects, take priority over the concerns of others. (70)

In this way, Poole shows how the collective identification of a nation also matches the closed, private nature of a family unit.

As the concept of what constitutes a family changes, so too does the concept of nationhood. Schultheis continues expanding upon the initial family-as-State metaphor and explains that “Focusing on the nation as patriarchal family illuminates the metaphor’s circulation through the overlapping discourses of national identity and subject formation [...] it is perhaps unsurprising that the metaphor plays a primary role in national identity as well” (5). As the concepts of modern subjects and nations came about together, it is hard to separate the family from its cultural and national representation. Since both are “building blocks of a modern ideological framework, subject and nation are united in form and function” (Schultheis 11), and so too, we might add, are government and the state, especially when taking into account terms associated with parenthood. When these institutions encroach upon individual liberties, they are called “paternalistic” or a “nanny state.”⁴ This terminology evokes images of parents and children. It is the imagery of the parent protecting the child’s best interests that many authoritarian governments utilize to reinforce and reassert their dominance. Wha Sook Kim writes that the Argentinean military junta called Argentina the grand Argentine family and that the “discurso oficial presentaba a los ciudadanos como niños inmaduros y débiles que necesitaban la guía de un padre firme, el Estado” (“Telarañas” 419). Labeling the citizens as children reinforces the political position of the government as parent. Adriana Sandoval notes that “La asociación de familia, patria y orden, como objetos preciados y de veneración tienen asociaciones implícitas deliberadas con el fascismo” (155). Fascism is a form of

authoritarianism, and Sandoval's quote points directly to the relationship between family and country.

Many of the words used to describe leaders who hold absolute power have their origins in ancient Greek words. Ignacio López-Calvo notes that

Curiously, the paternalistic connotations of the word *despot* come directly from its etymological origin: the Greek word from which it derives [...] (*despôtes*), meaning "head of household," that is, the master of slave and children. This domestic nuance is lost in the Greek word for tyrant, [...] (*turannos*), which referred simply to a monarch or other type of ruler of a state. (López-Calvo 5)

Although tyrant does not have a familial connotation, López-Calvo also observes that

The term *dictator* is intimately associated with the idea of paternalism. In several works of this [dictator novel] tradition the patriarchal despot believes he must think for his subjects and organize their lives in the proper way, with the intention of saving them from the influence of international communism and other new trends that, in his (sincere or not) opinion, are a threat to Western Civilization. (33)

The paternal family plays a large role in how relationships within a family and within a state are constructed. In her doctoral dissertation, Wha Sook Kim traces the development of Western political thought and its link to patriarchal family structure (*La imagen* 11-16). Kim links patriarchy to the political philosophy of capitalism where women are subjugated and their labor is given less value (*La imagen* 14-15). Returning to the family in particular with respect to patriarchy, Schultheis explains that:

The paternal family forms the basis for the Western subject's experience of the world and the identifications that make that subject socially recognizable. Thus, we see the terms of the paternal family reproduced in discourses of modernity, race, nationhood, and capitalism; those terms provide the glue that holds our sense of 'reality' together. (17)

Within the home, the dominant national identity, most often patriarchy, is the power structure that rules the house.

This is especially true when one takes into account the fact that many authoritarian governments—Francisco Franco, Augusto Pinochet, Rafael Trujillo—referred to themselves as not only the leaders but also the fathers of their countries. Many dictators used the rhetoric of religion and family to legitimize the morality and righteousness of their respective regimes, which is pertinent in Spain, where “the most culturally influential ‘families’ were the Church and the Falange [...] The orthodoxy, morality, and anti-materialism stressed by the Church overlapped with the Falangists’ notion of ‘spiritual’ patriotism, with traditional bourgeois ideas of the respectable Christian family, and with a military emphasis on leadership, order, and national unity” (Perriam, et al 6). The omnipresence of individual dictators within the private space of the home has been well documented in many countries. For example, upon landing at the airport, visitors to the Dominican Republic were greeted by the sign “God and Trujillo.”⁵ His photo overlooked the household, reinforcing his omnipresence within both the public and private spheres. Turning back to Spain, we note that Franco compared his triumph in the Spanish Civil War directly to the “exploits of the great warrior heroes and empire-builders of Spain’s past, like Philip II or El Cid” (Richards 152). The use of the family reinforces how dictators in both Latin America and Spain wove their narrative of conquest and right to rule seamlessly with national stories and allegories.⁶

The relationship between family and national passions can be difficult to understand. Saona ties together their interconnectedness by showing that “la nación es ese espacio oculto bajo la ilusión de un orden que toma la forma de la familia” (*Novelas* 96). Nation, then, is the illusion of order, and this illusion of order takes place via the

family unit. The image of the family helps reinforce the illusion of order within a nation. It is not surprising then that authoritarian governments would utilize the rhetoric of the dictator as both the leader and father of the country in order to reinforce the symbolic power of the government over the nation. These authoritarian leaders also use sexual politics to further their political aims. Although not speaking about dictators of Hispanic countries, other writers such as Barnes, Yourcenar, and Woolf “undertake a critique of the sexual politics of fascism, describing fascism as a patriarchal politics [sic], a loyalty to the fathers, and a corresponding contempt for, rejection, or misuse of the mother and maternity” (Carlston 187-8). In this form of “matriotism”—which Erin Carlston defines as “the sex/gender system which compels women to reproduce the *patria*” (131)—is concealed gender inequality, which hides “behind an idealization of maternity, harnesses women’s (reproductive) labor in the service of the State, and suppresses women’s sexuality in favor of their maternal role” (Carlston 7). By labeling women as mothers and defining their role within the domestic space, authoritarian governments replicate the idealized gender norms of patriarchy. With respect to the role of women within the nation, Jill Vickers explains that: “Women’s traditional association with peacemaking makes them seem inappropriate as leaders; macho men are favoured. These ideologies are reflected in popular and high culture. National myths portray the conquest of continents and the triumph over nature and ‘savage’ enemies” (240). Women are seen as gentle and timid, and thus when narratives portray women with male-gendered characteristics, these female characters are strange. This strangeness permits the reader to

question the portrayal of family and by extension, the idealized vision of the nation as created by authoritarian power structures.

When constructing the subject of family, it is also difficult to separate the traditional roles of women within patriarchy. In feminist theory, for example, Judith Butler asserts the distinction between biological sex and socially expressed gender:

Taken to its logical limit, the sex/gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders. [...] When the constructed status of gender is theorized as radically independent of sex, gender itself becomes a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that *man* and *masculine* might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and *woman* and *feminine* a male body as a female one. (6)

When a woman has gendered characteristics that are culturally linked to a male body, one can say that her gender is masculine. Even though she does not share the same biological sex as a patriarch, she still displays behaviors and mechanisms of control to maintain her absolute rule over the domestic space that reflect similar methods of fear, intimidation, and violence.

Joanne P. Sharp links nationalism to Butler's idea of gender and sex by showing that "The symbols of nationalism are not gender neutral" (98). Instead, nationalism itself plays a hand in enforcing a national norm whereby symbols of nationalism "implicitly or explicitly construct a set of gendered norms" (Sharp 98). Furthermore, Sharp notes that "gender and nationality are significant elements of contemporary subject identity and yet neither gender nor nationality are a priori categories" (106). Gender and nationality are subjects that have not been fully explored, and by extension, nor have the role of the family and the construction of the family unit within the domestic space. Although Diana Taylor focuses on gender and nation in Argentina, she too observes that "Just as gender is

a performative act [...] nation-ness is also performative. Both gender and nation-ness (which, I will argue, are the product of each other's performance and therefore difficult to imagine separately) are oppositional and exclusionary—just as one is male as opposed to female, one is Argentinean as oppose to something else. Both are inscribed on physical bodies.” (Taylor 92). She continues by observing that national and gender identity is “forged in the public sphere—the way we see others and ourselves is key to the process of national recognition and identification. Identification is key to subject formation, through enactments vary from country to country and from period to period” (92).

Although patriarchy dominates the social and cultural political landscape, a matriarchy that has as its core an abusive, authoritarian woman illustrates the same principles of unequal power relationships that occur with a patriarch. Additionally, the domestic space encapsulates several functions.⁷ One critical tool to explore how families function within the home is proposed by Sara Cooper, who recommends Family Systems Theory, an approach typically used for counseling where one views the members of the family as an interrelated unit and the family as a social construct that is a collective system, rather than individuals acting independently. Within literature, one can apply this theory to how the family as a system works or breaks down. Much like a government or country, the events and reactions within a family do not occur as solely individual instances. With the family central to both the social and political worlds (Cooper 2), we can observe how it can also function as a metaphor and metonym for power dynamics. When these power dynamics play out within the space of the home, they create a space where gender and national identity intersect.

Another set of useful theories to explore these masculine women come from the writings of Jacques Rancière. In his essay on power and violence in society in general, he notes that two categories of people exist, “those that one sees and those that one does not see, those who have a logos—memorial speech, an account to be kept up—and those who have no logos, those who really speak and those whose voice merely mimics the articulate voice [...]” (22). Applying Rancière’s theories, one finds that the family’s portrayal in literature and film is seldom flattering. Indeed, the family is frequently presented as abusive, insane, or otherwise dysfunctional.⁸

In order to understand how representations of women and power in literature and media serve as allegories for family in general and the nation in particular, emblematic texts form the basis of each chapter in the dissertation. In the first chapter, I explore one of the earliest strong woman figures from the Generation of 98, “Tula Varona,” (1895) by Ramón del Valle-Inclán. By examining the failed courtship ritual in this story, the larger social and political narrative of the disintegration of the relationship between Spain and its colonies becomes apparent. Using an inverted gender performance, the titular character, freed from the typical expectations of motherhood and maternity, usurps the agency and power of the embodiment of colonial power.

The second chapter explores how blood, birthright, and inheritance in Spanish law and society influence the representation and portrayal of female characters in four *nívolas* by Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo. Through the representation of maternity (or lack thereof), the strained relationship between nation and citizen is reflected in the broken patriarchal families in the stories. Examining how women are inexorably tied to the conceptions of

nation and nationhood, and then reexamining mothers in literature who are controlling, manipulative, or insane, we see how a dysfunctional family can reflect a country reeling from political and economic instability.

After examining how women both reflect and question the body politic, the third chapter reveals the absence of mothers in the lives of their children. This absence reflects the larger social upheaval that emerged after the Spanish Civil War and subsequent overtly patriarchal dictatorship. With Franco as the new “father,” mothers in particular and women in general were expected to uphold the ideals of the newly formed nation-state. Thus, by subverting the narrative of family, the fear and dread of the domestic space of the home felt by the motherless daughters more broadly applies to the stifling political milieu and rigid gender expectations that emerged during the Franco dictatorship.

The fourth chapter builds upon family, but rather than female orphans who come of age, the works in question have young children who attempt to poison the authoritarian women who stepped in to replace their mothers. The space of the home becomes a constricting place, and the children find the only refuge is outside of the home (nation). The antagonistic relationship between the children and their surrogate mother figures minimizes the parallel between this surrogate and traditional, male authoritarian figures. The family home becomes as oppressive as any totalitarian state under the direction of these strong women.

The fifth chapter focuses on two twenty-first century works that center on the city of Barcelona, Carlos Ruiz Zafón’s *La sombra del viento* (2001) and Alejandro González

Iñárritu's *Beautiful* (2010). These works crossed over and were popular in the United States and other English-speaking countries which reveal how the Spanish Civil War causes a national trauma that continues to the present day. Families are still represented as broken—again the children have either dead or absent parents—and the narratives fixate on the past. Unable to break free from the collective trauma of civil war, the narratives suggest a still-wounded nation that struggles to cope. The children and great-grandchildren of the decedents of the Spanish Civil War continue to relive the national horror on a small scale within their own homes as their families do not fit into the idealized version of the institution.

The conclusion provides thoughts on how family, nation, gender, and power might play out in twenty-first century Spain while the nation as a whole attempts to come to terms with the national trauma of the Spanish Civil War and Franco dictatorship. Most notably, as the conception of family continues to be redefined, especially as certain social mores and gender expectations become more fluid. As these social institutions begin to have more flexible definitions, so too will the representations of gender, family, nation, and nationality in literature and media become less rigid. By examining the family as a microcosm for the nation, literature and media that have family at their center come to have deeper political and social meanings.

Endnotes

1. The *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* traces the term “nuclear family” back to 1924. A nuclear family consists of a mother and a father and their children. A nuclear family is often contrasted with an extended family, which the *OED* defines as consanguine and conjugal relatives living in proximity. Prior to the twentieth century, early death resulted in families with stepsiblings and half siblings. Families with one parent or children raised by grandparents are not new phenomena. For Deborah Chambers, “the modern, nuclear family *does* exist and it is flourishing as an ideal: as a symbol, discourse and powerful myth within the collective imagination. It structures emotions, modes of official knowledge, bodies, identities and definitions of public and private cultural space” (1).

2. This link between gender and nation is also illustrated by Alison Sinclair, “The choice of gender for national identification is charged with meaning [...] Myths of nation in Spain are not exclusively feminine, but they re most memorably so” (“Identifications” 181-2).

3. Diana Taylor points out that: “Other scholars have focused on *writing* the nation, examining foundation fictions (as Doris Sommer does) or the literary traditions (as Josefia Ludmer did with the *gauchesca*) or national constitutions, grammar books [...] Although language, literature, and any number of linguistic systems are key in aligning a citizen’s sense of identity to a geographic place, becoming a “citizen” is also performative.” (92)

4. The *OED* defines paternalistic as coming from paternalism, which is characterized by restricting freedoms and responsibilities of others based upon what is claimed or considered to be in their best interests. According to the *OED*, the term nanny state originates from British English around 1965, and is used to describe government or policies that unduly interfere with individual choice.

5. Preface to *God and Trujillo* and mentioned by López-Calvo on page 166, note 58.

6. Ignacio López-Calvo observes that “Totalitarian rulers tended to present themselves through the officially controlled media as patriots who had been sent by Providence to save the country from being corrupted by demonized internal or external conspiracies. Typically, the supposedly benevolent patriarch and his administrative council or junta promised to defend ‘Western values,’ such as family and Christianity, and to return to democracy as soon as the country became ready and mature enough for it” (7).

7. As Sara Cooper argues,

If the family can be seen as both the space where socialization (normalization) occurs and the seat of social or political rebellion, where the roles of sex and gender are both established and subverted, and where communication skills are honed or destroyed, then the literature that represents the family must be explored with some exceedingly flexible yet powerful critical tools. (6)

8. One only needs to think of novels such as Galdos' *Fortunata y Jacinta*, Valle-Inclán's *Luces de Bohemia*, or Unamuno's *Niebla* to see that family relationships and the institution of marriage do not resolve social problems, and in fact, marriage and family can make the problems of the individual worse. This is echoed by Pisters and Staat, who note that "Of course, families can be dysfunctional as well, and these unsuccessful families have also been studied extensively from a sociological perspective" (8).

Chapter 1

Wild Women of the West: Courtship in Valle-Inclán's "Tula Varona"(1895)

In this chapter, the focus will be on the representations of national identity as portrayed by Ramón del Valle-Inclán in one of his early short stories, "Tula Varona" (1895).¹ Although Valle-Inclán is most often studied as a dramaturge, his short stories provide an early glimpse into the themes of nationhood and national identity for which he and other writers of the Generation of 98 would become well known. In "Tula Varona," Ramiro, a young Spanish noble, arrives at a new town (most probably in Mexico), and falls in love at first sight with the rugged and intrepid Tula Varona. Their casual flirtations lead to a fencing repartee where Ramiro draws blood. In another interaction, Ramiro is so overcome with desire for Tula Varona that he kisses her. She promptly throws Ramiro out of her house for the transgression, and keeps him at bay with her fencing foil. These jousts and subsequent jockeying for power reveal the tensions between the colonies and Spain, but rather than directly explore the relationship between these two powers, Valle-Inclán creates an allegory through a failed courtship ritual.

By employing courtship rituals, Valle-Inclán takes expected gender roles and behaviors and reverses both their power dynamics and outcomes. Rather than encounter a chaste and demure *doncella*, Ramiro is confronted by a masculine woman. This confrontation reflects the disconnect between the idealized relationship between Spain and its (soon to be former) colonies. When "Tula Varona" was first published in 1895,² Spain's final colonial holdings had not yet achieved independence. However, Spain's grasp on its outlying territories had been steadily slipping away since the early

seventeenth century. The loss of colonies in the Americas had already begun to greatly diminish Spain's sphere of influence in the Western hemisphere. By the time that Valle-Inclán wrote "Tula Varona," the only colonies that Spain still had direct control over were Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. Nevertheless, the rumblings of succession and colonial nationalism were still present in the relationship between Spain and its colonies that would break away three years after the publication of "Tula Varona." These tensions are expressed in the interactions between Tula Varona and Ramiro. Ramiro's desire and fascination with Tula symbolizes the same relationship between colonizer and colonized.

The sexualized and gendered embodiment of that tension between the waning colonial power and its colony begins with the title of the story. Starting with the first name, we see that the etymological meaning of Tula is strength or strong.³ Then, upon examination of the surname, we find a play on the Spanish word *varón*, which means male human being or a male who has reached virility.⁴ The last name uses the Spanish convention of adding an "a" to a noun to make it feminine. From the initial interaction with the title alone, a careful reader would see the play on gender and notions of femininity. Thus, one possible meaning of the main character's name is strong manly woman. Another is a play on this surname is the more well-known character of Latin American literature, the strong man. Having spent a considerable amount of time during his travels abroad in the country of Mexico,⁵ Valle-Inclán would have plausibly experienced and witnessed the influence of the Mexican dictator, José de la Cruz Porfirio Díaz Mori, an early example of a Latin American "strong man."⁶ The figure of the strong

man frequently appears in the dictator novel. Speratti Piñero notes that the short stories in *Femeninas* that Valle-Inclán published shortly after his return to Spain in 1895 are where “lo mexicano reaparece” and that Tula Varona is “el personaje homónimo, descrito como una criolla caprichosa y cruel” (61). This capriciousness and cruelty that is inherent to Tula Varona’s nature appears to be a precursor to *Tirano Banderas*’ tyrant, Santos Banderas. In part, she can be seen as a practice run for the crueler and less romanticized version of Porfirio seen in Valle-Inclán’s *Tirano Banderas*.

Although the work with the clearest connection to this dictator by Valle-Inclán is *Tirano Banderas* (Speratti Piñera 69-70), there are precursors to Valle-Inclán’s later portrayal of Porfirio in Tula Varona’s characterizations. Considering Valle Inclán’s future forays into the dictator novel genre with *Tirano Banderas* (1926), it is plausible that the exaggerated masculine qualities of Tula Varona created a basis for Valle-Inclán’s more well-known work. Indeed, *Tirano Banderas* served as an example, template, and cornerstone of the genre that exploded as part of the Latin American Boom. Tula Varona⁷ certainly exhibits many behaviors that one would attribute to a male leader, and Valle-Inclán’s characterizations of an emotionally distant and controlling person would fit his later literary creation.

Although Tula Varona is an incomplete sketch of an authoritarian figure, she is an analog for gendered stereotypes of women from the colonies. These stereotypes began with the exploration and incursion of Spanish conquistadores. In the travel narratives from the Conquista, many writers drew upon the tropes of cannibals, dog-faced men,⁸ and women who urinated standing up. Drawing upon this collective imagining of the colonial

territories, we find that Valle-Inclán has continued to masculinize the exoticized and eroticized female Other. The female body that the conquistadores feared and subjugated at the start of the conquest is replicated in the sexualized descriptions of Tula Varona and the emasculated Ramiro. Similar to the descriptions of indigenous women in colonial literature, Tula Varona exhibits male behaviors. Although Tula Varona's behaviors are more modernized than urinating like a man, her actions such as fencing and smoking make her a wild and dangerous form of female sexuality that must be tamed or dominated by the colonizing forces.

The positioning of unequal power between colonizer and colonized starts with the names of the protagonists. The one-sided romantic interest between Ramiro and Tula Varona and subsequent conflict can be attributed to the etymological meaning behind Ramiro's name, which is "powerful in battle" or "powerful in army."⁹ By examining the meaning behind the names Tula Varona and Ramiro, the militaristic conflict and battle metaphors become more noticeable in the text. They add a more universal nature to the story, moving it beyond an unsuccessful love story to a larger commentary on the decaying relationship between Spain and its colonies. In addition to the military and battle metaphors, the language of hunting permeates the story, and not just when Tula Varona shows off her marksmanship. Inequality in dating rituals is created and maintained by the culture. In the western and patriarchal tradition, women are most often the prey in the courtship chase. Even when the metaphor is made passive by having a woman use her beauty to "bait" and lure in the suitor, the prize is still the captured woman. From the opening of the story, Ramiro is captivated by Tula Varona's beauty.

Similar to an animal being drawn into a trap, Ramiro starts what he assumes will be a successful conquest. By underestimating his opponent, Ramiro falls into the same hubris that Spain showed when dealing with its colonies.

Rather than considering the relationship in a calculated, militaristic manner, Ramiro (and more globally Spain) falls to the strong man of the colonies. For R. Carballo Calero, Tula Varona is “unha aventureira internacional. Os amores son frívolos, cando non son sádicos” (4). While Tula Varona may seem to be a worldly vagabond, I disagree with Carballo Calero’s assertion that her liaisons are frivolous. Examining the alleged sexually adventurous history of Tula Varona, the reader is merely presented rumors of her behavior, and nothing concrete. There is little textual evidence of any frivolous nature to her liaisons. While there is some truth regarding the sadistic pleasure she takes rejecting Ramiro at the end of the story, the actual projection of this emotion comes from the omniscient narrator’s observation rather than from Tula Varona. The nature of the narration is such that the story is presented in way that sympathizes with Ramiro by entering into his mind and reactions, while only observing Tula Varona. As the narrator does not enter into Tula Varona’s state of mind, the description erases her voice. Conversely, the narrator focuses on Ramiro’s inner thoughts and motivations. The reader perceives Tula Varona’s actions rather than understanding her motivations. Thus, the fact that she does not reciprocate Ramiro’s advances does not make her ultimate dismissal of him a sadistic act.

At first, it appears as though Ramiro and his one-sided chase will eventually triumph over Tula Varona. This expectation stems from the fact that Valle-Inclán plays

off the clichéd trope of the moneyed newcomer who succeeds in capturing the attention and interest of the most eligible woman in town. Rather than the stereotypical cold woman turned warm lover, Ramiro is confronted with a cunning opponent who does not willingly acquiesce to the standard literary tropes of romance stories. Indeed, Ramiro's attempt to woo Tula on the battlefield of love further illustrates the underlying conflict on both the social and economic level between Spain and the colonies. Ramiro's dogged and fruitless pursuit of Tula parallels Spain's infatuation with and slipping control of its colonies. It is clear that the affections in the story are one-sided and not reciprocated, similar to the slowly deteriorating political relationship. As discussed in the Introduction, romantic relationships were a popular way to shape nation-building dialogue in nineteenth century Latin American literature (Sommer). If romance literature helped to create archetypes that illustrated the positive construction of a new nation, then the rejected advances and failed courtship in "Tula Varona" come to embody an allegory of disintegrating and explosive political relationships of larger nation-states. Ramiro attempts to domesticate the wild woman of the west, but unlike the meaning of his name—which is powerful in battle or powerful in the arm—he does not embody his name's etymology when faced with a woman who does not easily submit to his desire.

Exploring Ramiro's failed courtship of Tula Varona, we can see parallels to the historical narrative of taming the 'savage' native. Instead of a successful foray into a new place to impose his will upon the colonies, Ramiro is confronted by a sizeable amount of resistance. The narrative of domesticating the local population appeared in the earliest accounts of the Spanish conquest, and the necessity for this pacification was often

couched in paternalistic terms of salvation. In part, the wild woman of a foreign land who must be domesticated stems from representing uncharted land and territory as virgin women who await the phallic insertion of a flag to claim them. Personifying land as feminine when talking about the environment creates a dialogue that strips the land of any agency within a patriarchal construct. Within this construct, land and women are possessions to be acquired and cultivated, regardless of the civilizations or persons who occupied them prior. Particularly popular metaphors relating to the femininity of nature and the land include Mother Nature and Mother Earth. Drawing upon the perceived femininity of the land, Ramiro embodies the colonial pursuit of territory and taming. The land, and by extension the indigenous female bodies that occupy it, is something to be conquered and subdued.

The terms Mother Nature and Mother Earth are also linked to pagan symbols and imagery where the world was imagined as a woman. Valle-Inclán draws upon the rich literary history of Greek and Roman mythology to add an intertextual layer to the interactions between Tula Varona and Ramiro. Taken in conjunction with the metaphors of Mother Nature and Mother Earth, the Greek and Roman mythology that Valle-Inclán draws from create a mix of aloof femininity that subverts socially constructed expectations of female gender. Even with the images of mothers as gentle and nurturing, as both European explorers and Ramiro discover, interacting with these environments reveals that the perceived pristine and passive beauty of the land can be deadly and treacherous. Although Tula Varona is not a mother in Valle-Inclán's short story, as the embodiment of the savage and primal colonial land, she intertwines the beauty and

danger of the natural world. Despite not fulfilling a literal role of mother, Tula Varona is a direct allusion to Diana the Huntress from Roman mythology. In fact, as mentioned earlier, one incarnation of “Tula Varona” was published under the title of “Diana the Huntress.” The relationship between the Mother Nature and Mother Earth metaphors and ancient religion stems from the personification of the seasons and planet as women.

The mythical figure of Diana is closely linked with animals, hunting, childbirth, and virginity. Like her mythical counterpart, Tula Varona engages in historically masculine pursuits such as hunting, while rejecting the sexual advances of Ramiro. Nevertheless, Diana the Huntress is not the only strong, female character from mythology. One needs only to think of Juno (Hera in Greek mythology) or the Amazons to find exemplars of cunning and forceful women. These women of ancient legends were lauded for their ability to behave in masculine ways, and most often served as cautionary tales for men to recognize how to interact with these entities that were both beautiful and perilous. Drawing from other strong, female-centered stories from Roman and Greek history, Diana the Huntress serves as an excellent template for Tula Varona, because the influence of ancient mythology in “Tula Varona” can be seen in the aggressive and bellicose nature of its titular character.

By embodying a stereotyped, hypersexual woman from the colonial territories as the virgin huntress, Valle-Inclán makes a character that is alluring and off limits at the same time. Sharing the gendered characteristics of the land that has been appropriated by colonial interests, Tula Varona is an object for conquest. Like Diana the Huntress, she is adept with weapons. Despite not using her mythical counterpart’s bow and arrow, Tula

Varona's marksmanship with a shotgun serves as a modern interpretation of weaponry prowess. It is important to point out that her masculine weapon skills of shooting and fencing are not only stereotypically masculine due to their perceived physical requirements, but also due to the phallic nature of the armaments themselves. Both weapons, relative to body length, are long and slender. Taken in conjunction with the many masculine descriptors of Tula Varona in the text such as her manly smile when she laughs and her propensity to wear men's hats (Valle-Inclán 106), the overtly sexual nature of Tula Varona's shotgun and fencing sword causes Ramiro to become mesmerized by her allure. The homoerotic desire that Ramiro feels towards the masculinized woman mirrors similarly expressed sentiments found in classical lyric poetry and classic literature as expressed between the hero of the narrative and his sidekick.¹⁰ Another instance where Ramiro feels an intense desire for the masculine performing of Tula Varona is when he tries to get her to share a cigarette with him. The sexualized act of smoking a cigarette and then Ramiro's attempt to partake in the same act of simulated fellatio furthers the play on gender and sexual attraction. The attraction and repulsion that Ramiro has for Tula Varona stems from her fluid presentation of both male and female gendered behaviors.

By utilizing the figures and figurative language of myths, Valle-Inclán adds dimension and allusion to the frustration and admiration that Ramiro has for Tula Varona. From the start of their interactions, Ramiro recognizes Tula Varona as a replica of Diana. Like the virgin huntress of lore, Tula Varona rejects and refuses the advances and admirations of her socially suggested suitor. The importance of the connection to Diana is

that the myth permits a woman to behave outside of her expected gender performance. According to Judith Butler, “gender proves to be performative—that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be” (33). Since our viewpoint of the society and story in question comes from a limited omniscient narrator who focuses on Ramiro’s inner thoughts, the gender that Tula Varona “performs” through language, dress, and behavior around Ramiro is perceived to be masculine and aggressive. At the same time, the performative function of the male gender inspires homoerotic desire, which creates two outcomes: one where Ramiro feels emasculated and another where he feels as though he must reassert his masculine dominance through fantasized sexual violence. The mythic space permits and encourages behaviors that society typically associates with the male sex. Both Diana the Huntress and Tula Varona are spared from conforming to socially normalized gender roles because they perform a warrior role. By performing the male sex’s socially prescribed gender, Tula Varona holds the power that society gives to that gender identity.

Adding to the dangerous characterization of Tula Varona is how she at once fits and breaks gendered expectations of female identity. Visually, Tula Varona is strikingly lovely. Despite her propensity to wear certain men’s clothing items, these clothes are more of a local curiosity that adds to the perception of her as exotic and non-Western. Her warrior tendencies place her gender performance further away from stereotypical and socially constructed feminine behaviors. This hybrid nature of existing as a beautiful woman who behaves like a man confuses Ramiro, who is unsure if he speaks with a gentile lady or a rough and tumble vagabond. The physical beauty of the *criolla*—a

hybrid creation of indigenous and peninsular mixing—marks Tula Varona’s biological sex as female. However, her masculine gendered characteristics reflect the need for violence on the part of the colonies to reassert their power and position with respect to Spain. Aside from the courtship ritual that Ramiro tires to engage in, the relationship between Ramiro and Tula Varona is continually marked and framed within the colonizer and colonized dialogue.

The majority of the descriptors regarding Tula Varona revolve around that fact that she is *criolla*—whether it is her accent, clothes, or taste for mate. Tula Varona’s beauty is alluring, but this beauty comes from her *criolla* heritage. The narrator frequently refers to her as “la criolla” rather than by her given name. It is her position as *criolla* that serves as the key to her masculinity. The contamination of the New World and its projected colonial history as a place where its inhabitants needed ‘civilizing’ intersects with the culture, customs, and manners of the Old World and its desire to control and order the dangerous, indigenous bodies and sexualities. The result is a hybrid woman who can operate within the accepted role of the mythical Diana and yet startle with her provocative and aggressive sexuality. Rather than a pure Spanish lady, Ramiro is faced with a fiercely sovereign entity who cruelly mocks him at every opportunity. Each interaction where Ramiro fails to impress or sway Tula Varona reveals the buffoonish nature of Spain’s old ways and waning grasp on the more competent and agile colonies.

Turning the expected romantic story plot of love and marriage into a farce helps make the courtship ritual between Ramiro and Tula Varona into a satirical situation.¹¹ By exaggerating the inverted power dynamic between Tula Varona and Ramiro, Valle-Inclán

creates a situation where the hyperbolic masculine qualities of Tula Varona expose the stupidity and vices of Ramiro. Castro Delgado attributes Ramiro's failure in love to his vanity and lack of intelligence which systematically manifest the "ironía del narrador y las burlas de Tula Varona" (523). Further, and paraphrasing Danielle Gambini, Castro Delgado pinpoints Ramiro's defeat and humiliation to when he kisses Tula Varona and her rejection of him is "la inversión de los roles de género" (523). Thus, Spain becomes the butt of the joke when Ramiro, who is supposed to be a swashbuckling transplant to the colonies, is evicted from Tula Varona's house, and by extension, the colonies. The allegorical ability of Spain to interact with and control its colonial holdings continues to slip throughout the story. Pursuing the figure of Diana the Huntress foreshadows the failed and foolish courtship of Ramiro with Tula Varona. The mythical figure of Diana, through her own bellicose nature and battle prowess, never succumbed to her own sexual desires nor submitted to any man who pursued her. The image of woman as huntress and guardian of the untamed forest comes to embody the resistance and independence of the Spanish colonies. The decadent Spain, represented by Ramiro, does not know how to interact with the colonies' newfound independence. Valle-Inclán showcases this independence by inverting gender expectations and roles of the colonial, female body.

Pulling from the common, historical literary tropes often ascribed to the colonized, female body, Valle-Inclán creates an image of a woman that is at once virginal, by dint of her rejection of Ramiro's advances, and sultry, as reasoned from her overtly coquettish behavior and her alluded lesbian liaisons.¹² These reports regarding Tula Varona's sexual behavior come through two mediated sources: the narrator and the

narrator's reporting of Ramiro's thoughts and perspective. These two distinctly male viewpoints serve as the lens through which the reader engages with and perceives Tula Varona. The character whose perspective that is most developed is Ramiro, and he clearly recognizes the classic qualities of beauty and strength exhibited by Tula Varona. Even though Tula Varona is not pure in the strictest sense of the word, her sexual dalliances are presented as rumors and overheard whispers rather than fact. By positioning herself outside of expected gender norms and performing a masculine gender, the rustic Tula Varona presents a considerable challenge to the gentile Ramiro.

The challenge that Ramiro faces is how to woo the local lady without giving in to his violent, sexual desires. As Ramiro struggles against his violent impulses, the desire to ravish Tula Varona is only subsumed by socially constructed expectations of behavior. Attempting to maintain Peninsular and gentry standards, Ramiro resists the sexual urges that this unconventional display rouses from him. Taking into account the literary history wherein Diana the Huntress always outwits or escapes her suitors, it is clear that Ramiro will be no match for this contemporary temptress. Even though Ramiro knows his feelings are improper, the omniscient narrator goes into great detail regarding his exact fantasies. The narrator insinuates that Tula Varona's refusal to move their interactions past coquetries justifies Ramiro's thoughts of forcing her to submit. While Ramiro's only transgression against Tula Ramiro is a kiss, that single act is what causes Tula Varona to cast Ramiro out of her home.

Although a kiss seems like a small infraction, taken in conjunction with the history of assault against indigenous, female bodies, Ramiro's eviction from Tula

Varona's home takes on a more global meaning. The creation of the *criollo/a* body was a product of violence. Apocryphal tales that explain the difference in the Peninsular versus Latin American definition of the word *coger*—meaning to grab or hold in Spain and vulgarly to fuck in Latin America—stem from the sexual violence indigenous women experienced as the two cultures came into contact with one another. From the subaltern's perspective, rape and sexual coercion are the fabric of the *criollo* identity. At the earliest point in the molding of Latin America in the image of Spain, the blended heritage borne out of violence has resulted in an unequal power dynamic between the colonizers and the colonized. In the moment where Ramiro submits to his sexual impulses, Tula Varona uses it to recapture the upper hand. Although Tula Varona is not privy to Ramiro's violent and sexual inner thoughts, the historical violence perpetrated against indigenous body creates an equally violent reaction. Even though "Tula Varona" was published three years before the Spanish-American War, the tensions are evident in the failed courtship attempts of Ramiro. By forcibly removing Ramiro from her house, Tula Varona proves that she does not need Ramiro or Spain to survive in the New World. Expelling Ramiro from of her colonial home becomes a symbolic ejection of Spain from the colonies.

Tula Varona's rejection is more than just the kiss. The invasion of her personal space with Ramiro's presumption that she reciprocates his attentions must be rebuffed not with words or deferment, but with violence. The need for violence stems from the need for armaments to fend off the unwanted Spanish incursions of the colonial space. Tula Varona's use of a fencing foil returns the power in the relationship to a phallic tool and a masculine sport. By rejecting both Ramiro and colonial gender norms, Tula Varona

retakes the domestic space of the home and symbolically recovers the sovereign space of the nation. Rather than the idyllic nation-building, Latin American romance novel that reinforces heteronormativity, Valle-Inclán crafts a tale where family formation is thwarted and lesbian relationships are possible. By denying the creation of a new family unit with Tula Varona and Ramiro, Valle-Inclán demonstrates that the schism between colonial and peninsular interests cannot be bridged. The dissolution of romantic ties (or the inability to form those ties in the first place), reveals the disintegrating relationship between Spain and its colonies.

Tula Varona's hostile reaction towards the colonizer and his intrusion upon her personal space also has an ecocritical aspect to it. Cheryll Glotfelty defines ecocriticism as the "study of the relationship between literature and physical environment [...]" ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies" (xv). Within literature, linking the indigenous female body with the conquered land is related to the common language of violation that is used to describe the natural resources and pillaging by the colonizers as mentioned earlier. One of the immediate consequences of the conquest of the Americas was the exploitation of the natural resources. Adding to the antagonistic relationship between Spain and the colonies is the imagery of capturing and taming. To further investigate the ecocritical connections to "Tula Varona," the relationship between nature and the alluded mythological characters and their significance must be explored. For instance, Diana the Huntress' occupation is the protection of sacred forests. Despite the fact that the confrontation between Tula Varona and Ramiro happens within the home, Tula Varona's symbolic role as guardian of the colonial lands transforms the

actual domestic space of the home into the allegorical representation of the country. Thus, when she expels the colonizing interloper from her home, and as mentioned previously, by extension the colonies. Even though Tula Varona appears to represent untamed nature, her lack of offspring frees her from the traditional, maternal role of caretaker. Tula Varona's non-conforming gender performance marks her as savage and bellicose by the norms of Spanish society. In order to protect her home from future incursions, Tula Varona turns to the violent means—guns and swords—that first subjugated the colonial territories.

Masculine elements are necessary to protect the feminine space of forest and foreign land. The alluded position of defender of nature and sacred spaces makes Tula Varona even more of a guardian of the colonial territories. While Diana the Huntress of myth was a sworn virgin, Tula Varona is rumored to be separated and to live apart from her husband. Despite the scandalous insinuations that her independence causes, Tula Varona embraces her freedom from marriage and alleged husband. The narrator insinuates a more colorful history than that which is experienced by Ramiro when he interacts with Tula Varona. Performing masculine and aggressive behaviors shows that the literary construct of women as warriors liberates Tula Varona from the social graces expected of 'proper' and 'chaste' Spanish women. Ramiro's expectation that he will eventually tame the hybrid woman only serves to further divide the interests of both sides of the power struggle that is reflected in his failed courtship attempt.

Another aspect of Ramiro's character that adds to the divide between Spain and its colonies is his title of duke. Much like we shall observe in greater detail in Chapter 2

with Unamuno's "El marqués de Lumbría," this title of minor nobility confers the weight of patriarchal tradition. Ramiro is from Madrid, the land of bullfights and other spectacles of decadence. The young and moneyed Duke seeks to increase his perceived nobility and status through heterosexual marriage. Traditionally, nobility held control of the land and lived from rents and investments. Tula Varona presents an opportunity to expand both land holdings and finances in the expanded Spanish territory. While it may seem that Tula Varona's prior marriage would be an impediment to Ramiro's pursuit, her body and coquetry make her even more desirable under the patriarchal male gaze.

Female sexuality is inexorably linked to religion, and Valle-Inclán's story radiates with what Claire J. Paolini refers to as a strong, pagan sexuality (Paolini 90). This paganism is directly related to the Roman and Greek mythological references and the ties to the Mother Nature/Mother Earth. These ancient beliefs and feminized metaphors permit the colonized female more freedom for Tula Varona than the standard Catholic religion. By not fulfilling the Church's mandate to produce children within matrimony, Tula Varona falls outside the patriarchally defined role of women. Additionally, by not remaining faithful within her marriage, Tula Varona breaks free from monogamy and a heteronormativity. The colonies, embodied as a liberated woman, represent a threat to Spanish order and tradition. Much like the land that at first seemed beautiful and unguarded turned into a less hospitable place, so too do the affections and flirtations of Tula Varona turn into a swift rejection of the colonizer.

Despite Valle-Inclán's portrayal of Tula Varona as "un ser narcisista, obsesionado con su poder de seducción y su belleza, mujer que con sus encantos hace que un hombre

sucumba ante sus artificios femeninos” (González 299), these characterizations are driven to a large degree by her gender. Reversing the seduction and humiliation roles changes the narrative from the fallen woman to the tricked and scorned man. Tula Varona’s perceived drive to use her ‘feminine wiles’ to have men succumb to her charms is why several critics would posit that Tula Varona is a *femme fatale*.¹³ Paolini observes that, as a literary device, the *femme fatale* is “sensual, seductive, and passionate, she is also cold, cruel, and impassive, never giving herself to any man. In fact, she often leads the man to ruin and destruction” (79-80). While Paolini argues that Valle-Inclán’s fictional women, like Tula Varona, are neither ideal nor *femmes fatales*, it is clear that Tula Varona’s refusal to submit to Ramiro and her eventual rejection of him for giving in to his sexual impulses puts her in a category closer to *femme fatale* than an ideal, chaste woman. Tula Varona continues to represent a hybridity of two extremes: indigenous and Spaniard; *femme fatale* and chaste lady; woman and man.

Popular myths surrounding Diana the Huntress also have men falling to their untimely demise, and so women who are the object of male desire who do not wish to be captured turn the hunter into the hunted throughout literature. Ramiro’s failed attempt to captivate Tula Varona’s interest is much like the mythological story of Actaeon’s failed attempt to capture Diana. Instead of seducing the maiden, Diana turns Actaeon into a stag that is devoured by his hunting dogs. Valle-Inclán adds suspense and tension to the fencing scenes between Tula Varona and Ramiro, as many readers would have been familiar with the deadly consequences that had befallen Actaeon when attempting to capture Diana the Huntress in classical literature. Although the *femme fatale* is meant to

serve as a warning to men that sexual and strong woman are ruinous, the historical roots show that the origin of the *femme fatale* is a woman who refuses to be prey. Rather than denigrate the sexual and strong woman, Diana the Huntress and Tula Varona reveal that the power in a relationship comes from restraining sexual impulse and desire.

However, not giving in to sexual impulse and desire does not absolve Tula Varona from feeling and exhibiting her sexuality. Looking at Tula Varona's alleged past sexual history, Paolini refers to Tula Varona as a "devout adulteress" (88). This oxymoronic term captures the dichotomy of female identity that is along the virgin/whore divide and its tie to religion in general and Catholic dogma in particular. Whereas Diana the Huntress was a sworn virgin, Tula Varona is rumored to have a prior marriage and no offspring. Renowned for their beauty, both Diana the Huntress and Tula Varona are subjected to the male gaze. Their striking physical appearance has them singled out by the male narrator and Ramiro as an object to be admired like a statue rather than an individual person. Tula Varona's body in particular is compared to a Greek Venus with her "piernas largas y esbeltas" (Valle-Inclán 109). The connection to mythology as a socially acceptable exemption to chaste and innocent female sensuality opens up the possibility that the frozen and placid beauty found in ancient sculpture is more complex than at first appearance. Returning again to the idea of hybridity, this presentation of femininity/masculinity creates strength through violence and force. Through the inversion of the socially constructed expectation passivity and maternity of the protagonist, the perception of Tula Varona is that of an alluring and tempting woman of ill repute. The

characterizations that shift Tula Varona closer to being labeled a whore are those that closely tie her to her mythic counterpart.

For González, Tula Varona's apparent narcissism, cruelty, and lasciviousness are attributes that "no constituyen, necesariamente, una censura del temperamento femenino y sí una crítica del donjuanismo, vinculado usualmente con el sexo masculino" (299-300). Tying Tula Varona's behaviors to the famous literary Don Juan and criticizing the libertine behaviors does not fully explain the inherent sexism and classism present in the story. Aside from a rumored husband, the only perspective we have of her behaving like Don Juan is through Ramiro's jilted standpoint. The exaggerated masculine qualities that Tula Varona displays are more than a criticism of Don Juanism, they are an indictment of the perils that the colonies present to Spain. The violent rejection of Ramiro and Spanish colonization comes to fruition in the story because Ramiro does not approach his interactions with Tula Varona with caution. Thus, even though the story was published in 1895, the fact that the colonies broke away from Spanish rule shortly after publication shows that Tula Varona's inverted gender performance is less of a condemnation of Don Juanism and more of caution against the growing ferocity and independence of the colonies. The conclusion that Valle-Inclán wishes to caution rather than support or endorse colonial autonomy stems from Valle-Inclán's many negative descriptors of Tula Varona and the sympathetic portrayal of the young, yet buffoonish noble.

Again, the violence in the colonies against the colonizers is not one-sided. The *criollo/a* body came into existence out of an original violence by the colonizer. This violence is repeated in the courtship ritual that Ramiro attempts with Tula Varona.

Similar to the conquistadores lack of concern for any prior relationships that the indigenous women may have had prior, Ramiro remains drawn to the alluring Tula Varona and her marital status. Returning to the homoerotic desire that Tula Varona provokes in Ramiro, the scene where Ramiro tries to convince Tula Varona to share her cigarette also reveals the points of conflict between Ramiro's noble background and Tula Varona's rustic lifestyle. The systemic occupation of indigenous lands and subjugation of the people on those lands continued after the initial conquest through the continued economic subordination between the colonies and mainland Spain.

As Catherine Davies points out, the economic relationship between the land-owning *criolla* and the title holding peninsular also reveals the economic conflict between Spain and her colonial possessions. The amount of land available for minor nobility in Spain was finite, and the colonies represented an incredible opportunity to seize wealth through the abundant natural resources. Mainland Spain took advantage of the economic boon that the colonial lands provided by taxation. This traditional relationship between colonizer and colonized is questioned when Ramiro attempts to position his request to share Tula Varona's only cigarette as an obligation to the Spanish crown (Davies 143). However, Tula Varona breaks this cycle of fiefdom and second class status created between taxed and taxer by being a "contrabandista" (Davies 143). Piracy serves as a way to circumvent the Spanish pillaging of colony resources. Although this commentary is delivered by Tula Varona while flirting with Ramiro, her words further illustrates the gulf between Spanish colonies and "mother" country.¹⁴

Utilizing the metaphor of Spain as the mother country, we see a convergence and conflict between the feminine. The power dynamic that plays out when the motherland tries to impose its will upon Mother Nature directly relates to the fecundity of both. Tula Varona's refusal to reciprocate Ramiro's affections helps stop the genetic incursion upon the colonized people. By evicting Ramiro from her home, Tula Varona continues to sever the ties to the motherland because no new *criollo/a* bodies can be created. The pagan spirit that surrounds Tula Varona's description is a way to push back against the restrictive social mores that surround Catholic, female sexuality. Additionally, the clumsy and oafish flirtations as Ramiro attempts to woo Tula Varona add to the division between the self-centered Spanish gentleman and the fiercely independent *criolla* woman. Freed from the courtship ritual, Tula Varona is able to doubly reject motherhood by not being a biological mother and by rebuffing the motherland/Ramiro and Catholicism/chastity.

Prior to the rejected kiss, the narrator makes it clear that Ramiro perceives a reciprocated interest from Tula Varona. The division between colonizer and colonized becomes noticeable when Ramiro is clearly shown as being more interested in pursuing a relationship with Tula Varona. Rather than see her demonstrations of how to drink mate in the American style as a friendly gesture, Ramiro believes that they are sharing a kiss through the cup. The act of drinking mate (a very New World beverage) illustrates how Ramiro is a visitor in these lands rather than an owner. The deadly nature behind the embodiment of Diana the Huntress/Mother Nature is revealed in language that reflects the biblical story of original sin. Shortly after Ramiro's unwelcome kiss, the narrator describes Tula Varona's reaction as "ella, en vez de huírle, acerada, erguida, con la

cabeza alta y los ojos brillantes, como viborilla a quien pisan la cola, le azotó el rostro [...]” (Valle-Inclán 115). Creating a simile between Tula Varona and a viper is not casual, since there are classical and religious allusions throughout the story. Tula Varona represents how Eve’s existence caused Adam to fall into temptation. Rather than just represent Eve, Tula Varona’s masculine qualities also have her embody the form that the (male) Devil took when convincing Eve to eat the fruit of knowledge and share it with Adam. Tula Varona exists in the story to tempt Ramiro, but rather than utilize the battlefield of nation-states, she uses the metaphorical battlefield of love to outwit, outsmart, and humiliate her opponent.

Using language that has Tula Varona inhabit both masculine and feminine references to original sin, Valle-Inclán further positions the New World as a place where Spain’s customs and power wane. Tula Varona engages in an inverted gender performance. Within that performance, she is freed from the typical expectations of motherhood, maternity, and marriage, which usurps the agency and power of the embodiment of colonial power. Nevertheless, the male narrator strips any female agency from Tula Varona in the final scene of the story when he closes with Tula Varona enjoying the view of her naked body in front of a mirror. The mirror scene projects the narrator’s view of beauty and women. Rather than empower Tula Varona and the colonial lands, the narrator places the power of her sexual performance in terms of the male gaze. If Tula Varona rejects Ramiro (Spain), then it is due to her masculine and devilish nature rather than inherent qualities of the female gender. The physical appearance of Tula Varona and Diana the Huntress convert them into objects of male desire, who also

happen to reject suitors. The men who observe them replicate the expectations that women should be gentle and meek, and women who fall outside those behaviors and qualities are temptresses. Ramiro's vain attempts to woo/tame the wild woman of the colonies helps to reverse the virginity myth, as it is Ramiro's loss of control that dishonors him, rather than Tula Varona's sexualized behavior scandalizing herself. Inverting the gender performance does not liberate Tula Varona, but rather serves as a warning to men like Ramiro to be cautious of how their perception of the New World as docile and passive is a dangerous oversight.

Tula Varona's last words in the story are "¡Diana cazadora la llamara el duquesito, bien ajeno al símbolo de aquel nombre!" (Valle-Inclán 116). Despite numerous comparisons to the virginal huntress of lore, Tula Varona rejects the association at the very end. Given the other parallels with Diana the Huntress already discussed, perhaps it is better to say that although Tula Varona is not strictly a virgin, she does represent an adept marksman who defends her homeland and personhood. By not having children, Tula Varona rejects having a future with Spain. More dangerous than her rejection of heterosexual marriage, nobility, or mother country is Tula Varona's status as middle class. The antagonism in Valle-Inclán's writing towards the middle class was a direct result of his pro-monarchy stance. Even though Ramiro is portrayed as bumbling and not terribly bright, the culture that he represents is presented as the morally superior one. Tula Varona is a particularly unsettling character because her middle class status liberates her from the norms of nobility and high society. Her refusal to participate in the economic exchange with Spain through taxation is a clear warning of the bellicose

undercurrents in the New World that would eventually lead to Spain's loss of its final colonies a mere three years after the publication of "Tula Varona."

Part of the appeal of this short story is the reversal of the traditional, patriarchal roles for men and women. Tula Varona is a hybrid creation, much like the *criollo/a* bodies that populated the New World. The continued popularity of this story might be in the fact that after the loss of the colonies, it hits nostalgic notes. In hindsight, Spain—like Ramiro—was destined to lose the colonies because it was a land populated with warrior women. The inverted gender performance in this story furthers the popular literary tropes of describing the colonial lands as savage and brutal. The emerging middle class is a dangerous phenomenon, and one that was particularly allowed to exist due to the wealth that the colonies brought to Spain. Nevertheless, the reversed patriarchal roles do not create a profeminist narrative, but rather a cautionary tale for Spain regarding its relationship with its colonial holdings.

Endnotes

1. With respect to its multiple publication dates and modes, the first recorded publication of “Tula Varona” appeared in a collection of short stories entitled *Femeninas, Seis historias amorosas* in 1895.¹ From there, this story was printed in the following collections: *Historias perversas* (1907), *Mi hermana Antonia* (1918), *Cuentos de amor* (1920), *Cofre de sándalo* (1909 and 1922), *Flores de almendro* (1936), and *Historias de amor* (1909 and 1931). This same story also appeared in *El Globo* in Madrid in 1905 as “Diana cazadora” and published another time in a periodical in Tegucigalpa in 1914.

The multiple print appearances in Valle-Inclán’s lifetime show that there was a large appeal for this tale that was first written in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Stylistically, “Tula Varona” is more of a realist work than Valle-Inclán’s later publications but there are still “toques simbolistas (o modernistas) en el vocabulario” (Fichter 291). The untamable woman from the colonies held sway over the imagination of Valle-Inclán’s readers, and the story’s appearance in multiple collections illustrates its staying power in Valle-Inclán’s repertoire. According to Joaquín Núñez Sabarís, of the early Valle-Inclán stories that appeared in *Femeninas*, “Tula Varona” is the one that shows the fewest changes (595). The text for this chapter is from *Historias de amor* published in 1937.

As Ruth Whittredge points out, “No se saben las fechas de composición de sus cuentos, solo las de publicación” (216). It is possible that “Tula Varona” was written far prior to 1895, but there is no concrete evidence of its creation date.

All of the bibliographic information pertaining to “Tula Varona” comes from Robert Lima’s 1999 annotated bibliography (various pages) and Joaquín Núñez Sabarís’ article, “Las anotaciones autógrafas de ‘Femeninas’” (pages 605-606).

2. Catherine Davies cites a first publication date as 1893 (142); however, Robert Lima and Joaquín Núñez Sabarís both point to 1895 as the initial date of publication for “Tula Varona.” Additionally, Speratti Piñero also pinpoints an initial 1895 publication date (61). Perhaps Davies ties the date of 1893 to when Valle-Inclán returned to Spain and wishes to pinpoint 1893 as the date when Valle-Inclán started writing the story.

3. According to http://babynamesworld.parentsconnect.com/meaning_of_Tula.html, the meaning of Tula comes from German and means strength or strong. As we shall see in the second chapter with Unamuno’s *La tía Tula*, Tula is a popular character name for a strong female character.

4. Definitions for *varón* translated from the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* online.

5. Historical information from Speratti Piñero, page 60.

6. Porfirio's years in power were 1876 to 1911.

7. In order to distinguish between Unamuno's Tula in the second chapter, I will refer to Valle-Inclán's protagonist as Tula Varona throughout this chapter.

8. For a more extensive discussion of this trope, please see David Gordon White's *Myths of the Dog-Man*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991. Print.

9. Interestingly enough, Ramiro is the name of the love interest opposite of Unamuno's Tula as well. Ramiro's name is also of Germanic origin and means "powerful in battle" or "powerful in army" according to http://babynamesworld.parentsconnect.com/meaning_of_Ramiro.html. The battle and war metaphor of Valle-Inclán's Ramiro is far more apt than for Unamuno's Ramiro.

10. Achilles and Patroclus in *The Illiad* come to mind when talking about homosexual relationships between strong, male characters in classic literature.

11. This is according to Fichter who asserts that there is a satirical-realist character to "Tula Varona" (Fichter 291).

12. The plot point about Tula Varona having lesbian relations was mentioned by Davies, page 143.

13. *Mujer fatal* in Spanish. Since *femme fatale* is more recognized in English, I will defer to the French loaner word. Certainly, Tula Varona does seem to fit the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* definition of "an attractive and seductive woman who is likely to cause risk to or the downfall of anyone who becomes involved with her."

14. Davies mentions that the "economic relations between metropolis and (ex)colony" are explicit (143). Given the relatively untouched editorial stance of "Tula Varona," the relationship between Tula and Ramiro is best described as that of the colony and the colonizer on the cusp of dissolution of formal ties.

Chapter 2

Blood, Birthright, and Inheritance: Unamuno's Portrayal of Mothers, Aunts, Wives, and Sisters in *Tres Novelas Ejemplares y un Prólogo* (1920) and *La tía Tula* (1921)

In this chapter, I seek to explore some precursors to the representations of reversed gender roles. While not the earliest Spanish writer to delve into these themes,¹ Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo explores the notion of motherhood and family in a significant portion of his writings. Given Unamuno's extensive and prolific literary production, I will focus on four *nóvolas*, three of which form *Tres Novelas Ejemplares y un Prólogo* (1920)—*Dos madres*, *El marqués de Lumbría*, *Nada menos que todo un hombre*—and *La tía Tula* (1921). At the center of each of these works is the question of gender and power. Here, individual desire conflicts with societal expectations, resulting in tragic endings. However, the endings of each of these stories do not resolve in a way that provides the reader with catharsis. The villainous characters triumph and the virtuous characters suffer, which leads to a reexamination of the institution of family and by extension a reexamination of the concept of nation.

First, we must approach Unamuno's works with the understanding of what the family was like in Spain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For a broad view of the period, I rely heavily upon the demographic research by David S. Reher. Citing Frédéric Le Play, Reher explains the two major family systems are "the patriarchal family with its stem-family variant, and the 'unstable' or nuclear family" (47). At the outset, we must clarify how a patriarchal family differs from a nuclear family. A patriarchal family is a family unit dominated by a father, and a nuclear family merely

means parents and their children living together. A nuclear family is not necessarily a patriarchal family. The term nuclear family does not necessarily denote father-headed household, although in western society, it more often than not connotes and brings to mind such a familial composition. Nevertheless, a majority of households in most regions of Spain at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century were nuclear families. Certain regions were more likely to have a larger proportion of nuclear families, but as Reher's research suggests, this was in part due to the inheritance laws and traditions in Spain. Reher explains that

Two fundamentally different family systems have existed in Spain for centuries. One of them was predicated on the fact that one heir was chosen over his siblings to inherit most of the family estate and to live and care for his parents. The other was based on a reality in which inheritance was divisible, and co-residence with related kin was seldom if ever based on succession to the headship of the family property. (67)

In other words, Spain had both a patriarchal inheritance system and an egalitarian one. It is an easy fallacy to think that the policies of the Franco regime removed the progressive legislation of the Second Republic and brought it back to an antebellum status quo; however, prior to Franco's ascent to power, legislation existed that gave the daughters of land-owning families similar rights to the estate.

The presence of these inheritance patterns reveals that the familial conflicts in each of the aforementioned Unamuno *nóvolas* stems from the inherent tensions that arise from these disparate traditions of inheritance. Raquel in *Dos madres* inherits her lover's estate, as she uses the legal system to disinherit Berta, despite Berta having given birth to Juan's biological child. In spite of being born out of wedlock, Tristán's first child is given the right to the estate and his half brother is banished to a monastery because of

Carolina's tenacity in *El marqués de Lumbría*. The purpose of Julia's desire to be loved by her husband in *Nada menos que todo un hombre* is because she fears that their marriage is for her beauty and title rather than an emotional caring. Tula secures her position in her sister's household via legal means. Nevertheless, the question of birthright, blood, and inheritance lies on the edge of each of these stories which parallel the troubled Spanish national identity.

These families in the *nívolas* are conflicted about their relationships. Although Unamuno's characters feel two-dimensional, they serve as vehicles to explore larger social and national concerns. Unamuno's flat characterizations of women have been called misogynistic, and compared to his male characters, these women lack the depth of psychological motivation. Frank Sedwick observes that:

many of Unamuno's female literary creations seem artificially drawn, because in his insistence on their '*realidad íntima*' he often overintensifies them to the extent that they lack some of the other complexities of the feminine point of view. He appears even to be ill at ease with them and to join his reader in studying them. Many become stereotyped in their obsessive aspiration to motherhood, or if that state is unattainable, to a simulation of motherhood or a substitute for it [...] (309)

It feels as though the women are paper dolls, placed in scenes to explore a man's view of female motivations. For example, suicide is an option for Unamuno's male characters, but not his female ones. Male characters can contemplate suicide and even go so far as to kill themselves as an escape from an unfulfilling life;² female characters are forced to die of divine causes or at the hands of men. The givers of life and light are unable to take their own lives. Male characters in other works by Unamuno are able to kill themselves for unrequited love, but female characters are not given this option to flee an unsatisfying

life. Rather, the women who die in *Tres Novelas Ejemplares y Un Prólogo* and *La tía Tula* are killed by childbirth or their husband.

Unamuno's female characters have a deep, foreboding sense of fear, especially Tula in *La tía Tula*, who rejects physical motherhood out of the abject terror of dying in childbirth. Although mothers dying in childbirth makes for a dramatic storyline (much like our present day writers' fascination with car accidents and plane crashes), death as a direct result of childbirth was only recorded to be less than one half of one percent in the early twentieth century.³ In Unamuno's vision of a woman's world, her concerns are marriage, birth, and child rearing. For Unamuno's male protagonists, their existential crises are resolved in brutal ways such as suicide or murder (e.g. *Niebla* and *Abel Sánchez*). Conversely, the male characters in the four *nóvolas* in this study are either passive—Juan in *Dos madres*, Tristán in *El marqués de Lumbría*, and Ramiro in *La tía Tula*—or extremely controlling and violent like Alejandro in *Nada menos que todo un hombre*. At the core of these familial interactions lies a struggle for power that is intertwined with gender roles and expectations.

The expectations of women, especially when they serve as metaphors for the nation, is for them to fall into one of two acceptable roles: virgin or mother. In the nineteenth century,

The monarchy, the republic, the very idea of liberty, were all portrayed as women—mythic female figures charged with the task of nurturing the nation, the family of subjects or citizens. At critical moments of political transition, the proponents of revolution—or reaction—depicted such women as irrational, diseased, promiscuous, a threat to the integrity of the nation. (White 233)

In the case of Unamuno's female characters, these women are the threat to the stability of the institution of the patriarchal family. Roberta Johnson astutely notes that Unamuno "creates diabolical women" (*Spanish Modernist Novel* 200). These diabolical women are reminiscent of the extremely masculine behaviors that several female characters exhibit in later works. Of the four *nívolas*, the one with a patriarchal nuclear family, *Nada menos que todo un hombre*, comes to a violent end. The nurturing nature of the maternally obsessed Raquel and Tula comes with the dispensation of the nuclear family and the dismantling of the patriarchy. It is clear that the figure of the strong female character who acts like a man is not restricted to novels written as a reaction to authoritarian power structures. Rather, these inverted gender roles reflect the tumultuous geopolitical nature of Spain.

Political and social instability in Spain was not limited to their Civil War, but rather a nearly continuous process shaped by various geopolitical conflicts across Europe and their colonies. The volatile political situation in Spain, even as far back as the Habsburg Empire, created factions and fissures. War in Spain was a generational phenomenon. Even the Golden Age of Spain was marked by internal divides and the Reconquista. Politically and socially, Spain underwent significant changes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The most notable event, for which the literary group that Unamuno is associated with is named, happened when the Restoration Monarchy suffered a humiliating military defeat in 1898. According to historian Raymond Carr, the Spanish public was "shaken by what was simply known as 'the Disaster': overwhelming defeat at the hands of the 'sausage makers of the United States' as the allies of Cuban

separatists. The consequence of defeat was the loss of the remnants of Spain's colonial empire: Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines" (224).

Prior to "the Disaster," Spain had been losing international influence and territory. For Jo Labanyi, the process of nation-state creation began in the late nineteenth century, which was reflected in the literature (*Spanish Literature* 643-4). As part of the creation of the Spanish literary canon, most of the authors were "supportive of the liberal state's centralizing agenda" and as a result, the "canon of Spanish literature established by this process is skewed accordingly" (Labanyi *Spanish Literature* 643-5). The emphasis on nation-building texts in the mid-nineteenth century "produced a skewed corpus, omitting much literature that was widely read, and giving the impression that literature's sole function was to 'write the nation'" (Labanyi *Spanish Literature* 384-6). The result was that it "is only from the late 19th century that one can really talk of Spain as a nation-state in the full modern sense of the term: that is, as a national collective whose members feel a sense of shared values" (Labanyi *Spanish Literature* 648-50). In the years that followed 'the Disaster,' tensions between the monarchy and the rural farmers culminated in a series of strikes in 1910 (Carr 231). The strikes continued until Primo de Rivera's coup in 1923, which Carr argues was "a warm welcome as a relief from strikes" (240). Although the *nóvolas* in this study were published two years before Primo de Rivera's coup, work stoppages were part of the political environment in Spain.

As the nation continued to form amid chaos, so too did gender roles. While the rural, agrarian economy shifted towards one that was more industrialized and urban, the Spanish populace began to grapple with the role of women inside and outside of the

home. Roberta Johnson writes that “The image of the masculinized woman that surfaced at the turn of the century in Spain in popular and other cultural venues doubtlessly reflected concern about women’s heightened visibility in the public sphere” (*Spanish Modernist Novel* 63). Also a result of the image of the masculinized woman is the dissolution of the patriarchal and nuclear families in literature. In the case of the *nóvolas*, the passive males—Juan, Tristán, the count (Julia’s lover in *Nada menos que todo un hombre*), and Ramiro—are much like the defeated Spain. Any authority or dominance that Spain held in the geopolitical realm had largely faded at the beginning of the twentieth century; consequently, Unamuno’s portrayal of the family in general and women in particular reflects this milieu in Spain.

When the economic reality of Spain changed with the century, so too did the interests of the next generation of writers, whose writing shifted from realism and naturalism to modernism. Among other important traits, modernism was marked by a preoccupation with the psychological state of characters and profound pessimism about the human condition. The literary group known as the Generation of 98 is best known for expressing the angst and shock that resulted from the loss of the empiric reach of Spain. Critic Constance Sullivan argues that it is a critical cliché that the “(male) writers of the Generation of 1898 were preoccupied with personal and national identity” and asks for us to “look again at what gender identity, beyond sexual identity, has to do with the misogyny of writers like Unamuno, Baroja, and Valle-Inclán” (32). Jo Labanyi adds to this discussion about Unamuno’s representation by pointing out that Unamuno’s “representation of women has been seen as illustrating his hostility to contemporary

feminist debate. But his literary works reveal not so much an unreflective misogyny as a very self-aware exploration of masculine anxiety” (*Spanish Literature 1633-4*).

Nevertheless, the inquietude towards women is palpable, especially when their motivations are directly tied to their biological function—childbirth and childrearing—and social role—marriage.

It is important to study gender identity, which includes representations of gender performance; however, I counter that gender identity can intersect with national identity. Identity—national and personal—was and continues to be a primary concern for Spanish writers both past and present. A nation defined by conflict often results in writers preoccupied with identity. If the nation cannot clearly be defined, then its citizenry struggles with classification and meaning of the self. By examining the representation of gender and power relations, we can see how wider concerns and implications of nation and national identity play out in the domestic space through familial interactions. For Roberta Johnson, the familial household and national concerns “remind us that the thinking about Spain as a nation that was prevalent at the turn of the century was intertwined with discourse on family matters, especially the role of women in society” (*Spanish Modernist Novel* 10). When expected gender roles are confronted or challenged, so too are notions of power and identity.

One aspect to keep in mind when thinking about the family in Spain is that women were more likely than men to live in non-nuclear family situations. According to Reher:

women were more likely than men to live in complex households at all ages, and in solitary ones at higher ages, mainly because superior male mortality and a

lower incidence of remarriage among women led to a society with more widows than widowers. They were the ones most likely to end up either living alone or moving in with their married children. (95)

A complex household is one that involves more than two adults; thus the household in *La tía Tula* would be considered complex since Tula, Rosa, and Ramiro share the household. The trend for living alone at an older age is also reflected in this story, since Tula outlives her sister, brother-in-law, and her brother-in-law's second wife. Raquel outlives Juan in *Dos madres*, and given her initial introduction in the story as widow, outlived her husband as well. She tells Berta that "No se está bien de viuda" (72). The lack of a nuclear or patriarchal family does not result in loss of social status or personal happiness; rather, it serves as a way to experience more personal freedom from gender norms and societal expectations.

The upheaval of the expected formation of the family reflects the societal changes that occurred in Spain. For Johnson, "The 'masculine' woman, who usurps men's role, refusing to marry and settle down to domestic life, emerges as an important figure in male-authored novels during the period when feminism was gaining ground in Spain" (*Spanish Modernist Novel* 63). In Unamuno's literary world, parenthood is a common theme. As Alison Sinclair observes:

Parenthood is a topic which holds [Unamuno's] attention again and again. But what preoccupies Unamuno is not apparently parenthood in all its dimensions. We may think that he has much to say on the topic, but in fact he is highly restrictive, if at the same time he is highly emphatic. The two areas in which he is restrictive or selective are his emphasis on mothers rather than fathers, and his scant attention to the actual experience of parenthood [...] Rather his focus is on the attainment of the status of parent, the moment of entering motherhood or fatherhood. (*Uncovering the Mind* 153)

The allure of the parent-child relationship may unconsciously stem from the relationship between Spain and its colonies. With Spain's identity as a nation-state in flux, so too were the identities of its citizens. Unamuno's focus on wanting children rather than raising them appears to echo the desire of Spain to have colonies over maintaining its empiric reach. Raising a child changes one's identity. Parenthood is a unique moment of transition, similar to the transition that Spain was making as a nation with decreasing geopolitical influence and waning domestic stability.

Women are specifically important to understanding conceptions of nation and nationhood. The connection between gendering the nation as female and patriarchal possession of the female body is made clear by critic Christine Arkininstall: "Indeed in Western European patriarchal representations, the nation is conceived of in gendered terms as a feminine entity, domesticated, civilized, and molded according to the desires of its male creators" (13). The women in Unamuno's four *nóvolas*— Raquel, Carolina, Luisa,⁴ Tula—break free from patriarchal gender norms; however, their liberation is not lauded. Rather, the sense of tragedy and injustice at the end of these tales illustrates the danger of inverted gender expectations. Parker et al note that "this trope of the nation-as-woman of course depends for its representational efficacy on a particular image of woman as chaste, dutiful, daughterly or maternal" (6). When the nation is in turmoil, this turbulence can be reflected in masculinized women whose headstrong, self-interest ultimately leads to the unjust finale at the end of the story.

Although some critics have tried to frame Unamuno's exploration of female characters in a progressive or pro-feminist framework, many more critics, including

myself, find his female characters are merely devices to move the plot forward, and lack any substance. In the early twentieth century:

Women became a national symbol and guardian of the continuity and immutability of the nation. Taken as a whole, canonical male-authored fiction of the period between the wars not only does very little to challenge traditional notions of domestic propriety and traditional sexual roles in an age when these were being challenged by an increasingly vocal feminist movement, but in fact, it reaffirms them (when domestic issues are addressed at all). (Johnson *JSTOR* 171)

As the continuity of Spanish nationhood waned, the symbolic and idealistic view of the woman-as-nation faded. Family became less integrated and more conflict ridden.

Marriage and conflict over children, perhaps symbolic of the relationship between the former colonies and Spain, drive the story lines and their ultimately unhappy or unresolved ends. Although writing about Clarice Lispector's well-known work of short stories, *Family Ties*, Marta Peixoto's observation about female power within the domestic space is apropos that the "power a woman wields within the family has a negative, constricting side: deprived of the chance to develop herself beyond the scope of the family, she attempts to control those close to her" (291). Indeed, in each of the *nóvolas*, there is a woman who at some point in the narrative attempts to control those around her, and her actions do not follow socially expected behaviors of her gender. Raquel dictates to Juan how he will have an heir; Carolina forces Tristán to let his first-born, yet illegitimate son Pedrito, supersede Rodriuguín to become the next Marquis; Julia tells her father that she will not accept an arranged marriage; and Tula refuses to let Ramiro dishonor her sister Rosa, and forces them to marry. Each of these instances provides a unique look at Unamuno's perception of femininity and the role of women.

Unlike the manly woman (a “stock dramatic theme”) observed in Golden Age theater (Labanyi *Spanish Literature 1479-80*), Unamuno’s women do not cross-dress. In part, this can be attributed to the genre: literature (text) versus theater (visual). According to Labanyi, the most popular category of manly woman in sixteenth century Spain was the “*mujer esquiva* who spurns men and marriage, as in the Elizabethan ‘taming of the shrew’ theme” (*Spanish Literature 1488-90*). Of the favorite tropes of Golden Age theater, the two preferred representations of women seen in Unamuno’s literature are the masculine woman and the *mujer esquiva*. These representations of femininity would not seem strange to a Spanish audience, since they were recycled tropes of older forms of literature. What makes Unamuno’s women unique is the political landscape in which he writes them; the controlling (*mandona*) nature of these characters make them the rulers of their domestic ‘kingdoms.’ According to Mary Lyndon Shanley, “Unamuno was a firm antimonarchist [...] he protested Spain's war with the United States, he debated the wisdom of the ‘Europeanization’ and modernization of Spain” (266). The controlling, dictatorial behavior of women such as Raquel, Carolina, Julia, and Tula—in *Dos madres*, *El marqués de Lumbría*, *Nada menos que todo un hombre* and *Tía Tula*, respectively—reflects Unamuno’s antimonarchist attitude, which adds to the perceived injustice and tragic ending of the stories when one person in the family tries to dictate the lives of everyone else, without any care or input from the other members.

Not every woman portrayed in the four *nóvolas* is a *mujer esquiva*, but there is a noticeable reticence towards marriage. Unamuno clearly portrays negative consequences for the family in general and women in particular when marriage is either unwanted or

avoided. As Alejandro Martínez observes, “La ideología patriarcal sostiene la diferencia cultural y social de la mujer en la diferencia biológica y se construye a través del control masculino en el matrimonio, la sexualidad y el poder reproductivo (255). All of these elements of patriarchal ideology are present in Unamuno’s *nóvolas*. Women are viewed entirely through their biological imperative or through the religious iconography of virgin/mother. As John P. Gabriele keenly points out, “Womanhood has historically implied the roles of mother and wife” (106). By reducing women to their essential, biological function, Unamuno strips away any opportunity to truly explore their psychological motivations. Unlike *Niebla* (1914) with its profound psychological and existential questions, *Tres Novelas Ejemplares y un Prólogo* (1920) and *La tía Tula* (1921) rely on melodramatic plots and familiar literary tropes that result in tragic endings.

Devilish Desire and Maternal Madness: *Dos madres* and *La tía Tula*

In order to appreciate the tragic endings, I will first compare the two stories that on the surface seem the most similar: *Dos madres* (1920) and *La tía Tula* (1921). In both of these works, we see the desire for maternity trump all other concerns, and both Raquel and Tula are obsessed with their biological function and the desire to have children. Although each achieves motherhood through surrogacy, Raquel insists upon Juan having a blood rather than adoptive relationship to his offspring. Through Juan’s thoughts, the reader is given a picture of Raquel: “la viuda y la viuda sin hijos; Raquel parecía haber nacido viuda” (*Dos madres* 31). The initial view of Raquel comes not from her own thoughts, like Unamuno’s male characters in other works, but rather is transmuted through the eyes of the pusillanimous Juan. The role of storytelling remains outside of the

thoughts of Raquel, in the hands of an omniscient, third person narrator, who then places these observations about Raquel through the lens of her male lover. From the start, Raquel's sterility is the center of her identity. In one sentence, the biological function of her gender is brought to the forefront, as the natural cycle of reproduction, being born, is interrupted in this character who, despite a prior marriage, is without children. Juan initially tries to protest Raquel's plan that he marry someone else in order to have a biological child, citing the fact that the entire town knows of their sexual relationship. Their liaisons have not resulted in a child, which does not bother Juan in the slightest; he wishes to marry Raquel. Raquel's insistence on Juan having a biological child harkens back to the medieval concept of blood relations and honor.

While the entire plot of *Dos madres* at first appears to center around Raquel's acquisition of a child by proxy, it also illustrates as part of its subtext that questions of nation and identity are upended by gender.⁵ Starting with the status of widow, we see that Raquel is freed from the virgin/whore dichotomy. Her marriage and first husband's death leave her in a unique social position; she loses no honor through her relationship with Juan. Nevertheless, she is obsessed with controlling Juan's actions and procreation. Her authoritarian command of Juan's life reflects a monarchical purview of control. When combining the familiar tropes of the nation-as-mother with Raquel's maternal role, her actions take on sinister overtones.

It is the maternal relationship that Unamuno returns to in his narratives, which helps us explore how representations of gendered conceptions of women and power relate to religion specifically and the loss of the colonies tangentially. In general parlance, a

nation is often referred to as the “motherland” or “mother country.” The beginning of a nation is frequently referred to as its birth, and home is intimately associated with the feminine. Despite the many allusions to the femininity of country, the language surrounding the nation encapsulates the patriarchy. Citizens and land must be protected and directed, thus controlling the feminized land and nation. In this way, the female-embodied country is tamed and dominated by a patriarchal system. The women in Unamuno’s world replicated and reinforce the patriarchy.

In Unamuno’s construction of the maternal nature of women, they fall into two categories: devilish or angelic. This dichotomy is directly informed by his religious background and worldview. His exploration of the female gender aligns with the two most commonly recognized women in the Bible: Eve and the Virgin Mary. These women are the key to the Christian mythos, and often form the basis of female characters such as Raquel and Tula. Both Eve and the Virgin Mary are defined by their biological, maternal function. Eve gives birth to the first sons of men, and for her transgression of eating from the Tree of Knowledge, womankind is cursed to experience the pain and danger in childbirth that Tula fears and avoids in *La tía Tula*. Unlike Eve, however, Tula becomes like the Virgin Mary and has children while remaining pure. Her end sacrifice, asking God to take her instead of her adopted daughter, is the ultimate act of piety. Raquel is the complete opposite of Tula; her self interest until the very end makes her a dangerous and decidedly non-maternal representation of motherhood. Her desire for maternity, much like a nation’s desire to colonize, is decidedly selfish. By taking the fruit of another woman’s (literal) labor, Raquel colonizes the act of motherhood. Additionally, upon the

birth of Juan and Berta's first child, Raquel declares "¡Se llamará Raquel!" (*Dos madres* 62). In this instance, we see the patriarchal tradition of naming things. Just as Adam named all the things in the Garden of Eden, so too did Spanish explorers. Land was appropriated and renamed, much like Juan and Berta's conjugal home and child are by Raquel. In a manner more expected of a patriarch or conquistador, Raquel dictates with whom Juan will marry and later dictates that their child be called Raquel, like her. The presentation of this colonizer/colonized power struggle is played out in the interactions between Raquel and Berta. Juan, who should be the embodiment of family and masculinity, follows Raquel's marching orders and does nothing to countermand them.

The colonizer/colonized narrative that unfolds in *Dos madres* is furthered by Unamuno's spiritual interests.⁶ By presenting Raquel as a demonic figure, Unamuno obliquely critiques her authoritarian nature. This critique hinges upon Raquel's unconventional and controlling pursuit of motherhood. With many explicit references to Raquel as demonic, the moral and religious overtones of the story become apparent. The angel/demon question is unique in this work because it revolves around the female gender. When Raquel and Juan discuss who he should marry in lieu of Raquel, she reminds him that the devil was an angel once as well. While this is a common retort when discussing good and evil, it takes a more sinister direction when the demonic character is an authoritarian woman.

By inverting the gender of the Devil, Unamuno adds a threatening dimension to the actions of women. Eve's fall from grace parallels the fall from grace of the Devil: both defied God. In Raquel, we see both the demonic and the fallen; she is the

embodiment of temptation and temptress. Additionally, Raquel represents a paternalistic and colonizing force, which serves as a cautionary tale towards men who do not fulfill a traditional, male-gendered role. Another direct Biblical reference in *Dos madres* is the story of Solomon, where two women fought over one child; however, Juan is not the wise and strong king like Solomon. Thus, Juan's inability to stand up to Raquel embodies the unequal relationship between men and women, and the danger that upsetting the patriarchal natural order of things can bring. In part, this unequal relationship stems from Juan's status as orphan, meaning that he did not come from a nuclear family. The lack of an idealized patriarchal family results in the less than socially typical portrait of masculinity. The interaction between Raquel and Juan is not that of typical lovers; rather, it is one of mother and son.⁷ By seducing Juan away from the socially prescribed role of husband and treating him like a child, Raquel touches upon the taboo of incest. The mother/son dynamic is clear as Juan holds Raquel "maternalmente" and Raquel calls Juan "Hijo mío" (Unamuno *Dos madres* 47). This is similar to the relationship between a country and its colonies. These colonies are at once the progeny of the country, while still wanting to interact as an equal. The result is a situation much like that between Raquel and Juan where the colonizing country continues to dominate the decisions and interactions of its former colony. Alison Sinclair best captures this potential colonizer/colonized power structure wrapped up in gender by noting that "the woman who is to be mother is not so much added to by the bearing of a child, but rather is added to by the increase of personal territory which enables her to exert power and control over

others” (*Uncovering* 161). Quelina is merely an extension of the familial territory and, by extension, power that Raquel holds over Juan.

As mentioned earlier, the religious themes underlying Unamuno’s work illustrate the spiritual nature behind family dynamics. The descriptions of Raquel as devilish and demonic are important, as they tie back to the unnatural or masculine behaviors that Raquel demonstrates when interacting with Juan and Berta. Even Raquel’s physical appearance invokes demonic iconography with her dark eyes and dry breast. Her nature is so charming that Berta falls in love with her and sees her like an idol, even to the point that Berta consents to having a child on her behalf. Contrasting Raquel’s evil physique and demonic nature is Berta, with her light eyes and fertility. Again, by dint of her physical gender, Raquel is a dangerous because she does not partake in the divine punishment for Eve’s transgressions; she does not feel labor pains due to her inability to conceive a child with either her now-deceased husband or her lover Juan. Berta suffers during pregnancy and birth, reinforcing the Biblical castigation for Eve’s transgressions. Raquel’s outsider status is reinforced by her transient status as a widow; she is no longer a virgin, yet she is childless.

Within the traditional and patriarchal-defined role for women, Raquel is neither wife nor mother and consequently remains outside the idealized and pure vision of a woman. Alison Sinclair observes that this outsider position is why widows are “particularly dangerous: nothing contains their sensuality and their threat” (*Uncovering* 159). Raquel, having already been left a widow, refuses to marry Juan since their sexual dalliances have not produced a pregnancy. She overwhelmingly enjoys the status and

freedom that widowhood has given her, and despite Juan's suggestions that they marry and adopt, it is Raquel who is deeply concerned about blood relations. Representing an older attitude towards inheritance and blood purity, Raquel insists that Juan's child be biological. For Raquel, Juan's biological child will be an extension of their relationship. She also makes it clear that the relationship between her and Juan supersedes any ecclesiastically recognized union between him and Berta.⁸ By agreeing to marry Berta in order to father a biological child on Raquel's behalf, Juan is making a figurative deal with the Devil.

Returning to the earlier discussion of the role of women and their position in a patriarchy, we must examine how Raquel's actions fit within the literary trope of the shrew. Although an obsolete use of the word shrew in English is used to describe the Devil,⁹ the equivalent word in Spanish, *esquiva*, does not have the same etymology. Rather, *esquiva* means contemptuous, rough, or shy.¹⁰ Nonetheless, the behavior we see in Raquel more closely follows the English-language definition of shrew,¹¹ even though she is not necessarily a shrew in the sense of avoiding marriage. Typically, a woman who refuses to marry is seen as a shrew; however, Raquel has already been married once, and her reticence to remarry stems from her infertility and the desire for her lover to have genetically related progeny.

The absolute control that Raquel holds over the lives of Juan and Berta resembles the position of power and privilege that a Spanish monarch had over the Spanish colonies. Unlike Unamuno's actual Spain with respect to its colonies, Raquel comes out ahead in the end, and Berta remains a colonized entity. However, the reader sees how

Raquel's unjust treatment and scheming results in Berta's miserable existence. Raquel's authoritarian nature and overtly maternal command of her relationship with Juan make motherhood an extension of colonizing behavior. In the instance of the portrayal of strong women in *Dos madres*, the colonizing force of the "mother country" is embodied in Raquel.

Berta becomes like a Spanish colony with Raquel acting like a colonizing force towards her. After the first colonizing impulse—naming Berta's child after herself—Raquel takes over raising Quelina.¹² The more interesting interaction between Raquel and Quelina is when Raquel sings to Quelina in a strange and demonic tongue. While this at first seems to be a harmless lullaby in an unknown language, it reflects the relationship between the colonizer and colonized. Much like a colonizing country takes over and imposes a new language, so too has Raquel begun to impose this unknown and strange language upon Quelina. The unequal power relationship between Raquel and Berta has at its core who has the birthright to Quelina: the woman who arranged her birth or the woman who gave birth to her. If we look at the relationship between Raquel and Juan along its overtly parent/child lines, then we can see Quelina as a grandchild to Raquel. Encapsulated in the mother/son dynamic between Raquel and Juan is an implicit familial, blood relationship. Thus, Berta becomes superfluous in the family that Raquel is creating. What helps cement this relationship between birthright, blood, and inheritance is not the social institution of marriage, but rather the legal system. After Juan's death—fleeing from the demonic Raquel and the infuriated, yet angelic Berta—Raquel delights in the revelation of Berta's disinheritance. By using the courts, Raquel has supplanted the

typical inheritance pattern where Berta would have inherited the estate from Juan had his last Will and Testament declared otherwise.

What at first appearance seems to be a cruel maneuver that leaves Berta in a financially precarious position is actually what would typically occur within an impartible inheritance pattern, where wealth is transferred to only one child, most often the eldest male, upon the death of the parents rather than equally among the heirs. While partible inheritance was more common in towns, impartible inheritance was more common in rural areas (Reher 37). With the mother/son relationship between Raquel and Juan, the impartible inheritance pattern makes more sense. Since Raquel serves the function of being both mother and lover to Juan, we can see this maternal relationship as a function of a stem family system.¹³ In a stem family, it is only upon the death of the oldest generation that the eldest son inherits and takes over the land, while the other siblings leave the familial home as a result of this inheritance. As Juan was an orphan from a young age, he did not benefit from this system initially; however, his maternal attachment to Raquel replaces this lost mother/son relationship, and contributes to the power that she has over him. When Juan leaves everything to Raquel, he is merely transferring his wealth back into the perceived older generation of the family.

After being disinherited, Berta is left at Raquel's mercy. The power dynamic is cemented; Berta has lost any hope of financially opposing Raquel's demands regarding raising and mothering Quelina. Raquel tells Berta that she will continue to receive financial support if she chooses to remarry. While much has been made about Raquel's closing statement "No se está bien de viuda" (*Dos madres* 72), I propose that Raquel is

speaking specifically about Berta's economically unstable position rather than her own. By being cut out of Juan's will, Berta no longer has financial stability, which stems from the fact that in actual nineteenth century Spain, widowed women were rarely able to be as economically powerful and productive as their husbands (Reher 109). For Raquel, being a widow is more of a socially stigmatizing position than a financially unviable one. Before Berta and Juan marry, Raquel tells Berta that she was born a widow. This statement proposes that a woman who falls outside of the expected roles of virgin, wife, and mother is dead from the moment she is born, which is reflected when Raquel continues with, "Mi verdadero marido se me murió antes de yo nacer" (*Dos madres* 49). Given the clear religious allusions in Unamuno's work and in *Dos madres*, it is possible that the "true husband" is Jesus, and that Raquel is comparing herself to a nun. In the Catholic tradition, nuns are symbolically married to Jesus, a husband who, for all intents and purposes, is dead, making them childless widows before they are even born. Despite this potential connection with the sisters of the cloth, Raquel's actions are self-serving and used to control and abuse her authority.

The connection to the Catholic Church is not casual. Taken in stock with Unamuno's overall body of work that repeatedly questions religion and existence, Raquel's status as widow calls into question the role that a childless, married woman has within society. Although there is a connection between being a permanent widow and a nun, Raquel is far from pious. She embodies extremely negative and masculine behaviors. Her contempt for religiously sanctioned marriage is clear when she makes the distinction between woman and wife. Raquel's nature is seductive and charming, which

causes Berta to idolize her at first. The dangers of idolatry are evoked throughout the Bible,¹⁴ and the idolatrous influence that Raquel has over Berta and Juan is present throughout the text. The mesmerizing influence that Raquel holds over the family permits her to usurp, control, and replace the more natural and socially accepted family that Juan and Berta should create.

Nontraditional, non-nuclear family formations are not unique to *Dos madres*, as we can see when we explore how Tula's desire for motherhood is as all consuming as Raquel's in *La tía Tula*. However, unlike Raquel's selfish and demonically-inspired mission to motherhood, Tula is driven by a strong sense of social propriety and religious faith. Tula's desire to maintain the social and sexual order as sanctioned by the Catholic Church makes her a more angelic portrayal of the figure of the strong woman. Unlike Raquel's colonizing portrayal of absolute power, Tula represents the ecclesiastical power and control exerted by the Catholic Church over the emotional and mental lives of Spanish citizens. While the control that Tula had over her sister and family might not have been as absolute as Raquel's, she still dictated her sister's motherhood choices. Alison Sinclair points out that Tula is "less than explicit about the accomplishment of her personal project of motherhood" as compared to the "terrifying Raquel of *Dos madres*" (*Uncovering the Mind* 140). Nevertheless, there are several qualities that Raquel and Tula share. The fear of dying in childbirth is at the forefront of both of their minds. For Raquel, her inability to have children is a physical problem, but for Tula, it is a conscious choice.

All of Tula's actions help shape the outcome of the story. At first glance, Tula and her sister Rosa are figuratively raised by the Church—they are orphaned and cared for by their maternal uncle, who is a priest. From him, they learn a love of books and reading, and ostensibly, a thorough knowledge of Catholic dogma. In the beginning of the story, Tula's given name is Gertrudis, which means "strong spear." The name Tula, which is a pet name for Gertrudis that is derived from the "trud" part, means "strength."¹⁵ As Gertrudis, Tula is a strong weapon of the Catholic teachings. The phallic nature of the name adds to the masculine qualities that Tula displays in preserving Catholic dogma. When her sister Rosa begins to fall for Ramiro, Tula's insistence that Rosa preserve her virginity until marriage reflects the ideals of the Catholic faith regarding feminine sexuality prior to marriage. Tula reinforces the social order and ensures that Rosa and Ramiro follow it to the letter.

Examining Rosa and Tula, we observe the struggle between female sexuality and acceptable (as defined by the patriarchy) behavior. Tula lives out her ambitions for motherhood through her sister's marriage. She desires motherhood, but only within the confines of socially sanctioned matrimony. Much like the previously discussed dichotomy and tension that was seen in Raquel's character in *Dos madres*, so too do we observe the tension between desire and propriety with Rosa and Tula in *La tía Tula*. Similar to the religious icons of Eve and Mary, Tula remains vigilant about both her and her sister's sexual purity. While John P. Gabriele argues that "Referring to Tula in the context of virginal maternity/maternal virginity suggests a rebellion against the institutional fate accorded to women when they become wives and their biological

destiny to become mothers when they give birth” (114), I would counter that Tula unflinchingly embraces the institutional fate of women by forcing her sister to engage in all the risks of motherhood, while she reaps all the rewards and happiness of the female biological destiny. By avoiding all sexual contact with men, and by preserving her sister’s virginity until marriage, Tula illustrates the stranglehold and power that Catholic dogma holds over the perception of women and their place in society. Moreover, Tula maintains and preserves her virginity, even when given multiple opportunities to marry.

The only circumventing that Tula does with respect to the prescribed role of the biological function of women is that she avoids sexual congress to ensure that she does not become pregnant and risk death in childbirth. Rather, she encourages Rosa to follow the Catholic teachings of being fruitful and having multiple children. It is Rosa who is tempted to give in to her desires, whereas Tula remains pure. In part, this comes from Tula’s serious nature, to which she says, “Nací con esa gravedad encima, dicen. El tío asegura que la heredé de mi madre, su hermana, y de mi abuela, su madre” (*La tía Tula* 34). The serious nature observed in Tula is attributed to her gender and as something inherited and passed down mother to daughter. Nonetheless, it is not a conclusion that Tula came to on her own; others have told her (*dicen*) and her uncle has assured her that this is where these tendencies originate. The male voice has formed Tula’s opinion, and has relegated her behavior to an inborn trait found in women. This severity and seriousness of character colors the entire narrative; Tula’s self-depravation comes from Catholic teachings and is reinforced by a male voice of authority. Consequently, the internalized patriarchal gender norms are reproduced when Tula pursues her vicarious

motherhood desires. Her only temptation is a brief love interest with whom she corresponds, and then rejects in order to raise her sister's children.

Regarding Tula's use of her sister for surrogacy, Rosa's pregnancy is a textbook case of Eve's biblical punishment. Sharing the divine, patriarchal punishment cast upon the female gender for giving in to temptation and eating from the Tree of Knowledge, Rosa is violently nauseous through her pregnancy. Despite Rosa's desire for Ramiro to share in her pain—for him to be an equal partner in the physical labors of childbearing—she carries this burden alone. Tula, replicating the bystander status of the male gender, is an outsider to the process and pain of pregnancy. Although some critics such as the aforementioned John P. Gabriele argue that there are inherently feministic qualities to *La tía Tula*,¹⁶ I counter that Tula reinforces and continues the patriarchal order and oppressive Catholic dogma through her actions. Tula does not limit herself to shaping the sexual mores and behavior of her sister; she lords over her brother-in-law Ramiro's behavior and choices, before, during, and after his marriage to Rosa. Tula not only prevents premarital sex between Ramiro and Rosa, she makes him marry his consumptive paramour to prevent the child of their liaison from the stigma of being born out of wedlock. By preserving the social expectations of propriety, Tula does not exhibit feministic qualities that would break from the patriarchal notions of expected sexual propriety.

While Tula does not use fear to achieve compliance with her wishes like Raquel of *Dos madres*, she does use religion to replicate and reinforce social expectations. The importance of blood, birthright, and inheritance are preserved in Tula's replication of

Catholic ideals. In this case, blood has a dual meaning. The first is the implied blood that was spilled in Rosa and Ramiro's conjugal bed. The second is the relationship created by the birth of Rosa's first child. Rosa's children are an extension of the blood relationship between Rosa and Tula. Like Raquel of *Dos madres*, Tula dictates the naming of the children that come from the surrogate womb. After the first pregnancy, Rosa says that it seems like she dreams dead.¹⁷ Tula disregards Rosa's pain and fear and insists that Rosa quiet down. Then, like a government (and Raquel of *Dos madres*), Tula decrees that this first child shall be named Ramiro, after his father, and that the next child would be a girl, and therefore should be named Gertrudis, like her.¹⁸ Rosa becomes like Eve, the progenitor of the biblically encouraged and sanctioned family, whereas Tula becomes Adam and propagates the patriarchal and hierarchical tradition of naming things. By dictating her sister's voice and naming her sister's children, Tula continues to reinforce the religious and male-dominated familial order.

Part of the biblical teaching from Genesis is to go forth and multiply.¹⁹ As Tula predetermines the gender and name of her second niece, their uncle don Primitivo exclaims in surprise that Rosa would even be thinking about having another child after such difficult labor. True to the religious teachings that the purpose of marriage is to have many children, Tula answers, "¿para qué se han casado, si no? ¿No es así, Ramiro?" (*La tía Tula* 41). Once again, Rosa's voice and desires are sublimated to Tula's evangelical quest for Rosa and Ramiro to fulfill the perfect Christian family. Ramiro's reaction in this situation is to be startled under Tula's gaze, furthering the perception of Tula as the strong one in the family, and Ramiro as weak. It is Tula who maintains the values and

norms of Spanish society, and Ramiro who threatens order and discipline with his sexual desires.

Rather than Ramiro, Tula is the one who maintains the virtue of the family. After she reinforces the religious and social expectation of the fertile, obedient wife with her sister and brother-in-law, she says, “Toda mujer nace madre, tío” (*La tía Tula* 42). For John P. Gabriele, this scene is pivotal because, “Both textually and theoretically, the scene establishes that the female body is the concrete image of gendered meanings” (106). Harkening back to the start of biblical reproduction, the purpose and role of women is to be born and then, in turn, give birth to the next generation. Through this scene, we see that the birthright of women is to become mothers. This assertion that every woman is born a mother contradicts Simone de Beauvoir’s popular sentiment that one is not born a woman, but becomes one. Judith Butler uses Beauvoir’s exploration of what it means to be a woman to show it “follows that woman itself is a term in process, a becoming, a constructing that cannot rightfully be said to originate or to end” (43). However, in Unamuno’s construction of the female gender, what is a woman is defined solely in relation to her maternal role. Even Tula is defined by her motherly nature and lack of children. The cycle regarding the nature of women, from the beginning of Christian mythos, is that since Eve’s fall from grace, women are meant to suffer and reproduce. The affectionate nature of women is something that Alejandro Martínez notes is common in Unamuno’s literature, and he writes that “Por la alta función social y natural que Unamuno ve en la mujer, estima que en esencia el fondo compasivo de la

mujer es maternal” (262). No matter what other aim or desires that Tula or Rosa might have, their entire life is defined by duty, desire, and honor.

The guardian of honor and duty in the family is Tula. She sublimates the primal desires of her brother-in-law to preserve her sister’s honor. Even after Rosa and Ramiro marry, Tula takes an omnipotent role in their lives as she follows them to their marital home. Through her role as aunt, Tula fulfills her maternal desires without risking her physical self. The duty that Tula feels is toward the ideal family and fruitful family. Despite Rosa fearing for her life as each pregnancy becomes successively more difficult, Tula takes over much of her niece and nephew’s education and upbringing. Rosa’s continued fecundity causes her great distress, and she wants to stop having children before giving birth kills her. During Rosa’s third and most difficult pregnancy, we observe the exhausting process of motherhood. The exhaustion is not just limited to Rosa, as Ramiro is just as tired from the back-to-back pregnancies. When Ramiro complains in front of Tula, she returns the dialogue to the inequalities and divisions brought out between the genders as revealed by pregnancy. With a sense of irony, she asks “¿Para ti?” when Ramiro complains “¿Qué pesado y molesto es esto!” (*La tía Tula* 47). Since Ramiro does not have to endure the physical pain and danger of pregnancy, his grumbling is ridiculed by a woman. While Ramiro is consistently characterized by his sexual desire and inability to repress his baser instincts, Tula is a paragon of restraint and order.

Returning to the earlier discussion of the inherent, stoic nature of Tula, we see that Tula replicates and reinforces the socially expected role and function of women in

Spanish society. Despite Ramiro's exasperation and fear that any more children will kill his wife,²⁰ Tula returns his attention to the purpose of marriage, that "La Naturaleza es sabia" and that "Ay, hijo, todo tiene sus riesgos y todo estado sus contrariedades" (*La tía Tula* 47). Taking into account that God and Nature were two sides of the same coin at this point in history, not only is it natural that Rosa continue to be fertile and pregnant, it is God's law as well. Additionally, pregnancy not only separates Ramiro from his wife and sister-in-law, it also distinguishes Rosa from Tula. By avoiding marriage, and by extension intercourse, Tula remains like the Virgin Mary whereas Rosa maintains her fruitful, Genesis mandated production of children. The desire for maternity is very clear with Tula, as she refers to her brother-in-law as *hijo*. Alison Sinclair points out this desire for the role and rejection of the necessary actions results in "both desiring motherhood, and yet spoiling it, simultaneously idealizing it, and preventing it from achieving its own full existence, whether in herself, or in others, in those women she obliges into motherhood" (*Uncovering the Mind* 143). By infantilizing Ramiro, Tula assumes a superior role. The unequal power dynamic between parents and children²¹ further reveals the inefficient and weak view of masculinity as presented by Ramiro. Neither adult in the marriage, according to Tula's words and actions, is capable of understanding the importance of the institution. Like the Catholic Church, Tula preserves the seriousness of the enterprise. Much like the priests, Tula dictates what family and marriage should be like, even though she does not participate in the venture.

Perhaps one reason that *La tía Tula* is seen by some critics as a feministic interpretation of motherhood is that Tula refuses to marry, even when her dying sister

asks her to marry Ramiro and become the legal mother of her nephews and niece. Nevertheless, Tula's reticence towards marriage is clear through the many conversations that she has with Ramiro before and after her sister's death. Ramiro says, "¡Qué bien has hecho en no casarte, Tula!" (*La tía Tula* 47). By not marrying, Tula is not subjected to the dangers of pregnancy and also maintains her virginity. Popular belief in Catholic dogma is that the Virgin Mary gave birth without pain, meaning that she was born without the original sin of Eve. Rather than serve as an example of a feminist usurpation of patriarchal norms and expectations, *La tía Tula* is a portrayal of the two main mothers of the Bible: Eve and Mary.

While Rosa suffers all the unpleasant symptoms of pregnancy as dictated by Eve's original sin, Tula remains pure and self-sacrificial like Mary. Despite similarities between Rosa and Eve and Tula and Mary, there are some things that Tula does that do not coincide with the Virgin Mary mythos. As Rosa lies dying, Tula is unable to stimulate nulliparous lactation from her "pechos secos, sus pechos de doncella," even with the newborn placed on "ese pecho en la flor sonrosada pálida de la boca del pequeñuelo. Y éste gemía más estrujando entre sus pálidos labios el conmovido pezón seco" (*La tía Tula* 51). The act of trying to nurse her youngest nephew may seem to be desperate; however, in some cases, women are able to lactate outside of pregnancy when given enough psychological and physical stimuli. Akin to Raquel's dry and shriveled up breast in *Dos madres*, Tula's breast is also dry, which of course contrasts with the abundant iconography of the Virgin Mary breastfeeding Jesus. Her search for motherhood is thwarted by her own fears of dying and her body's inability to lactate. By

sacrificing her own sexual desires, Tula attempts to embody the sacrifice of the Virgin Mary. The unintentional result of Tula pursuing motherhood without sacrificing her own body is that Rosa experiences extreme physical pain and eventually pays with her life. When Rosa dies, Tula inherits the full role of being mother.

Once Rosa dies, Ramiro is left in shock. The result is a mantra from Ramiro that embodies the gendered expectations of women. He thinks “la mujer no podía morir” (*La tía Tula* 58). Similar to the mantra “The King is dead, long live the King,” in *La tía Tula* it is Rosa who has physically died, but the ‘office’ she fulfills cannot end. The role of mother transcends the individual, and even if Ramiro’s wife dies, the fallout from her death does not include the cessation of the role of mother. Rosa, having fulfilled the prescribed role of the fruitful Eve, tries to pass the physical role on to her sister. Even when Rosa pleads with her sister to save her children from having a stepmother, Tula tarries for a full year before refusing to marry Ramiro. With respect to any possible biblical taboo, there is no provision that forbids a woman from marrying her sister’s widow, and the only explicit rule against sisters marrying the same man applies to when both sisters are alive.²² While Tula does not marry Ramiro, she also orders him not to search for a stepmother for his children because they have a mother already, her (*La tía Tula* 71). She rejects marriage with Ramiro not only due to her fear of dying in childbirth, but also because any subsequent children produced in a union between her and Ramiro would diminish her relationship with her nephews and niece, reducing it to that of children and stepmother. She calls her nephews and niece children of her heart (*La tía Tula* 78). The relationship between her and her nephews and niece is spiritual. It

transcends sexual love and physical desire. In this representation of maternity, Unamuno envisions a pure, self-sacrificing version of Mary and a reformed Joseph, as found in the guilt and lament expressed by Ramiro after Rosa's passing.

Self-sacrifice and resisting temptation are the hallmarks of Tula's character; Ramiro is marked by animalistic passion and untamed desire. Tula sanctifies the positions and act of mothering, but avoids the necessity of marriage—regardless of whether it is spiritual one or physical one. As discussed earlier, nuns are spiritually married to God, and Tula rejects being a nun because “No me gusta que me manden” (*La tía Tula* 63). Although some critics would point to this exchange as being an example of how Tula is a feministic representation of women, I counter that Tula's reticence stems from her desire to control and direct others. By remaining outside of the confines of a convent, Tula can enforce the will of God rather than be subjected to the will of church representatives. This is also clear when she seeks out religious counsel from her confessor, Father Alvarez. A distinction is made between having a confessor and a spiritual director. Tula rejects being “dirigida” and “menos por un hombre” (*La tía Tula* 76). The reasoning for this rejection of male dominance, according to the omniscient narrator, is due to the fact that “sus normas de conducta moral, sus convicciones y creencias religiosas se las había formado ella con lo que oía a su alrededor, y con lo que leía, pero las interpretaba a su modo” (*La tía Tula* 76). The strength of Tula's character comes from her own readings and interpretations.

Despite multiple rejections of marriage, Tula remains faithful to her calling to motherhood. By finding her own strength through experience and knowledge, Tula

circumvents the hypocrisy of the Catholic Church with which Unamuno so often found fault. Nevertheless, for this strong character to be found in a woman—one who is controlling not by virtue of her nature like Raquel in *Dos madres* but rather by virtue of her submission to a higher power—is unusual enough for it to be remarked upon by Father Alvarez. He pleads with Tula to consider Ramiro’s situation and needs. In this instance, we see that the sexual needs of men are the primary concern of the Catholic Church rather than following God’s law. Within Unamuno’s world, a woman is “capable chiefly of maternal love, and physical passion itself is to a large extent a kind of maternal instinct to proffer asylum” (Sedwick 309). Maternal love is something that Tula, like Raquel in *Dos madres*, demonstrates towards the biological father of the children of her heart. For Tula, Ramiro is “como otro hijo mío” (*La tía Tula* 78). Tula’s maternal strength is an infantilizing force for Ramiro. Once again, we witness the elevated and pure form of adoration for a child that comes from the evocation of the Virgin Mary ethos in Tula’s character.

The pure nature of her motherhood and its evocation of Mary contrasts sharply with the brutish nature of Ramiro’s hypermasculine pursuit of pleasure and satiating desire. The base nature of men outside of the Church is the reason that Father Alvarez encourages Tula to marry Ramiro:

[Father Alvarez] —Pero piense en él, en su cuñado, en su situación...

[...]

[Father Alvarez] —Le ayuda..., le sostiene...

[Tula] —Sí, le ayudo y le sostengo a ser padre...

[Father Alvarez] —A ser padre..., a ser padre... Pero él es un hombre...

[Tula] —¡Y yo una mujer!

[Father Alvarez] —A ser padre..., a ser padre... Pero él es un hombre...

[Tula] —¡Y yo una mujer!

[Father Alvarez] —Es débil... (*La tía Tula* 78-9)

Here, the institution of marriage serves as a civilizing force, and the female body serves as an outlet for male desire. Although Tula rejects marriage, she does not prevent other women from serving in this capacity. She actively seeks out other women to take the place of mother, rendering many popular feminist interpretations inaccurate,²³ as Tula merely avoids the trappings of her gender. The unbridled male desire and weakness that Ramiro can barely resist would seem to pale in comparison to the stereotypical portrayal of women in literature as emotional temptresses; however, Tula displays a stoic and reserved nature. Even when Tula tries to hide behind her gender saying that even though Ramiro is a man, she is a woman, Father Alvarez returns to the moral turpitude of the male gender when dealing with intercourse. The weak-willed nature of Ramiro contrasts with Tula's strength. Modestly, and perhaps with a bit of irony, Tula asks the priest "¿Soy yo fuerte?" (*La tía Tula* 79). The priest, echoing the voice of the Church and society, replies "Más de lo debido" (*La tía Tula* 79). By practicing self-restraint, the embodiment of female purity is a force that is stronger than what should exist.

At every opportunity, it is Tula who reminds both her uncle and brother-in-law of God's law and will. Throughout the story, Ramiro is unable to resist temptation. His actions confirm Tula's assertion that men are "de carne y muy brutos" (*La tía Tula* 65). Despite Ramiro temporarily acting like Joseph, his carnal lust is only slaked by his guilt for a year. In fact, once the shock of his wife's death has worn off—and it is clear that Tula will not participate in the physical enterprise of motherhood and marriage—Ramiro soon gives in to his desires. More scandalously, Ramiro begins sleeping with Manuela, a

broach of propriety and the Church's idealized marriage relationship. Manuela's inability to resist Ramiro's advances is a direct result of her weak health from tuberculosis. Unable to hide his peccadilloes once Manuela becomes pregnant, Ramiro is browbeaten into his second marriage by Tula. Like Tula and Rosa, Manuela is an orphan. She refuses to let Manuela and Ramiro's child be abandoned and raised in an orphanage.

However, Ramiro dies from an illness while Manuela is pregnant. Tula mourns his passing, calling him the father of her children. Even though motherhood for Tula happens outside of marriage and physical relations with men, it remains within a spiritual context. Furthering the self-sacrificing Virgin/Eve aspect of Tula's character is her continued pursuit of more children to raise. History repeats itself as Manuela has a difficult labor and dies from blood loss shortly after giving birth to Eva. After losing both biological parents, Eva is an orphan like the mothers who came before her: Rosa, Manuela, and Tula. Considering the original mother of all humanity, Eve, was without a mother herself, the family that Tula fashions repeats the motherless line of women. The idea of Eve as orphan allows us to examine Tula's actions with a new lens. With the progenitor of all mothers created without a role model, the patriarchal concept of the inherent qualities of the female gender as mother and nurturer are clearly illustrated by Tula's nearly insatiable drive to fulfill her prescribed role.

Taking the role of motherhood outside of the vagaries and lusts of mortal men like Ramiro returns the role to the pure and idealized biblical version. Tula receives all of the benefits of motherhood through the children of Rosa and Manuela without any of the risks that stem from Original Sin. Tula's role renews the notion that children are a gift

from God, not the bestial men siring them. The saintliness of Tula is foreshadowed when she talks to Father Alvarez, who says she would be a regular Saint Teresa if she became a nun. The mention of Saint Teresa is not casual when taking into account the other allusions to Eve and the Virgin Mary. The mysticism that surrounds Saint Teresa and her role within Spanish Catholicism most notably centers on Jesus as a child. Saint Teresa is also the patron saint of the loss of parents, which abounds in *La tía Tula*. When Tula finally sacrifices herself to save one of her adopted children, the result is an episode that would qualify as an act worth of a saint. The reason for her sacrifice is to ensure that her adopted children can have children and families of their own. Her purpose is not to serve men or women, but rather to serve a higher purpose. By ensuring the continuity of the family, Tula is able to cement her role as a divine mother. Thus, in the same vein as Saint Teresa, the memory of “tía Tula” lives on long after her death, as she is immortalized by her faith and adherence to the idealized, biblical mother.

Comparing the angelic Tula to the demonic Raquel provides two versions of the pursuit of motherhood at all costs. Rather than break free from patriarchal constraints, the strong women in *Dos madres* and *La tía Tula* reinforce the system. Although both women become mothers outside of marriage, they exert complete control over the lives of those around them, and are able to replicate the oppression of the patriarchy. The children that these women appropriate are still assimilated into the dominant social system. While *Dos madres* and *La tía Tula* are similar stories that encompass different aspects of femininity, they both illustrate the importance of how religion plays into notions of family (blood) and who should have possession of the children (birthright and

inheritance). These strong women control and cause suffering for the other people around them. Raquel is like a dictator and Tula is like the Catholic Church, two systems of power that Unamuno had qualms with during his lifetime. His distaste for the monarchy and the abuse of power is why the endings of these two tales are tragic; Raquel succeeds in disinheriting Berta and maintaining custody of Quelina while Tula's self-sacrificing nature results in her exchanging her life for one of her adopted children's after causing her sister's death by insisting upon multiple pregnancies.

Marital Melodrama: *El marqués de Lumbría* and *Nada menos que todo un hombre*

El marqués de Lumbría and *Nada menos que todo un hombre* are two of the most melodramatic of Unamuno's short stories.²⁴ Utilizing the definition from the *OED*, melodrama has two definitions that are particularly useful when examining these two *nóvolas*: melodrama as "A genre comprising any of the types of melodramatic work, especially exciting by exaggeration and sensationalism" and "More generally: any sensational incident, series of events, story, etc.; sensationalist or emotionally exaggerated behaviour or language; lurid excitement." The plots of *El marqués de Lumbría* and *Nada menos que todo un hombre* clearly embody the melodrama genre. Each has female infidelity, cuckolding, and family tensions, creating a series of events that brings about the reinstatement of patriarchal norms and power structures, especially when considering blood, birthright, and inheritance.

Examining *El marqués de Lumbría*, we first note that the two girls, Carolina and Luisa, are orphans like Tula and Rosa in *La tía Tula*. Even though the Marquis desperately wants to have a male child, his second wife is sterile. Failure to have male

progeny means that the Marquis cannot pass his title and land down to his daughters. If either of his daughters fails to produce a grandson, then their holdings will no longer remain in his family after his death. The patriarchal inheritance pattern, and the Marquis' pursuit of a suitor to marry his daughters to produce a suitable heir, reinforces the patriarchal system.

Carolina's cunning and plotting nature, much like Raquel in *Dos madres*, stems not from wanting to break free from the patriarchy, but rather to solidify its influence and hold over her current generation and the next. This is reflected in the description of Carolina as someone who "se mantenía rígida y observante de las tradiciones de la casa" (*El marqués de Lumbría* 71). The home is the site of tradition and order, but this order can be stifling especially within the genre of melodrama. As a general rule, melodrama is rife with social transgressions and tensions that augment the emotional highs and lows of the narrative. Unlike the self-sacrificing Tula in *La tía Tula*, Carolina does not resist her desire for Tristán and scandalously becomes pregnant with his child shortly before her sister Luisa is supposed to marry him. Similar to the situation that confronted Rosa and Tula in *La tía Tula*, Carolina and Luisa are interested in the same suitor. Luisa's carefully tended flower baskets draw Tristán first to the family home, then to her. The flourishing plants represent the vivacious and cheerful Luisa, and are in sharp contrast with the Marquis and Carolina who are horrified by sun and fresh air (*El marqués de Lumbría* 69). Also encoded within the imagery of blooming flowers is Luisa's virginity.

While Tula in *La tía Tula* stoically resists temptation, Carolina embraces it. The Marquis is careful to preserve his youngest daughter's honor, but is lax in observing his

eldest. One custom that is broken through Tristán's pursuit of Luisa is that of the eldest daughter marrying first. As Tristán is an outsider to many of the expectations and traditions that one encounters with landed gentry, the Marquis asks Carolina to instruct Tristán in "las tradiciones y costumbres de la casa" (*El marqués de Lumbría* 73). The presence of the foreshadowing of the drama and tragedy yet to come is a characteristic of melodrama. The story follows familiar plot lines where betrayal by one person in the family (blood) comes at the expense of its most innocent member. Once Luisa finds out that her sister is pregnant with Tristán's child, she screams that she will tell the whole city the truth. Her father silences her by informing the servants that she is unwell, and quietly sends Carolina off to a monastery. The Marquis silences the voice of female dissent and ensures that the marriage between Luisa and Tristán proceeds as planned, while relying upon another patriarchal institution, the Church, to help hide Carolina's potential disgrace.

The proper and face-saving marriage between Luisa and Tristán comes at a price: Luisa quickly fades along with her flowers, as marriage proves to be a debilitating and soul-crushing enterprise for both bride and groom. Maintaining the patriarchy and expected social rules makes the family estate more like a prison. The Marquis' insistence on preserving the status quo to ensure a male heir to his title and land results in a situation where neither daughter is fulfilled within the patriarchal social constructs. Carolina, despite being the initial ambassador of the rigid traditions of the house, is hidden away to prevent any shame or scandal from befalling the family. The patriarchal rights of inheritance and succession seem to be in jeopardy as Luisa (and her flowers) shrivel and

wither. Like any good melodrama, Unamuno does not let Luisa slip away into oblivion. Rather, she gives birth to a son who can inherit his grandfather's title and land. The Marquis' obsession with having a male heir (the lack of which is "la espina dolorosísima de su vida") carries through to the birth of his first grandchild (*El marqués de Lumbría* 70). As Luisa suffers through the biblically mandated labor pains, the Marquis lays dying. For the patriarch, it is only the gender of Luisa's child that matters. The legitimate child of his daughter and son-in-law will save the family name. Relieved that patriarchal inheritance patterns can continue, the Marquis places a "beso de muerte" on the new Marquis (*El marqués de Lumbría* 76). Much like Ramiro's thoughts in *La tía Tula* echo the sentiments "The King is dead, long live the King," so too does the dying Marquis call his grandson "Marquis." The patriarchy self-replicates and places an emphasis on legitimacy, family relations, and inheritance. Once the male successor is born, the focus of the family shifts entirely to the heir.

Although Tristán may be a male, he is not the heir of the estate. The disconnect between the elite life afforded by the Marquis' title and the idleness that come with it causes a sense of despair for those outside of the line of succession. Tristán feels completely useless in the decadent household and laments that he is "como una dependencia de la casa, casi un mueble" (*El marqués de Lumbría* 77). Although he tries to make amends for his part in the unhappy union, Luisa refuses to try and salvage the dying flowers, saying that "Aquí no hay más flor que el marqués" (*El marqués de Lumbría* 77). The child who will inherit the estate is more important than individual, female happiness. In part, due to Tristán's betrayal and her father's complacency in

hiding its truth, Luisa does not show the maternal warmth that so often accompanies Unamuno's portrayal of women. The patriarchy has taken the vim and vigor out of Luisa's life. As the only member of the family who enjoys and seeks out sunshine and light, Luisa slowly wilts within the confines of the four walls, fades, and eventually dies. The symbols of life, beauty, and innocence that are reflected in the flowerbeds die with Luisa, whose deathbed lamentation includes a wish that she had sunshine in her marriage. The domestic space of the house took Luisa's light and life from her. She begs Tristán to watch over their son and says that Tristán should tell "her" that she is forgiven, which returns the reader to the melodramatic, narrative thread left unexplored until this deathbed conversation: Carolina's disappearance from the familial home and the specific circumstances that caused the shouting match on the eve of Luisa's nuptials.

Returning to the melodrama genre, the suspense and emotional tension that comes after Luisa's death erases any doubt about what happened between Carolina and Tristán. Since the fateful night when Luisa screamed that she would tell the whole world something, we learn that Carolina has been living in as a nun for four years. From the moment she returns to the estate as Tristán's wife, Carolina directs and controls what should happen. Tristán shows that his true nature is passive, and lets the servants take over the primary care of his child with Luisa. By acquiescing to his second wife's demands, Tristán proves that he is just as susceptible and obsequious to the new incarnation of patriarchal power as he was when the Marquis was alive.

Carolina's difficult pregnancy and subsequent birth of a daughter reveal a misogynistic and religious view towards women. She calls the baby girl "nuestro castigo"

(*El marqués de Lumbría* 80). There are two interpretations for what kind of punishment this child could represent—the divine and the social. At this point in the narrative, the reader is aware that a sexual transgression occurred between Carolina and Tristán, but the extent of their liaison is not known. The punishment on both a religious and social level is that they would have a daughter—someone who cannot inherit title or land in a patriarchal system—rather than a son. Much like the Marquis’ obsession with ensuring the proper, patriarchal inheritance of power and property, Carolina seeks to have a son to secure her birthright as the mother of the future Marquis, and does not mourn the death of the infant shortly after its birth.

Keeping up appearances, Carolina tells her nephew (the Marquis) Rodriuguín that she will bring him a playmate, a distant cousin that has been left alone. Everyone in the town and house believes that after the death of her newborn daughter, Carolina sought to raise an adoptive child. They believe that she brings “el adoptivo, el intruso, para molestar y oprimir al otro, al de su hermana” (*El marqués de Lumbría* 81). At first glance, the new boy Pedrito, appears to have no blood relationship to Carolina and Tristán. As an orphan, Pedrito is perceived as a parasitic presence in the family, an intruder to the legitimate Marquis. For this reason, the two young boys “se miraron, desde luego, como enemigos” (*El marqués de Lumbría* 81). With the weight of nobility behind it, the question of birthright and inheritance loom in the background. Given the melodramatic nature of the story, the reader strongly suspects that Pedrito is not an adopted intruder, but rather the illegitimate child of Carolina and Tristán.

While the plot may seem predictable within the melodrama genre, the undercurrent of power and privilege play out between the elder, patriarchal-embracing Carolina and her dead, kind-spirited sister through their respective children. After one particularly vigorous roughhousing session between Rodriguín and Pedrito, Carolina becomes so upset that Pedrito has a bloody nose that she calls Rodriguín, “Cane.” As mentioned earlier, Unamuno frequently uses biblical allegories and allusions in his works to foreshadow or add depth to the narrative. The tension of what Luisa threatened to tell the whole world and what the reader suspects comes to a head with Carolina’s revelation that, like Cane and Abel, Rodriguín and Pedrito are brothers. However, it is not their mutual father that tells the truth. The character who steadfastly maintains the customs and traditions of the patriarchy, Carolina, explains the truth rather than the weak and decorative Tristán. Notably, it is a female messenger who reinforces the system. Tristán is both an outsider to the family, since he married in, and an effeminate presence as he serves as little more than a piece of furniture once he has helped to create the next heir.

Carolina’s ferocity at defending what she perceives as hers reinforces the controlling nature we have seen other female characters use in order to preserve the status quo. She tells Rodriguín that the Marquis is Pedrito, not him. By virtue of being the eldest daughter, it was Carolina who should have married first, not Luisa. Additionally, Carolina became pregnant first. Even though the birth happened outside of the bonds of matrimony, Carolina is now married to Pedrito’s father, which gives her much more latitude to disinherit Rodriguín. Earlier in the story, many allusions were made to the distaste that the elder Marquis and Carolina had for sunlight, but with a taste of power,

Carolina threatens, “abriré todos los balcones al sol, y haré que se le reconozca a mi hijo como quien es: como el marqués” (*El marqués de Lumbría* 83). Now that Carolina has enough power, she can relish in and reveal the truth.

Much like the henpecked Juan of *Dos madres*, Tristán remains unable to speak when confronted with having to choose between his sons.²⁵ For Labanyi, this reveals gendered anxieties about motherhood, but also reinforces “male proprietorship of children” (*Spanish Literature* 1642). Regardless of Carolina’s intervention, either Rodriguín or Pedrito would belong to the Marquis birthright. Like Luisa, Carolina, and Carolina’s unnamed infant, daughters serve as a punishment, pain, or shame within the patriarchy. None of the females have a birthright to the title of Marquis. In order to have a chance at shaping the destiny of the Marquis, Carolina commits a sin by becoming pregnant outside of wedlock. Nevertheless as a bulwark of the oppressive system, Carolina steadfastly believes that the sin in this episode was not the out of wedlock birth of Pedrito, but rather the fact that Rodriguín punched Pedrito. After revealing her plan to make Pedrito the Marquis, Carolina reinforces the suffocating and restricting nature of the patriarchy. Rather than serve as a universally fostering figure, she is a warden. By “sentencing”²⁶ Rodriguín to a boarding school, Carolina represents the punitive function of the state. The general makeup of the monarchy and its right of succession encourages the usurpation of the nurturing role of the mother for a controlling and power-hungry marionette.

The zeal with which Carolina maintains her birthright claim to gestating the Marquis illustrates the influence that inheritance patterns hold over popular imagination.

The heightened emotions that *El marqués de Lumbría* evokes fit within the melodrama genre; nevertheless, the melodrama genre relies upon gendered social expectations that add a dimension of grey to moral standards of right and wrong. Both Carolina and Luisa are wronged by circumstances that directly result from the system of governance has primogeniture as its legal basis. In this respect, as the eldest, Carolina should have been given the right to have the child that would carry the Marquis title. When the elder Marquis allows Luisa to marry for love, he sets in motion the disinheritance of Rodriguín, the child whom he knew and named as Marquis. Marriage for love was not an unusual or frowned upon practice; however, in the exaggerated and overly emotional narrative, Luisa's love and happiness must be thoroughly extinguished like her flowers in order to feel Carolina's final, crushing vengeance that results in Pedrito's ascension to the noble title over his half brother.

Adding to the perception of Carolina as self-interested and dangerous is her sexuality. Playing off of stereotypes and expectations, at first glance many readers would place the blame for Carolina becoming pregnant out of wedlock shortly before Luisa's marriage on Tristán and the elder Marquis for allowing the temptation to seduce the elder sister to occur. Yet, by observing Tristán's passive nature, we see that those from outside the original family unit have limited scope in changing the dynamics, much like those outside the ruling power structure are unable to change it. Further proof of Tristán's passivity comes with Carolina's admission that it was her dangerous, feminine sexuality that secured her birthright: "¡Fuí yo quien te seduje, yo!" (*El marqués de Lumbría* 87). The twist that adds to the melodramatic nature of this story is that Carolina was not the

virtuous woman seduced by the handsome stranger. She is just as calculating at securing her place as the mother of the Marquis as any nobleman seeking power. Here, motherhood is a scheming enterprise that replicates the patriarchal system. Sexuality is a coercive force, because with the women in the family reduced to the role of carrying the Marquis in their womb, their sole purpose in life is to give birth to the next generation. In order to have a sense of purpose, Carolina replicates the rigid and unfair system of her father.

Another aspect of the “strong woman” that is also found within the texts of *Dos madres* and *La tía Tula* is that Carolina, like Raquel and Tula, seeks to be the one to “make men” out of the males around her. When these strong women serve as civilizing and masculinizing forces, they replicate the patriarchal system that created them. Their abuse of position and power helps to illustrate the unfairness of male primogeniture regarding inheritance. Interestingly, the idea of making a man out of someone is strongly linked in Hispanic literature with sexual intercourse.²⁷ Although Carolina is talking about how she will make a man out of the future Marquis, she did so by using Tristán. According to Carolina, Tristán’s destiny was to father the future Marquis. By acting so passive, Tristán’s sexual escapades with Carolina and Luisa fail to result in a change in the perception of Tristán as a man. By parading him around the town “como a un prisionero,” Carolina reinforces the perception of the domestic space as a prison (*El marqués de Lumbría* 85). As the story reaches its culmination, Tristán attempts to use a resource of many oppressed women to escape the home: the cloister. While Carolina was initially sent off to a convent to hide her pregnancy, Tristán wants to run away to be a

monk in order to escape from his prison-like marriage. Representing the legal order within a nation, Carolina prevents any escape from the familial grounds. Tristán is unable to take refuge in the space that is typically reserved for women, and is forced to face Rodriguín's disinheritance and shunning. The representation of Tristán's version of masculinity within a patriarchal system is one that requires filial sacrifice to preserve the birthright and inheritance of noble blood.

At the end of the melodrama, the tragedy lies in the fact that the eldest daughter planned and executed her revenge to ensure that Pedrito, her son, born first, would inherit the title of Marquis. The father, the true interloper in the penitentiary that is the Marquis' home, is powerless to protect his youngest son. The last line of the story encapsulates the conflict between morality and tradition: "Tristán inclinó la cabeza bajo un peso de siglos" (*El marqués de Lumbría* 88). The rigid patriarchal system of primogeniture, most notably practiced by the upper class, has existed for centuries and oppresses Tristán. As an outsider to the original family, Tristán cannot protect Rodriguín and is as trapped as his first wife, who realized that the Marquis and the patriarchy were the most important parts of the house. Carolina rigidly maintains the tradition of the eldest giving birth to the Marquis at the expense of any kindness towards her nephew. Given Unamuno's open contempt for the monarchy later in his life, his portrayal of nobility protecting old, blue-blooded ways was not solely for a melodramatic effect, but also to show how family and home can be a suffocating prison when tradition, patriarchy, and masculinity are maintained to extremes.

Femininity in *Nada menos que todo un hombre* does not revolve around Unamuno's typical portrayal of woman as nurturer and protector. Rather, its portrayal is of a selfish and vain woman who ultimately pays for her insecurities with her own life.²⁸ The conflictive relationship between Julia and Alejandro serves as an allegory for the tensions between Spain and its colonies. The conflicts in the family units in *Nada menos que todo un hombre* revolve around the importance of marriage, and the social contract which reflects blood, birthright, and inheritance. Examining the courtship and marriage between Julia and Alejandro illustrates how the Franco dictatorship could, in the words of Jo Labanyi, package "Unamuno as a puritanical author obsessed with 'the problem of Spain'" (*Spanish Literature 1647-1648*). The biographical details of Alejandro lend themselves to the interpretation that Julia represents Spain and Alejandro the colonies.

Unlike the leading ladies from the other three stories, Julia is not a devil, saint, or schemer. Taking into account that the family portrayed in *Nada menos que todo un hombre* is the only one of the four stories in this study that is intact—Julia has both of her parents alive and she has a legitimate child with her husband—we must examine how Unamuno's portrayal of the patriarchal family questions the legitimacy of the institution and the allegorical relationship between Spain and its colonies. Prior to marrying, Julia tries to escape the destiny of a bored, upper class wife. Her father says that the honor of the family depends upon Julia's marriage. By having a beautiful daughter, don Victorino Yáñez hopes to leverage a decent marriage to someone who is nouveau riche to exchange an increase in the family coffers for an augmentation in social rank and mobility. Fully aware that her father needs her compliance, Julia's complains that she is to be sold to the

highest bidder to save her father's business affairs and to save him from a debtor's prison. In spite of knowing that her father risks financial ruin, Julia rebels and takes a boyfriend. Preserving her own honor (virginity) is not Julia's priority, because she does not acquiesce to the notion of blood loyalty. Instead of working to preserve the family unit, Julia is portrayed as selfish. She asks her mother, "¿Y qué voy a hacer, mamá? ¿Vivir como una esclava, prisionera, hasta que venga el sultán a quien papá me venda?" (*Nada menos que todo un hombre* 91). The exchange between Doña Anacleta and Julia reveals the position of women within the hierarchy of the upper class—commodities to be traded among men.

Julia intentionally engages in actions that devalue her body's status as a commodity for trade. The most essential aspect of dating for Julia is to take a boyfriend, any boyfriend that is not chosen by her father, so that she can "salir de casa, huir de su padre, fuese como fuese" (*Nada menos que todo un hombre* 97). The desire to flee from her father, the harbinger of order and patriarchy, sends her into the arms of Alejandro Gómez. The backstory of Alejandro furthers the allegory of Julia as Spain and Alejandro as the colonies, for although his exact origins and ancestors are unknown, he is of indigenous origin and as a child had been taken to Cuba, and later Mexico by his parents. While in the colonies, Alejandro amasses a fortune and returns to Spain. The nebulous origin story for Alejandro hits on several points of melodrama and popular Spanish imagination. He is a rich and mysterious stranger, a *criollo* who has lived in the colonies, found fortune, and returned to the motherland. Representing a break from the stifling traditions of inheriting money through birthright, Alejandro arrives in town. Once he

captivates the town beauty, he gets her to marry him, because as a “true man,” he gets what he wants.

The undercurrent of violence and aggression emanates from Alejandro’s exaggerated projection of masculinity. He tells Julia that his only family is her, and that she is his. He says to Julia he has not had parents, that “Mi familia empieza en mí. Yo me he hecho solo” (*Nada menos que todo un hombre* 97). As the Spanish colonies rejected their inheritance from Spain, so too does Alejandro reject that he ever had a family. He also reveals that Julia is not his first wife. He figures that Julia has heard the rumors that he murdered his first wife, which he dismisses as preposterous.²⁹ Once this knowledge is put into words, Julia’s discomfort with Alejandro becomes more apparent. By attempting to flee her father’s restrictive and patriarchal home, she has ended up in a worse prison, that of doubting whether her husband truly loves her or just her beauty. Even though Julia is “libre, absolutamente libre; podía hacer en él los que se le antojase, salir y entrar, recibir a las amigas y aun amigos que prefiriera [...] La incertidumbre del amor del hombre la tenía como presa en aquel dorado y espléndido calabozo de puerta abierta” (*Nada menos que todo un hombre* 111). These sentiments echo the popular English idiom “freedom is a gilded cage,” which reveals how wealth fails to bring emotional comfort within the upper class.

From the prison that was her father’s house to the dungeon that is her husband’s, Julia remains trapped within the masculine world of the Spanish upper class. Her birthright is to maintain a noble line, and while she is pregnant, Alejandro insists in a hypermasculine fashion that they will have a son because he is a man. The insistence

upon his manliness adds to the antagonistic relationship between Alejandro and Julia. When their son is born, Alejandro refuses to kiss him, because he says it is the mother's job to raise the children. Through the interactions between Alejandro and Julia, we observe the legitimizing of the socially prescribed gender roles. The gender-specific role of trophy wife that Julia attempted to avoid with her father's ministrations has become her reality. Her new home is just as much of a prison as her father's.

Playing into the melodrama genre, Julia's unhappy marital life leads her to seek comfort with one of Alejandro's friends. The catalyst for this affair is the mutual love of books that both Julia and the Count share. Alejandro is contemptuous of Julia's reading, while the Count loves reading as much as Julia. The educated Julia is a threat to Alejandro's masculinity. This relationship of education being a threat to Alejandro plays upon the stereotype that Spain was the erudite country and the colonies were rough and rugged. Julia's impulsive marriage to Alejandro has created a restrictive and miserable union, from which Julia temporarily escapes with a similarly pedigreed Spaniard. The Count also echoes the rumors that Alejandro killed his first wife after spending her entire fortune. Even though Alejandro has previously addressed and dismissed those rumors, the threat of violence adds a dangerous dimension to Julia and the Count's affair. Unlike Alejandro's first marriage, Julia does not have a fortune for him to spend; however, he has made it clear that she is his entire family. By denying any past family ties, Alejandro denies both birthright and inheritance. He represents a treacherous viewpoint where self-interest trumps tradition. At the same time, Alejandro's hypermasculine portrayal of the patriarchy also shows the extremes that such a tradition can encourage.

Even though Alejandro shows the extremes of patriarchal tradition, he rejects the social mores regarding female sexual propriety. This is made quickly apparent by Julia's first boyfriend and later evidenced by Julia's discovery that Alejandro does not care about appearances with her affair. Instead of being upset by the possibility of Julia having an affair, he is insulted by being called a gentleman. He rejects birthright and inheritance—that of being a gentleman—to embrace being a self-made man. This view of colonial masculinity as a question of being self-made versus old money also illustrates the rift between the colonies and Spain. The issue that Alejandro has with Julia is that, according to him as the voice of masculinity, she is all woman—vain, insecure, and unfaithful—and even worse, a woman who reads books. Unlike the well read and studied Tula of *La tía Tula*, Julia's love of books has made her obsessed with the notion of romantic love.

Julia's fascination with the world within books echoes the fascination that another famous Spanish literary figure had with novels of chivalry: Don Quixote. The reverberation with Cervantes' masterwork, and Cervantes' writing in general, is evidenced by the title that encompasses the three *nóvolas*, which includes *Nada menos que todo un hombre*. Like her literary predecessor, Julia becomes more bored as Alejandro takes away her books, saying they make her neurasthenia worse. The melodramatic nature of the story continues when Alejandro begins to have an affair, much like Ramiro of *La tía Tula* does, with a maid. His affair sends Julia into a stereotypically portrayed hysteria, during which she questions his masculinity. Within the confines of the relationship where she has no power, Julia laments that her role in life has

been reduced to being the mother of his child and a pretty object to possess. When Julia tells him that she has taken the Count as a lover, and that Alejandro is not a man, he dismisses her. Here, another famous writer (Shakespeare) is mentioned, by way of his play *Othello*. The plot of *Othello* alludes to the tragic and violent end that awaits Julia. In *Othello*, the beautiful Desdemona is violently killed by her husband. Similar plot structures also create intertextual references between *Othello* and *Nada menos que todo un hombre*. Although Alejandro is an outsider to Spain, his wealth that came by his own talent has made him accepted in Spain like Othello's merit made him accepted in Venice. Also, based upon his indigenous background, Alejandro would appear darker skinned, like Othello with his Moorish background. However, rather than kill Julia over her affair with the Count (like Othello does when he kills Desdemona), Alejandro kills Julia to her release from her misery. The dialogue with *Othello* adds to the doubling between the two works.

Alejandro negates the fourth wall by telling Julia that his home is not a theater and that continuing to believe in the stories that she reads will make her crazy. Whenever Julia tries to tell Alejandro the truth about her relationship with the Count, he dismisses her. The Count refuses to verify the truth because he is afraid of Alejandro. As a result, Julia is placed in an asylum. A favorite literary trope, the supposedly "insane" woman who tells the truth is as old as Greek mythology, specifically the disgraced Cassandra whose prophecies were always true but never believed. Julia is declared insane, since no male voice corroborates her tale. The suppression of the female voice is something passed down by the patriarchy. So too is relegating troublesome women to the

madhouse.³⁰ For Julia, being kept at the asylum is worse than revenge for having an affair. She is convinced that Alejandro's first wife died rather than live with Alejandro's oppressive masculinity. While she is away at the asylum, Alejandro realizes that he loves Julia more than himself. Fearing that she will actually become insane, Julia intentionally puts on a mask to behave in such a manner that Alejandro and the staff believe she has been cured.³¹

As part of her cure, Julia accepts that she can no longer call herself or allows anyone else to call her by just her first name. Accepting Alejandro's correction that she should go by the formal Señora de Gómez, Julia embraces patriarchal naming conventions to survive with her sanity intact. In order to do so, she must play the role of the proper wife. When the Count finally tells the truth, Julia refuses to tell the truth. She says that he can call her Doña Julia or Señora de Gómez. By taking these names, she accepts the legal and social relationship to her husband. She is no longer the willful and rebellious Julia; she is the prim and proper lady of the house. Nonetheless, shortly after accepting her position within the possessive and hypermasculine patriarchy, Julia actually goes insane. Even though Alejandro is very affectionate with Julia and their son, he still cannot admit to the romantic love that Julia craves. The hypermasculine representation of patriarchy remains incapable of coping with the romanticized conception of love. Alejandro, in a desperate bid to save his wife, offers his blood for Julia's. The weight of his version of patriarchy does not allow him to break from the inheritance of violence that often accompanies notions of honor.

Continuing with the theory that family represents nation, those notions of honor notwithstanding, the codependency that exists at this point in the narrative between Alejandro and Julia also reflects the unhealthy codependence between the colonies and Spain. The colonizer cannot exist without the colonized, and yet the colonized would not exist without the colonizer. Without the resources of the colonies, Spain's economy weakened, and without Spain, the identities of the colonies entered into a state of flux. The fear of inadequacy that Alejandro feels around Julia and her family reflects the inferiority complex of the former Spanish holdings in the Americas. The uneasy and violent relationship between Julia and Alejandro also reflects the turmoil following the Disaster. Insecure in his masculinity, Alejandro (the colonies) murders the woman (nation) who evokes his feelings of ineptitude. The marriage between them results in a desire for death, and the violent masculinity results in the destruction of everything they created. The consequences of defying tradition are tragic and cause Julia's untimely end. Her arrogance and vanity, much like Spain's arrogance and vanity regarding its relations with the colonies, causes the love/hate relationship between them. The matrimonial bond is severed by death, much like the relationship between Spain and the colonies were fragmented by war. In the end, Julia is found with Alejandro's bloodied corpse hugging her lifeless body. The murder-suicide shows how patriarchy's preoccupation with blood, birthright, and inheritance results in violence and destruction, much like the loss of the Spanish colonies felt like for the Spanish populace after "the Disaster."

Conclusion

In all four of the Unamuno works in this chapter, the patriarchal family and nuclear family systems are called into question. The title that encompasses three of the works—*Dos madres*, *El marqués de Lumbría*, *Nada menos que todo un hombre*—is *Tres novelas ejemplares*, which harkens back to Miguel de Cervantes' *Novelas ejemplares* published in 1613. Cervantes' work has examples of idealized and realistic portrayals of reality. The women in his novels are as diverse as those illustrated in Unamuno's *nóvolas*, some are chaste, some are clever, and some are dangerous. Specific to Unamuno's work are strong and willful women who represent an unease with abusive authority, whether that authority be political or clerical. In *Dos Madres*, Raquel takes over the household and farms out childbearing to an unsuspecting and mesmerized Berta. Contrasting with Raquel's demonic and controlling pursuit of motherhood is Tula's religiously motivated preservation of Catholic dogma. In *El marqués de Lumbría* and *Nada menos que todo un hombre*, melodrama drives the narrative, but at their core is a pursuit of tradition and patriarchy. The tragic endings of the four *nóvolas* represent the confluence of blood, birthright, and inheritance. With the relationship between the colonies and Spain dissolved, so too do we observe strained familial relationships and dysfunction. The representations of patriarchal families as broken reflect a nation that is also reeling from political and economic instability. Moving away from traditional expectations of relationships and questioning the old guard helps reexamine the role of motherhood, which by extension also asks the reader to reexamine their relationship with Spain. As mentioned earlier in this study, women have been inexorably tied to conceptions of

nation, and by portraying mothers as controlling, manipulative, or insane, Unamuno questions the nation and its actions as a whole.

Endnotes

1. Galdós wrote many novels that dealt with gender, family, and Spain. Please see *Gender and Modernization in the Spanish Realist Novel* by Jo Labanyi for a more detailed analysis.

2. The most famous Unamuno creation who contemplates, and later completes, suicide is Augusto from *Niebla* (1907).

3. According to Rodríguez-Ferrer the actual data on maternal childbirth death rates are as follows: “A principios del siglo XX ocurrieron 3674 muertes maternas y la tasa de mortalidad fue de 564,7 muertes por 100.000 nacidos vivos. Durante los primeros decenios de siglo las tasas se mantuvieron estables por encima de 500 muertes por 100.000 nacidos vivos.”

4. In *El marqués de Lumbría*, Luisa is first introduced as Lucía, the youngest daughter of the Marquis. After the initial introduction to Carolina and Lucía, there is no further mention of Lucía in the story. For the sake of clarity, I will only use the more commonly used name. It seems to be an editorial oversight that has not been corrected over several editions.

5. As aptly pointed out by Alison Sinclair, Federico García Lorca’s Yerma is just as obsessed with having children as Raquel (*Uncovering* 160).

6. Unamuno’s religious interests are notable throughout his work, and religious allusions are common. For instance, *Abel Sánchez* is an exploration of envy and a reexamination of the Cain and Abel story. Alison Sinclair explores the concept of envy in *La tía Tula* in her chapter “Envy: Reconstruction and Destruction of Maternity in *La tía Tula*” in *Uncovering the Mind: Unamuno, the unknown and the vicissitudes of self*.

7. Ricardo Diez also observes the relationship between Raquel and Juan as “el profundo desprecio al matrimonio convencional” (185).

8. Ricardo Diez also notes the difference between Raquel (Juan’s *mujer*) and Berta (Juan’s legal wife), although he frames it as a question of legitimacy versus social convention (185).

9. The obsolete definition comes from the *OED*: “b. Applied to the Devil. *Obs.*”

10. The definition of *esquiva* comes from the *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*: “(Quizá del gót. **skiuhs*; cf. ingl. ant. *scêoh*, a. al. medio *schiech*, tímido).
1. adj. Desdeñoso, áspero, huraño.”

11 . The *OED* definition of shrew is as follows, “*OED* A person, *esp.* (now only) a woman given to railing or scolding or other perverse or malignant behaviour; freq. a scolding or turbulent wife.”

12. Quelina is the diminutive of Raquel in Spanish.

13. From the *OED*, a stem family is a “family unit in which property descends to a married son who remains within the household, other (*esp.* married) children achieving independence on receipt of an inheritance.”

14. The examples of cautions against idolatry can be found in Exodus, Revelations, Deuteronomy, and Leviticus, among others.

15 According to http://babynamesworld.parentsconnect.com/meaning_of_Tula.html and <http://www.thinkbabynames.com/meaning/0/Gertrudis>, the meaning of Tula is Germanic for strength, while its use in Spanish as a nickname for Gertrudis stems from the –trud part of the German. Gertrudis means “strong spear” in Old German.

16. “In an effect to gain further insight into the inherent feminist qualities of *La tía Tula*, I intend to illustrate to what extent Tula’s character informs emplotment by revealing the process by which she empowers herself both within and through the narrative.” (Gabriele 105).

17. Rosa’s exact words are “me parece que sueño muerta” (Unamuno *La tía Tula* 41).

18. Tula’s exact words are: “—Éste se llamará Ramiro, como su padre —decretó luego Gertrudis en pequeño consejo de familia—, y la otra, porque la siguiente será niña, Gertrudis, como yo” (Unamuno *La tía Tula* 41).

19. The exact passage is Genesis 1:28, and while there are many translations, the most common expression is to go forth and be fruitful and multiply.

20. Ramiro says, “tantas veces va el cántaro a la fuente” (*La tía Tula* 47), which implies that there are only so many times someone can draw water from a well before it dries up. The image of water is historically linked to women, for when looking back into Greek mythology, many goddesses and spirits were tied to oceans, lakes, and streams. A well that has been drained from too much use is reminiscent of Rosa’s womb, especially when adding the visual image of having her water break and fluid leak out at the start of each labor.

21. This unequal relationship between parent and child will be further explored in the film-based chapter, “Matriarchal Mothers and Feeble Fathers: Family as a Representation of Authoritarianism.”

22. Leviticus 18:18.

23. One specific citation that springs to mind is that: “Raising children, who are not her own, out of wedlock enables Tula to fulfill the role of mother, a role for which her character is highly suited and which she finds personally satisfying, without compromising her self to traditional patriarchal constructs” (Gabriele 107). I counter that Tula reinforces traditional patriarchal constructs by forcing other women to marry Ramiro either before engaging in sexual relations or after becoming pregnant out of wedlock.

24. Many times, these *nívolas* are briefly lumped in with Unamuno’s other works. For instance, Renée Horowitz argues that Unamuno portrays that “woman’s love is always maternal in nature” which is “evident in the three short novels, *Dos madres*, *El marqués de Lumbría*, and *La tía Tula*” (56). I propose that the reason for the lack of in-depth criticism of *El marqués de Lumbría* and *Nada menos que todo un hombre* stems from the melodramatic nature of these stories.

25. The question of legitimacy and inheritance is also present in earlier Spanish works, including those by Galdós, such as *El abuelo*.

26. The exact quote regarding sending Rodriguín to a *colegio* is “sentenció Carolina” (*El marqués de Lumbría* 85).

27. In particular, sex with a prostitute is seen as a way to become a man. The act of intercourse is more important than the person with whom the act is completed. Using prostitutes is also a way to critique the larger society. The popularity of the theme of intercourse with prostitutes can be seen in novels such as *Señas de identidad* by Juan Goytisolo, *Tiempo de silencio* by Luis Martín-Santos, *Memorias de mis putas tristes* by Gabriel García Márquez, and *La casa verde* by Mario Vargas Llosa.

28. This is a rather simplistic view of the relationship between Alejandro and Julia. It could also be argued that Alejandro is emotionally abusive and that the culmination of this abuse is the double homicide and his suicide.

29. A more recent novel that has a widower with a guilty past is *Corazón tan blanco* by Javier Marías.

30. Gilbert and Gilbert. *The Madwoman in the Attic*.

31. Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble*.

Chapter 3

Fear and the Fractured Family: Motherless Daughters in Three Postwar Spanish Novels

In post-war Spain, many female writers published books with the *chica rara* (odd girl out¹) at their center. Although extensive research has been done on the figure of the *chica rara* and her place as part of postwar and post-Franco literature, far fewer studies exist with respect to how her position in the family serves as a space to comment on the wider implications of the representation of family in Spanish society. The three novels that I will study in this chapter to explore the allegory of family as nation will be *Nada* (1944) by Carmen Laforet, *Primera memoria* (1959) by Ana María Matute, and *Julia* (1970) by Ana María Moix.

Each of the three novels forms part of a new pro-female author canon, and serves as a female *Bildungsroman*. A traditional *Bildungsroman*, according to the *OED*, is “A novel that has as its main theme the formative years or spiritual education of one person (a type of novel tradition in German literature).” The difference between a traditional *Bildungsroman* and a female-centered one is that when the girl transitions to a woman, she experiences a nearly universal loss of innocence, although not necessarily related to virginity. The departure from childish naivety with respect to her gender’s socially defined place makes her an adult. The editors of *The Voyage In* note that gender in the *Bildungsroman* has not been “assimilated as a pertinent category, despite the fact that the sex of the protagonist modifies every aspect of a particular *Bildungsroman*: its narrative structure, its implied psychology, its representations of social pressures” (Abel et al 5).

Although the editors are speaking about English-language literature, these observations are relevant to the three novels in question, as each author takes elements of a coming of age novel and observes these elements through the eyes of a female character. According to Pratt et al, “In the bildungsroman proper, with its expectation that the hero is learning to be an adult, there is the hidden agenda of gender norms, where ‘adult’ means learning to be dependent, submissive, or ‘non adult’” (16).

Both forms of the *Bildungsroman* illustrate how growing up for a woman does not result in liberation and independence, but rather a harsh awakening of the truly repressive nature of society for their gender. In English-language female *Bildungsroman* novels of the nineteenth century, the “young woman protagonist often dies—physically or spiritually” (Stimpson 192). This same pattern is echoed in the three novels studied in this chapter when the young women realize that their socially prescribed gender roles constrict and restrict their individuality, resulting in the symbolic death of their childhoods, dreams, or hopes.² It should also be noted that *Bildungsroman* typically have an orphan at their center, as a character with parents would ostensibly learn how to navigate the wider waters of society with a role model present. Thus, the motherless³ girls in these three novels incorporate elements of the genre by their lack of parental presence.

The common narrative thread in these novels—despite publication in three different decades (the 1940s, 1960s, and 1970s, respectively)—is a young girl or woman who finds herself out of place within her own family unit specifically and social norms generally. Indeed, Mayock explains the main characteristics of the odd girl out in the post-Civil War female authored novels in Spain include “a portrayal of some type of

female ‘strangeness’—transgression or subversion of traditional societal norms—and a resounding need for chronological ordering in order to arrive at conclusions about the evolution of the female protagonist and her narrative representation” (Mayock *The “Strange Girl”* 25-26). When there is a subversion of traditional societal norms of gender, so too there exists a subversion of the idealized conception of nation. Judith Lowder Newton points out that to “write subversively is more than a means of exercising influence. It is a form of struggle—and a form of power” (22). By retaking a narrative category that is more often associated with men who transition from boys to men, the authors of the three novels in this chapter reveal the dystopic future that awaits each young woman as she struggles against the realization of her alleged place within society.

While many critics—such as Emilie Bergmann, Ellen C. Mayock, Irene Mizrahi, and María Jesús Mayans Natal—mention the family circumstances of the protagonists, this chapter will explore the importance of the emotions that the fractured families create, and how these emotions relate to the overall milieu of Spain. Mayans Natal explains that the function of the family can be similar to assimilation into a culture or nation.

According to her, the process of socialization and enculturation form a psychological pressure that helps to impose values, individual beliefs, and norms (Mayans Natal 72). Mayans Natal also points out that the family is an entity where many negative and oppressive qualities become a reality for its members, especially when considering the relationship between men and women (72). The individual is subsumed in the family, much like he or she is within the larger nation-state, and thus the failings in a specifically portrayed family often reflect larger social injustices.

Under the Franco regime, the Catholic Church and its conception of the family were held up as the pinnacle of Spanishness. Along these lines, Nuria Cruz-Cámara points out that:

Es bien conocida la visión ultraconservadora de la mujer ideal que el régimen franquista impuso desde su subida al poder en 1939. En lo que parecía una regresión de siglos, el estado, en íntima unión con la iglesia católica, propugnó una feminidad uniforme basada en la domesticidad y la maternidad. (97).

The ideal Christian family of the Virgin Mary, Joseph, and Jesus Christ served as the model of an exemplary family. Mary, both a virgin and without original sin, forms a celestial family with God by giving birth to his son, and she also forms a terrestrial family with Joseph. The result is the symbol of woman who is a vessel for childbirth, worships her only male child, and is subservient to the needs of the men around her, which also represents the duality of loyalty to family and nation; Mary's most important relationship and service is to God (the nation) and her secondary relationship is to her husband (family). The Catholic Church's view of how women fit within the family (always subordinate to men), also reflects how women were treated in Spain after Franco's ascent to power. In this vein, "The orthodoxy, morality, and anti-materialism stressed by the Church overlapped with the Falangists' notion of 'spiritual' patriotism, with traditional bourgeois ideals of the respectable Christian family, and with a military emphasis on leadership, order, and national unity" (Perriam 6). The portrayal of Franco as the head of the national family only furthered this relationship between family and nation. Thus, faithfulness to the Church served as a gateway to placing allegiance and trust in the new regime that was restoring these values to the country. Within the patriarchal structures of the Catholic Church, women were expected to place their

devotion to the service of God above their individual desires. The fidelity towards the Church could also serve as a springboard for the obedience that the Franco regime expected of its citizens: loyalty to nation over family.

Franco portrayed himself in the same light as the “exploits of great warrior heroes and empire-builders of Spain’s past” (Richards 152). By tying himself to the national literary and historical past, Franco reinforced the perception of his regime’s right to rule Spain. The reimagining of these historical figures to fit the regime’s point of view measured the “ideal of Spanishness against [...] various ‘others’—indigenous peoples, republicans, the Spanish working class” (Richards 152). Additionally, Paul Ginsborg points out that the Spanish regime “evoked traditional family relationships, which they saw as threatened by certain trends in the modern world. Patriarchy was to be restored” (429). Each of the three novels criticizes the patriarchal oppression that the individual protagonists actively fight back against. Pilar Rodríguez notes that:

Este carácter crítico de la novela y la ruptura que propone con respecto a modelos anteriores de desarrollo femenino son, tal vez, aún más radicales al salir la novela a la luz en un momento de la historia española en el que el discurso patriarcal—apoyado y reduplicado de manera efectiva por el sistema educativo y por la iglesia católica—consagraba el sacramento del matrimonio como la meta más preciada a la que debía aspirar el desarrollo de toda mujer. (41)

The relationship between government and religion as the metaphorical family or parents of the citizens makes their connection and appearance in the novels integral to understanding conceptions of nation and national identity. To that effect, Margarita Saona observes that the “pertenencia a la familia es indispensable para pensar la historia de la nación, ambos presentan visiones distintas sobre el sujeto nacional” (*Novelas* 64).

Additionally, family and nation are intimately linked to the female body. The beginning of a country is its birth. At the “birth” of the Franco regime, there was a concerted effort to control the myths of Franco’s rise to power. However, given the regime’s desire to reinforce patriarchy and severely reduce or limit the gains of women’s rights during the Second Republic, the body and space of the female body were co-opted and the myths of Franco made him an all encompassing family figure. It is this imposition and dominance of patriarchy that has Ana Figueroa examining how

las formas sociales que Franco impuso a las mujeres según las cuales estas debían ser las repetidoras y conservadoras de un sistema patriarcal cuya misión sería crear una nueva patria que respetara los "valores" de una familia católico-burguesa. No hay que olvidar que todo proceso de creación nacional obliga a la reformulación ideológica de los seres que habiten esa *nación en proceso*. Tal organización —para el ordenamiento franquista— pasaba por un reconocerse (en el caso de las mujeres) como un ser cuyo cuerpo está destinado solo a la maternidad, la que, a su vez, está estructurada dentro de modelos fuertemente patriarcales. Si consideramos que una visión, así, lleva a despersonalizar el cuerpo de la mujer, para convertirlo en algo material que adquiere valor fuera del cuerpo mismo, se logra que se proyecten en el —en el cuerpo— construcciones e ideales de política definitivamente masculina. (Figueroa 174)

Speaking in terms of metaphors, nations are “born” and often referred to using female pronouns. As Christine Arkininstall observes, “Indeed in Western European patriarchal representations, the nation is conceived of in gendered terms as a feminine entity, domesticated, civilized, and molded according to the desires of its male creators” (13). Lands are something to be conquered, and its wilderness something to be tamed. Male leaders like Franco co-opt the female body and repossess it by imposing notions of purity and obedience.

With Franco at the helm of the state and his agenda to restore patriarchy, an integral component of his thinking, the family-as-Nation metaphor could not be more apt.

Along with patriarchy, “The articulation of family and nation carries with it a specific distribution of gender” (Saona “Do We Still” 208). Similar to the roles within the Catholic Church that come from a strictly regulated, patriarchal hierarchy, so too can be the roles within a household. While not every household follows stereotypical divisions of gender and labor roles, these divisions are most notable in literature, where the reader’s focus is drawn to a small scale representation of what are often larger social questions and issues.

More broadly, within Spanish society, women were the “*angel del hogar* (‘angel of the home’) whose biological and social destiny was motherhood. From 1937 onwards, unmarried women between the ages of 17 and 35 were expected to give six months of ‘social service’ to the state” (Ginsborg 430). The service was performed for the state and required by the state in order for these unmarried women to become better wives and mothers. As a general social concept, the angels of the home⁴ “shared a subjectivity founded on humility and modesty, vigilance and chastity, self-sacrifice and abnegation, forbearance and restraint, submissiveness and the desire to please” (Kebadze 38). In the three novels, the conflict is between the chaste and submissive role that the protagonists are expected to play and their “awakening” to the reality that their place is supposed to be in the home. The result is that “from its very beginning, Spanish fascism actively sought to fix essentializing notions of gender roles and gendered tasks” (Pérez-Sánchez 12). By using a typically male coming-of-age narrative, the female protagonists reveal the inequitable and gendered expectations of their future selves, first within their own family unit and second within the nation.

Since the family formed a large contingent of the pro-Franco and pro-Catholic propaganda in post-Civil War Spain, the concept of the family serves as fertile ground for subversion, questioning, and ridicule. As mentioned more generally in the Introduction, women and gendered terms are part of the nation-building discourse. Particular to Franco's regime,

It put institutions in place and passed laws to regulate women's performance of their duties as mothers and daughters of the fatherland. The official arbiters of these duties, the Catholic Church and the [...] the Women's Section, dictated that women were to serve the *patria* with self-denial, dedicated to the common good. (Morcillo 3)

For Sanchez Lopez, the family serves as the “vehículo transmisor de la ideología falangista, para lo cual Sección utilizará en su provecho la tradicional función de las mujeres como suministradoras de las normas sociales, que son fijadas merced a los lazos afectivos que existen entre la madre y sus hijos” (82). The filial relationship proved key to the expected behaviors for grown women in Franco's idealized vision of Spain. The Women's Section helped replicate some of the expected female behaviors. As Sandra J. Schumm observes,

The qualities of submission and obedience—normally expected in children—would magnify male hegemony over both mother and daughter. Thus Franco's dictatorship not only served to augment patriarchal domination and authoritarian influence in Spain, but also especially complicated identity formation for Spanish women. (*Reflection* 19)

In order to break the ideological imposition of the Franco regime, these three authors erase or minimize the ties between mothers and daughters. Their protagonists are decidedly disobedient, and even if their attempts to resist do not result in a change in their futures, the will to resist the imposed gender norms illustrates the lack of universal

conformity with the politically projected ideals. For Schumm, the “the plethora of motherless protagonists beginning in 1945 suggests that the removal of the mother figure is connected to Franco’s policies that essentially made women invisible, both legally [...] and personally” (*Mother and Myth* 12). The result is that in Francoist Spain, “Motherhood turned into a political issue, and biology determined women’s destiny” (Morcillo 5). Rather than have the Falangist expectations of femininity be transmitted from mother to daughter, the extended family is the entity that imposes this worldview of subservience and docility.

Before examining each novel individually, I will explore some common plot elements that have drawn critics to compare these books in varying degrees. The first and most critical element in common for *Nada*, *Primera Memoria*, and *Julia* is the non-traditional formation of their families. Emilie Bergmann notes how the “representation of the disintegration of family structures in the post-Civil War novel, whether through the death of one or both parents or changes in patterns of authority, imposes painful absences and conflicts while it creates opportunities for independent thought and action” (142-3). The reimagining of these family structures in literature both instructs the reader and subverts his or her expectations not only about family but also the nation as a whole. The metaphor of the nation as family is a useful framing device in fiction because that fiction “simultaneously regenerates, revises, and subverts the metaphor itself” (Schultheis 7). One of the more interesting regenerations is the role of women who run or control a household and how these women often take patriarchal notions and cultural norms to an extreme, as is the case with the grandmothers in *Nada*, *Primera Memoria*, and *Julia*. The

result is an exploration of childhood and family that subtly questions conceptions of power and patriarchy.

All three protagonists have missing mothers, whether they are absent physically or emotionally. In *Nada* and *Primera Memoria*, Andrea and Matia live with their extended family, and their mothers are notably absent from their lives. For Julia, her mother is in the house, but is emotionally distant and on several occasions willingly hands over Julia's care and raising to her grandfather and namesake, Don Julio. The Franco regime held the figure of the mother as a key to the domestic space of the home. The absence and absentee attitude of Julia's mother helps break down the religiously-based social order that was omnipresent in the ideal portrait of the Spanish family.

Indeed,

Gender ideology itself became crucial in defining the state, its territory, and its authority. Spiritual/Catholic values, authority, and discipline were to govern an important institution: the family. Social and gender relations blended in the family, and women—as mothers—represented an essential element in the reconstruction of the fatherland. (Morcillo 31)

Without a mother, there is no Virgin Mary to bridge the divide between the divine Father (government) and the secular family. The female figure that takes over the family's moral compass is the grandmother. Talking specifically about *Nada*, Mayock points out that Andrea's grandmother serves as a guardian (an *abuela de la mantilla*) of traditional Catholic values within the home and Church, and creates a gendered dichotomy in her home (*The "Strange Girl"* 52). Although Mayock writes specifically about *Nada*, the characteristics of Andrea's grandmother are also present in the Matia and Julia's grandmothers. The division of gender roles can clearly be seen when Andrea's uncles are

given free reign of the house and no domestic responsibility, Matia's cousin Borja can do no wrong in the eyes of the *abuela*, and Julia's brothers are given many more social freedoms. These *abuelas de la mantilla* are not benevolent; rather, they replicate and reinforce a social order that severely limits any expression of resistance or gender nonconformity that Julia and Matia express as they transition from children to young adults.

Despite forming part of the family, each protagonist remains on the outskirts of these interpersonal relations, creating a narrative of a feminine voice observing the action from the outside looking in. The figure of the odd girl out allows for an oblique critic of the Franco regime, as the reader simultaneously witnesses the aftereffects of war in Spain and the deep social schism that remained. Part of this schism stems from the stagnant postwar economy that plunged large segments of the population into near starvation or poverty. This mood of social malaise permeates the literary movements of Spain from post-Civil war to democracy. Each author illustrates the fall and disintegration of the family unit. With every interaction between the odd girl out and her family, the reader sees more and more cracks between the idealized family of Franco and the family portrayed in the three novels. The fear that each odd girl out feels within the home and her desire to escape from it parallels how many citizens felt underneath the Franco regime: those that were unable to emigrate to other countries remained trapped by circumstance and powerless to escape without leaving the "family" of Spain.

The first major novel with the odd girl out is Laforet's *Nada*. Irene Mizrahi acknowledges that although no critic has specifically explored Andrea's family as an

allegory of Francoism, the similarities between the family and the Franco regime are hard to ignore and often mentioned in passing by other critics (19). *Nada* is replete with conflict between family members and internal desires versus outside appearances. In *Nada*, one can see how

La institución familiar funcionó a modo de símbolo de la nación franquista. El Estado la propuso como fundamento de la estructura social y modelo de los valores sociales que difundía. Laforet deconstruye esa imagen, presentando un modelo familiar extremadamente disfuncional y grotesco que alegóricamente constituye la representación paródica del totalitarismo español. (Mizrahi 19)

Indeed, the familial conflict that stems from the Civil War saturates the entire narrative. The disputes over even small things all have their root in which sides were chosen, and the consequences of not having any real skills for employment in the new realities of postwar Barcelona.

The first-person narrative begins when Andrea arrives in Barcelona to start her university studies. From her first interaction with her extended family to her last, Andrea can do no right. Her grandmother is appalled that Andrea would arrive at the family home unaccompanied from the train station. The concern is ostensibly for Andrea's safety, but as the reader learns more about the grandmother, this episode is very clearly a reaction to "*el qué dirán*" (what would people say?). Similar to Franco's obsession with maintaining the appearance of his regime, so too does the grandmother attempt to control the outward appearances of her family. Inside the home, the once prosperous family has fallen into decline. The house on Aribau from the beginning is described in various unsavory ways. The bathroom seems like a witch's house and Andrea becomes dizzy, as if drunk (Laforet

15). Her discomfort is justified, for it is not long until the reader becomes aware of other aspects of the house that make it analogous to the life inside Spain.

Soon the constant fighting over food and resources causes Andrea to dread her time within the home. The emotions that Andrea expresses, while couched in the setting of the domestic space, are truly reflective of the overall terror of anyone who did not agree with or conform to the regime's world vision. Mayock reveals that "The composite picture of the families in *Nada* represents a microcosm of the Spain of the 1940's. The family portrait reveals the state of the Spanish economy by means of the crumbling appearance of the once-elegant Aribau house and the unforgiving hunger of Andrea and her extended family" (*The "Strange Girl"* 51). The terror and violence within the house are often ignored by the other members of the family, including Andrea herself. She is frequently left mute witnessing such acts of violence, and can only meekly offer small solutions, such as letting her aunt Gloria stay in her room after a particularly savage beating from her husband. For Mizrahi, the horrific violence within the home represents a collective, repressed guilt that everyone lived in the postwar (24). Everyone has a grudge or feels guilty about the Civil War. However, in the shadow of a war that is still looming under the veneer of calm, Andrea is trapped by oppressive social mores where women have two respectable roles: the Virgin (nun) or the Mother (Mary). Any deviation from these roles would make Andrea a 'fallen woman' and subject to being seen as the Whore (the other Mary).

The strong social and political pressure to maintain appearances is apparent throughout *Nada*. The importance of the socially acceptable face versus the actuality

results in an almost fanatical desire of the grandmother to maintain appearances at all costs, even the safety of the occupants of the house. While in the Aribau house, she keeps quiet and stays in her room as much as possible. Every time she ventures outside her room, she sees the disastrous family dynamic, more and more absurd, violent, and cruel with each passing day.

Other examples of the outward appearance and inner desire swirl around the ambiguous sexuality of Andrea. Mayoock argues that “*Nada* is compelling for its portrayal of familial war (of course echoing the civil war), failing economy, religious insistence and stagnation, and sub-par education standards for women. Even more intriguing, perhaps, is Andrea’s struggle to understand sexuality in general and to define her own” (*The “Strange Girl”* 54). The homoerotic nature of Andrea’s interaction with her friend Ena is made even clearer by her uncle Ramón’s interest in Ena as well. Even the grandmother grudgingly acknowledges the physical similarities between Andrea and her uncle Ramón when Jerónimo Sanz (Angustia’s boss) mentions it. She says that Andrea is “igual que mi hijo Román; si tuviera los ojos negros sería como mi hijo Román” (Laforet 72). Andrea can only watch her friend have a relationship with her uncle, someone who looks like her, but she herself can do nothing more than feel a deep sense of caring and worry for the safety of Ena. At times, Andrea feels attracted romantically to her friend Ena. Andrea seems both attracted to and repulsed by her uncle’s interest in her friend, vicariously watching their relationship and silently hinting at wanting one with Ena. Andrea also appears conflicted about her relationship with Gloria, her aunt who is married to Juan (Román’s brother).

While Gloria serves as the voice inside the house that can tell the truth, her voice is not heard outside the home, nor is she able to completely leave the domestic space. Gloria explains that she had a relationship with Román during the Civil War, and now he treats her coldly and with disdain, while her husband severely beats her. Both brothers sharing the same woman echoes the incest taboo. Additionally, Román served as a Falangist spy during the war, while Juan was a staunch supporter of the Republic. Gloria wants Román and her mother-in-law, the aging matriarch, to recognize that her affections towards Román are not merely platonic and familial; they are profound and erotic.

Gloria's husband embodies the broken spirit of the defeated Republicans. Trapped within a decaying home (country), Juan lives with the knowledge that his cause lost and his wife cheated on him. Adding to the humiliation and defeat is the constant hunger and threat of abject poverty that permeates the domestic environment. Symbolically, the violence that Juan perpetrates against Gloria comes from his defeat in the Civil War, their poverty, and her relationship with Román. Juan can take out his frustrations on the "fallen" woman, because he is unable or unwilling to confront his brother, who helped the winning side. Juan's fury and abuse within the home make it impossible for anyone to feel safe. Gloria fears for her life, and tells Andrea that one day Juan will succeed in killing her (Laforet 117).

Unlike Andrea, Gloria has additional family in Barcelona, and is able to occasionally escape the constant hunger and violence in the house on Aribau by going to her sister's place. Without any other family in Barcelona or independent financial resources, Andrea is reduced to scraping by eating whatever small scraps she can

scavenge. The injustice that Andrea feels is not just confined to her access to food. Her grandmother spoils her sons, who are “crippled” by their privileged position in the household (Mayock *The “Strange Girl”* 52). Mayock also describes Román as cruel, deceptive, and petty (*The “Strange Girl”* 52). What Mayock does not fully take into account with her criticism is that cruelty and deception are not characteristics reserved solely for Román. Indeed, Juan, as previously mentioned, is as rage filled and violent as Román, perhaps even more so. For all her outward appearances of purity and obedience to the Catholic teachings, Angustias has a sexual relationship with her Jerónimo Sanz. Her escape from the stifling environment of the family and home is to join a convent, thus hiding her transgressions and hypocrisy. In part, Angustias’ unreasonably high standards of proper female behavior make the Aribau house even more oppressive. For example, when Andrea fails to meet Angustias’ expectations of a ‘proper’ Spanish girl she blushes red and yellow, the colors of the Spanish flag (Mayock *The “Strange Girl”* 53). Andrea feels hunger and fear in the home, and seeks every chance to escape the once prosperous home. Her relatives are engaged in constant bellicose interactions, each successive one more frightening and violent than the last.

Part of her contempt for the domestic space stems from the fact that the Aribau home is a source of misery, hunger, and terror. As mentioned by Mayock, the dilapidated home and fractured family are a microcosm for Spain in the 1940s. With less than five years elapsing from the official end of the Civil War, the invisible wounds from the division of the nation are still present, as evidenced by the fraught relationship between the two brothers who tellingly fought on opposite sides during the Civil War. Linking the

beginning of the Falangist regime and the environment of Andrea's home, Mizrahi explains that the early stages of Francoism had invaded the family environment (95). As a result, emotional ties and morals disintegrated, and the home:

En vez de ser refugio del espacio público, la esfera doméstica está completamente subordinada a las leyes que controlan el mundo social. Se invierten los ideales sagrados del hogar burgués, transformado en campo de batalla en el cual los personajes viven involucrados en rituales salvajes de competencia, explotación y violencia. Al presentar un modelo familiar extremadamente disfuncional y grotesco, la narración de Andrea ejecuta una deconstrucción paródica de la institución burguesa como fundamento de la organización social y ejemplo de los valores propugnados por el Estado. (95)

While Mizrahi sees the situation inside the Aribau home as a parody, I would say that the situation is far more satirical than parodic. A parody is characterized by a humorous exaggeration of a writer, artist, or genre, whereas a satire is characterized by the humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize individuals and society itself. Since there is a clear outside target for criticism in *Nada*, it is a satire rather than a mere parody because it shows a grotesque and depredated family world, one where Franco's idealized family is taken to an absurd conclusion, where the warring between the two sides never stops, and everyone is torn apart. There is no rest, and there is no peace within the home. Eventually Andrea, like her aunt Gloria, finds refuge not in the family home, but rather in the serpentine streets of Barcelona. Her escape from the home is under the cover of darkness, and it is in the dark, womb-like environment of the city that Andrea finds refuge from the rigid social order and familial conflict.

In a sense, Andrea is reborn on the streets of Barcelona and the city becomes a surrogate mother. Here, she is able to interact with other students her own age. She is able to create a new vision of a nation, one where there is still ambivalence about Spain,

but without fear and violence. It is a world where she can wander the maze of the streets, using the knowledge that she gained from all the books she brought with her, and the courses she studies at the university. Rather than a dangerous place that threatens Andrea's physical and sexual wellbeing, the city is a refuge. Her friendship with Ena also provides a refuge, as she travels away from her family to spend time at the beach with Ena and her university boyfriend Jaime. Liberation is found outside of the home and with people who are not her blood relations.

Even though we later discover that Ena is using Andrea to exact revenge upon Román for humiliating her mother years ago, she still represents an escape from the rigid authority of Francoist Spain that exists within the Aribua house. The oppression inside the house is unbearable, even for the characters like Ramón who seem to benefit from its oppression. Both Ena and Andrea fear Román, who is violent and unpredictable. When Andrea begins to get to know her uncle Román better, she realizes that he desires her body, and in order to avoid the incest taboo, she begins to avoid him as well. Shortly after Andrea befriends Ena, Román takes an intense interest in her, and has a vicarious relationship using Ena as a surrogate. The brooding violence of Román's erratic, pro-Falangist character comes to an abrupt, unsatisfying halt when he commits suicide. Even Andrea's memory of why he took his life is uncertain. In a more metaphorical sense, Román's death provides one of the two options to leave the abusive domestic environment—the other is escape. Even though Román is dead, the home is still in disrepair and the family as a unit is coming apart. The only way out for Andrea is to leave her family, the home, and the surrogate mother of Barcelona.

Although it feels as though the novel ends suddenly after Román's death, Andrea had long fantasized about escaping from the tempestuous environment. The actual exit is provided by Ena; Andrea can work and provide for herself in Madrid. Rather than relying on the family and domestic structure to provide her food or shelter, both of which are very dubious in the Aribau home, Andrea can break free from her dependence on her blood relatives. Working in Madrid is not a perfect solution to the rigid social order imposed by the Franco regime, but it does provide Andrea the means to escape from her immediate family situation. She will no longer have to live in fear or hunger. Her family's home was a vortex of violence and abuse. The Civil War is very clearly reflected in *Nada*, and the family and nation experienced tremendous amounts of fear and terror in its wake. The fear that Andrea felt while living in the Aribau house was much like the fear felt throughout the country in post-war Spain. Román's death brings temporary relief, but the domestic space of home does not fundamentally change.

Primera Memoria was published twenty years after the Spanish Civil War ended. The novel uses the time period of the Civil War to foreshadow the class and ideological struggle that remained throughout Spain in its aftermath. The narrator of *Primera Memoria*, Matia, openly questions the happiness of her childhood. By placing the narration of the story in the past, "the nation as family metaphor is vulnerable to memories that penetrate the veneer of domestic (national) unity" (Schultheis 36). Rather than feel nostalgic and think back to her childhood as an idyllic time, Matia opens up the trauma of the summer where she lost her innocence with respect to her family's cruelty (specifically her cousin Borja). Instead of remembering her family fondly, Matia

observes how the members abuse their power and hurt other villagers. As the idealized vision of family comes apart over the course of Matia's narrative, so too does the nation begin to unravel with the spread of civil war. Family and nation, despite being questioned are "still conceived as interconnected concepts" (Saona "Do We Still" 208). Since family and nation are intertwined and coexist, the representation of a broken or dysfunctional household can represent a similar view towards the nation or government as a whole. In the case of *Primera Memoria*, the grandmother represents the decadent, land-owning class and Matia's descriptions and fear of her are a critique of the social restrictions placed upon many women in Spanish society.

At the heart of *Primera Memoria* is Matia's struggle with her transition from girl to woman in the shadow of a war. For Mayans Natal

el modelo de familia establecido en *Primera memoria* resulta de la asociación circunstancial de miembros desplazados de agrupaciones primarias bajo el tutelaje y la seguridad que representa el caciquismo femenino ejercitado por doña Práxedes. De aquí que ésta se comporte como la guardiana del patrimonio familiar [...] Además, a la anciana le corresponde asumir la responsabilidad de proteger los valores tradicionales del clan afectado por la desintegración de núcleos familiares anexos y la Guerra Civil. (Mayans Natal 47)

Although not at the center of the story, the aging grandmother, much like the war, looms in the background, a constant reminder of the dominant patriarchal system. It is Matia's grandmother Práxedes who continually reinforces gender expectations by keeping Matia shut up in the house and worries about finding her an acceptable suitor. This woman is "a symbol of a decayed and ruined class which continues to exert power over its descendants" (Ordóñez 184). While childhood is often idealized, and the summer vacation is especially seen as a *beatus ille* of youthful freedom, Matia's experiences

during the summer of 1936 clearly illustrate the deeply divisive issues that would not be fully resolved for several generations.

From the outset of the novel, the Civil War has left Matia and her cousin Borja in the care of their grandmother. Like many novels that take place during scholastic vacations, *Primera Memoria* appears at first to be a simple coming-of-age story. However, the idyllic summer vacation is filled with conflict between adults and children and between the children when the adults are absent. Given the backdrop of actual conflict, the play-fighting between the young boys in the village parallels the battles between the Falangists and the Republicans. Matia recounts that “Nuestras vacaciones se vieron sorprendidas por una guerra que aparecía fantasmal, lejana y próxima a un tiempo, quizá más temida por invisible” (Matute 12). Indeed, like the grandmother, the war hangs like a specter over everything the children do that summer.

It is not long before the first sign appears that the Práxedes house is an antiquated, suffocating space. Rather than take the customary siesta, Matia and her cousin Borja wait until all the adults are sleeping to sneak out. Once everyone is asleep, Matia “espiaba la señal de Borja, que marcaba el momento oportuno para escapar” (Matute 11). What at first appears to be a childish way of shirking adult supervision adopts a darker meaning when taking into account the snitch culture that evolved after the Civil War. The grandmother watches over her lands through old opera glasses incrustated with false sapphires (Matute 10). The opera glasses encapsulate many criticisms of Franco’s regime and the upper class: power (the power to observe), class (the fact that they are opera glasses), and decadence (the false rubies). The grandmother constantly observes others

and knows all the town gossip. She is old money, holding on to her wealth and power through her land and strategic marriage. Thus, when Matia's mother married a poor man, the resulting shame and loss of potential financial alliance infuriated her. The grandmother's mission has become to make sure that, despite being the spitting image of her mother, Matia does not follow her mother's follies. The grandmother is also very concerned with outward appearances. The dysfunction of the Práxedes household must remain contained within their premises.

The second indication that the Práxedes household represents a decadent and decaying class is the fact that much of the house goes unused. The grandfather died several years ago, and rather than sell his things or give more space to the servants, the rooms remain dusty and idle.

The shuttered rooms and covered furniture reveals a fading lifestyle that the family can no longer support. The grandmother either chooses to remain oblivious or does not care that the housekeeper only cleans the rooms that are in use by the family. Her concern is keeping up outward appearances; a family with money and land should have a large house, even if she only has one housekeeper who cannot (or will not) maintain the entire domicile. Her lack of oversight of these rooms allows Borja the opportunity to steal things for gambling money. The house is too large for the family, but the grandmother wants to sustain the façade of their prestige.

Even though the male head of the household has long died, the grandmother continues the gendered oppression within the domestic space. Matia and Borja resent how their grandmother attempts to impose order and patriarchal expectations of gendered

behavior upon them. When Matia and Borja escape from the watchful eyes of their grandmother, they usually head to the beach to take the family boat to a nearby island. While coming-of-age novels for young female characters often have the onset of menarche as one of the major events, Matute instead has a violent incident in the war form one of the strongest images. The first sign of blood does not come from a female body, but rather the corpse of their neighbor Manuel's adoptive father. The initial loss of childhood innocence does not come from menstruation but rather the bleeding, battered corpse of a man. By defining her moment of adulthood with a murder, Matia is not tied to the notion of a biological sex as her essence. Instead of the onset of puberty, it is the first view of war that begins to awaken Matia's more grown-up awareness of the world.

The strained relationship between Matia and her grandmother becomes apparent when Matia refers to her grandmother for almost half the novel as only "la abuela." It is not until Matia discovers that Manuel's family well is no longer potable because of a putrefying dog carcass that she takes ownership of her grandmother, and by extension, her privilege. The grandmother (and the Práxedes name) embodies the wealthy families who supported the Falangists, and from early in the novel, we know that Manuel's adoptive father was murdered for his Republican sympathies. The divisions of ideology also cause divisions within the village. Much like Matia's own father could not openly express his feelings towards her, she cannot openly express her love for Manuel because he does not represent a respectable suitor: his parentage is an open secret and his decision to remain with his family despite his adoptive father's political transgressions on land acquired from the affair between his biological father Jorge de Son Mayor and his mother

has made him and his family targets for hostility and violence both clandestine and blatant. The small piece of land that Jorge de Son Mayor gifted to Manuel's mother Marlené is an intrusion in "el declive de mi abuela" (Matute 138). As Jorge de Son Mayor is a relative of the Práxedes family, gifting these lands to his red-headed concubine has taken this land and its growing potential outside the family's sphere of influence. The contempt and hatred that the grandmother shows towards Marlené is "hard for us in [the United States] to understand the dread and hatred the Spanish upper classes have for their less fortunate countrymen. Fear dominates their reasoning and they seem utterly void of social consciousness. The peasant and worker reciprocate in kind: they hate because they are afraid" (Rich 388). The presence of Manuel's family on this land is an intrusion upon the grandmother's physical and financial domain, and the politics of Manuel's father made him a threat to the Práxedes power.

Matia's mother did not obey the grandmother and married someone without land, much to the chagrin of the grandmother. Matia's Aunt Emilia obeyed her mother and married a man who eventually is a coronel in the army. Under the veneer of obedience, Aunt Emilia shuts herself up in her room to write letters. Aunt Emilia maintains the appearance of the devoted wife waiting for her husband to return from the work, but later, Matia discovers that the letters are not for her uncle, but rather they are love letters to Jorge de Son Mayor. It raises the possibility that Borja's father is not the Coronel and that Manuel may be his half brother. Aunt Emilia's deception also illustrates how submitting to the patriarchy does not bring happiness.

Aunt Emilia did not give up her naivety until it was too late. Matia avoids this same fate. Although she did not have her father around much while growing up, Matia received several gifts from him. Two of the more important artifacts that represent her childish life are the cardboard theater and her books. Through these things, Matia is able to imagine herself as a character from these fairy tales.⁵ Overall, the purpose of fairy tales as literature is to prepare the “children to deal with life effectively, realistically, and ethically” (Anderson and Sheay 2). However, the lessons Matia learns over the summer of 1936 are that life is unfair and that there are no ethical solutions in a system run by the ruling, wealthy class. Her imagination, and by extension the era of fairy tales, is from her youth. After coming of age not through a biological event that would permit society to deem her a woman, but rather witnessing the aftermath of violence, the possibility for a happy ending is nullified. Indeed, the omnipresence of fairy tales in the Spanish novel with motherless daughters also links to the gruesome stories and violence that are not always resolved.⁶ Additionally, Matia learns that being a woman in this system does not afford her any privilege or protection, nor will anyone save her.

Borja successfully exploits the patriarchal imposition of female purity and chastity, along with the political milieu of Mallorca, to blackmail Matia. When he threatens to tell their grandmother that Matia has been having sexual relations with Manuel and that another boy in his gang watched them, Matia realizes that she has been defeated. Much like Lorenzo, Matia does not have the same protection or voice within the patriarchy. Due to the fact that Matia often acts like a tomboy and rarely obeys her grandmother, it is not hard for her to imagine how her cousin Borja and his accomplices

will ensure that she is swiftly sent to a reformatory. The biblical allusions that begin with the epigraph and end with the image of the white rooster converge and become clear with Borja's betrayal of Matia. Earlier in the summer, when Matia was more naïve and more girl than woman, Borja served as her accomplice, her partner in crime. As the summer progresses and Matia became more like a woman than girl, her grandmother does not permit her to go away with the local boys and her cousin like she had in summers prior. Matia is too close to being considered a woman, and it would not be good for appearances for a young woman to spend so much time alone with so many young men. When the grandmother distinguishes between the sexes and imposes notions of female sexual propriety upon Matia, the children begin to drift apart.

When Borja questions Matia about her burgeoning relationship with Manuel, he demands to know what side Manuel is on, his or the other boys'. Manuel represents a sacrificial Christ-like figure (due to the allusions to the betrayal of Judas), and here he is above taking sides. Matia chooses to side with Manuel, but neutrality is an affront to Borja. Borja uses his knowledge of the grandmother's desire to maintain appearances to hide the fact that he has been stealing money from both his grandmother and mother all summer. He frames Manuel because he knows his grandmother will want to believe him more than Manuel, a person of lower social strata whose family inherited land she does not feel he deserves.

As mentioned earlier, Matia lives in the world of fairy tales. In Anderson and Sheay's article, they argue that Matia forgets the Hans Christian Anderson ending to the Little Mermaid when she fails to warn Manuel about Borja's betrayal. Rather than not

remembering the Anderson tale, Matia knows that the fairy tale requires more sacrifice before she is delivered. Had she warned Manuel, she would have sacrificed herself for love. However, throughout the story, Matia repeatedly mentions that no one loves her and that she loves no one, not even her doll. Over the course of the summer, she has seen how the grandmother controls the fate of everyone around her, and how Borja has used her desire to maintain appearances to bully Lorenzo and his mother. Thus, when confronted with saving Manuel and being sent to a reformatory or going along with Borja and the patriarchy, she chooses self-preservation over fairy tale love. It is her fear of how her grandmother has the power to send her away to a place where she will never see nature again that makes her choose herself over Manuel.

Matia does not fear her grandmother at the beginning of the summer, but by the end of the summer, she knows full well that her grandmother will impose patriarchal norms of female behavior (staying at home, finding an acceptable suitor) on the word of her cousin. Borja acts out of self-preservation as well; he knows he has taken too much money and that his grandmother will notice its absence. Matia cannot defend Manuel or she too will be sent to a reformatory on the suspicion of her lack of sexual purity. Instead of sacrificing herself for truth and what is right, Matia sacrifices Manuel in order to remain free. The Civil War shattered Matia's innocence, first with the dead body of Manuel's adoptive father and lastly when Borja, her former accomplice, turns against her to curry favor with the symbol of the decadent and oppressive upper class. Once again, rather than menstruation serving as a key event in reaching adulthood, Borja's threat to claim sexual impropriety—and with it symbolic bleeding and broken hymen—effectively

silences Matia. Within the patriarchy, Matia has no voice, and quickly learns to bow to the system rather than futilely (like her father and the Republican movement) try to change it.

Both female protagonists in *Nada* and *Primera memoria* recount a single period of time—one year or one summer, respectively—and both have been studied as examples of fairy tales.⁷ Both protagonists experience an extreme amount of fear from their family, whether it is physical or imagined violence. The families have a grandmother who tries to maintain appearances, and the protagonists chafe against the social expectations of their gender, preferring to be outside the home and do as they please. Neither seems to really enjoy their first kiss nor become extremely attached to the boy that kisses her. The first person narratives question the official version of the family that was created by the Catholic Church and Franco.

A few decades later, another novel was published with a young girl from a fractured family at its center. *Julia*, unlike *Nada* and *Primera memoria*, is a third person narrative that has several ellipses in time. The story is marked by fainting or loss of consciousness, which Jaqueline McLeod Rodgers points out are typical literary devices in female novels that are used to stall the narrative (17). The overwhelming emotion of fear permeates the novel. The novel is filled with the words for fear and being afraid, almost like an anxious refrain. For Mayock, Julia's family represents the stereotypical image of the nuclear family that emerged in the 1950s, and she later argues that Julia's mother is a change of pace from the absent mothers of previous Spanish novels ("*The "Strange Girl"*" 110). Although I generally agree that the family in *Julia* represents a nuclear family,

I disagree that her mother is not absent. In fact, it is precisely the long physical and later emotional absences that cause profound anxiety for Julia. Julia's mother continually relegates raising Julia to other family members, then rejects Julia for being too masculine when returning to her care. Julia's childhood is punctuated by her parents as their marriage turns from a traditional institution to one that only keeps up appearances, as well as by her brother Rafael's sudden death. While the grandmother Lucía desperately tries to keep the outward appearances of the family normal, the reality behind the closed doors is that Julia's parents are living two separate lives, and are only married in name.

The nuclear family, the accepted and idealized conception of male and female interactions, is slowly unraveled across the years of Julia's memories. Each jump in time is like a thread that she pulls that reveals the true nature of her fractured family and, at the same time, it confronts the idealized conception of male and female interactions as encouraged by the Catholic Church and Franco regime. Julia's memories start with extreme happiness and comfort and end in fear and abandonment. The first abandonment of Julia happens when her youngest brother Rafael becomes very ill. Julia is sent to live with her namesake, Don Julio. Julia's brothers tease her saying that her parents are giving her away because they do not want to have a girl, and within short order, Julia is deposited by her father on her grandfather's estate. While her stay with her grandfather is explained away by her family as her mother cannot handle a sick child and a rambunctious young girl, the reality is that Julia's presence prevents her mother's liaisons.

Don Julio is the most liberal family member. He detests Lucía and thinks his son is a fool for marrying Julia's mother. He also teaches Julia Latin and how not to speak unless one has something to say. Later, when Julia returns to the structured school system, these lessons and her muteness make her an outcast. Her grandfather does not keep his opinions to himself, and it is rumored that he was a communist and killed people during the Civil War. When his grandsons confront him about this past, he merely shrugs it off and blames it on the circumstances of war. He is neither ashamed nor proud of what he did, but rather he simply states that things happened. Similarly, by the 1970s, Spain had barely begun to start healing from the schism caused by the Civil War. Six years after the publication of *Julia*, Franco would be dead, and a democratic government would be elected. It is not implausible to think that Spain would have anticipated some sort of change in governance within the next decade, given Franco's advancing age and loosening of certain restrictions.

Thus, when Julia goes to live with her grandfather, we see the generation that knows the war personally and the generation that only has the parental memory of the event. As a result, Julia and her brothers Ernesto and Rafael have internalized the propaganda of the Franco regime and any attempts to ask about this past are quickly rerouted or ignored. Rather than the bitter family divides portrayed in *Nada* and *Primera memoria*, the Civil War seems like a distant past. The parents do not speak with their children about it and what little Julia and her brothers know does not greatly influence their daily lives. However, there are small signs that the memory of that conflict remains. When Julia accuses Don Julio of being a tyrant for not letting her aunt Elena marry Don

Félix, the word seems to cut him deeply. He tells her that she has insulted him, but he no longer openly opposes Elena's union.

When Julia is retrieved by her father after living with her grandfather for five years, she tries to take both her cats with her. One cat fights and tries to escape, and her grandfather comments “¿eres una tirana?” (127). Julia lets the cat go, and knows that forcing a creature to do something it does not want to is a cruelty. The idea of tyranny, however, is not explored further after this episode. The next time that Julia thinks about the cat she let escape into the wild, it is several years later, and she assumes it has been killed by coyotes.⁸

Everything that Julia does after living with her grandfather causes her mother distress. She does not dress or behave like a stereotypical girl, and remains silent in school. Much like Andrea and Matia are silent in their respective novels when confronted by violence or patriarchal repression, so too does Julia retreat to her inner, mental world. However, unlike Andrea and Matia, Julia's silence is so extreme that she is rendered mute outside the home. Perhaps this represents the last passage into the role of the woman in Francoist Spain: a silent figure present mentally but trapped within a system that she neither comprehends nor wishes to engage with.

Her muteness is made worse and even less bearable when her brother Rafael dies. Rafael was always an ill child, but shortly after he expresses to Julia that he wants to be a writer, he has a seizure and passes away a few days later. Rafael's dream is never realized, and the timing of these two events suggests that the view of a writer as a profession is a fading dream. Rafael departs the world young and at the cusp of sexual

maturity. Much like the young generation of writers lost to the Civil War, Rafael's full potential is never realized.

As a child, Julia did not have a close relationship with either of her brothers, but upon her return to her family home at thirteen she began to reestablish these relationships. After Rafael's death, she turns to her brother Ernesto. He is not the embodiment of a good son, as he refuses to go to the funeral and is violently slapped by his father for not being enough of a man. Later, he engages in art full time with his own studio. It is strongly implied that Andrés and Ernesto are lovers and use the art studio for their rendezvous. Although Julia never vocalizes her suspicions, she has an understanding that when Andrés comes over, she needs to leave. Later, when both Julia and Ernesto are studying at the university and starting to engage in the anti-Vietnam protests, Ernesto's father once again slaps him for failing to be 'man enough' to protect his sister and for getting her involved in the student movement. Ernesto is therefore an atypical representation of masculinity. His father tries to impose rigid gender expectations on him, but because of the father's own shortcomings and absence in the marriage, he can only reinforce his will through physical violence. The result is feelings of horror in Julia and no change in Ernesto's behavior.

Ernesto can escape the strict vision of the family as outlined by the Francoist regime, but as we see at the end of the novel, Julia is not as fortunate. After Julia is seriously injured by the police during the student protest, Julia's parents refuse to let her out of the house unaccompanied. Faced with the complete restriction of her freedom and no recourse, Julia realizes that she was never really free to begin with. She wanted to stay

with Don Julio, and he wanted her to stay with him as well, but her parents demanded her return. She has had no control over her life, and unlike Andrea and Matia, she has no hope of escaping the four walls of the house.

The end of the story reveals that although the novel is written in third person, it is actually a disembodied narrator. It is Julia, speaking about herself, projecting a voice for a body that Julia has no control over. What the reader first thought was a third person narrative shifts at the very end to second person when Julia listens to the voice of herself, Julita, regarding whether or not to get out of bed. The key passage is:

Julia sabía que como todas las mañanas Julita le ordenaría no, hoy no te levantes, no te levantes de la cama nunca más, estás enferma; o, levántate, empieza un nuevo día para ti, un día monótono, aburrido, irreal. Y obedecería, porque Julita nunca le perdonaría haberla abandonado en un universo inmóvil, sin tiempo y de donde nunca, nunca Julia podría rescatarla. (Moix 220)

Julia is trapped in the past (Julita). She listens and obeys this past, thus narrating her own life in the third person. Ensnared by her traumatic memories, Julia cannot save Julita, nor will Julita permit Julia to stop remembering the past. No longer is there any hope of escaping the house like she has in the past to flee from the fear of death or the fear of abandonment. Instead, Julia is trapped and no more than a grown doll. Julia is like a puppet, going about her life as Julita orders. The two options that Julita gives Julia are staying in bed or boredom and monotony, but Julita does not offer any way out. Unlike the optimistic ending of *Nada* or the slim hope in *Primera memoria*, *Julia* ends on an extremely pessimistic note.

The family situation in each of the three novels reflects the political milieu of Spain, and the visceral reaction of these three protagonists is fear and dread and a desire

to escape from the domestic space of the home. Each of the odd girls out observes her family and is confined within the conception of what is proper female behavior, as broadly defined by the Catholic Church and Franco's vision for Spain. Unable to directly confront or change their situation, Andrea, Matia, and Julia are restricted by memory, memoir, and writing. Many times, the three protagonists are rendered mute or voiceless—Andrea is silent when she witnesses the domestic violence in the Aribau home, Matia loses her voice when her cousin threatens her freedom, and Julia chooses to remain mute for several years—and above all else, they are left powerless within the patriarchy.

However, their lack of power and agency does not prevent these protagonists from returning to the past and finding a voice through memory. Each of the girls does not conform to the gender expectations set out for her, and the result is a family home that evokes fear and dread. The solution is to escape; however, only Andrea and Matia (when she eventually leaves for school) manage to get out of the house and away from the repressive family situation. The pessimistic options available to each of the protagonists also reflect the political milieu of postwar Spain. By representing dysfunctional families, each of the authors can subtly critique the ideal family that the Franco regime strategically used to reinforce its legitimacy. Showing violent and dangerous homes through the memories of women reveals the fractured nation-state, and confronts the reader's expectations of an idyllic and peaceful coming of age novel.

Endnotes

1. Ellen C. Mayock translates *chica rara* to “strange girl” but given these protagonists positions on the periphery of the family, I would like to call them the odd girl out. Bonnie Zimmerman uses odd girl out as a way to describe queer characters in literature (249).

2. Sandra J. Schumm refers to these novels as “novels of self-realization” rather than a *Bildungsroman* (*Reflection* 13).

3. The mothers may either be physically or emotionally absent, depending on the novel. Nevertheless, the protagonist in each novel is left to navigate her loss of innocence regarding her gendered place in larger society on her own.

4. Keadze translates this term to “angels of the hearth” (38).

5. The importance of fairy tales as ways to explore female identity in female-authored Spanish literature is also explored by Sandra J. Schumm in *Reflection in Sequence: Novels by Spanish Women 1944-1988*, page 20. Indeed, author Martín Gaité is well known for her use of fairy tales to explore memory and myth in her novels.

6. Reading the original *Grimm's Fairy Tales* reveals several instances where no happy ending occurs. These stories were less about happy endings and more about serving as cautionary tales.

7. For instance, Ellen C. Mayock points out that *Nada* can be read as a reverse Cinderella tale (*The “Strange Girl”* 54).

8. The narrative thread about the two cats is an idea that Moix does not revisit after Julia's brief thought. For a scene that was full of symbolism of the Franco regime, power, and struggle, it is disappointing that at the close of the novel, when Julia realizes that she is and will always be Julita, a little girl trapped inside her parents' home and enclosed by society's expectations, that Moix does not revisit this scene or image. Instead, the ending is rather pessimistic about women's future in Spain.

Chapter 4

Poisonous Progeny: Children Confronting Authoritarianism in Three Films

One of the more popular metaphors used to describe the relationship between the state and its citizens is that of parent and child. The power dynamic between adults and children inherently implies that the adult has more knowledge and influence than the child. In dysfunctional and harsh families, the parent refuses to engage or permit the child any voice in the dialogue by quashing any sign of protest. In other words, the child in the relationship does not have the full voice of the parent. Frequently, one voice dominates the discourse within the family. The children or young adults in these situations often times cannot escape or effectively argue with the parental mandates. While parents shaping their children into moral and upright citizens would not fall into the category of abuse, the ways that parents shape their children can mimic the political situations that Rancière explores in his chapter “Wrong: Politics and Police.”

To reduce the interactions between parent and child to a political one ignores the relationship that already exists between them. Rancière also notes that “Politics is not made up of power relationships; it is made up of relationships between two worlds” (42). The two worlds in conflict are the world of the parent, characterized by order and reason, and the world of the child, characterized by freedom and innocence. In some cases, the parent represents a tyrannical or dictatorial figure, and the carefree world of the child comes into conflict with the rules of the parent. Examples of adults acting in an authoritative manner abound—it is not only parents, but also aunts, uncles, grandparents, and caregivers. The repressive nature of the domestic space begins to reflect the

environment of a prison or a mental institution. The children and young adults subjected to this situation seek ways to escape from the vigilant eye and repressive ways of these adults and, at times, even plot the demise of these figures.

Women gendered as masculine that hold too much power results in an imbalance of the natural order; therefore, it is rational and reasonable to oust them from that position. By using matriarchal figures who abuse their power, artists are able to critique the abuse of power under the guise of returning the world to its natural order—that is to say a world where a woman cannot exert the ‘unnatural’ command of power. This power exceeds the socially accepted norms, and by extension, her overthrow restores order rather than overtly inciting discord.

In reaction to this rhetoric of women holding power as unnatural, many artists use a subversive representation of the home to criticize the unchecked power and ruthlessness of authoritarianism, but the critique draws upon an adult who controls and terrorizes the domestic space. Rancière asserts that “Domestic space is thus at once that private space, separated from the space of citizenship, and a space included in the complementarity of laws and morals that defines the accomplishment of citizenship” (42). Even though the home is a closed, private space, it is still a reflection of the social mores of the country. When the domestic space is filled with oppression and the threat of violence, the resulting interaction between family members ties the critique of the world within the home to the world outside the home. Inside the home, the inhabitants are subject to the whims of the ruling adult. Arendt notes that “the stability of the totalitarian regime depends on the isolation [...] from the outside world” (438). As long as the tyrannical figure maintains

control within the home and remains isolated from outside scrutiny or intervention, the abuse of power will continue.

Once authoritarian order has been established within the home, the house becomes a restrictive space. With respect to domesticity, confinement in “private spaces contributes to a reduction in the vitality of the public sphere as a political site and diminishes the ability of marginalized groups to claim a share in power” (Duncan 128). Thus, the people trapped within the sphere of the home do not have an equal say, nor can they easily leave to other spaces and have agency outside of the home. Duncan also observes that “Space is thus subject to various territorializing and deterritorializing processes whereby local control is fixed, claimed, challenged, forfeited and privatized” (129). Along these lines, Lefebvre contends that physical space “serves as a tool of thought and action [...] it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power” (cited in Tatum Davis 120). Repressive spaces that reinforce the patriarchal norms also construct a space where it is difficult to separate the traditional roles of women within patriarchy.

Fear of the authoritative adult appears as a consistent theme in three movies from different countries that I wish to explore in this chapter. In *De eso no se habla* (1993) from Argentina, a widowed mother domineers and dominates the entire town. Carlos Saura’s masterpiece from Spain, *Cría cuervos* (1976), portrays an aunt who takes over the education of her orphaned nieces in a restrictive and authoritarian way. In *El verano de la señora Forbes* (1989), the nanny imposes strict order upon the previously free and unfettered boys whose parents take a two-week cruise. The strong and authoritarian

woman in each of these works does not coincide with the cultural perceptions of women as gentle, meek, and maternal. The more masculine traits of imposing order, unflinching and unfeeling demands for discipline move to the fore. Rather than the socially expected warm and loving figures, these women seem reminiscent of the trope of the distant father who is suddenly forced to care for his brood. The violence and threat of violence portrayed by these strong women adds another dimension to their supposed 'unnatural' performance of their expected female gender—a stereotype of them as weak and needing to be rescued. Thus, when these women perform masculine behaviors, it breaks the stereotype and is seen as something unnatural that must be resisted and stopped in order to restore gender expectations.

Even though there may not be a patriarch present, the women who assume the position of the patriarch in the household become matriarchs who reinforce the social order. They exert control over the lives and liberty of others without taking into consideration their viewpoints. Thus, figures who act in restrictive or abusive ways turn into a presence that must be removed from the home. Additionally, those within the home may seek refuge from the authoritarian adult by fleeing the domestic space. Rancière says that the role of women as mothers is to be the instructors of morals and education in order to form citizens (41-2). When left without a male presence in the house, these female figures become the embodiment of the oppressive male patriarchy. They recreate and reinforce the patriarchal order. At times, these women already demonstrated a propensity to abuse power, and the death of the husband only serves to bring about more misery and

oppression. Power and gender intersect in this instance because, as McDowell and

Pringle note, women within patriarchy are:

constantly defined in relation to men. Whether they are similar to men, different from or complementary to them, men, masculinity and male behavior are always the reference points. Most obviously, women are defined in familiar terms as carers and nurturers. Their identity and status derive from their relation to the explicitly gendered categories of mothers, daughters and wives. Women are thus defined not only in relation to men, but as dependent on men and subordinate to them. [...] Men's specific gender is thus ignored: they represent the universal and the human to which women are 'Other.' (3)

When women reinforce the dominant order within the home, despite the lack of a male partner or other male influence, they can be said to engage in what Rancière calls a police function that can be understood as “essentially, the law, generally implicit, that defines a party's share or lack of it” (29). Nevertheless, these women are still being defined by the broader social and cultural definition of male and masculine.

In this chapter, I will explore how strong, authoritarian women in three films—*De eso no se habla*, *Cría cuervos*, and *El verano de la señora Forbes*—serve as an allegory for the family-as-State and how their portrayal results not only in a criticism of their abuse of familial power, but also of authoritarian government. It is the gender of these characters that makes the criticism oblique rather than explicit. While much has been written on women in the family, scant attention has been paid to fictional women as representations of authoritarian leaders. In the three films, powerful women assume the de facto head of the patriarchal household role and make it even more oppressive.

In 1984, ten years after the end of a brutal dictatorship in Argentina,¹ María Luisa Bemberg produced *De eso no se habla*. In this film, an omniscient narrator recounts the story of Doña Leonor and her daughter, Charlotte. Doña Leonor has been widowed, and

upon Charlotte's sixth birthday, realizes that her daughter is not growing normally. Rather than accept any assistance, Doña Leonor refuses to let anyone acknowledge that Charlotte is a dwarf. A mysterious man, whose name we later learn is Don Ludovico D'Andrea, arrives in town a few years later. Don Ludovico falls in love with Charlotte and they marry. When Don Ludovico gives in to Doña Leonor's demands for Charlotte not to attend a traveling circus, both mother and husband wake up the next morning and discover Charlotte riding in the exiting procession of performers. At the close of the movie, the storyteller reveals his identity.

The film resonates strongly as a social and political critique precisely because of the context of dictatorial repression, since the disappearance of many of those who opposed the regime and the overt resistance to the government's official denial of wrongdoing forms part of the social subtext of a film that appears to be about a mother protecting her daughter from ridicule. This is accomplished by Doña Leonor who tries to prevent anyone in the village from talking about how her daughter is a dwarf. She desperately tries to stop anyone from pointing out the obvious,² which results in more elaborate and more farcical ways to maintain control. In the end, her desire to hide the truth causes her daughter to embrace her otherness by joining the circus and leaving the town forever. All the actions of Doña Leonor encourage the audience not only to question Doña Leonor's official story (that there is nothing different about her daughter and no one in the town can say otherwise) but also the official history of the Argentinean dictatorship. Even though the metaphor does not pertain to all of the characters in the

movie, the actions of Doña Leonor parallel the actions of a dictatorship that attempts to maintain its power and control over society.

Doña Leonor appears to fulfill the traditional role of a woman, but in a subversive manner because she represents the figure of a male dictator.³ Using a dictatorial woman is one way to critique a dictatorship without naming the dictator per se. By doing so, the dictatorial woman becomes a subversive figure against both dictatorships and patriarchy. Through motherhood, Bemberg allows her audience to look outside the familiar tropes of abusive dictatorial power and see those abuses of authority in a farcical and satirical manner. As critic Ann E. Kaplan notes, “motherhood is one of the areas that has been left vague, allowing us to reformulate the position as given, rather than discovering a specificity outside the system we are in” (133). Taking the abuse of power outside the known patriarchal system of maintaining power, motherhood becomes a space where the audience can re-imagine what constitutes a dictator. Kaplan advises that feminists reformulate their approach to motherhood, because “Motherhood thus becomes one place from which to begin to reformulate our position as women, just because men have not dealt with it theoretically or in the social realm” (132-3). Additionally, for Deborah Chambers, motherhood is a “site on which many of the family-values debates and the call for the return to a traditional family have been fought. Significations of motherhood have always been contingent on the patriarchal structure and, more recently, the nuclear form” (145). The representation of mothers in cinema opens the way to question the traditional structure of power and patriarchy.

By controlling who can speak and what they can speak about in her presence, Doña Leonor terrorizes the town. She is the dominant character and, by acting like a dictator, she imposes a profound silence throughout the film. The entire town remains under her vigilance, all due to Doña Leonor's continued insistence: "*de eso no se habla*" (I don't want to talk about it.) The audience can see Charlotte's small stature throughout the film. By forbidding anyone to point out the fact that Charlotte is different, Doña Leonor forces the town to ignore the absurd truth in front of them, much like a dictatorship demanding that its citizenry ignore the controls of the state. Mendell notes that the central theme of the film is "precisely the expressive power of the unsaid, that enigmatic, multivalent and forbidden 'eso' that one must avoid mentioning, but which is nevertheless always present" (158). The entire town can see the truth, but the authoritarian figure does not permit them to speak freely.⁴ The only time the audience observes the townsfolk openly mocking Charlotte is before her marriage to Don Ludovico D'Andrea. However, this derision occurs within an already marginalized space—the brothel—rather than in a public space or in front of Doña Leonor. The instigator of the joking is the general's son, who brazenly pokes fun at the height difference between bridegroom and bride, only to be rebuffed by his father. The general demands that his son apologize for his transgressions against Don Ludovico D'Andrea. Much like the military helped maintain the junta's power in Argentina, so too the general maintains Doña Leonor's unspoken rule never to speak ill of her daughter, despite Charlotte's evident difference. The force of Doña Leonor's will, along with the power that comes from her class and her knowledge of people's private lives, extends beyond

her actual presence and influence to other members of the community who attempt to maintain Doña Leonor's control over the town.

While Doña Leonor's motives may seem like an innocent and noble attempt by a mother to protect her child, the political milieu in Argentina prior to the production of the film means that we cannot dismiss the connection between Doña Leonor and the military junta. The lengths that Doña Leonor goes to in order to shield Charlotte from any perceived slight borders on psychotic in this film. Rather than viewing her actions as reasonable, the audience sees them as ridiculous. It is precisely because Doña Leonor is a woman and her attempts to assuage the potential cruelties of the world from her child are benign (when compared to a military junta) that it is easy to discount how she represents an authoritarian leader. If Doña Leonor were a father rather than a mother, the connection between her and the military junta would not seem as strange. The nature of Doña Leonor's interventions results in an oblique criticism of the dictatorship rather than a direct questioning and confrontation of it.

In this role as the domineering woman (another term is the phallic woman), one can observe the principles of Jacques Rancière's theory on power relationships. The portrayal of a bossy woman represents a direct criticism of the dictatorship in Argentina, along with a new perspective of motherhood. This reimagining of a dictator through gender and motherhood makes a social critique by converting motherhood into a subversive role. Like a state actor, Doña Leonor imposes her "rigid order on the life of society" (Rancière 29). From the very first scene in which she appears, Doña Leonor rejects the assistance offered by Mrs. Zamudio, who can understand and empathize with Doña Leonor having a

child who is different from the rest because her daughter is deaf. When Mrs. Zamudio tries to talk to Doña Leonor about Charlotte's height, she is rebuffed. Doña Leonor even goes as far as to pretend that she has no idea what Mrs. Zamudio is talking about, and then refuses to discuss the matter further. Instead of trying to find solidarity with another woman who has a disabled child, Doña Leonor acts cruelly, insulting and making fun of Mrs. Zamudio.

The same refusal to see or accept the truth permeates each of Doña Leonor's interactions with the townsfolk. Mrs. Zamudio and Doña Leonor cannot talk about their daughters as equals, nor can anyone else in the town speak openly to Doña Leonor because "there is no place for discussion with the plebs for the simple reason that plebs do not speak" (23). Mrs. Zamudio and Doña Leonor do not come from the same social class, thus Doña Leonor treats Mrs. Zamudio's advice like noise that she does not want to hear. Each time Mrs. Zamudio tries to talk to Doña Leonor or tries to get other women to listen to her, Doña Leonor uses her power and influence to force the rest of the women into silence. Although Rancière wrote about power and the police in an abstract manner, his theory can prove useful here as he notes:

Politics exists because the logos is never simply speech, because it is always indissolubly the *account* that is made of this speech: the account by which a sonorous emission is understood as speech, capable of enunciating what is just, whereas some other emission is merely perceived as noise signaling pleasure or pain, consent or revolt. (22-3)

Even though Mrs. Zamudio tries to talk with Doña Leonor, her words serve as little more than noise to be ignored by Doña Leonor. The result is that when anyone in the village searches for a way to do something, such as vote for or against Charlotte's concert, there

is no possibility to speak freely or openly. The politics of the town allow Doña Leonor to exercise complete control over what the people do and say, and dissenting opinions are relegated to a murmur or unintelligible noise that Doña Leonor refuses to acknowledge. In this sense, Doña Leonor serves as a policing force in the town. As Rancière has shown elsewhere, “The police is, essentially, the law, generally implicit, that defines a party’s share or lack of it” (Rancière 29). Doña Leonor’s ability to control who can speak and how they can interact with her in the room makes her a policing force in Rancière’s sense, because she determines who can participate and also who does not have a voice within the community. Even though she does not use physical force or violence, the threat that comes from her higher social standing and her knowledge of personal details about people in the town permit her to control the entire town with even something as small as a look. Furthering the policing function of the state, Rancière explains that the role of the police is:

thus first an order of bodies that denies the allocation of the ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying, and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task; it is an order of the visible and the sayable that sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, that this speech is understood as discourse and another as noise. (29)

Everything that Doña Leonor engages in determines which activities are visible and valuable and which are not acknowledged or seen. From the beginning, Doña Leonor mandates that no one can mention the height of her daughter. She continually insists that there is nothing different about her daughter, even though the entire village can see that her daughter’s growth is much lower than average. Doña Leonor ignores the voices of the townsfolk, as evidenced by her interaction with Mrs. Zamudio and later the priest. In

order to further impose her version of history, she goes as far as to destroy any mention of dwarves, dwarfism, or gnomes from the town. Much like a dictatorship rewriting or reimagining official history, Doña Leonor burns every book or fairytales that mentions characters of short stature and attacks her German neighbor's lawn gnomes in the middle of the night with a pickaxe. These actions appear exaggerated, but they also parallel those of a dictator maintaining control over the media in an attempt to obfuscate the truth from the citizens about the current state of the country. By hiding any references in literature that would make her daughter realize that she is a little person, Doña Leonor serves a policing function through controlling the visible and the acceptable. As a mother, Doña Leonor tries to maintain the appearance of nothing being out of place or different with respect to her daughter. Destroying any possibility that her daughter may one day discover her difference represents the desire of a dictatorship to hide the truth from its citizens.

When Don Ludovico arrives in San José de los Altares, he can see that Charlotte is a little person, which causes problems between him and Doña Leonor. As the title of the movie suggests, no one in the town (at the insistence of Doña Leonor), and especially not Doña Leonor, wants to discuss the overt reality that Charlotte is much too short for her age. When Doña Leonor asks Don Ludovico to buy a horse for Charlotte's birthday, he (as an outsider) thinks that she wants a horse that would match Charlotte's height. During his conversation with Doña Leonor, Don Ludovico infers that he has been tasked with getting a pony for Charlotte. When Doña Leonor becomes enraged at his choice of horse, Don Ludovico expresses genuine confusion at her reaction. He thought she wanted

a small horse, but that she did not want to explicitly say that the horse should be small. The pony forces Doña Leonor to confront an uncomfortable truth—that another person outside of her control can see the reality about her child. In this manner, Don Ludovico serves as what Rancière would consider politics. For Rancière, politics and its activity are defined as follows:

Political activity is whatever shifts a body from the place assigned to it or changes a place's destination. It makes visible what had no business being seen, and makes heard a discourse where once there was only place for noise; it makes understood as discourse what was once only heard as noise. (30)

By purchasing a pony for Charlotte rather than a stallion, Don Ludovico gives voice visually to what once was unspeakable—Charlotte's stature. It is something that no one else in the town has been able to say, despite Doña Leonor's attempts to erase any and all mention of the truth. The presentation of the pony to Doña Leonor demonstrates that Don Ludovico sees and accepts the truth that this dictatorial woman wants to hide.

The incident with the horse is not the only time there is a misunderstanding between Don Ludovico and Doña Leonor. When Doña Leonor hears that Don Ludovico wants to get married, she assumes that he wants to marry her. The dramatic irony of this scene culminates in the complete shock and horror of Doña Leonor when she discovers that her daughter is the object of Don Ludovico's affections. Although the audience is not privy to Charlotte's perspective, marrying Don Ludovico grants her the opportunity to begin to slip out of her mother's control. Through marriage, Charlotte leaves the fictitious world created by her mother, thereby gaining the opportunity to learn about and embrace her difference, despite her mother's intent to maintain that nothing is different and that no one can speak about it under any circumstances.

Much like voice and silence appear thematically in the movie, so too do sight and observation. Despite Doña Leonor's attempts to impose a profound silence on the town, everyone in the town and the audience can observe the truth that Charlotte is of short stature. The disconnect between what is seen (known) and said (openly acknowledged) in the film reflects how a society under a dictatorship can function. The act of watching the movie and seeing the disparity makes the gaze an important aspect to consider when approaching the metaphor of the authoritarian woman as authoritarian government.

The audience directs its gaze on a mature woman, an unusual object of attention as a main character, especially given her outlandish behavior in trying to obfuscate the truth. At the start of the film, Mohamé (as the voice-over) tells the audience that the story begins with Doña Leonor looking at herself "in front of the mirror." Mirrors in cinema offer a layering of perspective: the audience/camera watches the character; this character in turn observes him or herself. In this opening scene, the audience sees the reflection of Doña Leonor, then the camera pans out and the audience realizes that what they were viewing was merely a reflection of Doña Leonor, rather than the actual Doña Leonor. The idea of the mirrors and reflections works with the metaphor of the female dictator figure because the female dictator figure (Doña Leonor) reflects a male dictator rather than a story that directly critiques an abusive patriarchal figure. Using a female character to embody an authoritarian figure allows for a distancing of the critique, while still leaving the possibility for the audience to see the 'reflections' of a male dictator.

Film allows us to explore the implications of the male gaze, which merits examination in conjunction with the woman-as-dictator because Doña Leonor uses non-

verbal signals in order to maintain her force of will. The male gaze differs from looking because, according to Kaplan, “men do not simply look; their gaze carries with it the power of action and of possession that is lacking in the female gaze” (121). The male gaze represents asymmetrical power, which Doña Leonor wields within the village using her more typically masculine behavior with a feminine twist.

For example, Doña Leonor does not represent the typical object of desire or interest for an audience, and neither does her daughter.⁵ More often, female characters are stereotyped as using their sexuality to gain control or to exert power. Thus, Doña Leonor, with her conservative dress and severe manner, breaks from this preconceived norm of female sexuality. Rather than exerting control through her body, Doña Leonor uses her social standing (middle to upper, given the fact that she owns a store) and her knowledge of people’s private lives (the affair between the priest and the widow Schmidt).

Widowhood leaves Doña Leonor outside the typical object of desire as she is neither a virgin nor young. Although widows often serve as marginalized characters, Doña Leonor does not qualify as someone on the margins of society. Motherhood permits Doña Leonor to fetishize her daughter as a person without differences. Fetishizing motherhood parallels the male fetishization of women, which Kaplan explains as:

just as men fetishize women in order to reduce their threat (finding themselves thus in the other), so women fetishize the child[...] women here do not relate to the child as other, but as an extension of their own egos; [...] since the law represses mothering, a gap is left through which it may be possible to subvert patriarchy. (133-4)

However, rather than the mother/child relationship converting into a space to subvert patriarchy, Doña Leonor uses her position as a mother to reinforce the most extreme form of patriarchy—authoritarianism.

When the priest tries to speak with Doña Leonor about the widow Schmidt's destroyed gnomes, Doña Leonor feigns ignorance and insinuates that the priest wants to talk about the amount of her donation to the Catholic Church. By deflecting the issue of the vandalism, Doña Leonor directs the conversation to her source of power, her financial resources. Doña Leonor also questions the priest on how he could know about the gnomes' destruction so quickly, given that the widow Schmidt is not a member of the Church and lives fairly far outside of town. Much like Doña Leonor does not permit anyone in the town to speak about her daughter's height, she does not engage in overt blackmail. What appears to be an innocent question about the source of the priest's information carries with it the unspoken knowledge of the priest's relationship with the widow Schmidt. There are two levels to parish conversation: the words uttered aloud and the knowledge behind them. In short order, Doña Leonor asserts her social and economic capital and effectively silences any opposition.

The relationship between the Catholic Church and Doña Leonor is highly pertinent to the political posture of the film. During the military junta in Argentina and subsequent Dirty War (1978-1983), the Catholic Church supported the regime through inaction. Their complacency permitted the violent suppression of left-leaning citizens. The priest's desire to keep his illicit relationship with the widow Schmidt a secret and maintain the generous flow of Doña Leonor's money directly results in his inability and

unwillingness to reign in or confront Doña Leonor's attempts to erase visual representations of dwarves from the town. By controlling the priest's ability to speak or otherwise engage in a dialogue with her, Doña Leonor employs a role that Rancière, as we have seen, attributes to the police. Doña Leonor continues her threatening stance years later during a bingo game, making it very clear to the priest that she can and will reveal his secret whenever she deems necessary. Again, this illustrates that the authority wielded by Doña Leonor does not come from her physical or sexual desirability, but rather from her position of social and economic power, thus freeing her as a sexual object as well as from the male gaze.

As Doña Leonor breaks free from the male gaze via her social and economic power, so too does Charlotte break free of the male gaze by dint of her small stature and age. Charlotte represents a woman that does not fall within the typical viewpoint of desirable women, especially when she marries Don Ludovico. Charlotte's body is never the object of the male gaze. Her body never appears nude, nor does she appear as the subject of the camera's gaze. Even when the viewer sees Charlotte riding a horse or dancing a tango in front of a mirror, the audience does not share Don Ludovico's gaze of sexual desire towards her. The image of Charlotte riding a horse results in a strange representation for the viewer, for the very small, almost child-like figure on top of a much larger stallion results in a comical scene. Rather than sharing the sexual desire that Don Ludovico feels towards Charlotte, the viewer sees Charlotte as a spectacle. The only time that Charlotte's body appears in a sexual situation is the night Don Ludovico obeys Doña Leonor's wishes that Charlotte not attend that evening's circus performance. A

nightgown completely covers Charlotte's body, including her arms. Rather than being the object of the male gaze, Charlotte engages in a very sexual and active gaze towards Don Ludovico, a gaze that is most often reserved for male characters. In this scene, the viewer rethinks the direction of the male gaze, just as when Doña Leonor looks at herself in the mirror. The male gaze is repositioned from the asexual body of the married woman to the gaze of this same married woman towards her husband. Although the marriage reinforces a heterosexual norm,⁶ the sexual interest of Don Ludovico towards Charlotte distorts the typical male gaze.

Don Ludovico is not the only character that resists Doña Leonor's version of reality. Charlotte also resists the official history (that she is not different) that her mother imposes. Charlotte's rebellion begins at the concert her mother organizes to demonstrate Charlotte's talent with the piano. The committee, specifically Mrs. Zamudio, tries to dissuade Doña Leonor from putting her daughter in front of the town in such a public venue. When Doña Leonor realizes that the entire village will see her daughter's height and that she won't have complete control over the situation, she tells Charlotte not to curtsy to the audience and to greet them from the piano bench. Rather than obeying her mother, Charlotte stands in front of the stage and curtsies. When Charlotte breaks the façade that her mother has tried to impose about her height, Doña Leonor begins to snigger and giggle during the concert from the absurdity. The laughter reveals that Doña Leonor has started to lose control over maintaining the illusion that her daughter looks no different than any other child. The fact that no one else dares to laugh shows how much

power Doña Leonor exerts over the town; she may laugh if she finds the situation funny, but no one else can join in.

Doña Leonor also loses control when Don Ludovico asks for Charlotte's hand in marriage. The day of the wedding, the viewer notes the absurdly long length of Charlotte's dress. Doña Leonor has a look of horror when she sees the traditional figures of the bride and groom for the cake topper having the same height. Just as she erased and hid the truth by burning books with any references to dwarves and by destroying the widow Schmidt's gnomes, Doña Leonor tries to hide the traditional image of the bride and groom that does not match reality. She removes the figures and devours them to keep hiding from and controlling reality. However, Doña Leonor can no longer dominate every detail, and her plan to diminish her daughter's blatant height difference unravels when the infirm and wheelchair-bound mayor informs Doña Leonor that he does not feel well enough to attend the ceremony. During the ceremony, Doña Leonor places her daughter on a pedestal to put her at the same height as Don Ludovico. When the mayor dies in the middle of the ceremony, Doña Leonor notices right away that he died. In her attempt to make sure no one else notices that anything has gone awry, Doña Leonor calls more attention to the dead mayor. As Charlotte and Don Ludovico leave the church, Doña Leonor can no longer suppress her giggles, and soon her hysterical laughter fills the sanctuary. The inappropriate laughter shows that this dictatorial figure cannot hide the truth of the situation from even herself. Much like the Madres de la Plaza, Mrs. Zamudio takes great pleasure in slapping Doña Leonor across the face "for the emotion" that she cannot contain or control. The farce of the authoritarian control of Doña Leonor keeps

slipping away as the newlyweds begin dancing. The extremely long dress is an empty shell without any legs beneath it that match its length, and as Don Ludovico waltzes with his bride, the wedding becomes a mockery of the lie that Doña Leonor spent years creating and controlling. In the context of what I have been proposing here, these circumstances are similar to a dictatorship that slowly loses its power and ability to terrorize its citizenry.

The last instance where Doña Leonor tries to control Charlotte's life is when the circus arrives in town. As mentioned before, Don Ludovico gives in to Doña Leonor's wishes that Charlotte not attend the circus. Using Rancière's political theory, we can see how Don Ludovico represents politics, not only because his role in the town is the new mayor, but also because he "implements a logic entirely heterogeneous to that of the police [Doña Leonor], it is always bound up with the latter. The reason for this is simple: politics has no objects or issues of its own" (Rancière 31). Don Ludovico does not fear Doña Leonor, rather he only seeks to make his young bride happy. The arrival of the circus does not bother Don Ludovico, for he had invited it to town. For him, the circus provides a new form of entertainment for the town, whereas Doña Leonor has spent all of her energy trying to hide any intersection between Charlotte and the truth about her height. Even though Don Ludovico later reneges on his promise to keep Charlotte from the circus, he loses Charlotte forever. When Charlotte breaks free of the male gaze and returns it towards her husband, as mentioned earlier, she also breaks with the construction of maternity as a site of reinforcing oppressive patriarchal norms, as represented by Doña Leonor.

The use of matriarchy reinvents how feminism interprets politics and aesthetics within cinema. Bemberg uses the camera to distort the male gaze. Here, the women—whose mature or atypical bodies do not fit the stereotypical subject for heterosexual desire—are how Bemberg can break the male gaze and reposition it through mirrors and returning the male gaze. It is not a perfect metaphor for how feminism, politics and police intersect; nevertheless, Bemberg demonstrates that cinema can act politically by using a new interpretation and representation of motherhood.

Poison as revenge: A failed attempt in *Cría Cuervos* y *El verano de la señora Forbes*

One of the recurring themes in dictatorship literature and post-dictatorship films remains the populace's fear of their government. Keeping in mind the power of fear, it follows that violence can be perceived rather than physically experienced. The threat of violence can serve to instill as much terror as physical violence. Nevertheless, the presence of indirect violence does not mean less violence occurs in the story. The fear of harm lies at the base of torture; the dread can often be worse than the violent act one anticipates.

Violence frequently happens when an unequal power relationship exists. Many movies explore the inequality between power and agency, especially the inequality between men and women and parents and children. The home represents the space where these unbalanced power relationships play out. Within the family, the relationship between children and adults represent, according to Rancière's theory on police and politics, two distinct worlds. These two worlds are created by radically different understandings of society as a whole and the world at large. The adult world tries to

impose order, rules, and law whereas the mythos of the children's world is characterized by complete freedom and innocence. When an adult threatens the liberal world with law and order (a form of violence against the individual), the children are in crisis. The children can lose their liberty by giving in, accepting, and integrating themselves into the adult world or they can try to resist and fight back against this law and order to maintain their freedom.

Cría cuervos (1976) and *El verano de la señora Forbes* (1989) have at their core children with an adult who attempts to impose a new social order. The choice of children as protagonists is not without consideration. In Spain,

Spanish film-makers have frequently couched their dissidence through the alternative viewpoint of children, [the children are] often ignored and frequently frightened, but always observing, always questioning and aware. Far from wallowing in Hollywood-style condescension and sentiment [...] the natural wonderment of childhood was transformed into a distressful fear of the unknown and the unknowable [...] (Stone 85)

Although Stone writes specifically about Spanish film (and later about *Cría cuervos* in particular), this observation about the role of children is apropos for the Colombian-written, Mexican-directed *El verano de la señora Forbes*. Both of these films have political dissent behind them; in multiple interviews, Carlos Saura has talked about how politics were a part of his films (Stone 71-2) and Gabriel García Márquez has written several other works that either form part of the genre of the dictator novel or have authoritarian figures at their center.

When the adults impose a new order upon the children, it reflects how totalitarian states interact with their citizenry. Writing on totalitarian states, critic Hannah Arendt observes that "Totalitarian domination, however, aims at abolishing freedom, even at

eliminating human spontaneity in general, and by no means at [sic] a restriction of freedom no matter how tyrannical” (405). In both cases, the adult is a woman who is not the children’s mother. The children then try to deliberately poison the source of these new rules that impose restrictions on their world. However, in both films, the children do not succeed. They manage to only poison one victim in each film, Ana’s father in *Cría cuervos* and a cat in *El verano de la señora Forbes*. Despite trying to poison their caretakers, none of the children escape from the restrictive world created by authoritarian women who abuse their power. It is not to say that the imposition of parental order merits murder; rather, the radical change from absolute liberty to complete restriction requires violent action in order to resist the new power structure.

In order to better understand how violence works within these movies, we must explore other antecedents to murderous children. Killer children form a common theme in horror films; however, these children are generally marked by a demonic or other worldly possession of their corporeal bodies. The evil intent to murder comes from outside the child’s locus of control. Other films where the children try eliminating a new authority figure include family comedies where a parent begins dating again, such as *The Parent Trap* (1998). In these films, the children attempt to scare off the new suitor, but the intent is to frighten rather than murder. Given Hollywood’s predisposition to encourage the perspective that the only way to combat one type of violence is to use another form of it, two other genres of Hollywood films that prove useful in understanding how violence encourages other forms of violence, are battered women and rape victims who kill. The former genre, as noted by Frances Dolan in her article

“Battered Women, Petty Traitors, and the Legacy of Coverture,” has at its core abused women who kill their abusers.⁷ Dolan also observes that women who murder serve as interesting subject matter for films because:

Stories of killer women, perennial favorites, are both shocking in their inversion of one set of gender expectations—women are weak, nurturing, nonviolent—and reassuring in their confirmation of another set of equally venerable gender conventions—women are evil, sneaky and dangerous. (250)

In this way, the dichotomy between abusive man and abused woman is kill or be killed. The threat of violence and the possibility of death move the action of these films from beginning to end. Dolan argues that “Although the options available to conflicting spouses have changed, the stories have remained similar for centuries in the West, suggesting that spouses in conflict have only one way out of their struggles: dominate or submit, kill or die” (251). The options offered by these Hollywood films of abused women who kill fall into the extremes of destroy or be destroyed. The dichotomy presented by *Cría cuervos* and *El verano de la señora Forbes* is much like the dichotomy presented by films of battered women who kill and rape victims who kill, for the children must choose between being dominated or complete submission. The children demonstrate that they are as dangerous as these killer women. When children act like these women, it shifts the notion that one form of violence requires equal or more violence in order to end the disagreeable situation.

The dominant production of films made by Hollywood influences the expectations of the audience watching the film. When a domestic conflict arises and the threat of implicit or explicit violence is present, the viewer expects a violent resolution to the situation perpetrated by the person with less agency and power against the person

with superior agency and power. In addition to the genre of women killing their abusive partners, another genre of Hollywood where the victim seeks violent recourse against an abuse is that of rape-revenge. Alison Young writes, “Rape-revenge stories are primarily about the *lex talionis*, the notion that once rape takes place, the world is out of kilter until vengeance is carried out by the victim” and these films put forward the idea that “rape requires full-scale revenge, and that there should be as much violence inflicted in the punishment as there was in the crimes” (46). Just as the movies where abused women kill their abusers, rape-revenge films also demand a violent confrontation with the perpetrator of that initial violence. The solution offered by Hollywood continues to be one where one kind of violence requires another form of equal or greater violence to stop the abuse of power for the victim to regain agency.

As with other genres of Hollywood films where violence begets more violence, one expects to see an equally violent resolution to the newly imposed restrictions on liberty; however, the use of subterfuge on the part of the children does not produce the desired escape in either of the films. People find ways to subvert and fight back against oppression when an unequal power dynamic exists, but they cannot use the same violence used against them to escape. Frequently, poison remains the weapon of choice for women, especially women who suffer in an abusive relationship. Katherine O’Donovan notes in her article about abused women who kill that “It is not surprising that conventional wisdom has it that poison is a women’s [sic] weapon. But the use of poison as means of self-defence could not be accepted by the law. The element of planning is too strong” (222). In both movies discussed here, the children use poison as a means to kill

the woman who tries to establish law and order. Due to the unequal power, the children cannot communicate with the figure that replaces their mother and who imposes an unbearable order. The only recourse left to them is a feminine (weaker) method that one carries out through concealment or stealth. Nevertheless, the attempts to poison the incarnation of absolute power results in failure—the children in both *Cría cuervos* and *El verano de la señora Forbes* do not succeed in removing or changing the tyrannical presence from their home.

Also, in the background of both these films are dictatorships or military juntas. In *Cría cuervos*, Ana's father represents, if not Franco himself, a member of the Falange. Given the release date in 1976, the theme of an unhappy childhood, and the desire to eliminate the source of that unhappiness, it is not unthinkable to see parallels between the brooding, hypocritical father figure and the distant, strict aunt as two sides of the same coin. The evil actions Ana employs to kill her father take on even darker undertones because she represents the generation who will come to power after his demise. Even with the father's death, his sister becomes as oppressive as any patriarch. Likewise, in *El verano de la señora Forbes*, although neither the movie nor its precursor in Gabriel García Márquez's short story explicitly states what dictatorial figure Mrs. Forbes represents, its Caribbean setting and references to other fascist leaders open the possibility that she represents various dictatorial figures across many Caribbean islands from caudillos to Trujillo. The direct allusions between the boys' scuba instructor Achilles that Mrs. Forbes is like Hitler only augment the connection between these women as representations of a male, dictatorial figure.

Both films contain a scene in which the woman who replaces the mother and imposes a new rule of law explains to the children around the dinner table that from now on, the children will have to behave according to her new standards. Aunt Paulina and Mrs. Forbes both use the word “order” to describe the changes. According to these women, the children lack manners. Learning these new, strange manners results in a crisis for children, and they try to resist by refusing to change. In both cases, the children’s verbal protests do not permit them to escape the newly imposed order and subsequent loss of liberty that comes with the new law and order of the adult world.

In *Cría cuervos*, the scene where the children learn table manners converts the dining room into an enclosed space. The older girls sit on one side of the table while Aunt Paulina dominates the other. Even seated, her height and the look she gives the children pierce the scene. The children physically appear together and act in unison to attempt to subvert Aunt Paulina’s new authority at the table. The critic Marsha Kinder notes that Aunt Paulina “imposes tyrannical rules on the children” (“The Political Development” 23). The close-ups of the children’s faces and their reactions to the stern looks of Aunt Paulina reinforce to the audience the unfairness that the children feel after losing both parents. Since the story is told from Ana’s perspective, the shots emphasize and make the viewer empathetic towards her point of view. When the children realize they will no longer have the same freedom and innocence as before, Ana hisses between her teeth that her mother never forced these rules upon them. By using her voice, Ana reinforces the fact that Aunt Paulina is not her mother and did not originally have authority over her life. Not wanting to acknowledge that another form of law existed before her arrival,

Aunt Paulina refuses to give credence to Ana's *logos* and instead insists that Ana's claims do not reflect reality; and further, that if Ana wishes to say anything, she must speak up or remain quiet rather than mumble her objections. With Ana's earlier protest minimized by her aunt, Ana chooses not to speak again, but rather plots a way to escape from the newly imposed order and control. Even though Aunt Paulina could not force Ana's obedience during the wake, at the dinner table Ana cannot run away and hide beside her grandmother. In the dining room, the grandmother (a mute and incapacitated woman) is not present and no one else in the room can support Ana. At the end of the scene, Aunt Paulina assumes the upper hand and it is clear that no one can escape from her rule of law in the household.

Several scenes in *El verano de la señora Forbes* show the eating space as a site of conflict, tension, and resistance. In the first scene where we observe the family eating, they are outside on the patio, surrounded by cats, in complete chaos. When the mother asks the boys not to wear swimsuits to the table, the boys respond by removing the offending clothes and dine naked at the table. The father figure proves to be ineffective in establishing order, as he merely laughs at the boys' antics and indulges their behavior. The mother's desire to impose rules and some semblance of order motivates her to hire a strict, German governess for the boys while she and her husband go on a six week cruise. The next dining scene occurs when Mrs. Forbes arrives. The boys run around, scream, jump and generally behave wildly. They begin throwing their bananas around and resemble monkeys. The father joins in, effectively demonstrating that he adds to the general disorder and fails to be a strong authority figure in the family. The father's simian

behavior contrasts with Mrs. Forbes' use of knife and fork and rigid, straight posture while consuming her banana. The visual contrast between the father and sons and Mrs. Forbes emphasizes that neither biological parent can install any semblance of order at mealtime; it takes the intervention of a nanny (or the nanny-state) to bring order to the chaos.

Little by little, Mrs. Forbes restricts the space where the meals take place. At first, the boys can eat outside, but they must dress nicely and wear a tie while making no noise. When Sandro, the oldest, arrives late to dinner one evening, Mrs. Forbes does not permit him to sit at the table and eat. In an act of defiance, he goes to the kitchen and takes whatever he wants. The cook warns him that Mrs. Forbes is "capable of anything." Later, Sandro enjoys his purloined goods in the free and open environment of the beach, where he runs into his scuba instructor, Achilles. Achilles makes a direct comparison between Mrs. Forbes and another, well-known dictator, Hitler. When Sandro returns home, Mrs. Forbes punishes both boys since "both are responsible" for the acts of each other. Whereas Mauricio, the youngest boy, had attempted to follow Mrs. Forbes' rules and order before, when she punishes him for Sandro's actions, it unites both boys against her restrictive rules.

The next night, the boys no longer eat outside on the patio, but rather inside the home in the dining room. In addition to dressing for dinner, the boys must also navigate fine china and multiple utensils. The elegant flaming Bananas Foster that Mrs. Forbes eats contrasts with the scene of the boys running around and throwing bananas at each other. She promises that with good behavior, the boys will have a double portion of

dessert, but that if they misbehave, they will not attend their scuba lessons with Achilles. Her promised reward is a lie, because of her sexual attraction to Achilles. Both the audience and the children know that the children have no hope at fair treatment from Mrs. Forbes.

Achilles knows Mrs. Forbes has a strong sexual desire for him. Much like Spivak posits in “Can the subaltern speak?,” Achilles engages in subtle ways to negate and subvert Mrs. Forbes’ position of power over him. He refuses to answer when she speaks to him and when he becomes aware of her watching him, and will not remove his swimsuit to bathe after scuba diving. He also knows of Mrs. Forbes’ interest in Greek mythology—she tells him the story of Achilles and the Amazon queen to express her desire for him—and he kills a moray eel, a fish Mrs. Forbes tells him is “of the Gods” to subvert her authority. The eel’s death, its shocking presentation, and the agent of its grim end foreshadow Mrs. Forbes’ violent demise. However, Achilles’ symbolic act of resistance also results in Mauricio and Sandro suffering more indignities at Mrs. Forbes’ direction.

The casual display of the moray eel’s stabbed body frightens the boys because it had “human eyes.” When the boys are forced to eat the creature, the older cannot stomach the thought and begins vomiting at the table. Neither boy wants to eat more and Mrs. Forbes sends both boys to their room. The boys decide they cannot tolerate any more infringements on their freedom and liberty, and the oldest hatches the plot to poison Mrs. Forbes because “they won’t have any idea who did it” if they use poison. In the last scene before Mrs. Forbes’ death, the boys are in a small, side room having breakfast in a

space that resembles a prison. The lack of freedom and movement shown in this scene reflects the loss of freedom with the imposition of Mrs. Forbes' rules and order.

The idea that poisoning requires secrecy and that the ultimate goal is to not be caught also appears in *Cría cuervos*. Ana carefully hides the “terrible poison” that her mother gave her in the kitchen and only shares her knowledge of its existence with her mute grandmother. When Anselmo, her father, dies at the beginning of the film, Ana carefully closes his eyes, takes his cup, and washes it in the sink. To further hide her activities, she alternates the glasses on the towel, obfuscating which one contained the poison. At first, Ana's actions seem strange, but later when the audience learns of the “terrible poison” and watches Ana try to poison Aunt Paulina, her behavior makes sense. Even though Kinder claims that Anselmo died of a heart attack in the film and that Ana's intention was to poison Aunt Paulina, “one of her family elders” (“The Political Development” 23), the evidence within the film makes it clear during a cut-scene where adult-Ana faces the audience and explains that she killed her father for making her mother unhappy.⁸ The poison also serves as a way for Ana to try to rid herself of her aunt's restrictive rules, but it is not Ana's first recourse. Rather, Ana attempts to use her voice to fight back, but the verbal violence (“Die! I hope you die!”) does not produce any change. When Ana brandishes the pistol she inherited from her father,⁹ she fails in her attempt to shoot her Aunt Paulina, and experiences the only physical violence in the film—a slap across the face.

The desire to rid herself of her aunt's presence continues throughout the film. As Ana plays with her dolls, she mimics Aunt Paulina and tells the doll “Die!” In the next

scene, Ana removes the poison from its hiding spot in the kitchen, places the poison in the cup, hides the poison, and then serves her aunt. When her aunt finishes with the glass, Ana runs to the kitchen and repeats the same actions as she did with her father's poisoned glass. Ana fails to poison her aunt like she poisoned her father, but the oppressive reign of Aunt Paulina during the school vacation is lessened because the girls return to school. The poison failed to liberate Ana from the loss of freedom during her summer vacation, and any attempts to use more direct and masculine forms of violence also resulted in a stalemate. The song that repeats throughout the movie "Today from my window I saw the sun," illustrates that the escape does not come from physical violence but rather from a complete departure from the domestic space. The girls leave the oppression of the home by exiting the house and walking to school, and as the girls walk away from this now restrictive space, the camera pans out and moves away from them. Even though the control the aunt has within the home is no longer relevant, the only option that remains means leaving the domestic space and abandoning any hope of having agency within that space. Stone observes that it is an "ambiguous ending that reflects the time of the film's making: the dictatorship was ending" (103). For Ana in *Cría cuervos*, masculine violence (the pistol as a phallic symbol) does not fix the loss of her childhood innocence, nor does her verbal violence or protests change her aunt's position. The poison serves as the last recourse, but that passive and feminine recourse fails as well. By poisoning her father,¹⁰ Ana lost all liberty and freedom because the replacement for her father restricted her freedom more.

The children in *El verano de la señora Forbes* also fail in their attempt to poison the woman who took away the freedom and innocence from their childhood world. Once Sandro decides that Mrs. Forbes must die in order for the boys to experience and enjoy the freedom of their vacation, he and his brother Mauricio work together to achieve this grotesque end. To make sure the dose of the poison actually kills, the boys feed it to a cat. The cat yowls all night as it dies a slow, painful death, which only emboldens the boys in their decision to kill Mrs. Forbes. When Mrs. Forbes gets drunk and recites Greek poetry in German, the boys are convinced their plan to poison her has worked. When they see her alive and well at breakfast the next morning, they redouble their efforts and pour even more poison into her vodka. It is an act they do secretly, knowing full well that killing Mrs. Forbes has consequences outside the home. When the boys return from the beach to find the house full of police officers, they quietly rejoice and sneak past the officers to see their handiwork. In a moment of dramatic irony, the boys learn that their efforts to poison Mrs. Forbes failed and that the true cause of her death was being stabbed over a hundred times. Mrs. Forbes did not die because of the feminine technique of poisoning, but rather from the violent confrontation with Achilles.¹¹ The passive method did not solve the problem; it took a phallic symbol of a knife and direct confrontation to destroy the source of authority.¹² The ultimate reason for Mrs. Forbes' death is not restricting the liberty of the boys, it is the fact that she spied on Achilles with his male lover, and when she realizes that the reason her advances toward Achilles were rebuffed because she was not and could never be the object of his desire, she sets his cabin on fire. The violence and the threat of violence ends with violent means, but the only way to remove Mrs.

Forbes from her place of authority was through direct confrontation and physical violence.

In both cases, the children cannot poison the woman who installs an intolerable order that suppresses the children's liberty and innocence. The adult world collides with the children's. These women try to impose rules and restrictions during the summer vacation, a time normally associated with complete freedom. The children find a passive and feminine method¹³ to use violence against a threatened loss of freedom. Even though this reduction of liberty is not an explicit form of violence (aside from Aunt Paulina slapping Ana across the face), it is clear that the children feel afraid. In *El verano de la señora Forbes*, one boy says that he is afraid of being afraid and Ana says in *Cría cuervos* that during her childhood fear filled everything. Like abused or raped women in Hollywood films, the children want to kill the source of the fear and violence. The passive "feminine" violence of poisoning does not succeed in killing these matriarchal women, and only two options remain:¹⁴ fleeing the domestic space (*Cría cuervos*) or confronting the threat through direct "masculine" violence (*El verano de la señora Forbes*).

Conclusion

In all three films, the family becomes an institution the children want to escape. Although the violence is not explicit, the 'unnatural' gender performance of these women adds to the perception that the children's acts of rebellion—Charlotte joining the circus, Ana talking back to her aunt, Mauricio and Sandro disobeying Mrs. Forbes—or attempted poisonings—by Ana and Sandro—are justified. Reimagining motherhood

reconstructs the metaphor of the concept of the nation as family that “continues to proliferate through contemporary fiction, [and] that fiction simultaneously regenerates, revises, and subverts the metaphor itself” (Schultheis 7).

By observing female figures who take over the helm of a formerly nuclear, patriarchal family, we are able to see the connection between an authoritarian government and the passive resistance against the threat of violence and restricted freedoms. Taking into account the political activism of María Luisa Bemberg, Carlos Saura, and Gabriel García Márquez, it is not unreasonable to see a metaphor or allegory of Doña Leonor, Aunt Paulina, or Mrs. Forbes as parallel to the actions of a repressive, authoritarian government. Many authoritarian governments in Argentina, Spain, Colombia, and the Caribbean took the position that they knew better than the people, and this paternalistic relationship can be seen in the interaction between the children and these matriarchal women. Because of their gender, the women are ignored as analogues to traditional, male authoritarian figures found in dictator novels. Nevertheless, their actions are as oppressive as any caudillo or dictator when comparing family to the nation.

Endnotes

1. Argentina had a military dictatorship from 1973 until 1983. During those ten years, there was a brutal repression of anyone who went against the military junta. Many activists and political dissidents disappeared during the military junta's "Dirty War." The military junta refused to acknowledge the disappearances or make any explanations to the families of their victims. A human rights group known as Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo began to openly defy the dictatorship and its 'official history' of the country that nothing wrong happened and that there were no victims. Eventually the military junta agreed that there were 9000 people who were taken by the junta who cannot be accounted for today.

2. The only voice in the film that clearly states that Charlotte is different is the voice-over that begins speaking to the audience at the start of the movie, setting the scene. Until the very end of the movie, the audience does not know who this voice belongs to, although the voice seems to be an omniscient narrator. The voice-over is the only voice that Doña Leonor can neither intimidate nor quiet, for the voice-over serves as a historical and retrospective voice. As critic Jan D. Mennell notes, "By not naming himself, by concealing his identity from the audience the narrative voice-over offers a perspective that is at best enigmatic, since it conceals as much as it imparts" (163). The concealed identity of the narrator leaves the audience questioning the voice and its intent throughout the entire film. When the viewer learns at the end of the movie that the voiceover was Mójame, it gives veracity to the testimony because Mójame was a servant in Doña Leonor's house. Mójame is a marginalized character from the perspective of both his age and ethnic (Arabic) identity. Even though Mójame is a relatively minor character with few lines in the movie, he is a witness to the events that can break into the sacred space of the home and explain the extent that Doña Leonor controls and terrorizes the town of San José de los Altares.

3. López-Calvo notes that "Curiously, the word *dictator* comes from an office created by the Senate in ancient Rome for sudden crises in which there had to be a solution for social disturbances" (18).

4. The general state in Argentina circa 1977 was, as recounted by Christopher Hitchens, punctuated by "the 'pall of fear' hanging over the city [which] seemed to be warranted. People spoke to foreigners with an averted gaze, and everybody seemed to know somebody who had just vanished. The rumors of what had happened to them were fantastic and bizarre though, as it turned out, they were only an understatement of the real thing" (196).

5. An example of the widow as an atypical object of desire would be Juan Valera's *Pepita Jiménez*, where the narrator falls for the titular character. The narrator

desperately tries to suppress his feelings, as convention has his father set to marry her. The tension in the novel comes directly from this conflict between social norms and desire. If the widow were a typical object of desire, there would be no tension or conflict between the narrator and the object of his affection.

6. An interesting discussion of interpreting the film through a queer lens is done by David William Foster, “*De eso no se habla: A film of Queer Difference.*” *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 27.1 (2002): 177-92. Print.

7. Even though this article explores the legal implications of wives killing husbands, the statistics reflect the fact that abusive men cause more damage and death than abusive women.

8. There is a lot of critical debate as to whether or not Ana poisoned her father. Marsha Kinder (23) dismisses the possibility, and Rob Stone argues that it is “actually bicarbonate of soda” (100). Given what adult-Ana says, it is very likely that the “terrible poison” is boric acid, a powdered substance used to kill roaches. Although boric acid is used as a topical antiseptic, ingesting it can be highly toxic to humans, causing symptoms ranging from low blood pressure to coma. Boric acid also dissolves in water, much like the powder Ana places in both glasses.

9. The gun is a phallic symbol. It represents the only time that Ana uses an openly masculine and violent means as a way to end her aunt’s oppressive rule.

10. There is some critical debate as to whether Ana actually poisoned her father or if he died of a heart attack after sexual congress. I write this study under the assumption that the adult Ana’s confession in the middle of the movie about killing her father is true and that two scenes where she washes a drinking glass are her two separate poisoning attempts. The poison forms such a central part of the movie that I find it difficult to completely dismiss the idea that Ana did not poison her father.

11. The use of a gay male is interesting because he rejects the male gaze that Mrs. Forbes directs towards him. He is the only character that openly compares her to a dictator. He does not return her desire, despite her being a beautiful woman, because her gender is not the object of his sexual desire. However, having a homosexual relationship does not fit with machismo. Breaking the binary between man and woman forms a third option between masculine and feminine because Achilles utilizes recourses considered feminine or used by the subaltern (not answering questions, not returning Mrs. Forbes’ gaze, talking behind her back) and masculine recourses (the knife, the violence, direct confrontation) at the same time to subvert Forbes’ power.

12. In *Cría cuervos*, the gun that Ana attempts to use against her aunt was loaded, and if the aunt's married lover had not intervened, Aunt Paulina would have been dispatched via a phallic symbol and masculine means.

13. The movie *Madeinusa* (2007) also has a girl who takes revenge with poison against the source of oppression and violence. The important difference between *Cría cuervos* and *El verano de la señora Forbes* is that *Madeinusa* is pubescent (she's already 14) and she tries to kill a man, whereas the children in the other two movies are prepubescent and they try to kill a woman. Additionally, *Madeinusa* kills her own father, who represents the patriarchal system rather than a substitution of the patriarchal system. The children in *Cría cuervos* and *El verano de la señora Forbes* are very passive in their poisoning attempts. In both movies, the children mix a poison with a drink and passively wait for the caregivers to consume the beverage. There remains a possibility for the women not to consume the drink or for them to realize the drink is poisoned. *Madeinusa* takes action and agency to kill her father, because she forces the poisoned soup down her father's throat. She actively murders her father and then blames his death on the outsider (the "gringo"). Conversely, the children in the other two films are passive and wait to see if the poison worked. The passivity of the children results in the failed poisoning attempts, whereas the active murder by poison is why *Madeinusa* is able to take revenge upon her father.

14. These movies do not offer another option. The housekeepers in these films do not intercede on the behalf of the children. Even though these marginalized women console the children, they are only able to do so when the patriarchal women are not around. Aunt Paulina and Mrs. Forbes relegate the housekeepers to their "place" of cleaning the home and not speaking. The housekeepers talk behind the patriarchal women's backs, but they cannot change or confront the situation. For this reason, it reaffirms that the escape is not through the subaltern's voice.

Chapter 5

Bestselling Barcelona: National Trauma and its Connection to Family in *La sombra del viento* (2001) and *Beautiful* (2010)

It is hard to travel throughout Spain and not notice the scars left on the national psyche in the wake of the Civil War. Even casual travel about the city of Barcelona reveals placards commemorating events during the conflict, and the whitewashing of historical memory.¹ As a nation, Spain's present is clearly marked by the past experience of civil conflict and the aftermath of the Franco dictatorship. Of note is how the lingering effects of the Spanish Civil War reverberate throughout families, both actual and fictional. The preoccupation with its civil war in some ways ties life in Spain to its past for both Spaniards and outsiders. The reliance upon the Civil War as a plot point or device results in sense that the country remains fixated on an event that occurred more than seventy years ago. Indeed, the Spanish Civil War serves as a signifier of Spanishness in literature and media as much as paella, flamenco, or bullfighting when taking into account the fact that many bestselling (or crossover) movies and books happen to have this particular conflict as part of the story. Just as citizens search for national identity, so too do the members of the families seek their places in both their homes and society.

Taking into account the propensity for fiction and real life to revolve around exploring individuality, the Spanish Civil War turns into one of the hallmarks of Spanish identity, and becomes an expected and marketable element or theme when read or viewed. The international success of the two works that I will study in this chapter—Carlos Ruiz Zafón's *La sombra del viento* (2001) and the Alejandro González Iñárritu's

award-winning *Biutiful* (2010)—is an important aspect regarding larger implications of the reception and perception of modern Spanish identity. Indeed, this success illustrates that popular Spanish literature and film remain marked by an overall omnipresence of an event that has fewer and fewer living witnesses. However, there is an explanation behind why the second and third generations after the Spanish Civil War sustain the memory and fascination with these particular hostilities—trauma theory.

Even though trauma theory emerged out of the study of the Holocaust, its pertinence to understanding the lingering effects of war on the Spanish national psyche is indispensable. Trauma theory can be defined as:

a theoretical caucus that attempts to articulate and critique the diverse ways in which traumatic memories have been inscribed as wounds on the cultural, social, psychic and political life of those who have experienced them and those cultural products that seek to represent such experiences to those who have not. (Blake 1)

More specifically, cultural trauma can be defined as what occurs when “members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways” (Alexander 1). Indeed, the influence of cultural trauma upon the group’s future identity explains the persistence of civil war images and memory in Spanish literature, cinema, and popular culture. If we take the term and concept of history to mean the experiences of a group, then we can conclude, using Cathy Caruth’s argument, that “history, like trauma, is never simply one’s own, that history is precisely the way we are implicated in each other’s traumas” (24). Neil J. Smelser also makes a similar connection between history and trauma.

According to Smelser, historical memory forms first, and later, when it is entrenched as a

national trauma for which “society has to be held in some way responsible, its status as trauma has to be continuously and actively sustained and reproduced in order to continue in that status” (38). In order for an event to continue to be a national trauma, it needs to be remembered and reproduced.

The dictatorship that came to power after the cessation of fighting added to the trauma, since the new government suppressed dissident voices and did not truly allow people to talk about the war. As Irene Wirshing observes, “Literature written both during and after dictatorships is often embedded in trauma” (6). Although it is probable that the Spanish Civil War would have caused national trauma regardless of who assumed power, for Irene Wirshing, “National trauma is the aftermath of totalitarianism” (7). Thus, the nearly universal return to the Spanish Civil War in the country’s cultural products reflects that this conflict in particular created a national trauma.²

Although the time period for the novel and the movie are different, the lingering effects of the Spanish Civil War reverberate throughout the families portrayed in both works. More specifically, *La sombra del viento* focuses on Barcelona in the 1950s and *Beautiful* is set in the present day. Both center on the Spanish Civil War as a key part of their respective plots. I propose that the use of the Spanish Civil War as a plot device symbolizes a national trauma, and that the trauma is not only expressed in terms of the fixation on the event in question, but also through the representation of families that are fractured or emotionally distant. In turn, these less than idealistic families serve as an allegory for the state as a whole, and by extension, also embody the damaged national psyche.

By looking specifically at families as representations of national trauma, we can begin to connect recollections, narrative, and allegory. Narrative is a way to process memory, particularly traumatic memory. The need to recount life experiences, especially those that are negative and painful, drives storytelling within trauma theory. Although there are many ways to approach and reconcile the aftermath of misfortune, allegorical representations—whether conscious or unconscious—assist in processing the events. Allegories, even unintentional ones, reveal the subconscious and lingering concerns of the writer. Accordingly, allegories emerge from the synthesis of the individual and national experiences of trauma through the act of transcribing and transmitting the occurrence. To that end, war is a particularly disruptive phenomenon, at both a personal and social level. As a result, the mutual experience of war forms a collective memory.³ Collective memories are not exclusively related to national trauma, but a national trauma will create a collective memory, which may then be passed down to subsequent generations.

The relationship between family and national trauma starts with the transmission of oral history or, when oral history is suppressed, the memories can appear in other forms such as a notable absence, which can become as vivid as an actual experience to the subsequent generations. Families can also cause devastating memories. In violent or abusive families, certain circumstances can mimic civil war. Additionally, the life experiences of those touched by civil war often seem to reflect the conflict and national history. Next, the connection between family and national trauma is furthered by the very nature of civil conflict, because this specific type of clash lends itself to familial

representation. Indeed, in the actual Spanish Civil War, families were divided by geographic and sometimes ideological boundaries. Once the war ended, there were noticeable absences in the landscape such as damaged or missing buildings. In addition to absences in the backdrop of the cityscape, many people—soldiers and civilians alike—suffered injuries, died, or disappeared. While the destruction of buildings and disfigurement of soldiers and civilians create physical reminders of the violence that transpired, the psychological damage continues even when time reconciles the material damage.

Despite conventional wisdom claiming that time heals all wounds, mental distress often lasts much longer, especially when memories are transmitted via oral history to those with firsthand experiences to their descendants. Therefore, it does not matter that Carlos Ruiz Zafón and Alejandro González Iñárritu were born in the 1960s and therefore could not have personally witnessed the Spanish Civil War. Since both Zafón and Iñárritu lack firsthand knowledge of the event in question, trauma theory helps explain their interest in the event. More broadly, communal memories are not just tied to the transmission of knowledge between generations, but also the consumption of cultural products such as television, movies, magazines, and books.

Before exploring the representation of power dynamics in families as allegories for national trauma, a summary of both works is in order. The action of *La sombra del viento* takes place over several years. Similar to other mystery and detective novels by Spanish authors,⁴ the reader follows the protagonist as he unravels a mysterious disappearance. In *La sombra del viento*, Daniel Sempere searches Barcelona for Julián

Carax, a writer who allegedly died at the end of the Spanish Civil War. As the story opens, we learn that Daniel lost his mother to a cholera outbreak shortly after the end of the Spanish Civil War. Later, when Daniel is ten years old, his father takes him to the Cemetery of Forgotten Books. Here, the guardian, Isaac Monfort, explains to Daniel that “En este lugar, los libros que ya nadie recuerda, los libros que se han perdido en el tiempo, viven para siempre, esperando llegar algún día a las manos de un nuevo lector, de un nuevo espíritu” (Zafón 127-8). The book that Daniel chooses is called *La sombra del viento* by Julián Carax. A shadowy and disfigured man seeks out Carax’s books and burns them, which leaves Daniel with the last remaining copy of any work by Carax. The reader follows Daniel as he falls in love, makes new friends, and unravels the mystery behind Carax’s disappearance at the end of the Civil War. Typical to many detective novels, a few red herrings appear in the narrative to confuse the reader, but in the end, Daniel discovers that Carax is not only alive, but also is the horrifically burned man bent on destroying all copies of his novels. The novel abounds with double identities and parallel histories between Daniel and Carax; however, Daniel’s happy ending releases Carax from his tragic past.

In *Beautiful*, Uxbal discovers that he is dying of advanced prostate cancer and only has a few months to live. Surrounding his slow death is a myriad of familial concerns both past and present. From his past, he must confront the absence and loss of his father, who died exiled in Mexico before Uxbal was born. His father’s repatriated body is in a cemetery where a new mall is planned. He and his brother, Tito, agree to sell the plot and upon exhumation, Uxbal sees the face of the father he never knew because he fled

Franco's dictatorship at the end of the Spanish Civil War. In this way, the death of his father and the consequences of being an orphan are all too clear for Uxbal, who tries to prevent his children, Ana and Mateo, from growing up the same way. In his present, Uxbal begins to make amends so that he will die with a clean conscience, since he has the ability to communicate with the recently dead and knows that he will not move to the next life if he fails to do so.

Existing on the margins of society, Uxbal works as an intermediary between a sweatshop owner, the sellers of the counterfeit products, the Spanish police, and the business owner who cannot afford union wages. Even as he attempts to tie up his loose ends and to provide for his children, his actions and decisions do more harm than good. With each interaction, Uxbal takes his cut, and sometimes a little more, storing the piles of Euros in envelopes in his apartment. The first casualty of Uxbal's skimming is Ekweme, a Senegalese immigrant who sells counterfeit goods, and (more dangerously) drugs. Uxbal is incarcerated for interfering with Ekweme's arrest. Turning to his estranged wife Marambra,⁵ Uxbal attempts to repair his family unit. Unfortunately, Marambra suffers from bipolar disorder and eschews medication for homeopathic remedies. The stubborn and contrary Mateo receives the brunt of her physical assaults, and Marambra leaves him behind with several lacerations on his face while Uxbal is out fixing the major disaster that arose out of his good intentions. Trying to provide some warmth in the basement where the Chinese sweatshop workers sleep, Uxbal purchases outdoor gas heaters that kill all 25 workers with monoxide poisoning during the night. The worker's bodies are dumped into the ocean, but carried in by the tide back to the

shore. Unable to leave his children with Marambra, Uxbal relies upon Ige, Ekweme's wife. The night that Uxbal dies, he shares memories of his father with Ana, thus continuing the generational memory of the trauma of the Civil War as he leaves her to an uncertain future.

Within trauma theory, the concept of trauma is specifically a "debilitating kind of memory" (Kaplan and Wang 5). In *La sombra del viento* and *Beautiful*, these memories paralyze the narrative by having the protagonists fixate on the moments after the Spanish Civil War. The war itself does not imprint deeply upon these characters who were young children during the fighting; rather, it is the loss of a parent shortly after the cessation of hostilities that draws the narrative back to the events of 1939. Tied to the multiple returns of the parental loss is the inability to clearly remember the dead parent. These individual traumas form a point in time in the narrative where each protagonist returns. The revisiting of these distressing events represents a psychological wound. Even in the beginning of the twenty-first century, the representation of family reflects this national trauma. Drawing upon Caruth's terminology, the Spanish Civil War is a wound that continues to affect the psychological state of many Spaniards. This psychological trauma that echoes the Civil War becomes apparent when watching the fractured, damaged, or shattered families in *La sombra del viento* and *Beautiful*. It is at the moment of death that Daniel and Uxbal are able to reconcile their memories with their present. In order for the national trauma to end, all the persons who remember it must first reconcile the wound that the calamity created.

The return to the moment or memory of suffering is a feature of trauma narratives. Trauma theory does not have a specific phrase to address this phenomenon other than to call it a wound. I propose a more mathematical and less medical term, which stems from narratives, especially those in movies, where the opening scene is chronologically the final one.⁶ While the audience may not realize at first that the scene is out of place, the prevalence of this technique is not unusual for an experienced theatergoer. Unfortunately, the vocabulary to describe this type of narrative progression is a framing device that is called either reverse chronology, flashback, or begins in flashback.⁷ Neither seems to fully capture the essence of how the plot plays out. I would like to suggest a new way of contemplating this storyline structure by borrowing a mathematical concept: the Möbius strip. A Möbius strip is a two-dimensional object that exists in the three-dimensional world, most often formed by taking a strip of paper, twisting it once, and connecting the edges. It is also a chiral object, meaning that the direction of the twist of the paper creates a handedness like a glove. Thus, a Möbius narrative can have a story progress forward or backwards in time, depending on how chronological time is presented to the audience. The term Möbius narrative replaces the less precise expressions available to describe asynchronous presentation of time.

The most common explanation for how a Möbius strip works is to imagine an ant traveling along the strip. The creature will travel the strip, unaware that it journeyed from the front to the back of the strip. Drawing a line that traces the ant's path, the path will cross to the underside of the paper, without ever lifting up the pen. Undoing the Möbius strip would reveal that the line appears on both the front and backside of the paper. Much

like the ant traversed the strip without realizing it had crossed onto the back of the paper, so too do certain movie characters traverse the past and present without any awareness that the continuity of time has been broken to those observing. Utilizing Einstein's theory that time exists as a fourth dimension,⁸ the perception of time in our reality would present like the shifting of the ant from one side of the paper to the other; outside observers would see the ant travel across two sides, but the ant would not perceive this same change, as depth would not exist in its worldview.

The Möbius narrative's relationship to trauma theory is that the return to the memory or moment of trauma is where the experience silently loops for the individual or culture. To outsiders observing this return, it is an object that does not fit within their comprehension. This inability to understand is traced back to Freud's writing.⁹ What Freud termed hysteria today might resemble post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The person's need to relive or re-experience the event is like the ant walking along the surface of the Möbius strip, where the path traveled will always lead back to what an outsider would view as the start. In this way, the protagonist is unaware of the return to the trauma, while the observer would know the timeline had already occurred. Similarly, in *Beautiful*, the protagonist Uxbal travels between the past and present.¹⁰ The audience is aware of the temporal asynchronicity because they are interacting with a fourth dimension with a three dimensional understanding. For Uxbal, time progresses like the ant's path, and he does not distinguish between the past and present in his journey. Like the point where the twist joins the two ends of a Möbius strip, the beginning of *Beautiful* is where the past and present seamlessly meet and continue. Right before Uxbal dies, he

begins to tell his daughter the story that the audience heard at the opening of the film. In doing so, Uxbal transmits the oral history to the next generation, which permits the national trauma to continue, since there is no guarantee that Ige will remain in Spain to care for Ana and Mateo.

The Möbius narrative within *La sombra del viento* happens when the actual story returns to similar points in time. But rather than a narrative that works its way forward, *La sombra del viento* goes backwards in time, then moves forward again. Built around a detective novel style, *La sombra del viento* moves backwards in time as Daniel Sempere attempts to unravel the mystery surrounding Julian Carax. Once Daniel discovers the key to finding out the whereabouts of Carax, the narrative returns to moving forward in the present. At the conclusion and revelation of the truth of Carax's life, Daniel briefly dies, sees his mother's face, and returns to life. After this rebirth, Daniel writes the book that the reader has been reading all along. Instead of an oral history, Daniel creates a written record. The book stands as an artifact that transmits the memories of all the participants in both Daniel and Carax's personal histories. Although Daniel does not directly transmit these memories to his child, the novel still exists. Like Uxbal's oral history, Daniel's written record sustains the national trauma, because he takes his son to the Cemetery of Lost Books at the end, opening up the possibility that his son will also find another Carax figure in the tomes.

In *La sombra del viento*, the discrepancy between oral and written histories presented by Nuria Moliner (née Monfort) reveals the disparity between memory and history. At first, Nuria tells Daniel the generally accepted version of history that places

Carax in Barcelona at the end of the war, where he was shot and killed. She denies any intimate knowledge or relationship with the author, but after her death, Daniel reads her manuscript. Nuria's father, Isaac Monfort, hands Daniel the papers and says "Es la historia que usted buscaba, Daniel" (Zafón 6308-9). Even though Daniel's search for the true whereabouts of Carax first appeared to be out of a detective novel, the journey ends up as a way to rediscover his first and most formative trauma: the loss of his mother to cholera after the Civil War and her burial on his fourth birthday. While he spends much of the novel trying to recall his mother's face, Daniel does remember how it rained the day she was buried. This weather (while typical for Barcelona) is repeated, especially as Daniel comes closer to finding out the truth about Carax. These sensory clues and triggers are part of the trauma. Just as Daniel often comes close to discovering whether Carax died in Barcelona shortly after the war or is still alive, he also attempts to remember his mother's face. The search for history reveals individual remembrance, allowing for the reconciliation of personal trauma.

Similarly, in *Beautiful* the individual stories the viewer watches are spaces where history and personal recollection are often at odds. Marambra tells fanciful stories, but many of her assertions conflict with what the viewer sees. For example, Marambra claims that the open bottle of wine was for a friend, which contradicts an earlier scene where she drinks and spills wine on Uxbal's brother, Tito. She lies about abusing Mateo, and then shortly admits to and justifies her violence. Even her sweet tale of how she and Uxbal became a couple is suspect, since Uxbal disagrees with her version. It is not that her explanations are complete fabrications; rather, they are discourses meant to diminish

conflict. Polishing her past through a reworked tale permits Marambra to imagine a better history, much like the descriptions of Spanish history on the monuments in Barcelona. Marambra's personal history changes into a more positive memory, and slowly erases the negative aspects. Rather than serving as a way to work through the past, Marambra's memories skew the truth, and in doing so, she prevents her children from knowing what is reality and what is fiction. Just as governments wish for their citizens to forget the bad times in the past, so too does Marambra want her children to see her as more perfect than her true past (as known by Uxbal).

The act of remembering and forgetting is important in trauma theory. People who experience a national trauma such as war can fall on both sides of this memory spectrum. The particular moment that creates the trauma, whether at the individual or national level, may be remembered with absolute clarity or it may be forgotten as a way to cope with the horror. The collective realities of the witnesses and participants form history; however Caruth posits that history may no longer be "straightforwardly referential" with respect to experience and reference because the concept of history, taken together with trauma, will be resituated in such a way that it will permit "*history to rise where immediate understanding may not*" (11). The lack of understanding of violent events or the loss of a parent (which is more specific to the two works in this chapter) does not erase the moment's existence. Rather, the incident happens and is not readily comprehended by those who witnessed it. David K. Herzberger helps to illustrate this connection between the narratives that arise from history or that are fiction, for him, "Above all, historical and fictional narratives share the configurational element of temporality. Both fiction and

history are symbolic discourses to the extent that they mediate human perception of the workings of life” (7). Through fiction and history, we are able to understand the human condition, but only as it relates to the time at hand. Narratives lose their power of allegory when the collective memory and national trauma is too far in the past.

While it is part of the human condition to have relatives die, in the case of the protagonists in the book and the film, they were too young to fully comprehend what losing a parent meant. Their lack of understanding at the time does not preclude them from returning and trying to process the trauma when they are older. Nevertheless, childhood memory is often corrupted, distorted, or suppressed over time. Both Daniel and Uxbal share a need to remember the past in order to fully engage with their present reality. Memory becomes an intrusive element to everyday life, as the person is unable to control when the memory surfaces. In *Beautiful*, Uxbal’s fear that his children will end up alone and relying upon their own wits to survive drives his obsessive cash collecting. His ability to interact with the dead pushes him to atone for any lingering personal debts. By helping other spirits move on, Uxbal erases the elements of their past that hold them to the world of the living. This desire to die with a clean slate reflects the more general need within Spanish society to reconcile their traumatic past and move forward in the future.

The status as orphan is an important commonality between *La sombra del viento* and *Beautiful*. As previously mentioned, Daniel lost his mother, and Uxbal first lost his father, then his mother. Growing up without parents places both characters outside of the idealized representation of the Spanish family. The deceased parents reinforce the fact that the Civil War created absences in the family unit. Without a stereotypical family, the

gender roles are not rigidly defined. Despite Daniel's biological father introducing him to the Carax novel that functions as the impetus for the action of the story, the actual search is instigated and encouraged by Fermín Romero de Torres. In this respect, Daniel is raised by two men. However, the estrangement between Daniel and his father stems from the elder Sempere's inability to move past the loss of his wife.

The difference between their traumas is that Daniel's trauma revolves around forgetting and his father's around the inability to let go. According to Judith Meddick, speaking specifically about *La sombra del viento*:

The belated emergence of memory a generation later symbolizes the longevity of the official history of the civil war in Francoist Spain and the connected erasure of Republican identity. The novel reflects the inter-generational silence about the war and the ensuing repression, but intertwines it with the recovery of the past to language. While the repeated telling of the apparently forgotten history characterizes it as a traumatic event, instead of an overwhelming experience, which could not actually be registered when it occurred, the indication of the past as traumatic relates to its designation as unspeakable in the previous generation(s). (246)

Early in the novel, Daniel wakes from a nightmare, a common representation of psychological trauma, unable to recall his mother's face. Attempting to comfort him, his father tells him, "No te preocupes, Daniel. Yo me acordaré por los dos" (Zafón 93-94). Within the post war world, the onus of the collective memory rests squarely upon the parent. However, sustaining the memory alone ages and isolates his father, who promised his ailing wife that he would never talk to Daniel about the war, that "no dejaría que recordases nada de lo que sucedió" (Zafón 617-8). He relents a little, and answers Daniel's question about the prison at Montjuïc Castle sincerely and simply, much like

Uxbal does in *Beautiful* when he answers his children's question about why their grandfather fled to Mexico.

The representation of fatherhood portrayed in *La sombra del viento* fails to create a complete family. However, the lack of a female caretaker does not result in a hypermasculine narrator. Instead, Daniel seeks out female companionship and mother figures. Shortly after taking *La sombra del viento* home, Daniel begins to visit the Barceló household. Against the instructions he received from his father, Daniel shares *La sombra del viento* with Clara because she previously read other works by Carax and fell in love with the act of reading through them. Since his father is frozen in the past, Daniel fashions a new family, all while falling in love with the lovely Clara Barceló. When Daniel gets older and tries to pursue a romantic relationship with Clara, she turns him down, taking her music teacher as a lover. He rescues the Carax novel from her house, but loses both his first love and surrogate mother.

Daniel's pursuit of female love and companionship estranges him from his father. Unable and unwilling to remarry, Daniel's father remains rooted in the past. After Daniel's father shows him the Cemetery of Forgotten Books, the relationship between them becomes increasingly strained. Although it is reasonable that some estrangement would occur as children grow up and become more independent, the division between Daniel and his father directly relates to their common loss. For his father, Daniel's desire to have a mother figure is a threat to the memory of his wife. Similar to Daniel's tenth birthday, on his sixteenth, his father provides a demonstration of his love and affection by buying Victor Hugo's pen. Gifts serve as signifiers of his father's silence. Through the

totemic power of the object, the elder Sempere gives Daniel “the power of a writer” (Ellis 850). Since Daniel’s father avoids talking about the Civil War and carries memories for both himself and Daniel, the pen provides a new venue outside of oral history, that is to say the written word, to comprehend the past.

The clear detective aspect of *La sombra del viento* begins on this same day, as Daniel also meets Fermín and the disfigured man seeking Carax’s corpus of works to burn. These three men will provide venues for Daniel to engage with the truth and “to recover a lost past (and in particular a past expunged at the time of the Spanish Civil War) and in so doing establish a genealogy of fathers and sons” (Ellis 839). The search for paternal links is revealed when Daniel first summarizes the plot of *La sombra del viento*: “La novela relataba la historia de un hombre en busca de su verdadero padre, al que nunca había llegado a conocer y cuya existencia sólo descubriría merced a las últimas palabras que pronunciaba su madre en su lecho de muerte” (Zafón 153-5). Using the literary recourse of a novel within a novel, Zafón quickly hints at the final outcome: that Julián Carax is Daniel Sempere’s “verdadero padre” because he helps Daniel to become a writer (Ellis 850-1). At the close of the story, Daniel has three father figures the elder Sempere, Fermín, and Carax. In some respects, these men represent the holy trinity of father, son, Holy Ghost. Each guides Daniel in a specific way to discovering the mystery of Carax’s history.

The maternal is often eliminated or erased in *La sombra del viento*. Women in particular and femininity in general are sources of distress. Every woman in the novel causes Daniel some type of emotional harm. The first and most prominent is his mother,

whose death and imposed silence regarding the Civil War creates the point in the Möbius narrative where Daniel continues to experience trauma. The second is Clara Barceló, who does not attend Daniel's sixteenth birthday party, and when Daniel goes to confront her, he finds her in the throes of passion. In this instance, he loses his innocence, his heart is broken, and he also loses his surrogate mother figure Bernarda. The third betrayal is by Nuria, who intentionally misleads Daniel's investigation. Finally, there is Beatriz (Bea) Aguilar. She is engaged to a soldier, making her an unobtainable object of desire, much like Clara. Later, when Bea leaves her fiancé, she is the reason that Daniel permanently loses his friendship with her brother, Tomás. However, the trauma these women cause is necessary because it creates the impetus for Daniel to discover that the alleged body of Julián Carax found during the Civil War was actually that of his childhood friend Miquel Moliner, and that Carax lives with two aliases, the first as an embodiment of his own villain, Laín Coubert, and the second as Miquel. Eliminating the feminine replicates the patriarchal discourse that reduces women to their biologically gendered functions.

Other characters in *La sombra del viento* have painful relationships with women. The villain of the story, Fumero, has a relationship with his mother that is "pathologized" (Ellis 850), as she tries to use him to climb the social ladder. Her aspirations cause him to experience an extremely humiliating episode where he is clearly not welcome at a party. As an adult, Fumero adopts his mother's ruthless aspiration and is particularly dangerous due to his ambition. Carax's story parallels Daniel's in that both fall for the sister of a friend. Unlike Daniel, Carax unknowingly loves his half sister, Penélope Aldaya, and as a result, Mr. Aldaya keeps them apart and Carax believes she left him for someone else.

Returning to Daniel's initial summary of *La sombra del viento*, it is clear that Carax knows he is not Fortuni's son.¹¹ As a result, Antoni Fortuny batters his wife and leaves her a shell of her former self. Once Sophie believes that her son is dead, she moves to Argentina. Agency in finding the truth about the Spanish Civil War is not permitted from a living, female voice; only the written account of Nuria sets the record straight after her lifetime of deceiving others about Carax's whereabouts. *La sombra del viento* marks the female voice as one to be mistrusted and questioned. In fact, it is the actions of the mothers that create the conditions that result in Fumero and Carax's final battle in the crypt.

Much like the *chicas raras* discussed in Chapter 3, the mother figures in *La sombra del viento* and *Beautiful* have abandoned their children, either through death or illness. With only a ghostly figure of a mother, Daniel wanders the streets of Barcelona, searching for a new family. Daniel explores a city that is described as scarred and shadowy like the experiences of Spaniards after the war.¹² Franco's Spain did not allow for discussion of the vanquished. The serpentine streets of Barcelona serve as physical reminders of pain and suffering. Whereas Andrea gets lost in a womblike environment, Daniel seeks out the truth by exploring a city described with images of a brutalized body.

The wounds upon the physical landscape of the city from the war are not the only entities that bare scars. The human body can become disfigured or destroyed. These wounds on the city, often represented by the streets—one specific instance is “*aquel camino angosto, más cicatriz que calle*” (Zafón 103)—are replicated on victims of torture. However, it is not Daniel's father whose body shares the city's marks of abuse,

but rather Daniel's friend and surrogate father, Fermín. The torture and trauma wrought by the true villain of *La sombra del viento*, Javier Fumero, continues to affect Fermín psychologically. Just as Daniel cried out from a nightmare, Fermín screams as he relives the terror of his tormentor's viciousness. Faced with two father figures haunted by the specter of war, Daniel observes two equally damaged views of masculinity. Neither Daniel's father nor Fermín controlled the cause of their individual traumas, and the omnipresent fear of the main symbol of the Franco government—Fumero—leaves both men powerless to directly confront the situation. Together, both men are responsible for setting Daniel upon the path which reveals that Carax never died. Through Daniel's unraveling of the truth, identity and memory are resolved and recovered.

Remaining silent or using euphemisms versus talking directly about the horrors of the conflict is one key distinction between how different parental figures approach the topic of the Spanish Civil War in *La sombra del viento* and *Beautiful*. By examining the opening scene where Uxbal gives his daughter his mother's ring and tells her about his childhood fear of the sea, we see how storytelling and the spirit world intermingle. Uxbal's voiceover continues as the scene changes to a snow-filled wood. As his daughter Ana says in a voiceover "¿Papá? ¿Papá?," a young man steps into view. Later, we will find out that this man is Uxbal's father, who died shortly after his exile to Mexico. Uxbal's father tells him about how owls die and what existed in this space before the owls. The creation stories—one that is personal (how Uxbal and his daughter came to have the ring) and one that is mythical (how the snowy area came to be from water and wind)—weave history and memory. When Ana mentions that her mother did not believe

that the diamond in the ring was real, it is similar to questioning the truth of the individual's story. Conversely, Uxbal accepts a cigarette from his father, he does not question the creation myth of the space he occupies.

Violence is also a key part of understanding the trauma of the Spanish Civil War, especially when considering how family can mimic this phenomenon, since trauma can be transmitted or a consequence of the trauma within abusive or violent families as well. Certain portrayals of brutality are common in Spanish film, and Marsha Kinder points out some of the patterns of violent images include “the displacement of violence onto surrogate victims, especially animals, children, and women; and the displacement of violence from one sphere of power to another, between sex and politics, between private and public space, and between the body, the family, and the state” (*Blood Cinema* 137-8). Although Kinder speaks specifically about violence in film, similar imagery appears in literature, which we see in *La sombra del viento* with Fermín's tortured body and Carax's burned face. Not surprisingly, the most physical violence that occurs in *Beautiful* is directed against those not in a position of authority. We see the following images of abuse, most of it directed by someone with power over another with less power: Tito slapping Marambra across the face; Ekweme's body battered by police batons; Mateo's bruised and cut face from his mother's assault; the sweatshop workers' asphyxiated bodies in both the cellar and as they wash up on shore; Liwei's mutilated corpse on a hotel bed.

Many of the past issues that Uxbal must remember and confront are related to family. Despite the fact that his father died before Uxbal was born, this early orphaning

causes a trauma that must be revisited. His present is marked by his concerns as a father who must provide and protect his children. Lacking any true parental role models due to never knowing his father and his mother dying when he was very young, Uxbal does not want his children turning to the streets and their wits in order to survive. Uxbal represents a still traumatized nation as it navigates both the political and social changes brought about by globalization. The continual pursuit of money drives the plot (Garrett n.p.). Stacks of Euros reveal not only the grey, cash market and lack of traceability, but also Spain's entrance into the European Union. Much like Spain's civil war and peseta are a distant memory, the transition to a global economy and democracy is not without difficulties. Living on the margins of society, Uxbal takes advantage of his position in society as a citizen, and uses it to make a profit from the immigrants who provide the cheap labor for capitalism.

The global market has encouraged the consumption of luxury goods, but these goods are created and sold by those on the margins of society, as seen by the African and Chinese immigrants in *Beautiful*. Director Iñárritu provides visual cues that guide the viewer to the inequalities in the system. The most notable difference is with respect to housing. Each domicile reveals the class and ability to interact with the larger social structures. Even within the immigrant community, there is an unspoken hierarchy. The immigrants from Africa, such as Ekweme and his family, have crowded apartments with few amenities inside. The Chinese immigrants, at least those who work for Hai, are locked in a cold basement at night and sleep on the floor. Uxbal does slightly better for his family; they live in an apartment that shows its age. Marambra has an apartment with

bad wiring and leaking water. The character with the most comforts is Hai, the owner/ringleader of the sweatshop. Unlike Uxbal's dinner table where he serves cereal for dinner, Hai's family has plenty to eat. However, the relative comfort that Hai and his family enjoy is just as precarious as any other marginalized family, as evidenced by the raid on his home after the workers' bodies wash ashore.

Notably, only in death do these immigrant bodies come to be noticed by the wider public. When the immigrants engage in their unlicensed commerce, they fade into the background within the city. The complicit public permits their presence due to its demand for the appearance of luxury rather than true quality. In spite of the fact that selling counterfeit goods is illegal, many police officers accept bribes and turn a blind eye to this crime if given enough incentive, such as Zanc. As a result, bribery helps keep the immigrant labor invisible. Nevertheless, the immigrants' status outside the law makes them vulnerable. This vulnerability shows when several cops beat Ekweme after he tries to flee from his arrest. Scattering across the narrow streets of the Ramblas, these unseen bodies now become a spectacle. The general public who tacitly supported these deliverers of cheap goods now observes as their pursuit and stands back, ignoring its part in the violence inflicted upon Ekweme's body.¹³

Even more invisible than the African vendors, the Chinese immigrants sewing the knockoffs are kept under lock and key. Interestingly, many of these immigrants are male, and their place in front of the industrial sewing machines illustrates their feminized (and thus socially weakened) position. No worker dares reply to Hai when he screams at them for a batch of ruined purses, furthering their silent appearance in the film. Of all the

sweatshop workers, Lili is the only one who has a voice. She cares for Uxbal's children, but it is unclear whether she earns extra money for doing so, or if it is an extension of her servitude to Hai. From her interactions with Uxbal, we see that she speaks Spanish and works in a store, unlike the other immigrants who work quickly to burn illegal DVDs and sew counterfeit goods. In spite of her ability to interact with Spanish society, Lili is trapped in the basement along with all the other workers and becomes another body washed upon the shore.

The globalized version of capitalism mistreats individuals on many levels: race, gender, language, and sexual orientation. Each of the groups portrayed in *Beautiful* illustrates a society that thrives upon a system of exploitation. The explanation for the duality that emerges in a system that embraces and punishes is provided by the dirty cop, Zanc. When Uxbal confronts him about arresting the African vendors despite being paid a bribe, Zanc tells him a parable of a friend's son who was mauled by a tiger, despite the fact that the son fed and cared for them every day. The lesson for Uxbal, and the audience, is that a hungry tiger is a dangerous creature. Returning to the Zanc's parable, the description of the tame tigers turning against their handler also is reminiscent of the miscalculations about the power. According to Zanc, a hungry tiger is especially likely to turn on its handler when it has children. Ekweme goes to prison and is deported because Uxbal skimmed some of the money for Zanc's bribe, just as Zanc implies he skimmed some of the bribe amount for the other officers because of his daughter.

The hungry tiger of Zanc's parable embodies the motivations behind those in the capitalistic and globalized system. Driven by money, there is no identification with the

nation as a whole, but rather among family or ethnic groupings. As a nation, Spain can identify its immigrants easily by race and language. The African immigrants are clearly marked as outsiders to the larger Spanish society by their dress, race, and accents. Similarly, Hai, the sweatshop owner, has the most comfort but also the most marginalization—he is marked by his appearance, his accent, and his secret homosexual relationship with Liwei. Of all the hungry tigers in the movie, Hai has the most to lose if the system shuts down his way of life. Thus, when Hai demands that Uxbal tie up his loose ends, Hai must do so as well. When Hai kills Liwei, this act not only guarantees that he will be protected from any revelation about his involvement in the workers' deaths, but also will indemnify him from any chance that Liwei speaks about their relationship. Motivated by the need to save face in front of his family, Hai ensures his freedom by eliminating any voice that would cause him to lose power.

Interactions with the Spanish state in *Beautiful* emerge as relatively faceless and institutional. There are hospitals, subways, detention centers, jails, and schools; however, very few state agents have distinguishable characteristics or even names, except the corrupt one like Zanc.¹⁴ Just as Uxbal's family is dysfunctional, so too is the state. Marambra cannot afford the bipolar medications that would keep her condition stable, and Uxbal waits until the pain is too great (and therefore, the cancer too far gone to stop), because their lack of finances impedes their access to proper healthcare. The available housing appears dilapidated and in many cases, unsafe. Spain as a nation proves unable to provide for its citizens in *Beautiful*. Despite the Euros and access to the global market, the country struggles to provide for the most marginalized groups. Uxbal desperately saves

money for his children, so that they will not end up like him. As a nation, Spain appears to be trying to provide a better future, but like the paper bills that litter Uxbal's apartment, that future exists as fragile and easily lost.

It is precisely due to the fact that the paper money is so delicate that the future of Ana and Mateo seems even more uncertain. Since their father operated illegal business ventures, the money he earned remains outside of a bank. Cash provides anonymity, but it also opens the possibility that Ige will return to Senegal with her infant son to rejoin her husband. In a modern world where nationality can be changed with relative ease, and borders can be crossed within a matter of hours, loyalty is a shifting construct. Considering that Uxbal's insufficient bribe helped contribute to her husband's deportation, Ige has no reason to help Uxbal. On the other hand, female immigrant bodies are represented as maternal throughout the film, and given special attention as mothers.

Unlike the Spaniards who suffer from the national trauma of the Civil War, the immigrant women are single mothers because living in Spain provides an opportunity to make a better life for their families, not because of death. Their bodies are not sexualized, but rather viewed in terms of their biological function. Both Ige and Lili carry their infant sons with them as they traverse Barcelona. Naming their children also reveals the relationship each woman has to Spain; Ige and Ekweme name their son Samuel and Lili names her son Li. For the Senegalese couple, there is hope (at least from Ekweme) that Spain will become their home; with Lili's choice of a traditional Chinese name, there seems to be hope of returning to China. However, both of these infants are fatherless within the borders of Spain. Although the work that Ige and Lili perform is not well

paid—Ige says even if she cuts off a million chicken heads, she will never make enough money for Spain to be home—they symbolize hard work, determination, and motherhood.

Contrasted to these maternal, immigrant bodies are the sexualized bodies of Spanish women. The Spanish female body is made for pleasure and consumption. Marambra moonlights as a prostitute because her work as a massage therapist does not earn her enough money. The use of drugs and alcohol by Marambra and the Spanish women at the nightclub numb them to the reality and degradation around them. The dancers at the nightclub have prosthetic breasts on their buttocks and faces. Female Spanish bodies are clearly represented as being for the visual and sexual pleasure of the male and society. In a globalized world where power comes from money, everything is for sale, especially the female body. Indeed, Uxbal accepts this ridiculous display of the body as he seeks a way to escape from the reality of his actions that killed 25 people.

While the national trauma of the Spanish Civil War and being left an orphan are among some of the reasons why Uxbal is frozen in the past, he recognizes this pattern and tries to prevent his children from repeating his history. Finding a surrogate mother in Ige, Uxbal has found refuge in an influx of immigrants who do not live with the memories of the collective trauma. This contrasts sharply with Daniel Sempere in *La sombra del viento*, who decides to introduce his son to the Cemetery of Lost Books when he turns ten. Daniel is released from the memories of the Spanish Civil War, but he continues to encourage the transmission of the history by writing the story. Another contrast between the movie and the book is that the first serves as a medium where oral

tradition is more easily transmitted and the second where the written word is more logical.

Nevertheless, both *La sombra del viento* and *Biutiful* are marked by dead or absent mothers and lost fathers. The family unit is still fractured and marred by violence and abuse, much like the Spanish nation during and after their Civil War. Daniel is estranged from his father the more he seeks answers about Carax. The very nature of traumatic memory remains omnipresent in the novel, as one doctor remarks “Los recuerdos son peores que las balas” (Zafón 7519). Paradoxically, the desire to forget also coincides with life in the postwar, when Nuria writes to Daniel that, “Nada alimenta el olvido como una guerra” (Zafón 7538). In *Biutiful*, Marambra reinvents her history and memory, attempting to improve the past through a new narrative. In addition to the recurring theme of orphans, the portrayal of women reflects disquiet with the nation. Despite the Spanish Civil War’s end in 1939, the aftereffects and trauma still linger in the collective memories of the citizens.

Endnotes

1. Every major city I visited in 2010 had references to the Civil War, whether they were in museums or on historical markers. One specific instance comes to mind when I say that historical memory is whitewashed. While visiting La Sagrada Familia in 2010, the museum in the basement had pictures with captions that blamed the damage caused during the Civil War on “vandals.” A more apt description would have been that the responsible party for the damage to La Sagrada Familia was members of the Republican faction who did not approve of the Church’s influence and interference in Spanish affairs. There were small things like this throughout monuments, museums, and tourist attractions. It seemed as though the trauma of the Civil War still reverberated throughout the consciousness of the country, while an effort to minimize the wrongdoings of both sides was being written into the public memory.

2. The Spanish Civil War caused national trauma more so than other conflicts in Spain’s past. There are cultural products that involve the Carlist Wars, such as Julio Médem’s *Vacas* (1992), but the persistence and cultural trauma aspect of the Carlist Wars is not as widespread as the Spanish Civil War.

3. According to Nigel C. Hunt a collective memory is defined as “the joint memories held by a community about the past” which can include the memory of the survivor’s children who remember these events because of hearing the stories they are told (97). Through the inclusion of subsequent generations in the definition of collective memory, the lack of direct knowledge about the Spanish Civil War does not exclude someone from having a collective memory regarding the experience.

4. One novel in particular that has a similar detective theme is *Beatus Ille* by Muñoz Molina Antonio, where the protagonist searches for the presumed dead author Jacinto Solana, much like Daniel Sempere searches for the missing Julián Carax in *La sombra del viento*.

5. Some publicity material and synopses referred to Uxbal as a divorced father, but within the actual movie, there is no mention that Uxbal and Marambra are anything other than estranged.

6. *Inception* (2010), *Looper* (2012), *Pulp Fiction* (1994), *Fight Club* (1999), *Butterfly Effect* (2004), *The Usual Suspects* (1995), and *Donnie Darko* (2001) are just a few examples of this trend.

7. Indeed, Ruth Franklin calls this initial scene “disconnected” (47).

8. Many writers and artists have gravitated towards Albert Einstein's theory that time exists as a fourth dimension and subsequently approached chronological time in novel ways.

9. This connection between Freud and trauma theory has been made by Caruth and Smelser, among others.

10. Daniel Garrett explains that the opening scene in the following way, "What happens in between can be considered a flashback, life flashing before the eyes close for the last time" (n.p.).

11. Taking into consideration Carax's flight to France, there is an allusion to Republican exiles.

12. This wandering of the streets of Barcelona is reminiscent of Andrea's wandering around the labyrinthine streets in *Nada*, a connection made by Sara J. Brenneis (61-62).

13. It is a scene that brings to mind fox or game hunts.

14. I do not believe that Zanc is named out loud in the actual film, but his character is named in the credits.

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I used the social institution of family as a means to explore different power relationships, and have extrapolated how these allusions and depictions come to represent the political milieu of a nation. Starting with the Generation of 98, the questioning of stereotypical gender roles illustrates an abuse of authority. Examining the structure of the family reveals how power dynamics within a home mimic those of the country. Similarities exist between the families represented in fiction and the nation as a whole. Exploring the specific events of a failed courtship, the virgin/whore dichotomy, motherless daughters, controlling women, and traumatized families reveals that the microcosm of the family often reflects the political milieu of the state.

By finding fault with the socially idealized vision of the institution, other foundational establishments such as government and religion can be questioned. Although speaking specifically about postdictatorial literature, Irene Wirshing points out that “The metaphor of family and nation is a literary tool used to define the successes and failures of governments” (6). Since idealized versions of the family are a popular way to describe the functioning of the nation-state and loyalty to the government, the violence and power struggle that are portrayed in literature and media permit a criticism of the constructed institutions that create a society. Thus, the metaphors and allusions that are created through intertextual references provide a space to question authoritarian tendencies within a government.

As our world continues to become more interconnected, we must also ask ourselves: How do we question the nation-state without directly confronting the power

structures in place? After examining the representation of gender and family, inverting stereotypical gender roles provides a safe space to critique government, in part because the use of gender permits an oblique rather than direct confrontation regarding power dynamics. Relying upon images of women and femininity as subservient and weak, the masculine portrayal of gender breaks the taboo of biological sex rather than overtly questioning the abuses of government and power. Upturned gender portrayals confront social norms; however, as these constructed understandings of identity evolve so too will their representations in literature and film.

Examining works across several years helps to create an outline that illustrates inverting or distorting socially constructed conceptions of gender is not limited to one work, film, decade, or author. As Tiffany Trotman points out, “The concept of ‘family’ is not stagnant. It has changed, as have most things, over the course of time. We are living in a time that has redefined family in many variant ways and has seen a phenomenal change in what defines this social institution” (1). Just as the constitution of family has changed over the years, so too has government in Spain. In the past 100 years, there have been different forms of government in Spain, but as the most recent work (*Biutiful*) in the dissertation shows, there are still problems with both family and nation as we enter the twenty-first century.

My contribution to the topic of the allegory of family as nation is how gender in general and social stereotypes in particular affect the perception of the power dynamics within the family, and thus by extension, the nation as a whole. With family as a microcosm for the nation, literature and media that have this institution at their center

come to have deeper political and social meanings. Portraying families that are dysfunctional or abusive reveals unrest or unease with respect to the nation and government. Redefining family norms means that we can probe the unconscious or generalized gender stereotypes, and then, by extension, begin to question the systems and institutions that created those notions in the first place. We find ourselves accepting weird women who act like men, especially when strange times are at hand, such as war or conflict. Gender proves a useful category to examine these dynamics, especially since the conception of what constitutes a mainstream family continues to be redefined. The relationships and power dynamics within a family will continue to provide a way to look at the broader relationship between authority and citizen, even as the composition of those families change over time.

Works Cited

- Abel, Elizabeth, Miranne Hirsh, and Elizabeth Langland. "Introduction." *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development*. London: UP of New England, 1983. 1-19. Print.
- Alexander, Jeffrey C. "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma." *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*. Eds. Jeffrey C. Alexander, et al. Berkeley: U of California P, 2004. 1-30. Print.
- Anderson, Christopher L., and Lynne Vespe Sheay. "Ana María Matute's *Primera memoria*: A Fairy Tale Gone Awry." *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 14.1 (1989): 1-14. *JSTOR*. 27 Nov 2011.
- Arendt, Hannah. "Totalitarianism in Power." *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt, Inc., 1976. 389-459. Print.
- Arkininstall, Christine. *Histories, Cultures, and National Identities: Women Writing Spain*. Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 2009. Print.
- Bergmann, Emilie. "Reshaping the Canon: Intertextuality in Spanish Novels of Female Development." *Anales de la literatura española contemporánea* 12.1/2 (1987): 141-56. *JSTOR*. 27 Nov 2011.
- "Bildungsroman, n." *Oxford English Dictionary (OED) Online*. March 2013. Online Journal Access.
- Biutiful*. Dir. Alejandro González Iñárritu. Perf. Javier Bardem and Maricel Álvarez. Roadside Attractions, 2011. Netflix Streaming.
- Blake, Linnie. "Introduction: Traumatic Events and International Horror Cinema." *The Wounds of Nations: Horror Cinema, Historical Trauma, and National Identity*. New York: Manchester UP, 2008. 1-16. Print.
- Brenneis, Sara. J. "Dictatorship Noir: Post-War Spanish History in Carlos Ruiz Zafón's *La sombra del viento*." *Romance Studies* 26.1 (Jan 2008): 61-73. *MLA International Bibliography*. 24 Jan 2013.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2003. Kindle Edition.
- Byron, Glennis and Gordon Byron. "Barcelona Gothic: Carlos Ruiz Zafón's *La sombra del viento* and the Omnipresent Past." *Journal of Romance Studies* 12.1 (Spring 2012): 72-84. *MLA International Bibliography*. 24 Jan 2013.

- Carballo Calero, R. "A temática galega na obra de Valle-Inclán." *Grial* 2.3 (1958): 1-15. *JSTOR*. 8 Feb 2013.
- Carlston, Erin G. *Thinking Fascism: Sapphic Modernism and Fascist Modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1998. Print.
- Carr, Raymond. "Liberalism and Reaction 1833-1931." *Spain: A New History*. Ed. Raymond Carr. New York: Oxford UP, 2000. 205-42. Print.
- Caruth, Cathy. "Unclaimed Experience: Trauma and the Possibility of History (Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*)." *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1996. 10-24. Print.
- Castro Delgado, Luisa. "Los personajes masculinos en el relato galante de Valle-Inclán." *Anales de la literatura española contemporánea* 28.3 (2003): 518-38. *JSTOR*. 8 Feb 2013.
- Chambers, Deborah. *Representing the Family*. Cambridge, MA: Athenaeum Press, 2001. Print.
- Cooper, Sara E. "Introduction: Questioning Family Dynamics and Family Discourse in Hispanic Literature and Film." *The Ties that Bind: Questioning Family Dynamics and Family Discourse in Hispanic Literature*. Ed. Sara E. Cooper. Landham, MD: UP of America, 2004. 1-42. Print.
- Cría cuervos*. Dir. Carlos Saura. Perf. Geraldine Chaplin, Monica Randall, Ana Torrent, Florinda Chico and Conchita Perez. Janus Films, 1976. VHS.
- Cruz-Cámara, Nuria. "'Chicas Raras' en dos novelas de Carmen Martín Gaité y Carmen Laforet." *Hispanófila* 139 (Sept 2003): 97-110. *MLA International Bibliography*. 19 Apr 2012.
- Davies, Catherine. "'Venus impera'? Women and Power in *Femeninas* and *Epitalamio*." *Ramon del Valle-Inclán: Questions of Gender*. Eds. Carol Maier and Roberta L. Salper. Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1994. 129-53. Print.
- De eso no se habla*. Dir. María Luisa Bemberg. Perf. Marcello Mastroianni and Luisina Brando. Sony Pictures, 1993. VHS.
- Diez, Ricardo. *El desarrollo estético de la novela de Unamuno*. Madrid: Colección Nova Scholar, 1976. Print.
- Dolan, Frances E. "Battered Women, Petty Traitors, and the Legacy of Coverture." *Feminist Studies* 29.2 (2003): 249-77. *JSTOR*. 10 Feb 2011.

- Dougherty, Dru. *Valle-Inclán y la Segunda República*. Spain: Pre-Textos, 1986. Print.
- Duncan, Nancy. "Renegotiating Gender and Sexuality in Public and Private Spaces." *Bodyspace: destabilizing geographies of gender and sexuality*. Ed. Nancy Duncan. London: Routledge, 1996. 127-45. Print.
- Ellis, Robert Richmond. "Reading the Spanish Past: Library Fantasies in Carlos Ruiz Zafón's *La sombra del viento*." *Bulletin of Spanish Studies: Hispanic Studies and Researchers on Spain, Portugal, and Latin America* 83.6 (Sep 2006): 839-54. *MLA International Bibliography*. 24 Jan 2013.
- El verano de la señora Forbes*. Dir. Jaime Humberto Hermosillo. Perf. Hanna Schygulla, Francisco Gattorno and Alexis Castanares. Fox Lorber Home Video, 1989. VHS.
- Evangelista, Matthew. "Virginia Woolf's Purse." *Gender, Nationalism, and War: Conflict on the Movie Screen*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011. 1-24. Print.
- "Extended family, adj, sociological." *Oxford English Dictionary Online (OED)*. March 2013. Online Journal Access.
- "Femme fatal, n." *Oxford English Dictionary Online (OED)*. March 2013. Online Journal Access.
- Ferguson, Mary Anne. "The Female Novel of Development and the Myth of Psyche." *The Voyage In*. Eds. Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsh, and Elizabeth Langland. London: UP o New England, 1983. 228-43. Print.
- Fichter, William L. "Primicias estilísticas de Valle-Inclán." *Revista Hispánica Moderna* 8.4 (1942): 289-98. *JSTOR*. 8 Feb 2013.
- Figueroa, Ana B. "*Nada* de Carmen Laforet: La pulsión lesbica como verdad no sospechada." *Alpha: Revista de Artes, Letras y Filosofía* 22 (July 2006): 169-81. *MLA International Bibliography*. 4 Apr 2012.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France 1978-1979*. Ed. Michel Senellart, François Ewald & Alessandro Fontana. Trans. Graham Burchell. Great Britain: Palgrave, 2008. Print.
- Franklin, Ruth. "*Biutiful*, by Alejandro González Iñárritu." *Salmagundi: A Quarterly of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 172/173 (Fall 2011/Winter 2012): 41-50. *MLA International Bibliography*. 24 Jan 2013.

- Gabriele, John P. "From Sex to Gender: Toward Feminocentric Narrative in Unamuno's *La tía Tula* or 'Cómo se hace una novela feminista.'" *Hispanic Journal* 20.1 (1999): 105-117. Print.
- Garrett, Daniel. "Not Beautiful but Brutal, Ugly Facts and Transcendence in Iñárritu's Film *Biutiful*: The Death of the Body, the Survival of the Spirit." *Offscreen* 15.8 (2011): n.p. *MLA International Bibliography*. 24 Jan 2013.
- Ginsborg, Paul. "The Politics of the Family in Twentieth-Century Europe." *Contemporary European History* 9.3 (2000): 411-444. *JSTOR*. 5 Dec 2011.
- Glotfelty, Cheryll. "Introduction: Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis." *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. Eds. Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1996. xv-xxxvii. Google Scholar Preview.
- González del Valle, Luis T. *La ficción breve de Valle-Inclán: Hermenéutica y estrategias narrativas*. Barcelona: Anthropos Editorial del Hombre, 1990. Print.
- Grupp, William J. "Contemporary Spanish Literary and Intellectual Life." *The Modern Language Journal* 45.4 (April 1961): 156-60. *JSTOR*. 27 Nov 2011.
- Herr, Richard. "Flow and Ebb 1700-1833." *Spain: A New History*. Ed. Raymond Carr. New York: Oxford UP, 2000. 173-204. Print.
- Herzberger, David K. *Narrating the Past: Fiction and Historiography in Postwar Spain*. London: Duke UP, 1995. Print.
- Hitchens, Christopher. *Hitch-22: A Memoir*. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2010. Kindle Edition.
- Horowitz, Renée B. "Unamuno's View of Women." *Letras Femeninas* 1.1 (Primavera 1975): 56-60. *JSTOR*. 24 Nov 2012.
- Hunt, Nigel C. *Memory, War, and Trauma*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2010. Print.
- Johnson, Roberta. *Gender and Nation in the Spanish Modernist Novel*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt UP, 2003. Print.
- . "Gender and Nation in Spanish Fiction Between the Wars (1898-1936)." *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 21.1 (Fall 1996): 167-79. *JSTOR*. 24 Nov 2012.

- Kaplan, Ann E. "Is the Gaze Male?" *Feminism and Film*. Ed. Ann E. Kaplan. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000. 119-38. Print.
- Kaplan, Ann E. and Ben Wang, eds. "Introduction: From Traumatic Paralysis to the Force Field of Modernity." *Trauma and Cinema: Cross-Cultural Explorations*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong UP, 2004. 1-22. Print.
- Kebadze, Nino. *Romance and Exemplarity in Post-War Spanish Women's Narratives*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Tamesis, 2009. Print.
- Kim, Wha Sook. *La imagen de la familia como alegoría de la Nación en el teatro argentino de la segunda mitad del siglo XX*. Diss. University of California at Irvine, 2003. *DAI* 64.3 (Sept 2003): item DA3085982. *Section A: The Humanities and Social Sciences*. Electronic delivery. 24 Oct 2011.
- . "Telarañas: La familia autoritaria, un espacio de de-socialización y escuela de instintos perversos." *Alba de América: Revista Literaria* 25.47-48 (2006): 419-28. Electronic delivery of printed article. 24 Oct 2011.
- Kinder, Marsha. "The Political Development of Individual Consciousness." *Film Quarterly* 32.3 (1979): 14-25. *JSTOR*. 26 Feb 2011.
- . "Sacrifice and Massacre: On the Cultural Specificity of Violence." *Blood Cinema: The Reconstruction of National Identity in Spain*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1993. 136-96. Print.
- Labanyi, Jo. *Gender and Modernization in the Spanish Realist Novel*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000. Print.
- . *Spanish Literature: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010. Kindle Edition.
- Laforet, Carmen. *Nada*. 1st ed. Ediciones Destino, 1945. Barcelona: Ediciones de Bolsillo, 1997. Print.
- Lima, Robert. *Ramón del Valle-Inclán: An Annotated Bibliography*. London: Grant & Cutler, 1999. Google EBook Preview.
- López-Calvo, Ignacio. "God and Trujillo": *Literary and Cultural Representations of the Dominican Dictator*. Florida: UP of Florida, 2005. Print.
- Madeinusa*. Dir. Claudia Llosa. Perf. Magaly Solier, Carlos J. de la Torre, Yiliana Chong and Juan Ubaldo Huamán, 2006. Netflix Streaming.

- Magnarelli, Sharon. *Home is where the (He)art is: The Family Romance in Late Twentieth-Century Mexican and Argentine Theater*. Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 2008. Print.
- Martínez, Alejandro. "La ideología patriarcal y el estado de la mujer en la obra de Unamuno." *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 16.2 (Winter 1992): 253-65. *JSTOR*. 24 Nov 2012.
- Matute, Ana María. *Primera memoria*. 1960. Barcelona: Ediciones Destino, 1984. Print.
- Mayans Natal, María Jesús. "La familia en cinco obras de la narrativa contemporánea española." *Narrativa feminista española de posguerra*. Madrid: Editorial Pliegos, 1991. 25-75. Print.
- Mayock, Ellen C. *The "Strange Girl" in Twentieth-Century Spanish Novels Written by Women*. New Orleans: UP of the South, 2004. Print.
- Meddick, Judith. "The Telling of Memory in *La sombra del viento* by Carlos Ruiz Zafón." *Romance Studies* 28.4 (Nov 2010): 246-58. *MLA International Bibliography*. 24 Jan 2013.
- "Melodrama, n." *Oxford English Dictionary Online (OED)*. March 2013. Online Journal Access.
- Mennell, D. Jan. "Eloquent Elisions: The Expressive Play of Silence in María Luisa Bemberg's *De eso no se habla*." *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 27.1 (2002): 157-75. Print.
- Mizrahi, Irene. *El trauma del franquismo y su testimonio crítico en Nada de Carmen Laforet*. Newark, Delaware: Juan de la Cuesta, 2010. Print.
- Moix, Ana María. *Julia*. Barcelona: Editorial Seix Barral, 1970. Print.
- Morcillo, Aurora G. *True Catholic Womanhood: Gender Ideology in Franco's Spain*. Dekalb: Northern Illinois UP, 2000. Print.
- "Nanny state, n." *Oxford English Dictionary Online (OED)*. March 2013. Online Journal Access.
- Neal, Arthur G. *National Trauma and Collective Memory: Major Events in the American Century*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998. Print.
- Newton, Judith Lowder. "Introduction: Power and the Ideology of 'Women's Sphere'." *Women, Power, and Subversion*. Athens: The U of Georgia P, 1981. 1-22. Print.

- “Nuclear family, n.” *Oxford English Dictionary (OED) Online*. March 2013. Online Journal Access.
- Núñez Sabarís, Joaquín. “Las anotaciones autógrafas de ‘Femeninas’.” *Anales de la literatura española contemporánea* 28.3 (2003): 584-607. *JSTOR*. 8 Feb 2013.
- O’Donovan, Katherine. “Defences for Battered Women Who Kill.” *Journal of Law and Society* 18.2 (1991): 219-40. *JSTOR*. 10 Feb 2011.
- Ordóñez, Elizabeth. “Forms of Alienation in Matute’s ‘La Trampa’.” *Journal of Spanish Studies: Twentieth Century* 4.3 (1976): 179-98. *JSTOR*. 27 Nov 2011.
- Paolini, Claire J. “Religious Symbolism in the Modernism of Valle-Inclán.” *Valle-Inclán’s Modernism: Use and Abuse of Religious and Mystical Symbolism*. Spain: Ediciones Albatros Hispanofilia, 1986. 79-100. Print.
- Parker, Andrew, et al, eds. “Introduction.” *Nationalisms & Sexualities*. New York: Routledge, 1992. 1-18. Print.
- “Paternalistic, adj.” *Oxford English Dictionary (OED) Online*. March 2013. Online Journal Access.
- Peixoto, Marta. “*Family Ties: Female Development in Clarice Lispector*.” *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development*. Eds. Elizabeth Abel, Miranne Hirsh, and Elizabeth Langland. London: UP of New England, 1983. 287-303. Print.
- Pérez-Sánchez, Gema. *Queer Transitions in Contemporary Spanish Culture*. Albany: State U of New York P, 2007. Print.
- Perriam, Chris, Michael Thompson, Susan Frank, and Vanessa Knights. *A New History of Spanish Writing, 1939 to the 1990s*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000. Print.
- Pilar Rodríguez, María. “La impropiedad de lo extraño: El desarrollo femenino como creación en *Nada*.” *Vidas Im/propias: Transformaciones del sujeto femenino en la narrativa española contemporánea*. Lafayette, IN: Purdue Research Foundation, 2000. 21-46. Print.
- Pisters, Patricia and Wim Staat. “Introduction.” *Shooting the Family*. Eds. Patricia Pisters and Wim Staat. Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP, 2005. Print.
- Poole, Ross. “National identity.” *Nation and Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990. 67-74. Print.

- Pratt, Annis, et al. *Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1981. Print.
- Rancière, Jacques. "Wrong: Politics and Police." *Dis-agreement: Politics and Philosophy*. Trans. Julie Rose. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1999. 21-42. Print.
- Reher, David S. *Perspectives on the Family in Spain, Past and Present*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997. Print.
- Rich Jr., S. Grover. "Franco Spain: A Reappraisal." *The Academy of Political Science* 67.3 (1952): 378-98. *JSTOR*. 5 Dec 2011.
- Richards, Michael. "Constructing the Nationalist State: Self-Sufficiency and Regeneration in the Early Franco Years." *Nationalism and the Nation in the Iberian Peninsula: Competing and Conflicting Identities*. Ed. Clare Mar-Molinero and Angel Smith. Berg: Oxford, 1996. 149-67. Print.
- Rodgers, Jaqueline McLeod. *Aspects of the Female Novel*. Wakefield, NH: Longwood Academic, 1991. Print.
- Rodríguez-Ferrer, R.M. et al., "Revisión sobre mortalidad materna en España." *Ilustre Colegio Oficial de Enfermería de Madrid*. 26 Nov 2009. Pdf document on Web. 6 April 2013.
- Romero, Denzil. *La tragedia del Generalísimo*. Barcelona: Editorial Argos Vergara, 1983. Print.
- Sanchez Lopez, Rosario. *Mujer española, una sombra del destino en lo universal: Trayectoria histórica de Sección Femenina de Falange (1934-1977)*. Murcia: U de Murcia, 1990. Print.
- Sandoval, Adriana. *Los dictadores y la dictadura en la novela hispanoamericana 1851-1978*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1989. Print.
- Saona, Margarita. "Do We Still Need the Family to Imagine the Nation? National Family Romances by Latin American Women Writers." *Disciplines on the Line: Feminist Research on Spanish, Latin American, and U.S. Latina Women*. Eds. Anne J. Cruz, Rosilie Hernández-Pecoraro, and Joyce Tolliver. Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 2003. 207-31. Print.
- . *Novelas familiares: Figuraciones de la nación en la novela latinoamericana contemporánea*. Argentina: Beatriz Viterbo, 2004. Print.

- Schultheis, Alexandra W. *Regenerative Fictions: Postcolonialism, Psychoanalysis, and the Nation as Family*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. Print.
- Sedwick, Frank. "Unamuno and Womanhood: His Theater." *Hispania* 43.3 (Sep. 1960): 309-13. *JSTOR*. 24 Nov 2012.
- Shanley, Mary Lyndon. "Miguel de Unamuno: Death and Politics in the Work of a Twentieth-Century Philosopher." *Polity* 9.3 (Spring 1977): 257-78. *JSTOR*. 6 Jan 2013.
- Sharp, Joanne P. "Gendering Nationhood: A Feminist Engagement with National Identity." *Bodyspace: destabilizing geographies of gender and sexuality*. Ed. Nancy Duncan. London: Routledge, 1996. 97-108. Print.
- "Shrew, n.2 and adj." *Oxford English Dictionary Online (OED)*. March 2013. Online Journal Access.
- Sinclair, Alison. "Identifications, Abjects and Objects: Myths of Gender and Nation in the Early 20th-Century Spanish Novel." *Spanishness in the Spanish Novel and Cinema of the 20th-21st Century*. Ed. Cristina Sánchez-Conejero. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007. 181-90. Print.
- . *Uncovering the Mind: Unamuno, the unknown and the vicissitudes of self*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2001. Print.
- Smelser, Neil J. "Psychological Trauma and Cultural Trauma." *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*. Eds. Jeffrey C. Alexander, et al. Berkeley: U of California P, 2004. 31-59. Print.
- Sommer, Doris. *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1991. Print.
- Speratti Piñero, E. S. "Valle-Inclán y México." *Historia Mexicana* 8.1 (1958): 60-80. *JSTOR*. 8 Feb 2013.
- Stimpson, Catherine R. "Doris Lessing and the Parables of Growth." *The Voyage In*. Eds. Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsh, and Elizabeth Langland. London: UP of New England, 1983. 186-205. Print.
- Stone, Rob. *Spanish Cinema*. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education Limited, 2002. Print.
- Sullivan, Constance A. "Spanish Literary History and the Politics of Gender." *The Journal of Midwest Modern Language Association* 23.2 (Autumn 1990): 26-41. *JSTOR*. 24 Nov 2012.

- Taylor, Diana. "The Theater of Operations: Performing Nation-ness in the Public Sphere." *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War."* Durham: Duke UP, 1997. 91-117. Print.
- Trotman, Tiffany, ed. "Introduction." *The Changing Spanish Family: Essays on New Views in Literature, Cinema, and Theater.* London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2011. 1-7. Print.
- Ueno, Chizuko. "The Dilemma of the Nation-State's Gender Strategy." *Nationalism and Gender.* Trans. Beverley Yamamoto. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2004. 43-48. Print.
- Unamuno, Miguel de. *Dos madres. Tres Novelas Ejemplares y un Prólogo.* 13th ed. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe S.A., 1972. 29-72. Print.
- . *El Marqués de Lumbría. Tres Novelas Ejemplares y un Prólogo.* 2nd ed. Buenos Aires: Colección Austral Espasa-Calpe, 1941. 69-88. Print.
- . *Nada menos que todo un hombre. Tres Novelas Ejemplares y un Prólogo.* 2nd ed. Buenos Aires: Colección Austral Espasa-Calpe, 1941. 89-149. Print.
- . *La tía Tula.* Madrid: Salvat Editores con Alianza Editorial, 1969. Print.
- Valle-Inclán, Ramon de. "Tula Varona." *Historias de amor.* Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Ercilla, 1937. 105-116. Print.
- "Varón." *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española.* 23rd ed. 2010. Webpage.
- Vickers, Jill. "Thinking about Violence." *Gender, Race, and Nation: A Global Perspective.* Eds. Vanaja Dhruvarajan and Jill Vickers. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2002. 222-46. Print.
- White, Sarah L. "Liberty, Honor, Order: Gender and Political Discourse in Nineteenth-Century Spain." *Constructing Spanish Womanhood: Female Identity in Modern Spain.* Eds. Victoria Lorée Enders and Pamela Beth Radcliff. Albany: State U of New York P, 1999. 233-57. Print.
- Whittredge, Ruth. "Los libros de cuentos de Valle-Inclán." *Grial* 9.32 (1971): 216-21. *JSTOR.* 8 Feb 2013.
- Wirshing, Irene. *National Trauma in Postdictatorial Latin American Literature.* New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2009. Print.

Young, Alison. “‘Don’t you fucking look at me!’: Rape and cinematic revenge.” *The Scene of Violence: Cinema, Crime, Affect*. New York: Routledge, 2010. 43-74. Print.

Zafón, Carlos Ruiz. *La Sombra del Viento*. Barcelona: Vintage Español & Random House, Inc., 2009. Kindle Edition.

Zimmerman, Bonnie. “Exiting from Patriarchy: The Lesbian Novel of Development.” *The Voyage In*. Eds. Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsh, and Elizabeth Langland. London: UP of New England, 1983. 244-57. Print.