

# GENDER REPRESENTATION AND TEXTUAL STRATEGIES IN THE FILMS OF PILAR MIRÓ

by

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## ABSTRACT.

This thesis aims to demonstrate the interrelatedness of the rebellious form and content of Pilar Miró's first six films - La petición (1976), El crimen de Cuenca (1979), Gary Cooper que estás en los cielos (1980), Hablamos esta noche (1982), Werther (1986) and Beltenebros (1991). The Introduction provides a brief outline of the director's life and an insight into some of the core themes of her cinema, summaries of relevant theoretical arguments from psychoanalysis and gender theory in the context of sociology and film studies and an outline of the situation of men and women in Spain vis-à-vis the law, social prejudices, attitudes to sexuality and work. Part I (chapters 1-6) examines gender issues and character portrayal in each of the films in chronological order using these theories. Part II deals with the metafictional textual strategies of Miró's works. Chapter 7 outlines features of metafiction, such as stylistic intertextuality, literal intertextuality, *mise-en-abîme* devices and other cinematic strategies which highlight the constructed nature of the films by laying bare the processes of fictional creation and disturb the viewer, making him or her an active reader, who cannot acquiesce in a passive spectatorial position. It also discusses the issue of authorship in film to posit that Miró abdicates from the position of omniscient auteur through intertextuality and her use of assistant authors, another strategy of metafictional, postmodern art. Chapters 8 and 9 look at specific examples of intertextuality. The first section of chapter 8 examines the thematic and stylistic influence of the American artist, Edward Hopper, on the setting of Beltenebros and José Gutiérrez Solana's *tremendista* paintings as a visual reference for El crimen de Cuenca: the chapter also takes into account the joint stylistic influence of Carol Reed's The Third Man (1949) on Beltenebros. The second section of chapter 8 applies

theories of historiographic metafiction and intrahistory to Miró's depiction of a miscarriage of justice in the Spanish legal system and the imprisonment of two innocent men in El crimen de Cuenca. Chapter 9 outlines a special instance of intertextuality in Miró's employment of stars. Using recent work in star studies, I consider the contributions and implications of her choice of two actresses - Ana Belén and Patsy Kensit - to La petición and Beltenebros. The conclusion suggests that, while Miró demonstrates an active interest in and sympathy for the victims of oppression, her use of intertextuality may be unconscious and that this thesis presents just one possible argument or interpretation. An interview with Miró in 1995 is included in an Appendix, as are relevant stills of Ana Belén.

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## INTRODUCTION.

### PILAR MIRÓ.

Pilar Miró is one of Spain's best known woman directors, who has also been involved in politics as the Directora de Cinematografía del Ministerio de Cultura under the PSOE government of 1982-1985, and became Director General of Radio Televisión Española (RTVE) in 1986. The 'Ley Miró' (December, 1983), recently revoked by the Partido Popular government, protected and promoted Spanish cinema by providing funding (Hopewell: 225-6; Méndez: 244; Seguin: 76, 79-80). Nevertheless, she has made it clear in interviews that she associated power not so much with political influence as with the making of films (Pérez Millán: 209; del Pozo, 1986: 108). Miró is perhaps not best-known for her measures to protect Spanish cinema, but her rebellious image (Amilibia, 1981: 54) and unconventional attitudes in life and her films which have attracted the scorn of many traditionally minded Spaniards.

Two of the six films that I will analyze have been the subjects of scandal in one way or another. The censors objected to La petición (1976), a film based on Zola's 'Pour une nuit d'amour', especially the crude nature of a scene between the two characters Teresa (Ana Belén) - the subversive daughter of strict parents - and Miguel (Emilio Gutiérrez Caba) - her lover and the housekeeper's son - in Teresa's bedroom; as well as there being the presence of sado-masochism in this scene, Miguel dies by accidentally knocking his head on Teresa's headboard while she strives to reach orgasm. The incident was full of the nudity of the *destape*, but it was an unconventional and dangerous scene for a Spanish film at the time: afraid of changes in Spain, the censors demanded that the scene be cut, a difficulty which Miró and Pablo del Amo managed to circumvent.<sup>1</sup> The scandal was exacerbated by the fact that the film's director was a woman, but Miró, backed by her

Comparable to her films, Miró's private life is unconventional, especially the birth of her son outside of marriage in 1981 (15). She is noted for being stubborn, loyal and complex, although she is tender underneath her façade of independence (10-11). Part of her daring, fighting spirit in adult life arose from her upbringing in a hostile atmosphere owing to a dearth of parental affection and the aftermath of the Civil War (21, 29), which provided her first experience of repression. Many of Miró's perceptions of hostility resulted from her relationship with her father, rivalry with her brother and the belief that she was an unwanted child (Pérez Millán: 24; Montero, 1978: 6, 8, 10). Until she was four years old, Miró slept in her parents' room and would often fall asleep holding her mother's hand. However, her father would later separate their hands which particularly angered Miró (Pérez Millán: 21-22). A professional lieutenant colonel posted in Madrid when Spain split into Republican and Nationalist zones, he was embittered and never spoke to his children: the young Miró felt quite afraid of her father, especially when he shouted at her for missing school through illness. He did not hold militant beliefs, but was nevertheless tried by the Nationalists after the war and spent some time in jail, which Miró's family never discussed openly. Furthermore, as a military man, he was resigned to unquestioning, soldierly discipline (24). She describes her father as an image of oppression for the family in addition to his own self-constraint: even her mother, who had a naturally happy personality, could only be jolly or relax when he was out. As the above comments on the young Miró's sleeping habits show, her only source of affection came from her relationship with her mother, who never kissed her, but often felt her forehead to see whether or not she had a fever (25, 35). Her parents preferred her elder brother, with whom she constantly fought. When her father died in 1956, Miró's brother wanted to take his place; however, this was impossible because he was posted to Zaragoza after military

distribution company, defended the relevance of the scenes to the plot and two months later, the film was released without cuts (Pérez Millán: 108-109). Above all, Miró disliked the impression people could have that she was interested in eroticism and nothing else (Benito González: 26), and in fact rejected a number of projects just after she had made La petición on the grounds that the production companies were only interested in sex scenes (Arnaldo: 58-60; Santamarina, 1978).

Miró was tried twice in Madrid and both trials received full media attention. Owing to the supposed insults to the Civil Guard in El crimen de Cuenca (1979) - a film about a miscarriage of justice and torture - she was the first ever civilian summoned by a military court, which was unconstitutional, although her lawyer eventually managed to transfer the proceedings to a civil court (Pérez Millán: 15, 151). The Dirección General de Cinematografía in the Ministerio de Cultura failed to grant El crimen its exhibition license on time, even though such licenses were not difficult to obtain in the wake of the promulgation of the new Constitution (1978) which had abolished censorship. El crimen was chosen to represent Spain at the Berlin Film Festival, but owing to rumors, the Juzgado Militar Permanente (número 5) ordered the confiscation of copies of the film amidst protests from Miró that the confiscation of the film was against her constitutional rights. The second trial resulted from Miró's supposedly fraudulent investment of public funds in RTVE (ABC, 1992; Pérez Millán: 148-149; Seguin: 76), an allegation based on the 1988 publication of discrepancies in expenses invoices: the PSOE did not support Miró and both the political opposition and authorities within the state-owned RTVE maximized the scandal. Miró paid back the money she had supposedly misspent on clothes for herself and presents and resigned in 1989, but her trial in 1992 resulted in her acquittal by Madrid's provincial court (Pérez Millán: 237-239).

training. Miró did not allow her brother to control her (28-29) and the rift between them grew over the years, especially on account of her conflicts with the Establishment.

Owing to her conservative family, Miró attended a convent school where the nuns concentrated on instilling notions of good and evil and religious ideals into the girls rather than the pursuit of academic excellence (29). As she grew older, the nuns stressed the importance of good behaviour and chastity, although sex remained a hidden subject (34). She accepted the traditional (and sexist) advice to study an arts *bachillerato* and witnessed yet more chauvinism at home because her family refused to give her a model horse for Reyes, a toy they said was fit only for boys (Pérez Millán: 38-39; Vicent, 1980: 53). When Miró studied law at university for four years to oppose her family's wishes (La actualidad española, 1978a), she decided to break with her past and her excessively repressive education (Blanco, 1987: 73) and came to the realization that the nuns' teachings were not necessarily correct:

Empezaron a cambiarme los conceptos, a darme cuenta de que lo que consideraba malo era bueno y lo que consideraba bueno era malo. [...] es bastante definitoria de una época... Exactamente de la generación de los años cuarenta. [...] que, en gran proporción, nos habíamos educado en colegios de monjas y de curas (Pérez Millán: 39-40).

Miró's parents allowed her to go to the cinema by herself at the age of 9 and she would watch films over and over again (36). Cinema became an emotional substitute for the young Miró, who liked all genres but pinpointed certain films: Bambi, Frankenstein movies and Little Women, especially the independent character Jo and the timid Beth: “[la] veía constantemente. Siempre que la daban. Y me fascinaba, lloraba” (38). While studying in Zaragoza, Miró joined a cinema club and came into contact with Buñuel's films, noticing the importance of more complex genres and movements, such as art cinema

(42). She left university without finishing her degree to work in Spanish Television and to study film in Madrid: she was most persistent and even visited the director's office at RTVE to request work, who eventually allowed her to gain some practical experience on news programmes as an editorial assistant, where she encountered chauvinistic prejudices (Bustamante, 1971: 3-4; Pastor, 1976; Pérez Millán: 47). For example, women could not enter the production control room because they would distract male employees from their duties (Berrocal: 52; Vicent: 53). Miró circumvented this ban thanks to José de las Casas, who granted her permission to enter, even though she worked on the latest edition of the news and there were few in the control room late at night (Pérez Millán: 47). RTVE also declared that directing and producing programmes was not woman's work (Berrocal: 52) and Miró felt that RTVE classified women as mentally retarded owing to their sex (Benito González, 1976: 26). When the authorities in RTVE granted Miró the opportunity to direct, they retained prejudices vis-à-vis women and creativity by giving her Revista para la mujer (1964), described by Pérez Millán as 'un programa de sobremesa en el que cada día de la semana se abordaba de manera central un tema de entre los considerados como femeninos' (48). Miró and Josefina Molina wrote a book to accompany the series, Natacha. Lecciones de belleza (1966), on which she spent little time and compiled by summarizing various beauty books. It is not hard to see Miró's sources of inspiration for the professional difficulties of the character Andrea (Mercedes Sampietro) and her relegation to 'women's films' in Gary Cooper que estás en los cielos (1980). In addition to collaborating on Natacha. Lecciones de Belleza, Miró wrote several journalistic pieces in Arriba and Pueblo, such as film reviews (48).

Film remained her main interest and she matriculated in the Escuela Oficial de Cinematografía (EOC) in 1963 to study script-writing: she initially chose directing as her

main subject but had to change her options owing to work commitments at RTVE (50-51). Miró's entrance exam script on In sorpasso (Dino Risi, 1962) reveals the importance she gave and continues to give to editing in her films (229): 'El guión de una película debe estar escrito pensando en el montaje' (53). She also criticized Risi's excessive use of an off-screen narrator, remarking that a film could tell a story through images - a practice to which she would resort in her own adaptations, such as La petición and Beltenebros. She subsequently studied script-writing with José Luis Bora, but Carlos Saura failed her in his class on 'Teoría y técnica de la dirección' (54).

Miró's long association with adaptation began during her second year at the EOC when she adapted one of Arthur C. Clarke's stories in a short called 'Operación nombre Dios' (ibid.). After her studies and hounding Adolfo Suárez, head of programming at RTVE, Miró began to make dramatic programmes for Novela, most of which were adaptations: despite reservations about adverse opinions from chauvinistic higher authorities in the company, Suárez gave in to Miró's constant demands to direct. Miró's 'Una fecha señalada' (Novela, 1967) won a special mention from the jury of the Montecarlo Film and Television Festival and she also taught script-writing at the EOC between 1970-1973, encouraging her pupils to use various genres (55-58). Although her bosses did not give her the chance to choose which scripts or texts to adapt for Novela, she did at least experiment with time, decor, actors and sound (62). For the adaptation of Washington Irving's Aventura de un estudiante alemán (1972), Miró experimented with dissolves, despite the lack of technical resources and budget made available to her later on for Beltenebros (74-75). Curiously, Miró used Eusebio Poncela as the young, Romantic, studious protagonist, who moves to Paris and imagines an ideal woman, who he meets and later discovers is a ghost: the themes and exaltation of Romantic love in Aventura de un

estudiante alemán anticipate Werther (1986), a modernized adaptation of Goethe's Romantic novel, The Sorrows of Young Werther (1774) starring Eusebio Poncela, in which Miró similarly focused on the contact of the protagonists' hands (ibid.). Novela was consequently an important learning experience for Miró in the fields of adaptation and the expressive properties of the image emphasized by Pérez Millán (82).

It is curious that a woman should make a film about such a negative character as that of Teresa in La petición (96). However, the film started as a script which Miró first wrote with Juan Tébar intended for Hora 11, although its subject matter proved too strong for RTVE. Miró subsequently worked on the script with Leo Anchóriz, but left the project until Anchóriz gave the script to Miguel de Echarri, who was searching for a Spanish film to fulfill quotas (87-88, 96). Miró herself was not particularly interested in La petición and would not have promoted it (96), although it did hold some appeal for her (Hernández Les, 1978: 351-367; 1981: 36). However, Miró is not a feminist, as she herself has explained: she is interested more in human issues, such as strength and vitality, rather than gender specific topics or stories about women, even though she does not reject them (Benito González: 26; Hidalgo: 58; Reporter, 31/1/1978: 74). Although she complained that directors usually present weak female characters, she nevertheless expressed greater interest in male characters (Benito González: 26; Marsillach, 1982; Ventura Melia, 1979), as is evident in her films, especially Hablamos esta noche (1982) - a work about a nuclear physicist - and Beltenebros (1991) which examines the life of a political exile, Darman (Terence Stamp). However, this did not mean that Miró failed to make interesting comments about women: Miró empowered many of her female characters - like Andrea when she seduces Julio in Gary Cooper and Clara in Hablamos through sexual activity or professional pursuits - and remarked that she would like women to react courageously in

life to prove their ability to overcome difficulties (Hernández Les: 361-363). This is a salient trait of Andrea, the protagonist of Gary Cooper, and one of the film's major themes. Miró herself clearly rose above many barriers as she is one of the scarce number of Spanish women who became film directors (Pérez Millán, 10; Montero, 1978: 6), making her mark by the 1980s. Some of her representations of women and men are more complicated than others - especially Teresa in La petición, Andrea, Rebeca 2 and Darman in Beltenebros, who account for more lengthy discussions within the chapters.

An interest in gender issues is not the only constant feature of Miró's cinema. Gutiérrez Aragón comments on Miró's non-dogmatic attitude towards the subjects of her films which allows the imagination to work without classifying any character (Pérez Millán: 10). Miró's films criticize society and established order, institutions and oppression, but without any overt moralization. In La petición, she targeted the family; El crimen discusses repressive law forces, the Church and political dogmatism; Gary Cooper examines the problems and chauvinistic prejudices faced by a female film director while it simultaneously alludes to the role of film stars; Hablamos depicts oppressive social relations and the destructiveness of ambition within Spain's nascent democracy; Werther protests against rationality within the social framework and Beltenebros is a sharp criticism of politics and manipulation (278). Another of Miró's constant thematic interests is the destruction of human relationships, which she explores from La petición onwards (Benito González: 26; Pérez Millán: 107, 222). Pérez Millán draws parallels between Teresa and Miró's own backgrounds in the film - especially the repressive and silent father figure (107) whose strict authority gives rise to Teresa's destructive acts. Miró also examines Teresa's dominance over the mute and Miguel, two of the film's male characters, through her

superior class status (Hernández Les, 1978: 358). El crimen represents another variation on this theme:

Lo fundamental de El crimen de Cuenca es contar cómo se puede llegar a destruir a dos personas, cómo se les puede llegar a convertir en dos animales, física y psíquicamente, a través de la aplicación de unos procedimientos salvajes. El tema central es la desintegración del ser humano, y coincidía que la película se podía construir sobre unos hechos reales (Pérez Millán: 136).

At the time of making Hablamos, Miró remarked on the negative effects of stress in the modern lifestyle and suggested a possible solution: "... lo que se necesita es un poco de amor, de amor en general, que la gente se quiera un poco ..." (Heredia, 1982: 13). Viewers have the impression that a lack of sentiment in the patriarchal environment is one factor responsible for the destruction of all sorts of personal relationships in the film between lovers, friends or father-son ties. Directing her next work, Werther, was a release of tension for Miró after years of politics and paperwork as minister of cinema, but the film also shows how love is destroyed (220-2) and takes into account changing gender roles in Spain.

Gary Cooper, a film about a director on the point of a serious operation, who - comparable to the now atheistic Miró (Amilibia, 1981: 54) - does not enjoy the support of an unquestioning religious faith, is, to a certain extent, autobiographical (Pérez Millán: 157, 171) and Miró's characters often have some similarities with her own life (259).<sup>2</sup> The success of Gary Cooper as a film resides in Miró's ability to translate her personal experiences, which she had recorded on tape after the operation and which she felt that she wanted to tell others about, to the screen (Miró, 1980: 47; Pérez Millán: 172). Miró commented on the semi-autobiographical nature of the film:

La película se basa en una determinada experiencia que yo viví, pero [...] no es autobiográfica [...] Lo 'biográfico' en la película son sólo los pequeños detalles (Pérez Millán: 173-174).

However, there are more similarities between Miró and Andrea than she mentioned above. Diagnosed as suffering from arteriosclerosis, Miró had the first of two open heart operations in 1975, which she believes changed her life and made her feel powerless and alone (Arnaldo: 58-59; Pérez Millán: 80). Miró's operation and the realization that she might have died in particular urged her to make films, like Andrea (Pérez Millán: 80, 214). Together with Juan Antonio Porto, she began to work on a script of Pardo Bazán's Los pazos de Ulloa which they left unfinished, a project which Andrea's boss offers her in the film (112). Miró also directed and edited the controversial Especial Víctor Manuel y Ana Belén (1977) broadcast in 1978 after several prohibitions which Andrea revises (115-116, 173). The medals in Andrea's case belonged to Miró's father and brought back bad memories; Miró herself used to play Massenet's Werther in difficult moments (173), as does Andrea on the eve of her operation. The most striking parallel between Miró and Andrea perhaps results from the film's reflection of Miró's own personal relationships. Miró's first love, Gonzalo, her son's namesake who she had not seen since 1960 and who studied medicine, came to the clinic and sat with her on the eve of the operation (Marsillac, 1982).

Hablamos examines topical issues of its time - the installation of a nuclear power station, the Ley del Divorcio of 1981, and Víctor (Víctor Valverde) and his boss's passing reference to a complex and long-running scandal concerning toxins in cooking oil which was much reported on in the 1980s (Pérez Millán: 191-192, 196; Sánchez Costa, 1982: 34). It is no coincidence that Víctor's girlfriend is played by Mercedes Sampietro because Víctor resembles Mario (Jon Finch), Andrea's boyfriend in Gary Cooper (Pérez Millán: 192-193). Miró envisaged Hablamos, the story of a contradictory man, as the opposite of

Gary Cooper (201). In retrospect Miró believes that Hablamos was a mistake, especially the way in which Víctor seems bad in comparison to many of the other characters (202), although viewers can deduce that he is just as much a victim as an aggressor. Nevertheless, Hablamos, like other films by Miró, documents attitudes towards gender issues in Spain. Víctor fails in two relationships with Julia and María Rosa (Amparo Soler Leal). Analogous to La petición, Beltenebros is a particularly complex exploration of female and male power inspired to a great extent by film noir: the film depicts the difficulties in relationships for men and women involved in the clandestine communist party. It nevertheless shows how one man, Darman, is redeemed from masculinist politics through love for the two Rebekas (Geraldine James and Patsy Kensit). Beltenebros also makes relevant contextual comments on women in 1942 and 1962, the periods in which the film is set, especially prostitutes.

#### THE SOCIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY OF GENDER IN LIFE AND FILM.

Given that Miró explores the construction of both power and fictional creation in her self-reflexive films, it is perhaps interesting to examine how she deconstructs the artificiality of gender. Various writers, such as Simone de Beauvoir (1949) and her famous remark - 'One isn't born a woman, one becomes one' - have highlighted the unnatural aspects of gender and its assignment of certain roles, behaviour and dress to each sex (Crowley: 58-77; Moi: 65). In contrast to the terms of biological difference - male and female - femininity and masculinity represent social constructs which confuse gender and biological sex in patriarchy's interests to subordinate and devalue those who are biologically female (Crowley, 1992: 18; Moi: 65). However, biological males equally suffer under the equation of gender and biology (Crowley: 19; Méndez: 23), a subject in

which Miró also takes interest, especially in Hablamos and Beltenebros through Víctor and Ugarte (José Luis Gómez) respectively. Because social notions of masculinity and femininity were heavily influenced by psychoanalysis, let us initially examine psychoanalytical theories on gender which will be of use to an analysis of both patriarchal gender systems and Miró's films.

### PSYCHOANALYSIS.

Humans must work and for Freud - again, as is widely acknowledged - that implies the repression of some tendencies to obtain pleasure or the 'pleasure principle' with the 'reality principle', but for some people, the repression may become excessive and cause neurosis (Eagleton: 151-152; Méndez: 280-281). Miró takes an interest in the oppressive nature of the work ethic and its paraphernalia, such as briefcases and claustrophobic offices, in Hablamos. Despite the protagonist's seeming adherence to the work ethic, Miró nevertheless allows tensions to manifest themselves, especially through the soundtrack. Subversive desires, many of which are sexual, can either be 'sublimated' or directed into civilized, creative pursuits or repressed into the unconscious from where they may return (Eagleton: 151-152), as is the case with Teresa in La petición and her sado-masochistic pursuits. According to Freud, humans first develop sexuality as babies sucking at their mother's breast (the 'oral stage') with the mouth as an erogenous zone (153), a state to which Gregorio (Daniel Dicenta) in El crimen regresses when he drinks milk from his wife's breast. As the child grows, desire is not fixed in any form or on any particular object: he or she is anarchic, sadistic, pleasure-seeking and does not understand gender

differences. Freud argues that boys are incestuously in love with their mother whereas girls feel homosexual desire towards their mothers and later on, heterosexual attraction to their fathers. Some of these issues implicitly appear in La petición through Teresa's homosexual attraction to her nurse, Francisca, and her sadistic quest for heterosexual pleasure with Miguel. Teresa is very anarchic under a façade of good behaviour: she disregards prescriptions on female passivity in sexual relations and, on that level, ignores culturally constructed differences in gender.

The child learns about law and order in what Freud called the Oedipus complex (154). For both Freud and Lacan, the Oedipus complex is the beginning of morality or conscience - the child's super-ego - and awareness of law and socio-religious authority as the father's real or imagined ban on incest with the mother symbolizes all sorts of other authorities (Crowley: 156; Eagleton: 156, 165). Althusser defined ideology as a set of beliefs and practices or a medium through which an individual lives out his or her relation to society (Eagleton: 172). There are various Ideological State Apparatuses such as the Government, the Army, the Police, the Church, Schools, the Family, the Law and Culture (or censorship) which become substitutes for or interchangeable with the 'law of the father' and which feature in many of Miró's films, above all El crimen, Beltenebros, Werther and La petición. Whereas Repressive State Apparatuses, which are also represented in El crimen, belong to the public domain and function by a mixture of violence and ideology, many of the Ideological State Apparatuses are part of the private sphere and function mostly through ideology. For example, the Church and the Family have their own ideas or definitions of what is good and bad, which they reinforce through discipline (Rice: 54-56), like Teresa's parents in La petición during the table scene. According to Freud, the boy imagines that his father threatens to punish or castrate him for what one might now see as

highly sexist reasons. Believing that the girl is castrated, the boy imagines that the father may punish his forbidden desires towards the mother with castration and consequently represses his incestuous desires for his mother into his unconscious, becomes a gendered subject, centres desires around genital sexuality and adheres to the reality principle or 'law of the father' (155), prescriptions which the sado-masochistic Miguel in La petición and his concentration on non-genital areas, such as the skin, contravene. Freudian theories on castration can, of course, be extended beyond punishment for specifically sexual transgressions. El crimen shows a historically realistic castratory torture inflicted upon a political dissident and the ending of Beltenebros features a literal castration. To return to Freud's arguments which are important to his definition of female sexual passivity discussed below, when the girls realizes her inferior, castrated state, she turns from her castrated mother in an attempt to seduce her father, identifying with her submissive mother (156). Despite repression, anti-social tendencies in the unconscious - many of which begin during the Oedipus complex - still want to become conscious (Crowley: 147), threatening the rules of civilization or causing internal conflict as the repressed attempts to surface and is contained by the ego (Eagleton: 157-158). Such tendencies become conscious in Teresa, Miguel and Gregorio's return to perversions in La petición and El crimen respectively.

"You circumcise women, too, but you do it through Freudian theory, not through surgery", a Sudanese woman once said of Western culture (Crowley: 137), attitudes against which Miró argues in her films. It is not surprising that feminist discussion of sexuality pinpointed Freudian theory as one of the causes of women's problems (146). Not only did Freud argue that 'castrated' girls envied penises and had to content themselves with an inferior vagina, but also that upon turning away from the mother, the girls' active sexual impulses decrease, the thwarting of which gave rise to sexual passivity (387). In contrast

to these theories, the narrative of La petición implies that the vagina is by no means inferior, as I will argue in chapter 1. Sexuality is initially bisexual, and only later becomes directed at a heterosexual or homosexual object (148-150), notions which are important to remember for the psychological and sexual currents of La petición and perhaps Hablamos. However, boys must bury their homosexual attraction to the father and turn their desires for the mother into desires for women, who replace the mother, to avoid punishment from the father; similarly, the girl must turn her desires from the mother onto the father. However, comparable to the process of civilization itself, gender identities established by the father's presence are constantly threatened by original, bisexual desires lying in the unconscious (150-151) as some of Miró's characters demonstrate. Claudio's homosexuality in Hablamos threatens his father's heterosexual identity while Andrea briefly alludes to previous bisexual desires in Gary Cooper.

Following Freud, Lacan has also theorized femininity, desire and gender. In the earliest stage of the 'Imaginary' (or pre-Oedipal phase), babies cannot distinguish between themselves and other objects and are dependent on their mothers, believing that they are one with the mother's body (Minsky: 188) and separating only when they realize that they are subjects. For example, when infants view their own reflections in mirrors (189). The father divides the two and rivals the child for the mother's affection through the threat of castration, pushing the desire for the mother - as in Freud's theories - into the unconscious. Miró seems to figure the Imaginary in El crimen through the presence of María Jesús, the youngest daughter of one of the convicts, who is constantly in her mother's arms and who becomes an important thematic device in Miró's criticism of oppression through reader response. When the father enters the scene, the child learns language and becomes a gendered subject through a newly acquired ability to recognize sexual difference and the

law which the father signifies because he is associated with the phallus (not the penis although the child believes that the penis represents the phallus, a signifier of power within patriarchy (190-192). Females, who lack the penis, are devoid of the privileges and power it brings and realize that their bodies are not considered valuable in patriarchal societies; since they lack the phallus, females cannot therefore become anything or attain an important status (191, 193-194).

Both sexes constantly search for substitutes throughout life, who will replace the lost plenitude found with the mother in the Imaginary (194), but the boy spends the rest of his life trying to justify his right to the power that the possession of the phallic signifier gives him. For instance, he tries to make himself the object of desire for women, like many of Miró's male characters such as Víctor in Hablamos and Darman or Ugarte in Beltenebros. Girls can only 'get a phallus' by being the phallus for future lovers, the passive object of desire men need to affirm their possession of the phallus (196-198). Men have to project everything of themselves that they do not want to acknowledge - such as weakness - onto women so that they can believe in their own superior value; woman constructed as a castrated 'nothing' allows man to seem strong (199). Ugarte in Beltenebros tries to dominate Rebeca through arrest and by demanding her services as a prostitute, although Miró seems to show Rebeca holds power over men in various ways which I will discuss in chapter 6. Miró's films, like El crimen or La petición, point out that possession of the phallus fails to convey infallible power for men, just as lack does not mean an absence of power for women.

Masculine power rests on very shaky foundations and pushes men into either a conscious or often unconscious state of crisis, which is perhaps indicated by the Geiger counter on the soundtrack of Hablamos during particularly tense moments or in Ugarte's

histrionic outbursts in the cinema in Beltenebros: what society takes to be natural feminine behaviour is also an acting out of the patriarchal requirements for women (199-200), which Miró seems to examine and refute in films such as Gary Cooper and La petición. Women fit into the available, well-defined roles through which men control them - wife, mother, *femme fatale* partly like Rebeca 2 in Beltenebros, etc. - and can never exist as subjects in patriarchy because they represent the double castration of their own lack and a projection of men's symbolic castration (200-202). Masquerade - an overt form of feminine dress - is a protest against the acceptance of lack by women since they desire a phallus, which they cannot have, and make their whole body into a tool with which to attract a male 'other' through whom they think that they may become whole. Women constitute receptacles for men involved in phallic sexuality as opposed to the different Lacanian notion of female sexuality or *jouissance* which goes beyond phallic desire (200). Although Miró attempts to explore female sexuality and pleasure in Beltenebros and La petición in particular, her notions of masquerade seem to differ from Lacanian definitions of the use of feminine costume. As I will argue vis-à-vis La petición using feminist theories related to horror films, women may use overt sorts of feminine dress not to disguise their castrated state, but to hide the dangerous powers of their castrating vaginas and to circumvent repression. The various psychoanalytical theories outlined above, which I will develop more in each chapter, assist in analyses of gender in Miró's films, notably in an attempt to define the characters' transgressions against norms, especially the 'law of the father' or masculinism. However, psychoanalytical insights must be coupled with sociological theories since male and female characters and institutions important in her films exist within the context of society.

## THE SOCIOLOGICAL SITUATION.

Like many biased psychoanalytical views, society imposes norms upon people of which Miró appears to be aware. The content of Miró's films seems to match the opinions of liberal feminists, who examined the ways in which traditions on gender roles restricted the human development of men and women:

Once discrimination is removed, it will be possible for women and men to be treated as individual human beings, with their own [...] preferences, no longer restricted in the opportunities available to them by stereotypical views of the [...] appropriate roles for each sex (Crowley: 14-15)

Traditional notions of masculinity and redefinitions of what it means to be male or female within sociology and film criticism appear, to some extent, in all Miró's films, especially Werther (1986), Hablamos and Beltenebros. The process of becoming masculine or feminine is never completely harmonious and prepares people for their roles in society: anyone who fails to match up to societal gender scripts risks victimisation (Brittan: 22, 39; Crowley: 20), issues that Miró explores. Male-oriented culture is 'not favorable to the unfolding of woman and her individuality' (Horney, 1967: 22), but men like the teacher in Werther or Luis María in Hablamos, who is driven to suicide by Víctor's dogmatism and desires for masculine success, can also suffer. Masculinism is the ideology that naturalizes the domination of (conventional) males or masculinist institutions which boys traditionally learn from their fathers, father figures or culture more generally (Brittan: 4, 6, 27, 105-106; Crowley: 19; Formaini: 92; Kauffman: 6-7). Traditional masculinity is a socially and self-inflicted repression of traits that society links to passivity and powerlessness (Kauffman: 11) which Ugarte takes to extreme lengths in Beltenebros by fabricating positions of power for himself. The conventional outlook denies not only passivity, but dependency and natural instincts in favour of self-sufficiency and artificial traditions (Brittan, 20, 28, 157, 159, 160; Formaini, 20; Kauffman: 3), ideals to which Víctor adheres. A common feature of masculinism is the acquisition of power to control oneself, others and the natural

environment (Brittan, 1, 5; Kauffman: 6-7), abilities which Víctor in Hablamos, the headmaster and Alberto in Werther strive to possess.

Ambition and work are important segments of male power that appear in Hablamos (professional environments), Werther (schooling and wealth) and Beltenebros (politics). Masculinist society required men to marry and support their family, although many societies no longer automatically expected men to take a wife by the 1970s and 1980s (Brittan: 1-2). However, men did not surrender their dominance in the workplace and careers continue to be the main focus of many men's identity (Brittan: 189; Formaini: 125). The alliance between patriarchy and capitalism caused a societal fixation with aggressive competition in which a man's power is measured by his success (Brittan, 7, 16, 48, 78-79, 98-99; Formaini: 53), a situation of which Alberto in his fears for his son's education in Werther and Víctor in Hablamos are well aware. A professional position signifies power and prestige for the middle classes whilst working class men tend to gain self-esteem in jobs demonstrating physical power (Brittan, 7; Crowley: 250; Formaini: 12; Kauffman: 12). Many men such as Víctor feign power even if they are not in control (Brittan: 140, 188), but in reality resent society's ambitious ideals (Formaini: 1, 15, 130-132). Traditional socio-biological theories view passive women as unsuitable for the competitive workplace, although women can also behave in a culturally 'masculine' manner (Brittan: 85). In some ways, Andrea in Gary Cooper seems to be competitive within the world of television and film-making and therefore 'masculinised'. Companies turn into exhausting, hierarchical battlegrounds where men damage their health or relationships (Formaini: 126, 129, 130-131, 140), but scientific industries, which expose workers to the physical harm of chemicals or radiation as well as psychological strain, exacerbate injuries (Kauffman: 5). Once again, Miró's Hablamos in particular depicts contemporary life and the damage done to relationships and individuals through the prioritization of professional advancement.

In addition to professional advancement, masculinism also advocates the subordination of women in various areas evident in Miró's films (Brittan: 4, 6, 17, 124-125; Kauffman: 21) founded heavily on the notion of biological difference (Brittan: 125; Crowley: 37; Kauffman: 124). The sexual division of labor initially stemmed from the

problem of reproduction, which, as many radical feminists argued, often incapacitated women (Brittan, 17, 124; Crowley: 81), although modern contraception methods changed this situation (Crowley: 111). However, this is a position to which Miró alludes in Gary Cooper through the incapacitating symptoms of Andrea's toxic pregnancy. Society naturalized this construction as it influenced biology by adding learnt roles to male or female sex (Brittan: 19-21, 43, 184; Crowley: 64, 71, 77; Formaini: 56): women were and still are portrayed as tied to their physiology in order to deny them various sorts of power (Crowley: 63). The continued use of sexual stereotyping to uphold male supremacy is a false view of what biology means (Formaini: 19). Nineteenth-century biology established by men reinforced theories of difference to male advantage, giving male anatomy socio-cultural meaning by associating it with aggression and activity, a strategy which reflected existing societal norms of sex-role behaviour (Brittan: 45, 188; Crowley: 21, 243; Formaini: 120; Kinsman: 103). In traditionalist societies, boys learn that they have the right to be active, violent, freer and superior to females; like Teresa in La petición, girls learn that they should be inferior, passive and dependent, qualities which please the dominant, masculinist group (Crowley: 20; Formaini: 14, 49, 55, 58-59). However, even Freud, whose theories reinforced the active/passive split, accepted that masculinity and femininity were often fragile states (Brittan: 49). Modern feminists argue that men's and women's sexuality can express complex desires, including submission and sexologists challenge the view of female sexuality as passive (Brittan: 56-57; Crowley: 111, 125, 128, 130). These are issues which Miró explores in Beltenebros and La petición in particular.

Sexuality is not the only area of sociological discussion that Miró takes on board in her films. Marriages, which feature in Werther and La petición, are not only love relationships, but demonstrate power issues from several angles. Women's economic dependence on men is one factor that pushes them into heterosexual marriage (Crowley: 125, 128, 166). Some chauvinistic men marry in order to have someone to look after them, while truly positive marriages encompass change and respect (Formaini: 97, 99-100, 102-103), features which Carlota's marriage in Werther sadly seems to lack, but that María Rosa in Hablamos enjoys in her cohabitation with Hans. The traditional family

conventionally reproduces the hierarchical gender systems of a society as a whole (Kauffman: 10) in which parents teach boys to identify with the qualities of masculinity, suppressing feminine traits (Brittan: 31; Kauffman: 9, 87). Alberto attempts to socialize his son in this way and even hides the boy's sensitive side which Carlota openly discusses with the teacher. The 'socialization thesis' outlined above is useful but not omniscient because it excludes individual or collective subversion and changes in present gender inequalities (Brittan: 23-24), as exemplified by the teacher.

Socio-biological discrimination carries on outside the home into the workplace which Gary Cooper draws to the audience's attention through Andrea's struggles to succeed in the male-dominated world of television. Masculinists devalue typically female occupations, although women are no longer confined to domesticity as a result of the achievements of the feminist struggle and enjoy considerable access to economic spheres, even though they are frequently considered less valuable than male employees (Brittan: 106, 111, 117; Formaini: 21). Not only did women conventionally hold jobs inferior to those of men in the past, but they also received inferior wages (Brittan: 113-114, 163, 204). Lack of opportunity as opposed to biology - the conventional reason given for female failure - is the main reason why women have not become men's equals (Horovitz: 237), as Miró shows through Andrea's comments on her own scant and mostly poor productions. Another argument for the subordination of women stems from the misogynist history of the Church based mainly on the Bible, especially the story of the creation and the fall in Genesis 2, false interpretations of which have contributed to women's sense of inferiority in addition to misogynist disgust of women as sexual temptresses (Formaini: 165-168, 172). The presence of religion and the priest in La petición brings to mind the contribution of Catholicism to Teresa's restrictive up-bringing and the deeply-rooted influence of religion before and during the dictatorship. Religious teaching has lost its central place in Western society only in recent years (167), but perhaps not so much in post dictatorship Spain, although religious education in schools is now optional (Gibson: 1994). Andrea's rejection of the priest's assistance before her operation in Gary Cooper is not only testimony to possible contemporary Western trends, but perhaps helps to characterize her independent

personality which causes her to break away from her traditional family background and its views on the role of women.

Other commonly noted patterns of gender roles are of relevance to Miró's characters. Sociologists identified a crisis in masculinity in Western societies that her films seem to depict, which nevertheless does not portend the end of male domination (Brittan: 25, 58, 184). However, Hablamos leaves this issue open to interpretation since Víctor's power station - an icon of masculinist power in science - may or may not fail. The crisis probably began with the erosion of male power in the home and workplace in the US and UK of the 1950s and continues through both deviations from stereotypes and women's entry into important positions in the work force (180-181, 183). Víctor and his superior chauvinistically deem Clara's entry into the power station (and, by extension, science) a *molestía*, but because of her visit she does make her presence felt. The end of Franco's regime is a contributing factor within the Spanish context, which I will discuss in relation to gender issues in Spain. The family is becoming more democratic or even collapsing, altering the status of women (131; 134, 180). Nowadays, many married women work, enjoy economic independence denied to them in the past, and can choose to end unsatisfactory marriages (Formaini: 86, 104-106), analogous to María Rosa in Hablamos or Carlota in Werther. Growing numbers of men accept changing gender roles, although others, who both Alberto and Carlota's father in Werther seem to represent, retain traditional outlooks (Brittan: 182, 184). Suffering under the dominant patriarchal regime is not exclusive to women. Men like Víctor and Ugarte feel anxious because social convention traditionally made them feel impotent if they fail to exercise power over women or at work (58). As is evidenced by the above, masculinism's split between male and female causes damage since behaviour socially defined as masculine and feminine is human, which the teacher in Werther exhibits through his emotionality. Viewers sense that Ugarte's embittering sense of inferiority might have also been determined by such a split.

A possible solution to this division and means for men to recover their sensitive, 'feminine' side often suggested by some radical feminists, which Miró does seem to acknowledge in Werther, is for men to become equally involved in child care (Crowley:

30, 82; Firestone: 206; Formaini: 19, 34, 52). Nowadays, notions of fatherhood, which feature in *Werther* as part of the film's exploration of masculinism and alternative outlooks, are undergoing some revision (Rotundo: 66). Traditional, 'patriarchal fatherhood' - dominant in the West from 1620-1800 - required fathers to be providers and distanced, moralizing disciplinarians rather like Alberto in *Werther* and Víctor in *Hablamos*, whereas mothers established intimate bonds with their children (Rotundo: 66, 69), as is evident in Carlota's attachment to her son or Dolores' close relationship with María Jesús in *El crimen*. The son's accomplishments traditionally affected his father's own public reputation and male children, like Alberto's son in *Werther* or Claudio in *Hablamos*, were therefore instilled with masculinist virtues, although Víctor fails to change his independent son's homosexuality. Modern fatherhood in which fathers are either involved with child care or absent for various reasons, namely professional commitments or divorce, has replaced patriarchal models (Méndez: 21-22; Rotundo: 71-72). Late twentieth-century men are no longer the sole providers for their children owing to women's entry into the work force or divorce (Méndez: 21-24). As a separated woman and consultant, Carlota is well-positioned to provide for her son, analogous to María Rosa in *Hablamos*, a teacher who left her marital home with son Claudio. By the 1970s-1980s, the trend towards 'participant fatherhood' - in which fathers became more intensely involved with daily child care - accelerated. Participant fathers are emotionally involved with their children, therefore blurring distinctions between mothering and fathering. The teacher in *Werther* and Hans in *Hablamos* seem to be participant fathers who not only look after children, but also participate in domestic chores. Feminists in the 1970s encouraged participant fatherhood because they argued that men and women could take their identity from both careers and family life. However, more men practice traditional modes of fathering than participant fatherhood (74-76).

Despite changes in attitudes towards gender roles and women, some men still exercise power over women through violence, which Miró explores in *El crimen* and *Beltenebros*. Many men affirm their sense of power over lesser social and physical beings, although the need for violence to maintain control shows the fragility of a particular branch

of male power (Brittan: 10, 12, 74, 102, 179; Kauffman, 1, 15, 17, 20). Repression often causes problems if it does not allow sufficient outlets for the release of male aggression: Marcuse (1969), in which he intersects with the Freud of Civilisation and its Discontents, precisely attributes violence to excess or 'surplus repression' of sexual and emotional desires (Brittan: 82-83; Kauffman: 2). However, not all males are dominant and neither are all females equally oppressed: some women have authority over men (Brittan: 17, 138-141), for example, at work. In spite of her evident problems, Andrea in Gary Cooper, at least in theory, has authority over a few male employees.

Despite the entry of women into formerly male-dominated professional spheres and new social attitudes, it is often difficult for some men to accept changes in gender roles. For instance, sustaining both active and passive aims without generating fear, especially in the field of sexuality, is especially problematic (Formaini: 21, 88). Until the 1980s, feminists tended to believe that men degraded women with their aggressive sexuality. However, men have become increasingly aware of sexism (Brittan: 18, 28; Kauffman: 81-82). Male sexuality often differs from the powerful image given to it by masculinism and its basis, patriarchal societies' investment of energy and activity onto the penis, has been questioned (Horovitz: 92).<sup>3</sup> It is false that women play no active part in sexuality, merely attracting the male passively (Brittan: 60) - a trait demonstrated by characters like Teresa, Andrea and Rebeca 2 - and many men find it difficult or damaging to follow the Don Juan image of masculinity they were conditioned to imitate (Formaini: 32, 34-35). Male sexuality in its masculinist state is unnatural as it goes against the development of human capacities by disconnecting emotional and physical love (23, 26, 32, 36-37), which Ugarte and Miguel seem to do in their encounters with Rebeca 2 and Teresa respectively. At least Darman, despite his violent slapping of Rebeca 2, does seem to show some sentimentality towards the Rebecas and therefore deviates from the Don Juan mode. As in the original polymorphous perverse phase when the infant gained sexual satisfaction from all parts of the body, adults exemplified by Miguel and Ugarte continue to find sexual excitement through all sorts of senses, such as looking which is important in film, even though biological maturation narrows the original polysexuality to a greater focus on genital

pleasure (Formaini: 37; Horovitz: 88-89, 98). Because maturation also means the internalization of cultural norms - masculinity/femininity, active/passive and subject/object - polysexuality narrows to bisexuality and then genital sexuality in homosexual or heterosexual forms: alternative forms of non-genital desire relegated to forepleasure (Horovitz: 89), notions which are important to an understanding of sexual politics in La petición (non-genital sexuality) and Hablamos (homosexuality). There is no 'real' normal or abnormal and the sexually free human will experience sexuality as an aggregate of active and passive experiences (90), like Darman and Rebeca 2 in Beltenebros or Miguel and Teresa in La petición.

On the level of sexual politics, Claudio's presence in Hablamos is of interest. Since homosexuality challenges masculinist orthodoxy (Crowley: 137), heterosexism - a sub-branch of masculinism - attempts to defend itself (Brittan: 140, 170, 188; Kinsman: 103). Despite evidence that children are originally polysexual, heterosexists, such as Víctor, consider homosexuals as inadequate and morally depraved (Brittan: 163; Kauffman: 8). However, studies show that 4-10% of men in the West are gay and that 50-70% are bisexual under a façade of heterosexuality (Formaini: 21, 23), natural desires which Miró links with the themes of nuclear energy and nature in Hablamos. Positive assertions of homosexuality as natural, like those of the gay liberation movement, erode the heterosexist monopoly in which sociologists have noted growing cracks (Brittan: 18, 28, 37; Kauffman: 81-82; Kinsman: 105-107, 115-116). It is interesting to note that Miró pledged her public endorsement for any campaign for gay rights, commenting that "apoyaría esa revindicación firmando a cualquier manifiesto" (Amilibia, 1981: 55) and remarked that she would support her son if he expressed homosexual preferences (de Pozo, 1986: 110).

Masculinism prescribes harmful emotional restraint in all areas, not just sexual relationships or sexuality, to indicate power or self-control (Fromaini: 3, 9, 14, 16-17, 35, 121; Kauffman: 7) and to avoid the emotional outbursts that are a culturally recognizable feature of femininity (Crowley: 20). An emphasis on rationality in all spheres, disregarded by the teacher in Werther, demands the suppression of irrationality, of which emotionality is a part (Brittan: 29). Men erect their own barriers so that they are not governed by any

sort of emotional attachment and do not feel vulnerable (Crowley: 258; Formaini: 31, 69-70, 79, 153). They may decide to cool relationships by meeting less frequently or involve themselves with another lover or activity to avoid closeness (73, 80, 111). Víctor, who becomes Clara's lover and spends long periods in the plant, does both and is consequently distanced from Julia. It is only acceptable within masculinism for men to express certain levels of one emotion - aggression (Brittan: 69; Formaini: 9-19, 34-38, 48, 50, 155; Kauffman: 71). Since being masculine requires stoicism to eradicate weakness, men must bear physical and psychological pain in silence and the absence of a sensitive male role model in authoritarian fathers perpetuates masculine coldness (Formaini: 50, 63, 75; Kauffman: 7, 71). Once again, Miró erodes masculinism in that the teacher in Werther, who shuns the violence of the hunt, openly acknowledges his lack of both physical and psychological stoicism in discussions with Jerusalén and Carlota.

Despite the tensions it causes in some men, hidden emotionality, which can manifest itself in violence, does provide encouraging evidence that many men have not been irreversibly desensitized (Brittan: 29, 68). Men's capacities for love and tenderness are restricted to their private lives in which some men, like Darman in Beltenebros, feel free from the performance of masculinity (Formaini: 15-16, 18, 28, 35, 63). Love is the central axis of the developed person - as I will argue using Klein and Rivière's theories in chapter 1 - and only when love is a priority will they become fully human and avoid violence (93). Men in a study by Formaini felt that traditional masculinity was hollow and tried to recover truncated feelings (7-8, 13, 17, 38), but could only take steps to repair the damage if they were aware of it (19), as Darman seems to be when he thinks of Rebeca Osorio in the flashbacks. Only the acceptance of emotional release amongst men - be it fear or love - will lead to a reduction of stress-related violence (Kauffman: 26) which seems to afflict Ugarte in Beltenebros. Comparable to sociological theories, Miró's films appear to demonstrate that physical or verbal aggression is not biologically innate, but developed in socio-cultural systems that demand the repression of male passivity (Brittan, 4, 82, 112; Formaini: 116, 119; Kauffman: 11). Verbal criticisms or competition in the business world and politics are subtle kinds of violence used by Víctor, which are often

men's ways of expressing retaliation towards competitors (Brittan: 9; Kauffman: 2, 5, 17). Men like Ugarte commit violence against themselves when they cannot release their pain or sadness which turn into anger directed towards others and oneself in the form of self-hatred, inferiority and doubt (Formaini: 60, 111). Even the safety valve, sport, which releases tension celebrates the achievements of the best males and reinforces patriarchal power, frequently excluding women under the pretext of physical inferiority (Brittan: 163; Easlea: 251- 261) and can often fail to improve the situation. Sport - which features briefly in Hablamos - might seem part of relaxation, but it is also a tool of masculinist socialization full of rules which channels male aggression into alienating competitive behaviour (Brittan: 82; Easlea: 251-261.; Kauffman: 9) with an emphasis on achievement, activity and toughness at the expense of all else (Brittan: 75; Easlea).

Another important theme to consider for Werther and Hablamos is the struggle for power between men and nature. Masculinism attempts to attain power by dominating both nature and women - who are conventionally thought of as closer to nature owing to reproduction (Crowley: 34-35, 78; Ortner, 1974) - two 'inferior' sorts of entities featuring in Hablamos (Brittan: 7, 34, 103, 136; Formaini: 141-142, 170, 176). The first stages of patriarchy occurred when men began to tame feminine nature, which Descartes said was controllable specifically by rational men (Brittan: 104, 176; Crowley: 36; de Beauvoir; Easlea: 199, 200, 205, 207). Civilization transcends natural realities with man-made ones, such as cities which violate nature and community spirit (Brittan: 104, 174; Kauffman: 5-7), issues importantly conveyed by the mood of one of the intertextual influences of Edward Hopper's paintings for Beltenebros in addition to the ominous presence of science in Hablamos. More men than women study science and it is therefore a patriarchal sphere of influence (Easlea: 105, 195) motivated by a capitalist outlook that conquers the natural world for profit and causes irreversible damage (Brittan: 69, 197; Formaini: 145; Horovitz: 90; Kauffman: 5). A minority of nuclear physicists worry about the implications and safety of their work, but the majority do not (Brittan: 176; 198), differing opinions which Miró explores through the conscientious Luis María and the negligent Víctor in Hablamos.

Physics became male-dominated to a greater extent than other sciences because it was thought that only rational men could understand such a methodological discipline dependent on objective evidence - more so than biology, the easiest science, or chemistry - leaving no scope for irrational, 'feminine' intuition (Brittan: 175; Easlea: 201-202, 204; Formaini: 150). Even by the early 1980s, physics was still male-dominated in the US and UK and there continues to be some prejudice towards female scientists (Pandaya, 1997). Given the masculinist features of science, it can be said that Miró empowers Julia, Clara in Hablamos and Carlota in Werther. The conquest of nature is another aspect of physics, which interferes with the secrets of nuclei to obtain energy in nuclear reactors. Critics argue that violence against women, nature, other men and oneself is interlinked (Kauffman: 7), features which are exacerbated in science. Successful male scientists behave in culturally masculine ways because they attain success through intellectual aggression (Easlea: 198-199). One of the ways for men to change is by learning to respect nature instead of destroying it (Formaini: 179; Horovitz: 90), a strategy which Miró demonstrates in Werther, in contrast to scientific damage to the environment in Hablamos.

Sociological ideas on masculinism are useful in an analysis of Miró's films, but it is a mistake to see men as an omniscient power bloc with unified interests because men and women are as equally oppressed within masculinist environments (Brittan: 144-145, 187, 195), as her films demonstrate. Adhering to masculinity is not easy nor without contradiction (Formaini: 1, 3, 13-14) because the equation of maleness with masculinity turns masculinity into an impossible ideal or performance (Kauffman: 13-14), like Ugarte's façade of success in Beltenebros. However, masculinism attracts individuals analogous to Víctor or Ugarte because it promises men security and power, even though it is authoritarian (Kauffman: 14; Tolston: 25). Some men such as Darman choose to search for what they have lost as a result of their conditioning, whereas others fail to realize that something is missing, which makes awareness-raising necessary (Formaini: 10, 20, 76; Kauffman: 3, 24-25), as Miró attempts to do in her cinema. Modern psychologists argue that people function best if they have both masculine and feminine characteristics

(Crowley: 24): men need to realize that both genders have the potential to become fully human, instead of distorting half of their personalities (Formaini: 13, 59; Horovitz: 96).

In order to escape control, people must free themselves from all sorts of imprisoning categorizations (Kinsman: 114). Miró, who is interested in the human, questions masculinist domination in her films in which various characters criticize or escape several masculinist power structures: through the teacher in Werther and Andrea in Gary Cooper in particular, she examines the androgynous personality, the acceptance of which could make gender irrelevant to the assignment of roles (Crowley: 26). Miró does not seem to favour the radical feminist option of the mid-1970s to draw attention to women's superior qualities in order to create a woman-centred society (ibid.). Perhaps she was aware of the feminist ideas on the reduction of polarities between masculinity and femininity (ibid.) when she made her films. In addition to the narrative content, Miró's use of the cinematic form, editing and the camera also challenges accepted notions of both masculinity and femininity. I will now discuss theories on cinematic gender representation useful to my forthcoming analysis of Miró's films.

### CINEMATIC GENDER REPRESENTATION.

Analogous to the discourses of psychoanalysis and masculinism, film theory has equated the masculinity of the male subject with activity, voyeurism, sadism and fetishism, while the femininity of the female subject connotes passivity, masochism and spectacle (Cohan and Hark: 2). Laura Mulvey (1975) took on board biased Freudian theories in her discussion of the representation of women in film. By setting up a comfortable illusion of looking into someone's private world, cinema offers viewers the pleasure of (active) scopophilia, a component of the sexual instincts, in which, according to Freud, other people are taken as objects subjected to the control of the curious gaze (Mulvey, 1992: 24-25). In mainstream film and Freudian voyeurism, it is the woman who becomes the displayed object of the gaze ('to-be-looked-at-ness') and accordingly adopts attire to produce an erotic impact for male desire, becoming an object of sexual stimulation through sight (Neale: 26) over whom the voyeur holds (sadistic) power, especially if she is

punished (16). Although such patterns appear in the representation of *Rebeca 2* in *Beltenebros*, Miró does provide scope for *Rebeca* to resist subjugation to the male gaze as I will discuss in chapter 6. *Andrea* is an object for the viewers' gaze in *Gary Cooper*, but she has professional power and equally takes male stars and characters as objects in her own point-of-view. Woman as passive spectacle frequently retards narrative flow in traditional or classical film, but she in herself is not important other than as an object for the male spectator and male characters in the diegesis, whose point-of-view gives the spectator power over and access to the woman without breaking the illusions of fiction (27-28). Focus on *Andrea* or *Rebeca 2* may retard the narrative of *Gary Cooper* and *Beltenebros* respectively, but these female characters are important in their own right. Woman as object is often fragmented by the camera as it focuses in on different parts of her body, such as the legs or face (27), as does Miró with the *Rebecas*. To diffuse the threat of castration invoked by cinematic women characters, the narrative must investigate, punish and redeem women - a common feature of film noir - or reassuringly fetishise them into disavowal (29), images required by patriarchal order for its preferred, illusionistic narratives (32). Hollywood films structured for the male spectator can allow the female spectator to discover her lost, repressed masculine side since, in mainstream film which offers a masculinised position for the spectators, the female spectator can only enjoy images of women in a trans-sex identification in a regression to pre-oedipal masculinisation (Mulvey, 1990: 24-26).

Conventional films give narrative movement to the male character, who cannot be just an object of the gaze of the (male) spectator (Mulvey, 1993: 28). The teacher in *Werther* moves a lot, but he is nevertheless the object of the viewers' gaze in the weekend scene and Carlota's object of desire. However, Cohan and Hark argue that men are constructed as objects of the gaze, even in classical film, and that there is no monolithic, uncontradictory masculinity (1993: 1). Through looking at men in film, critics have discovered that men in life, as outlined above, and male cinematic characters overtly perform their gender or look for alternatives to masculinist models (2), ideas which fit many male characters in Miró's films who either perform masculinity (Darman and Ugarte

in Beltenebros and Víctor in Hablamos) or find alternatives (the teacher in Werther). Displays of the male body had to incorporate some sort of active behaviour in order to diffuse notions of passivity and 'femininity' or homosexual attraction for the male voyeur, part of the cultural anxiety about feminised men. Nevertheless, even in action scenes, the male body is still displayed (Cohan: 4; Neale, 1983). Darman features in action scenes, but he is on display for the viewers as are Gregorio and León in El crimen; comparable to the teacher in Werther, Darman is also constructed as the object of the gaze of both Rebecas.

The spectator can either identify with the male character or take that character as an object of the gaze (Neale: 13-14). It is not just a case of the male character being associated with omnipotence as Mulvey argued (Neale: 13; Rodowick, 1982: 8) because the cinematic male is subject to the erotic look of female spectators and characters (Neale: 18), as are many of Miró's male characters, such as Miguel, the teacher, Víctor and Darman. Willemen (1981) maintains that the viewers' pleasure depends on seeing the male exist and fight, but Neale argued that in highly masculine genres like the Western and especially in 'female' genres, such as musicals and melodramas, male characters are objects of desire: in melodramas and musicals, they are allowed to acquire 'feminine' attributes (Byars: 161). Byars' reading of segments of Picnic (J. Logan, 1955) shows how a male character (William Holden) becomes the object of female desire in the Kim Novack character, Madge's, point-of-view (Byars: 171-180) and Miró includes similar scope for the female, erotic gaze in La petición, Hablamos, Werther and Beltenebros. The voyeur's comfortable distance from the object in film is abolished when the male or female object is not presented in another character's point-of-view (Neale: 18), which often transpires in Miró's films. This happens to the teacher in Werther when he is with Carlota for a weekend, Rebeca and Darman in the dressing room and hotel room or Miguel and Teresa in La petición's bedroom scenes. Miró tends to include both characters in the frame rather than using a shot/reverse-shot structure with characters in each other's point-of-view to allow the viewers to see both male and female characters gazing at each other, or employs a strategy defined as 'intersubjectivity', identified by Williams in modern pornography of female authorship which conveys the equal activity of both sexual partners, thwarting

notions of female passivity (Williams, 1990: 227, 260-261). John Ellis argues that identification is never simply a case of men identifying with men on-screen and women identifying with female figures because cinema involves many contradictory desires and fluid identifications with different postures and characters (1982: 43; Neale: 11-12) as Miró's works seem to demonstrate, especially through the fusion of activity and passivity or masculine and feminine traits in her characters. Another modern critical current to consider is the work of Byars, who argues that, although film has been dominated by masculine discourses, there is still scope to read positive feminine images within them (165). Using theories by Lena Kotz (1993) and Richard Dyer (1989), I will attempt to move away from Mulvey's Freudian criticism in my analysis of Miró's films and to find positive images of female power, especially Gary Cooper through Byars's approach.

Lucy Fischer remarks that critics challenged dichotomies in the late 1980s (Cohan: 70). One important acknowledgment comes from an article by Chris Holmlund on masculinity as masquerade. Doane argued that masquerade was part of the female sphere as women pretended to be what they lacked - the phallus (213). However, masculinity is also a masquerade or performance, which is often exposed in modern film (225), as is evidenced by Miró's representation of torture and power in El crimen. Masquerade, Lacanian male parade or performing masculinity is necessary for men because the 'phallus' or power is unattainable: if the phallus was enough, men would not need to flaunt masculinity or project their lack onto women. The fear of any loss of male power motivates the flaunting of masculinity in masquerade: overt costume or accessories associated with authority - such as sticks or uniforms, which add to or substitute for muscles - are part of this process (213-214, 217, 222, 242-243). Miró does not depict muscular characters in the line of Sylvester Stallone in Rambo (George Pan Cosmalos, 1985) or Arnold Schwarzenegger, but the notion of male masquerade is one aspect to consider for the representation of the authorities in El crimen with their uniforms and sticks or Ugarte in Beltenebros with his masquerade of official power as a *comisario*. Susan Jeffords identified a current in modern films of the 1990s which deviates from masculinism: films such as Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves (Kevin Reynolds, 1991) contain

action scenes, but the male character also learns to love and therefore demonstrates anti-masculinist sentimentality (Cohan: 245). In Beltenebros and Werther, Miró corresponds to the latest currents in film and the representation of gender through the characters of Darman and the teacher. She also seems to use other critical insights into the representation of gender identified by feminists. With them, Miró builds open or unclassifiable characters, who match her open, non-dogmatic textual strategies.

## FEMINIST LITERARY THEORY.

It is of interest to outline feminist theories on the representation of women in literature that Miró's films seem to echo. Associating some of the theories of the French philosophical feminist, Hélène Cixous, with an analysis of Miró's representation of gender and power may seem paradoxical given the director's opinions on and dissociations with various branches of feminism, especially Radical feminism (Benito González, 1976: 26; Hernández Les, 1983: 361-362; Ventura Melia, 1979). Cixous' ideas on dichotomisation inspired by Derrida's theories of deconstruction (Moi: 104-112) fit with Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's discussion of patriarchal dichotomisation, part of Anglo-American 'images of women criticism' (Gilbert and Gubar: 1979: 20-44; Moi: 57-58).

Gilbert and Gubar outline the metaphor of literary paternity, the aesthetic antithesis of deauterising metafiction that I will examine in chapter 7. Within an overwhelmingly patriarchal Western literary tradition in which writing has conventionally been seen as alien to women (8, 47), the metaphor of literary paternity defines the masculinist notion that a male author fathers his text just as God fathered the world, the signifier 'author' meaning the individual who brings something into being (4-6). The pen, a metaphorical penis, is his instrument of generative power and with it he rules the fictional world he creates. The metafictional 'author', who is not an artistic God, clearly distances himself from the metaphor of literary paternity with its implications of authorial omniscience and its symbolization of male supremacy in all other areas of human activity.

Patriarchal societies excluded women from writing since they lack the penis/pen and become 'artistic eunuchs' reduced to the status of property in such patriarchal societies [and texts], imprisoningly silenced in male images of female individuals (12-13), ideas which Shelly seemed to adopt when he identified the author with the law. The

author/father is the owner/possessor of the subjects of his texts, which includes male and female characters (7, 12), a definition which corresponds to traditional auteur theory (Cook: 1986: 160). The ideological 'texts' of patriarchal society and male aesthetic works divide women into two imprisoning categories, those of the angel and the monster which Miró often fuses in her female characters. The 'angel woman', who is often enclosed in a domestic environment, represents an unreal ideal of perfection based on the Virgin Mary. She is fragile, childlike, pure, a consoler, contemplative, modest, submissive, devoted to others, silent and never draws attention to her altruism (Gilbert: 20, 39). Most importantly, she is denied the pleasures of an active sexuality, which in effect makes her *self-less* in that she cannot be herself when imprisoned by such ideals, which real women find difficult to match: since the angelic woman lives her life to please others, she cannot enjoy her own existence, which Gilbert and Gubar describe as a 'death' in life (20-25). Not only did the angel woman surrender her time for the good of others, but she also made efforts to correspond to ideal visual images of femininity, given that conventional women, especially those in the nineteenth-century, endangered their health in order to look slim and pale (25, 34). Twentieth-century women are equally subjected to prescriptions on their image vis-à-vis physical build, clothes and make-up, issues which enter into play in my discussion of the effect of Patsy Kensit on Rebecca in Beltenebros. The angel woman's antithesis, the assertive 'monster woman', adopts behaviour reserved for the male's life of activity which is highly unsuited to the angelic demands of contemplative purity and therefore represents a threat to both patriarchal rules of conduct and male supremacy (21, 28). She herself is overtly sexual and labeled horrific since patriarchy deems female sexual activity degenerate. Female freedom of speech and authorship similarly represent transgressions of

the silencing of women (35) and any artistic production becomes especially rebellious as it usurps male preserves.

Nineteenth and twentieth-century women writers, analogous to Miró, revised patriarchal images and rejected the ideological implications of dichotomisation (13, 44, 76-77). Clearly, if creativity is defined as a male gift, women writers (and directors such as Andrea) are left at a disadvantage (7). The metaphor of literary paternity had a corresponding opposite - the patriarchal belief in female literary sterility which Miró exposes as a construction: if women are artistically sterile, it is only because masculinism oppressed them, as is the case of Andrea. Women were often restricted to writing in lesser genres - such as children's books or diaries - or limiting their readership to mere women and producing what George Eliot called "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists" (72). Miró, at the start of her career, and Andrea both suffer this sort of restriction - Miró in Revista de la mujer and Natacha. Lecciones de belleza and Andrea in Los pazos de Ulloa. However, like Miró, some women have managed to work seriously in male genres (72) and many men offer sensitive depictions of women - Mario Camus and Ingmar Bergman to name but two cited by Miró (in La actualidad española, 1978: 80 and Sánchez Costa, 1992). Gilbert and Gubar's theories may be of some use to examine authorial authority, but their comment that women deal with central female experiences from a specifically female perspective (72) is not something that Miró agrees with, an opinion to which she alluded in conversation and in interview (Miró, March, 1996: Ventura Melia, 1979).

However, Gilbert and Gubar's notion of the anxiety of authorship may be of relevance. They argue that some female characters become ill in the work of female authorship (58). The confinement of pregnancy in particular replicates society's limitations for the literary woman and imagery of enclosure or entrapment, from which the female

character tries to escape, appears in the work to reflect the woman writer's own discomfort (84, 86, 89), perhaps a feature of Gary Cooper. Although Miró depicts a female monster in La petición, she does not fall into a trap affecting many female authors, who created works that subordinated women through the reproduction of dichotomies or vilified, transgressive female characters (69). Miró initially instructed Ana Belén to act Teresa as if she had a purely evil nature (Hernández Les: 358). However, despite her horrific behaviour, Teresa is more complex as I will discuss in chapter 1.

Cixous similarly identified a series of binary oppositions (1975: 115-116) corresponding to the man/woman binary that are part of the patriarchal value system in which the feminine half of the dichotomy is always seen as negative or even powerless - activity/passivity, culture/nature, day/night (Moi: 104). These binaries appeared in art and literature and, in patriarchal cultures, the male is always equated with the better or dominant term of the dichotomy, a situation in the phallic rules of language which Cixous aimed to undo through a new *feminine* language based on Deconstruction: this *feminine* language would subvert patriarchal binary schemes - where logocentrism joined with phallogentrism to oppress women - so that women would no longer be equated with passivity and death (105).<sup>4</sup> Derrida discussed the notion that meaning is never really present in language in which signifiers are linked to chains of other signifiers *ad infinitum*, the next signifier referring to the next one, and so on. There is therefore no transcendental signified where the chains would stop - like the concept of God - and which would have meaning and be fully present in itself. On this level, Cixous' deconstructive theories resemble 'death of the author' approaches to art, which I will link to the ideological implications of Miró's films in chapter 7 because a traditional author, who is the source and meaning of his or her own text, closely resembles the 'transcendental signified' (105).

Derrida undermines the comforting closure of binary opposition because he recognizes the free play of the signifier and breaks open what Cixous calls the prison-house of patriarchal language (107). Cixous also borrowed extensively from Lacan's argument that gender identities begin as a result of the perception of difference - who does and does not have the phallus -, one subject having meaning by virtue of its difference from another (Minsky: 191-2, 194). As Lacan commented, the phallus itself is not an object of reality, nor the actual male organ, but merely an empty symbol which only gains meaning from the fact that those in patriarchal societies who claim to have the phallus - represented by the penis - have the power to dominate women (194). Lacan's association of the phallus with binary opposition or difference to some extent erodes the status of men. As Minsky comments:

Lacan makes it very clear that the phallus only seems to have value within the powerful binary opposition of masculine and feminine. Its status is bogus (197).

Cixous's ideas on *feminine writing* are also related to Derrida's philosophy, which criticized the binary logic of structuralism in which meaning is produced through opposites. She believes that feminine texts aim at difference or contradiction to undermine the foundations of binary oppositions (Moi: 105, 108). In 'Castration', Cixous argued against the restriction of feminine writing to women since that would set up another binary opposition: within her theories, writers can write in a feminine or masculine way, regardless of their sex (108). On that level, Miró, who is more interested in the human rather than the gender-specific, argued that many male directors, such as Bergman, successfully represented women just as well as women directors and that genre is not determined by gender (La actualidad española, 1978: 80; Miró, March 1996). Following Irigaray (1977), Kuhn defines feminine texts or writing as unbiased and open with

multiple, shifting meanings (1982: 11-12, 16-17) as opposed to the limited, fixed meanings available from masculine texts. Although all of Miró's works seem to include elements of feminine writing or signification practices, she herself seems to narrate as if from a thematically masculine position, possibly inspired by Peckinpah, in El crimen and violent shoot-out sections of Beltenebros; Miró herself remarked in interview that she had tried to make Hablamos from a masculine point-of-view (El país, 1982); contrastingly, Gary Cooper is more of a feminine film, especially since of all Miró's works, this film in particular requires the participation of an active reader to discover not necessarily fixed meanings in the signification process, a key feature of feminine writing which encourages active reading to challenge patriarchal or illusionistic models in order to undo the masculinist ideals they represent (Kuhn, 1982: 12, 14, 18). I will return to the unfixed nature of Miró's characters in chapter 7 which discusses postmodern metafiction. *Écriture féminine* is therefore useful for an analysis of Miró's cinema. It is interesting to note that Cixous refused to define a practice of feminine writing (Cixous, 1975: Marks, 1981: 253), just as Miró leaves her films and characters open to interpretation through her avoidance of overt classification.

Some feminist theories are useful in that they recognize overt and covert misogyny, patriarchal discourses or power structures and gaps within them: others, namely radical feminism, fall into a trap of systematizing women as all-good or superior (Crowley: 263, 283), a notion with which Miró seems to disagree in La petición and even Gary Cooper by pointing to faults in her protagonists through the mouthpiece of other characters or in narrative events themselves. Feminist analytical categories are more useful if they are unstable, like the incoherent and unstable world in which we live (Harding: 341) and the unfixed meaning in *feminine* texts. Despite the open definitions of Miró's characters, her

films certainly make relevant comments on the position of women and men in Spain, the subject of the next section.

### GENDER ISSUES IN SPAIN.

Miró, who remarked that Spain was socially backward even in 1976 (de Béchade: 54), is aware of the situation of women in the various periods in which her films are set. Change came slowly and Spain was still governed by men in the 1970s and 80s as repressive education and deeply rooted social prejudices then and even nowadays still prolong chauvinism (García Osuna: 163; Méndez: 28). Miró thought that women had always been imprisoned in the role of 'woman in the house' and that men's ideas, not those of women, must be changed (de Béchade: 54). Her films certainly expose the effects of repression on both sexes at universal and culturally specific levels.

Noticeable features of Spain in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries under Franco and in democracy are inequality and dichotomisation inscribed into the law and culture between good or bad women and males and females (Méndez: 18). In late nineteenth-century Spain, women had to live with their parents by law until the age of 25 unless they married with parental consent, thereby passing paternal authority on to their husbands (Scanlon: 125). Verbal insults and disobedience meant that a husband could have his wife incarcerated for up to two weeks (Penal Code, art. 603), but no similar castigation existed for unruly husbands (127). Echoes of such biased restrictions are present in the dining-room scene in La petición during which Teresa's father controls her language. Society and the law conditioned double moral standards well into the twentieth century, even before the Nationalists' victory. Men relied on the purity of women because an adulterous wife could remove her husband's honour or a daughter would denigrate her father's reputation if she failed to maintain her virginity for marriage (Hooper, 1967: 192-193). Until the 1963 repeal of the *Ley de Escocia* (Penal Code, Articles 428, 425), a husband or father could 'legally' kill his adulterous wife or transgressive daughter and lover caught *in flagrante delicto* to preserve his honour (Méndez: 19; Scanlon: 360). This extreme legal context

possibly determines Teresa's fear of being discovered as a sullied woman in La petición. Husbands were only classified as adulterous if they had sex outside the home in the knowledge that their partner was married (Article 448) and the law only deemed it necessary to discipline a husband's keeping of a concubine in the marital home. Men could legally disinherit daughters and granddaughters who became prostitutes, but no law punished male libertines (130). Popular opinion saw women as spiritual creatures, who ought not to enjoy sex, but tolerated men's needs to vent sexual energy. Taboos even reigned over kissing and priests insisted upon female chastity (Hooper: 186; Martín Gaite: 97, 99, 101; Scanlon: 132, 180, 250-252, 334).

Francoism erased the rights women gained under the Republic owing to its Catholic morality on female virtue and the construction of ideal womanhood as altruistic, passive, pious and submissive (Graham: 1995: 115; 1995a: 182; Martín Gaite: 12-13, 27, 30, 40, 69, 72, 108-110; Méndez: 18-19).<sup>5</sup> Sexual energy was directed into reproduction (Martín Gaite: 14; Méndez: 3) and women were encouraged to look beautiful for men's benefit, but any hint of narcissism - arguably a feature of Rebeca 2 in Beltenebros - or masculine behaviour was chastised (Martín Gaite: 61, 64, 112). Taboos also surrounded women's dress: wearing a bikini would earn a Spanish woman the reputation of a transgressor in the 1970s (García Osuna: 43; Martín Gaite: 131) and sporting trousers in the 1960s brought scorn (Martín Gaite: 131-132).<sup>6</sup> On that level, the partly narcissistic striptease in Beltenebros and Andrea's use of trousers in Gary Cooper are tantamount to transgression. Like Carlota in Werther who is most concerned about respectability, women were, above all during the dictatorship, viewed as custodians of morality who should restrain men's advances (*ibid.*). Writing in 1979, Scanlon believed that the concept of honour still prevailed in Spain, advocating the prolongation of double standards. In the 1990s, women are still dichotomized into 'las putas y las decentes', although many no longer feel guilty for losing their virginity before marriage or adultery (García Osuna: 33, 35, 42-43, 53). However, a large sector of Spanish society scorns pregnancy outside of marriage because it is seen as a stain on the woman's relatives (103, 106), ideas that make Andrea's pregnancy yet another incident of rebellion. Nevertheless, Spanish women increasingly take steps to

fulfill their erotic desires. A survey by Elle (1992) showed that women wanted more sex (with 58% taking the initiative), and rented pornographic films; Madrid Kabaret, a popular bar with topless waiters, now caters for the female gaze (34-36, 38).

Rebeca 2 and fellow prostitutes figure as transgressors, even though Franco did not officially criminalise prostitution and brothels until 1956 (Graham, 1995a: 189-191; Nuñez Roldán, 1992: 199-201; Scanlon: 234, 297, 322) and both prostitution and employment as a hostess or maid in a *puticlub* remain illegal (García Osuna: 61, 100, 102; Rodríguez Ramos, 1988: 31). Prostitution thrived when unskilled women resorted to the sex industry in addition to cooking or cleaning to survive during the *años de hambre*, unlike Rebeca 2 who works in a high-class *lupanar postín* (Graham, 1995a; García Osuna: 100; Martín Gaite: 96). Prostitution has been a *bête noir* for many Spanish feminists since the nineteenth-century: women's charitable organizations virulently campaigned against it (Scanlon: 200). Franco's wife set up the Patronato de Protección a La Mujer (1942) to redeem prostitutes through the instilling of Catholic moral values and the police treated them harshly (Martín Gaite: 102; Nuñez Roldán: 191-192). In 1986, 65,000 people made a living from prostitution, an easy way to earn substantial incomes (García Osuna: 101, 105, 107). In the 1980s and 1990s, redefinitions of prostitution appeared and are, analogous to these culturally specific details on prostitution in Spain, important to an understanding of Rebeca 2 in Beltenebros and her encounter with Ugarte. In the 1970s, radical feminists branded prostitution a prototype of female servitude, but new feminism gaining hold in Spain believes that prostitution can be carried out with dignity (Cambio 16, 12/1993), a position with which Miró appears to agree in Beltenebros.

In democracy, the legalization of abortion, contraception, sterilization and divorce has helped women to gain more freedom (Méndez: 21; Montero, 1995: 382), which makes Andrea's abortion before 1980 illegal.<sup>7</sup> Franco criminalised abortion, sterilization and contraception, accompanying these by legislation to remove married women from the workplace so as to increase the birth rate to compensate for population decrease during the Civil War: Catholic ethics conveniently coincided with both his demographic policies and construction of angelic femininity (Graham, 1995a: 186-187; Martín Perpiñán, 1995: 113,

117; Scanlon: 336-337, 356). Nevertheless, demographic data in the 1970s showed that most Spanish families practiced some sort of birth control, many resorting to *coitus interruptus* which was especially frustrating for women. Even after the decriminalization of contraception in 1978 (Montero: 1994: 382), members of extreme right parties attacked a family planning clinic in Madrid (Borreguero: 62-65). However, many Spaniards disagree with the Church's ban on contraception or its strict sexual morals (García Osuna: 181) as Catholicism is losing its power in Spain (Méndez: 21). The Socialist government legalized sterilization in 1983 and abortion in 1985 in cases of rape, foetal abnormality and psychological or physical danger for the mother herself should the pregnancy continue (García Osuna: 168; Montero, 1995: 382; Perpiñán: 115, 119).<sup>8</sup> The Republican Constitution (1932) gave Spain one of the most liberal divorce laws in Europe (Graham: 101), but failed to do enough to improve Spanish women's lot as its reforms were a by-product of Republicanism rather than feminism (Graham, 1995: 101-107; Scanlon, 192, 225, 233, 235). It recognized women's equality to some extent, but society's deeply-rooted chauvinism remained. Employers could no longer sack women when they married, but wives had double shifts as they did housework, which Andrea in Gary Cooper seems to neglect, in addition to their job (Graham, 1995: 101). The Republic gave women the vote at 45 (García Osuna: 8) as opposed to the qualifying age of 23 for males (Scanlon: 274, 290). Many Spanish women retained conservative, religious ideas, disliked the divorce reform and voted for the right in 1933 (Graham: 101-107), but Franco's victory in the Civil War pushed Spain into a highly regressive situation (Scanlon: 320-321). Divorce remained illegal until 1981, when parliament passed a new law in spite of strong opposition from the Church (Montero, 1995: 382) to which María Rosa in Hablamos will resort to dissolve her marital ties to Víctor. In spite of the reforms, conservative attitudes continued because by 1986, only 1.1% of Spaniards were divorced or separated (García Osuna: 151-152).

Democracy in Spain brought legal guarantees against sexual discrimination (Montero, 1995: 382), although these were not always put into practice as is evident from Andrea's struggle to succeed professionally. Under Franco, married women became minors before the law (Graham: 1995a: 182; Scanlon: 348). The 1946 laws on

employment reinstated that women had to leave work when they married and banned their entry into important professions, for example as lawyers or judges (Scanlon: 321). Until 1975, a married woman could not open a bank account without her husband's permission, who had a legal right to claim his wife's salary (Montero, 1995: 381). The Church gained more power under Franco and imposed ideals of angelic femininity (Scanlon: 11). Feminism remained in a semi-clandestine state until December 1975 since it could only make its demands public after the *caudillo* died (Alcalá, 1995: 19; Scanlon: 130). Many Spanish women unquestioningly accepted priests' discredit of feminism (Graham, 1995: 104, 107; Scanlon: 7, 159-161) and education in private boarding schools run by nuns was also repressive (Falcón: 320). As late as 1979, the Church still continued to distribute anti-feminist propaganda (Scanlon: 356). In the 1940s and 50s, La Sección Femenina of the Falange taught women to be acquiescent housewives and discouraged competition with male intelligence (Martin Gaite: 60, 68, 72). However, some Spanish women worked, but most lacked the education necessary for true independence (Scanlon: 318, 324-325, 328, 336), which perhaps Andrea, Julia, María Rosa and Carlota enjoy. Under the dictatorship, only a minority of educated women chose to participate in feminism or politics (Borreguero: 256; Falcón: 376).

Economic independence threatened the stability of the future home and ambitious career women faced prejudices from traditional Spaniards (Martín Gaite: 68, 72) who believed that lower-class women should only work in conventionally feminine jobs for reasons of necessity (Scanlon: 345). However, the Plan de Desarollo (1963) and consumerism in the late 1950s -1960s led to the acceptance of women's economic activity so that families could buy consumer goods, although under a 1961 law, married women still required their husband's permission to work (Alcalá, 1995a: 77, 79; Scanlon: 347, 349-350, 352).<sup>9</sup> Women also benefited from an apparent liberalization of the regime used to convince the rest of the world of Spain's respectability to obtain economic aid from the USA (Martín Gaite: 14; Scanlon: 336, 342) through pretending to accept US morals. Between 1970-1974, 1.5 million women started work in badly paid jobs with little or no prestige. Scanlon partly blamed women for this situation because they lacked ambition,

but bosses disliked placing women in positions of authority since many male employees would ignore female superiors.<sup>10</sup> Girls also received less encouragement to undertake professional training in comparison with boys (Scanlon: 344-345, 349-350, 352). *La ley 11* (1981) ended discrimination within marriage according to gender and gave wives control over property (Cambio 16, 1996). Male predominance and gender-determined roles continued to be the norm, but in spite of traditional upbringings, younger people had undergone considerable evolution by the 1980s (Borreguero: 103, 105; Méndez: 28).

Franco did not combat professional discrimination, but the democratic Constitution (1978, art. 14) stated that all Spaniards were equal (García Osuna: 109, 112; Roca Cubellis, 1993: 23). By the 1980s, Spanish women increasingly balanced work and family, but despite legal measures in the Statute of Worker's law (1980) - which banned discrimination on the basis of gender, *licencia marital* and granted equal pay for equal work - equal opportunity is not a reality (Alcalá, 1995a: 80-81; García Osuna: 43, 75, 127, 142; Cambio 16, 6/1996). Between 1979-1981, a few women gained important posts in culture (García Osuna: 110), but, on the whole, women were slow to occupy prestigious jobs and the proportion of working women still falls below the EU average (Montero, 1995: 382). Social discrimination continues in the early 1990s since women surveyed remarked that they found being single advantageous for promotion (García Osuna: 111). The image of woman as maternal home-maker had not entirely changed even by the 1980s (Hopewell: 113) and many men in the 1990s still treat women as possessions (García Osuna: 75). However, progressive Spanish men in the 1990s have demanded rights to traditionally feminine attributes, such as tenderness. Fathers gained the legal right to some paternity leave in 1989 (García Osuna: 114, 144, 153; Roca Cubellis: 84) and some younger men, who seem to be represented by the teacher in Werther, believe that partners should share child-care and housework. Changes in Spain, like the divorce law, affected the traditional model of the family and by 1991, there were 242,000 single parent families in Spain, usually headed by women (García Osuna: 144, 152, 154), represented in Miró's cinema by María Rosa and Carlota.

Despite chauvinistic attitudes, the fact that men hold more important jobs than women and earn approximately 20% more (22), women - who seem to be represented by Andrea, Carlota and Clara - are slowly conquering once male-dominated academic disciplines and entering some formerly 'male' professions. In 1980, 42% of graduates were female which rose to 54% in 1990 (Appendix 2; Montero, 1995: 382, 385). The Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Españolas (ANME) founded in 1918 hoped that women would enter the male-dominated area of science, aspirations matching feminist aims worldwide in the 1970s (Embree: 177; Scanlon). Spanish women have tended to take arts subjects, nursing and pharmacy: engineering, technology and physics continue to be male dominated disciplines. However, women still complain that they are not allowed to participate in important decisions (García Osuna: 115, 120, 142).<sup>11</sup> As García Osuna comments, stress caused at work by *machismo* forces many Spanish women to turn to cigarettes or alcohol, calming substances to which Andrea in Gary Cooper resorts. Many frequently have a *doble jornada* (García Osuna: 121, 126-128) of domestic chores and professional activities because 79% of Spanish men still refuse to share housework (Alcalá, 1995b: 102; García Osuna: 114, 153-154; Montero, 1995: 383), unlike Hans and the teacher.<sup>12</sup>

One of the careers thought unsuitable for women that features in Gary Cooper and Beltenebros was writing. Female creativity suffered restrictions for various reasons. From 1927-1938, women by law could not work on public performances or in workshops producing writings or paintings offensive to their sense of morality. Like other prejudiced men in patriarchal countries, José María Pemán (1947) said that women lacked creative power, attitudes which feminist organizations took steps to counteract. For example, the ANME promised to publish works by promising female writers who could not afford to do so by themselves (Scanlon: 53-54, 293, 319, 322). Even on a non-professional level, Spanish women in general lacked letter writing skills (Falcón: 319), partly because the rate of female illiteracy in Spain continues to be higher than that of Spanish men even in the 1990s (Cambio 16, 12/1993: 20-24).<sup>13</sup> However, there were prestigious female writers in Spain such as Santa Teresa de Jesús, Emilia Pardo Bazán and a host of less well-known

writers, such as Julia de Asensi, recently recovered by researchers.<sup>14</sup> Rosa María Aranda complained that women were restricted to writing in unrealistic, sentimental genres, namely the *novela rosa*. For example, María Luisa Valdefrancos, María Luz Morales and Laura de Naves who wrote in this genre (Martín Gaite: 143-145, 148; Scanlon: 331).<sup>15</sup> A few women novelists established themselves in advanced literary production during the Franco years, although they were often criticized by traditional women - for example, Carmen Martín Gaite, Ana María Matute and Carmen Laforet, whose novel Nada (1944) reflected problems in Spain and won a prize - but there has been a post-dictatorship surge in women's fiction by writers such as Soledad Puértolas, Montserrat Roig and Lourdes Ortiz to name a few (Falcón: 327; Montero, 1995: 383-384; Scanlon: 331). There was a noticeable increase in publications of female authorship from 1972 onwards (Scanlon: vi). Comparable to Miró and her use of various genres such as film noir and the action film, women writers in the late 1970s explored women's experience and problems, but also branched into different thematic areas, as varied as the writings of men, although cultural officialdom is still reluctant to give women writers full-recognition (Montero, 1995: 383-384). Analogous to Miró, who encountered difficulties, women in particular felt the effects of discrimination as access to influential, writerly professions such as journalism was denied them (Scanlon: 316). Only six women have won awards for journalism, not surprising considering that women constitute only 9% of Spanish journalists (Fagoaga: 17-19). On the whole, women do not hold jobs with a lot of responsibility in the press.

Inequalities also exist within the contemporary visual media. In 1993, Canal + journalist and presenter Ana Ortas complained that women hold no real responsibility in the media owing to chauvinism (Cambio 16, 12/1993). Writing in 1995, Montero commented that the media was virtually an all-male preserve in the late 1960s and 1970s, when Miró was struggling to make her own mark on RTVE, but that there are now at least female deputy editors in the press and women in positions of authority in television (383). Miró, who had personal experience of this area of repression, depicts the same chauvinistic restrictions imposed on Andrea in Gary Cooper. It was particularly difficult for women to enter and succeed in the Spanish film industry. Rosario Pi was Spain's first

woman director and Miró and Josefina Molina, the only female students in the E.O.C in the 1960s, made their mark as directors by the late 1980s (Montero, 1995: 384).<sup>16</sup> Increasing numbers of women have directed in the 90s, such as Ana Belén (Cómo ser mujer y no morir en el intento: 1992), Azucena Rodríguez (Entre rojas: 1995) and María Miró (El baúl de los recuerdos: 1995) and are now making their mark on film and art to the same extent as women directors in other European countries (Montero, 1995: 384). It is interesting to note that when Miró made adaptations for RTVE, most of the scripts were written by male directors, such as Jaime de Armiñán, with the exception of a few adaptations of her own authorship.<sup>17</sup> As Luz Casal and Montero comment, despite the entry of women into the media, much broadcasting in Spain remains sexist in that it objectifies women (Berrocal: 169; Montero, 1995: 383).

The ANME campaigned for equality in legislation from the early twentieth-century (Scanlon: 152). However, greater development in feminist groups and writing followed Franco's death (Borreguero: 29). Various movements and groups encompassing Marxist feminist and radical tendencies organized demonstrations and conferences from December 1975 onwards.<sup>18</sup> The Instituto de La Mujer (IM), established by the PSOE government in 1983, works to improve the position of women through publicity campaigns and equal opportunities plans (Montero, 1995: 383; Oliva Blanco, 1995: 139-146). The first Plan de Igualdad de Oportunidades de las Mujeres (PIOM) swept away legal discrimination against women and the second (1992-1995) guaranteed the application of anti-discrimination legislation and aimed to alter social chauvinism, one of the apparent targets of Miró's critical exposés of the situation. According to Cristina Alberdi and Marina Subirats, feminists must promote the sharing of domestic duties and pay special attention to women's own subconscious messages that they are second-class by updating images of gender (Mujeres, 12: 4-5, 7), as do Miró's films with women in important positions and sensitive men.

Spain has endeavored to ridicule feminism ever since the nineteenth-century and the media often encouraged society to cast it aside.<sup>19</sup> Spanish feminists believe that some women in the 1990s succumbed to pressures to forget feminism (Cambio 16, 12/1993: 24).

However, many women have noticed both their own strength and that feminism is still important for both sexes. New feminists - rather like Miró in her films - have realized that they should not remain outside of society (as did radical feminism) or present fixed behaviour if they are to combat stereotypes (*ibid.*). For example, new Spanish feminists do not criticize each other's dress sense, even if it is highly feminine (20). Therefore, Rebeca 2's feminine attire might not be considered a tool of oppressive objectification, as I will argue in chapter 6 with reference to female narcissism and fantasies. Despite women's increasingly critical attitude towards the Church's teachings (*Cambio 16*, 12 1993: 24) and refirms. Alberdi complains that Spain has not advanced enough for feminists (García Osuna: 182-183). This is perhaps one of the messages of Gary Cooper, although the film is set in 1980. Consequently, whatever the historical setting of Miró's works - even ones in a modern context, like Werther of 1986, the most recent historical setting in the six films I analyze - there are residues of masculinism, be they directly referred to in the films, as in Gary Cooper, or implied, such as Beltenebros.

<sup>1</sup> "[...] entendimos que el Ministerio sólo necesitaba un pretexto para que se viera que imponía su autoridad y hicimos un falso emplame - que se percibía sobre todo en la música - en la copia que tenían que revisar ellos, y pasó sin más problemas" (Miró in Pérez Millán: 109). Item 9 of the government's New Norms for Censorship allowed the 'presentation of the nude body if the intention is not to arouse the passions of the normal spectator' (cited in Hopewell, 1986: 96). *Destapar* in Spanish means to uncover, hence the name for this slight relaxation of censorship.

<sup>2</sup> Miró alluded to this feature of her work in interview: "Escribir un libro, hacer una película es, de algún modo, confesarte, poner algo de ti" (cited in Urbano, 1985: 19). See also F.J.A, 1980. As Méndez comments, Gary Cooper, of all Miró's works, plays out this notion (1989: 258).

<sup>3</sup> 'Surely, the penis itself is a pathetic instrument. It is only when it is sexually aroused that it assumes a sort of power - otherwise, it is a flabby object' (Brittan: 46).

<sup>4</sup> Cixous is borrowing here from the theories of Lacan, who argued that women only existed in language in relation to the male sign, as what man is not or the negative in any binary opposition (Minsky: 199).

<sup>5</sup> The ideal to follow for unmarried women was entry into a convent (Martín Gaite: 36).

<sup>6</sup> Shame also surrounded the female body. Nuns instructed girls in boarding schools to bathe wearing a gown (Falcón: 320). Until the 1950s, *retocadores* reduced the size of women's breasts in the press (Hooper: 187-188).

<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note that Miró was one of the many important intellectual women in Spain who publicly declared that they had undergone abortions to support eleven women

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tried for practicing abortions in Bilbao (F.J.A, 1980). In the same interview, Miró also declared that she was in favour of divorce. See also José Manuel Parda, 1981, 25, Blanco, 1987a, 73 and Ordoñez, 1981, 32.

<sup>8</sup> In 1992, the PSOE added anguish to the 3 conditions, which requires a medical certificate that many doctors are unwilling to write (García Osuna: 178-179): women requiring an abortion for personal choice still go abroad (García Osuna: 174, 179; Martín Perpiñán: 118, 120-121).

<sup>9</sup> See also Higginbotham, xii who cites Monserrat Bofill (1968: 56).

<sup>10</sup> See also García Osuna, 113.

<sup>11</sup> In 1990, female workers earned 30-40% less than their male counterparts and more women were unemployed than men, demonstrating that employers prefer to contract males (Cambio 16, 12/1993). García Osuna's research shows only a slight improvement.

<sup>12</sup> See also INNER (1988).

<sup>13</sup> See also Harmency Como debe escribir sus cartas la mujer (1943), cited in Falcón, 319-320.

<sup>14</sup> For example, Isabel Díez (1996).

<sup>15</sup> See also Bermúdez (1994).

<sup>16</sup> On the scarce number of women directors in Spain before the 1990s, see Mary, 1976 and Montero, 1978, 6, 11.

<sup>17</sup> El patio de luces, Novela (TVE, 1967), adapted from the text by Dolores Medio; La enemiga, Estudio 1 (TVE, 1971) adapted from the play by Dario Nicodemi; El deseo

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bajo los olmos, Teatro, (TVE, 1975), adapted from the play by Eugene O'Neill (Pérez Millán: 81, 301, 324).

<sup>18</sup> Alcalá and Blanco list the various feminist groups in Spain and their activities (1995: 19-24) with documentary photographic evidence (25-42).

<sup>19</sup> Franco reinforced all of the dictatorship's traditional ideas vis-à-vis women in the media. Cinema in particular was escapist in the forties in that it presented women's dreams as love stories ending in marriage and dependency on men. In CIFESA films, male characters in a typical plot married a sweet woman, rejecting the unfeminine character (Falcón: 311). The media seemed pessimistic because in it, women saw their dreams but also: '[...] ven reconocido su derecho a vegetar dulcemente en el hogar a espera del ansiado varón' (316). Many male characters in CIFESA films married sweet women and scorned proud, independent and unfeminine characters (311-312). As Hopewell comments, Bardem's neo-realist film, Calle mayor (1956), condemned these ideals created by Francoist politics (Hopewell: 56).

PART I. GENDER ISSUES IN THE  
FILMS OF PILAR MIRÓ

## CH. 1. THE MONSTROUS FEMININE IN LA PETICIÓN.

La petición explores an extreme case of the transgressive woman which approximates the film to the monstrous feminine in horror, a genre full of strong, beautiful, exciting, deadly female characters who are not in a state of lack - such as vampiresses and *femmes castratrices*, the embodiments of the thrilling sex/death connection or pleasure in pain (Creed: 1, 4-5; Hogan: 164; Praz: 25-26). Various theories on the monstrous feminine help viewers to understand or interpret Teresa's volcanic power. For example, the notion that sexually unfulfilled women can often turn into monsters, seeking revenge for their symbolic castration through repression in society and the family (Creed: 121; Robin Wood: 77). Like transgressive women in society and the monster woman in literature, female characters in horror are defined as monstrous largely in terms of their active sexuality (Creed: 3).

Critics have drawn indications of the fear men feel towards women's dangerous castrating powers from mythology and re-readings of Freud's evidence in support of woman as castrated. Primitive stories of the *vagina dentata* express men's fears of the castrating powers of the mysterious female genitals (Campbell, 1976; Creed, 7, 27) and Classical mythology similarly depicts many female monsters such as the Sirens, typical *femmes castratrices* who used their magical songs to entice sailors to their doom on reefs (Creed: 128), a myth to which Miró possibly alludes in La petición as I will discuss below. Re-readings of Freudian and Lacanian theories on female castration and passivity are most useful to analyses of female monsters in horror films. Karen Horney argues that men tried to find evidence for the presence of a penis in women in order to deny the existence of a threatening vagina (1967: 130). Another re-reading stems from Creed and Jacobus' argument that woman's genitals are a source of both mystery and fear because they might castrate which challenges Freudian and Lacanian theories' basis for the association of the Symbolic order and authority with the masculine (Creed: 110, 120; Jacobus, 1986).

Many horror films, such as I Spit On Your Grave Sisters (Meir Zarchi, 1978), present woman's inferiority as the product of social forms of control rather than penis envy, the Freudian explanation for woman's supposed desire to castrate men (Creed: 119-121,

138). According to Freud, not only are males active subjects by virtue of the possession of a penis, but also women are passive objects who have a vagina designed as a place of shelter for the male organ (Creed: 145; Freud, 1923). Freud's theories of fetishism conceal the threat of woman as castrator and the phallus in women - which he believed children imagined - merely stands in for the castrating *vagina dentata* that males endeavor to deny. In Freud's opinion, boys see menstrual blood as evidence of wounds caused by castration or damage to the vagina in intercourse, but males could easily mistake it for their father's blood spilt during sex should they phantasise that men who have sex with women take risks (Creed, 112; C.D.Daly, 1943: 160). Freud almost admitted male castration anxiety produced by women in 'The Taboo of Virginity' when he wrote about post-coital fatigue and flaccidity as indicative of fear towards women (Creed: 198-199) and Bataille likewise said that the 'little death' or exhaustion following climax reminds man of his own possible castration (Bataille, 1987: 100, 106; Creed: 120).

Just as active, monstrous women thwart definitions of femininity as passive, they challenge male spectators' active, sadistic position (Creed: 7, 76). Castrating cinematic women assume two forms, either that of the castrating female psychotic - as in Basic Instinct (Paul Verhoeven: 1992) - who rarely receives punishment or the woman who seeks revenge on male abusers - for example, in Ingmar Bergman's The Virgin Spring (1959) - and who is shown to be justified in her actions (Creed: 123). Horror films, such as Fatal Attraction (Adrian Lyne, 1987), present woman's transformation into a psychotic monster through symbolic castration or the deprivation of fulfillment; Fatal Attraction's unmarried heroine - a career woman - turns monstrous because she is unable to have a husband and family, which constitutes a more conventional view, but it is evident that La petición matches this sort of narrative owing to the restrictions placed on Teresa, who becomes dangerously frustrated. Horror films depict male castration anxiety either by placing woman as literally or symbolically castrated or as castrator. I have outlined some ways in which women become castrators above; metaphorical female castration happens in the cinematic 'slasher' genre, in which women's bodies are knifed until they resemble bleeding wounds (Creed: 122). Arguably, Teresa in La petición becomes a slasher/castrator as she

batters the mute and consequently reverses the convention. La petición is not the only of Miró's films to deal with the theme of castration: Darman literally castrates Ugarte at the end of Beltenebros, emphasizing the fragility of the phallus, and Luis María is symbolically castrated through suicide in Hablamos. Horror films about female castrators either reinforce misogynist views that woman is dangerous and/or play on the spectator's fascination with the relationship between sex and death, which is what La petición seems to do. Conventionally, the *femme castratrice* is almost always represented as a stereotypical image of female beauty, above all for male viewers: man-as-victim is not degraded like female victims given that males' death scenes offer a form of masochistic gratification to the viewer by associating death with pleasure as opposed to punishment (Ebert in Creed: 128, 130). By way of contrast, Teresa is not the victim of a fatal attack, but the mute does seem to feel some pleasure in his own extinction.

Klein and Rivière's theories, which help to explain or partly justify why Teresa turned monstrous, show how humans want to secure the means of their existence, but equally need to get pleasure out of life. In 'Hate, Greed and Aggression' (1937), Rivière outlines man's primary instincts, most of which appear to determine Teresa's behaviour - love, hate, self-preservation and the sex drive. Hatred is often manifested in and gratified by aggression and its opposite - the harmonizing force of love - couples with life and pleasure (Klein and Rivière, 1937: 3-5). An individual's behaviour is mostly determined by the strength of love/hate tendencies in his or her emotional forces and environmental influences. Dissatisfaction with one's environment arouses hostility when the individual suffers frustrated needs, adult versions of which frequently originate in childhood, just as adult love-relationships are founded upon early emotional situations connected to parents or siblings in which deprivations can occur (3-6, 89, 116). If a child does not get enough love early on from parents or parental substitutes, his or her ability for developing or giving love and trust in others suffers (112). Fear or phantasies about internal warfare with severe parents determine a vindictive conscience or an inability to forgive the frustration one bears: contrastingly, trust in others survives if love has been firmly established unhindered by resentment and will act as a protective barrier to counteract adverse events (114-116,

118). However, the idea of dependency in amorous relationships can cause resistant and violent emotions (7, 119). Aggression and hatred - often directed towards a person who has disappointed the individual in some way - are hazardous if left inside to build up since they cause people either to burst with rage or suffocate through suppressed emotion.<sup>1</sup> One of Miró's messages in many of her films common to Spanish cinema as a whole is that the repressive climate in Spain exacerbates natural human tendencies to aggression (Pérez Millán: 101; Mary, 1976; Umbral, 1984: 13) - Luis María painfully retains his resentment and turns it on himself in suicide, the teacher in Werther ends his own life because he cannot fulfill his desires for love and El crimen shows the harm of violence released by supposedly civilized law forces on any scapegoat.

Klein's essay, 'Criminal Tendencies in Normal Children', is of interest to both the determinism of monstrous women and the early scenes of La petición, when Teresa manifests nascent criminal tendencies by biting Miguel's ear. Klein believes that children's games provide evidence of impulses at work and Freud maintained that the final stages of childish development remain in the adult's unconscious (Klein, 1973: 185, 199). The strictest sort of repression in society aims to control the most unsocial and dangerous tendencies in humans, such as murder. As Klein remarks, the super-ego (or sense of guilt) starts to work when a child reaches the age of 2 and has passed through two sorts of oral fixations - pleasurable sucking in breast feeding followed by thumb sucking and the cannibalistic oral-biting fixation. Anal-sadistic fixations take place in the first year of life, such as anal-sadistic eroticism in which the child obtains pleasure from the anal erotogenic zone and excretion accompanied by pleasure in cruelty and mastery applied to the parents during toilet training. It is these fixations that play the greatest part in the development of criminal tendencies in a person (185). The child obtains unconscious knowledge of sex in the anal sadistic phase and thinks that intercourse is made up of sadistic beatings, which the child may later relate to his or her sexuality in fantasies (190) and that criminals really act out in perversions (191-193). For example, the childish idea of sex consists of phantasies of the father or the child himself (or herself) harming the mother or, in homosexual identifications, injuring the father in castration. People might become violent in a type of

self-defense mechanism if they are abused and dominated so as to in turn gain some control by proving that they can be aggressors (197-198). While Teresa is very restricted by her parents, she at least dominates Miguel and the mute. According to Klein, the girl denied sexual gratification from her father's genitals sadistically imagines that they can be injured with the vagina: nevertheless, should a man gratify her sexual drives later in life, such sadistic wishes disappear to be replaced by love towards men (70-71). Some safety valves for the socially accepted release of energy from destructive sadism exist, although these are not available to Teresa in La petición. Sport is one such outlet in which aggression is turned against opponents (192, 199). Deprived of active pursuits, Teresa simply releases her repressed energy into sex and perversions, especially sado-masochism.

#### POWER AND PERVERSIONS. SADISM AND MASOCHISM: THE FREUDIAN VIEW AND DELEUZE'S REINTERPRETATION.

Sadism and masochism are the psychoanalytical terms used to define perversions that take pleasure in the active infliction or passive receiving of violence, humiliation or cruelty, integral parts of the activities and pleasures to be had from monstrous women.<sup>2</sup> Freudian accounts of sadism and masochism are misleading for any representation of monstrous women, particularly Teresa, but Deleuze's ideas are perhaps more relevant. Part of the postmodernist tendency of Miró is to prove that no single system of order or representation is omnipotent. In line with this train of thought, I will select points of interest from Freud and Deleuze, none of whose theories fit Teresa exactly and therefore fail to give a full explanation of female reality.

Freud, whose ideas on sadism and masochism match his hypotheses on active male and passive female sexuality, argues that most males' sexual activity contains an element of biologically determined aggressiveness used to overcome any resistance from the female sexual object (1977: 71). According to him, sadism in itself corresponds to an aggressive masculine component of the sexual instinct that has become independent and exaggerated (Freud, 1977: 71; 1919: 203). On the other hand, Freudian masochism is a passive attitude towards the sexual object, extreme cases of which occur when satisfaction depends on

suffering pain, even castration, in imagined phantasies given that actual or fantasized pain can excite the libido. A frequent scenario is for the masochist to fantasise or imagine that he has committed a crime punishable by torture (1924: 416-417, 420). One sort of masochism, the erotogenic variety, results should part of the death instinct enter the service of the sexual function and remain inside whereas sadism stems from the externalization of the death instinct towards the object (418). In Freud's view, when sadism turns around onto the self, masochism would tend to replace the desired sexual object (Freud, 1977: 72).

Sadism therefore turns into masochism when the sadistic impulse fails to find an outlet in real life or becomes repressed, turning upon the subject's own self (Freud, 1977: 72, 82): inverted sadism can later develop into two other forms - feminine masochism and moral masochism which is closely connected to feelings of guilt (1977: 72; 1924: 412-413). In 'Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality', Freud argued that sadism and masochism could work simultaneously within the same individual (Deleuze: 38). Aggressive sadism aims at domination, whereas hedonistic varieties of the perversion produced pain in others, which the sadist would never be able to enjoy if he had not first undergone the masochistic experience of a link between pain and pleasure.<sup>3</sup> Freud's hypothesis that active and passive forms are often found together in the same individual is of some use for the characters of Teresa and Miguel in La petición. Within this Freudian duality of sadism and masochism, active or passive aspects of the perversions may be more or less developed: the sadistic child identifies with the father whereas the passive-masochistic child, who wants to be loved by the father, takes the place of the mother (1919: 190, 192; Deleuze: 53), by adopting feminine passivity. Therefore Freud still connected masochism with passive female sexuality and sadism with active male sexuality and this is where his theories are unrealistic about women's behaviour.

Beating fantasies outlined by Freud, to which sexual excitement is attached, originate in the Oedipus complex and link to Klein and Rivière's theories on the development of aggression through frustration. Male versions involve another subject in which initially, the male child producing the phantasy watches the beating of girls (1919: 184-186); the phantasy becomes "My father is beating the child whom I hate", which the

masochist turns into "I am being beaten by my father" or a representative of the father. Consequently, adults who retain such masochistic phantasies are sensitive to and irritated by anyone who resembles a father figure (1919: 195). Freudian girls' phantasies usually involve unknown boys being beaten. Since receiving punishment means a deprivation of love from a desired parent, the idea of the father beating a child one hates or envies satisfies jealousy - "My father does not love this other child; he only loves me". When both sexes experience guilt for their incestuous desires towards the parents of the opposite sex, the phantasy of a child being beaten then turns from the sadistic into the masochistic version - "Nor does he love you, because he is beating you" - which led Freud to argue the sense of guilt always transforms sadism into masochism (1919: 189-190). Owing to repression in this pre-genital anal-sadistic phase of sexual life, the words "My father loves me" turn into "My father is beating me" and guilt and sexual love correspondingly fuse in genital excitation in the phantasy which remains unconscious because of repression (1919: 189). Even when the phantasy develops into the beating of many children, the castigators remain male in both *male and female versions until later on in boys, when they fantasise* about being beaten by their mother and subsequently, mother substitutes (1919: 189-191, 196-197). Psychoanalysis tries to account for the active role played by the mother's image in a chauvinistic way through a mechanism of projection in that the mother's image really represents the active father (Deleuze, 94; Freud, 1924). Masochists try to avoid the threat of castration and choose 'being beaten' as both an exorcism of being castrated and a regressive substitute for love: the Freudian phantasy of being beaten by the mother corresponds to a passive attitude in which males with this perversion often give the women who beat them masculine characteristics (Deleuze: 93; Freud, 1919: 198, 201; 1924: 424).<sup>4</sup> This seems to be another fault in Freudian theories: sadistic women torturers are not necessarily masculinised, nor do they need to be masculine since dangerous female characters like Teresa are very feminine.

In contrast to Freud, Deleuze argues that masochism is characterized not by guilt-feelings but by the desire to be punished as it aims to resolve guilt and make sexual gratification possible (90), positing that if the masochist lacks anything, it is a sense of

guilt. When the masochist projects the super-ego on to the beating woman, he seems to externalize the super-ego only in order to make the super-ego serve the aims of the triumphant ego and show that the super-ego does not rule (107). Contrastingly, the sadist has an overwhelming super-ego which takes the mother and the ego as its victims, recovering its full sexuality as soon as power is diverted outwards. For Deleuze, Sadists just have the ego of their victims on which to prey whereas in masochism, the super-ego can only appear from the outside in the form of the torturess (90, 93, 102, 106-108, 113):

The beating woman embodies the super-ego but only in an utterly derisory capacity [...] For in reality the super-ego is dead [...]. The beating woman represents the super-ego superficially and in the external world and transforms the super-ego into the recipient of the beating, the victim (108).

Although the super-ego does keep its power to judge in masochism, the more power it keeps, the more power appears mocked: masochistic guilt is artificial and ostentatious and therefore cannot be moral because it mocks the mechanisms of guilt through theatrical distance (95, 108). The pain that the masochist experiences is felt as pain inflicted on the super-ego and, to that extent, attacks the super-ego (and by implication, the oppressive forces that it represents) which becomes worthless owing to the subversion of its very mechanisms of prohibition - castigation and guilt (109).

According to Deleuze, masochism makes the subject challenge the father-image as the repressive authority which controls his sexuality and makes up the super-ego (112). It is about disavowal as a process of liberation from the pressures of the super-ego which transfers the possession and privileges of the phallus to mother figures (109), abolishing the father and denying reality (female 'castration'), just as masochism is based on suspension of pleasure (110). The father's likeness in masochists - which represents not only the super-ego, but also genital sexuality - is atoned for as they are beaten and ridiculed (53). Deleuze therefore reinterprets masochism as a subversive force, not a phenomenon attributable to guilt but one which circumvents the conventions of guilt and repression to produce undisturbed gratifications. Masoch's novels - the tools Deleuze used to formulate his concept of masochism - give paternal functions to women in which the father is

excluded, abolished and disempowered (Deleuze; 53-54). Whereas sadism stands for the active negation of the mother - with the mother as victim - and the inflation of the father, masochism requires a positive, idealizing disavowal of the mother - which gives her phallic power and must identify her with the law (52, 60, 78, 115). These issues are of interest for the development of the strong characters of Francisca and Teresa in La petición and Miguel's enjoyment of masochism with Teresa. Only the aggressive return of the father disrupts the masochistic situation (57) and powerful father-figures are absent from the sex scenes in La petición. According to Miguel, the strong mother figure, Francisca, would not disturb the couple's pleasure, but would become their accomplice.

The sadeian hero subverts the law, but so too do masochists whose mocking attitude proves that the law is useless when they employ its mechanisms to provoke the very disorder it tried to prevent. For example, physical punishment does not prevent but encourages arousal, making masochists rebellious in their apparent submission and punishment turns into a condition that allows the forbidden pleasure to which Teresa and Miguel resort. Furthermore, sexual pleasure is not only interrupted but deprived of its genitality in masochism which further excludes the penis (58, 62, 76-77, 86-87). The Deleuzian masochist consequently experiences guilt in a different way to the Freudian transformist argument based on the child's fear of the father (87): he ensures that the likeness to the father in him and the father's return is banished or punished with tortures directed at the father, the father's likeness in the son and genital sexuality (58, 86, 95). There is no longer a threat of castration from the disempowered father because it comes from the mother (59), who lacks nothing since the absence of a penis need not imply lack of the phallus, an indication of power in patriarchal societies (59-60, 79). It is assumed that the father's image determines sadism in that heroines imitate men and dedicate their activities to them, thereby placing man as the spectator (50, 52), another idea that Miró refutes through Teresa's independent sadism - which Miguel did not prompt - from childhood onwards. Sade's female characters enjoy hurting and torturing others, but their actions are prompted by a man or performed with a man - whose victim they later become (43) - unlike monstrous women who attack men. Deleuze's ideas from his studies of Sade's

novels that sadism is an active negation of the mother and an exaltation of the father are incomplete and seem to neglect monstrous women's sadism (52, 115), although some of his ideas fit La petición's exploration of the connection between sex, death and monstrous women, the topic of the next section.

### GENDER ISSUES AND SUBVERSION IN LA PETICION.

Free women, in unfree societies, are monsters, even murderesses. This is inhuman (Carter, 1979: 27).

Analogous views on woman's lot fit La petición in which Miró depicts the intrigue involved in Teresa's existence and rebellion against a restrictive 'law of the father'. Miró's representation of the victimisation of Teresa has resonances in Spanish cinema, namely in the opinions of José Luis Borau, who taught Miró script-writing at the E.O.C.<sup>5</sup> Although La petición resembles patriarchal narratives which depict men as victims of women (Byars: 2), Miró's film implicitly criticizes patriarchy; both men and women in the narrative are victims, even though Teresa kills in a highly violent manner. Williams believes that film is a good medium through which to discuss sex, but can also incite pleasure (1990: 3) which Miró seems to do in La petición. It is subversive enough that Teresa indulges in pre-marital sex, but she poses a yet greater danger by inciting desire in others, such as the mute and possibly the audience.

La petición reveals the consequences of tight prohibitions through its graphic depiction of the return of the repressed in monstrous form. If one considers Klein and Rivière's theories on love, hate and aggression outlined above, it is evident why Teresa has turned into a sadistic pervert in an environment almost devoid of affection. She does not seem to experience any envy of the opposite sex as penis envy, one of the causes of hatred according to Rivière; she experiences it within a human context since nineteenth-century Spanish society gave men greater freedom, envy of which partly conditions her violent, frustrated attitude (Klein and Rivière: 31). Both conservative society and Teresa's own strict background have together exacerbated her intrinsic, aggressive tendencies. Her

relationship with her parents does not occupy much of the narrative, but Miró provides sufficient detail to show their restrictive ideas which implicitly seem to be the target of her criticism. To return to Klein and Rivière for one context of reading, disappointments in childhood are harked back to and linked to disappointments in adult relationships. When children cannot vent their aggression, it consequently builds up into sadistic and often murderous fantasies. Since the child is aware of these destructive forces within him or her, he or she feels equally threatened by adults because of the laws which adults use to punish anti-social behaviour motivated by destructive emotions (Horney: 109-110). Teresa's largely cold environment exacerbates all of these tendencies and threats. She has no siblings as rivals but cold parents, although Miguel possibly arouses jealous competition for Francisca's attention.

As a result of these hostile feelings in childhood, some people become suspicious of love in their adult lives. When childhood fears of a threatening father or mother are reawakened, the individual becomes defensive and dreads what his or her partner might do to him or her by way of frustration or injury. Teresa's environment rekindles these feelings of hostility and she is afraid that others might punish her, indicated by her looks of horror when she discovers that Miguel is lying dead in her bedroom. Childhood conflicts may effect relationships with the opposite sex in later life: the little girl who was badly hurt through some great disappointment by her father will transform her instinctual wish to receive from the man, initially the father, into a vindictive one of taking from him by force. She will not only deny her maternal instincts but will have a vampiric drive to harm the male. Following this argument, Teresa in La petición becomes vampiric because her father and others denied her affection (Horney: 110-111).<sup>6</sup> Teresa shares many similarities with the mythological and literary vampire, who acts as a catalyst for the emergence of repressed tendencies, beyond giving Miguel passionate French kisses, nibbling Miguel's ear in her bedroom or half biting and kissing the mute's cheek. Pallor is a conventional physical feature of vampires and Teresa seems pale during the lake scene when the bright lighting concentrated on her face reinforces her skin's whiteness. Her most vampiric traits stem from her sexual perversions. Vampires conventionally promise unthinkable

pleasures, sexual liberation and indulgence to the point of death and it is this fusion of sex, death and beauty in particular that conditioned the Romantics interest in vampirism (Praz: 31, 33). Victims see the powerful vampire - who is frequently an aristocrat and expert seducer - as hypnotic (Punter: 117-120), analogous to Teresa whose dominance over Miguel, in Miró's opinion, would not have worked without her superior social status (Hernández: 305).

Teresa's parents did not build firm foundations for civilized behaviour based on affection and she seems unable to forgive them for the frustrations they caused her (Klein, 1937: 119). Denied the chance to develop compassion towards her parents and vent her anger, Teresa became a monster. Her education deprived her of contact with men, only allowing her to meet Miguel or servants. Teresa's parents attempted to socialize her by sending her to a convent school in France, thereby linking repression through education with religious authority and explaining Teresa's doubly strict upbringing. The dining room scene is a prime example of the restrictions and double standards applied to women. Teresa's father seems brutish and her mother is formal, acquiescing in her husband's authority. Her mother's only conversation in the film takes place at the dining table, but it shows her obsession with order - like aunt Paulina in Cria cuervos (Carlos Saura, 1975) - because she mentions tidying up the garden in another house. Teresa asks about her uncle, who resided there, and it becomes significant that her mother wanted to tidy his abode, just as they conceal his subversion. Teresa protests that they need not hide the situation, but her father immediately restricts her dialogue: "Cuando lo crea conveniente hablar contigo de eso y de muchas otras cosas, lo haré". Her mother answers Teresa's protest according to the dictates of patriarchal ideology: "Calla. Una señorita, aunque sepa de estas cosas, no debe hablar de ellas". This is an example of what Cora Kaplan in 'On Gender and Language' defines as prohibition on the subject-matter of female discourse embedded in the Symbolic (1986: 70-72, 74, 77-78). Teresa eats daintily, although she daringly pursues the forbidden subject: "Total, sólo tuvo un hijo con una de ellas". Her mother ends the conversation with a condemnation that her brother ceased to exist for them when the *crime* became news. When Teresa tries to intervene again, her father silences her and re-asserts

his authority in that she can only leave the table when the rest of them go, restricting her movement in addition to her language. Dining and formal balls, like the engagement party at the end of the film, are both very ceremonious affairs. The law of the father combines with religion at the table when her father recites grace here and later on when an important bishop attends the engagement party. Saying grace is a mark of religious faith but it is also an authoritarian convention in that Marcuse identified religion as one of the forms of tyranny in addition to dogmatism and social hierarchies (1969: 62). Oppressive table scenes are a recurring motif in Spanish cinema, to which Miró returns in Hablamos and Werther. In Almodóvar's Matador (1986), the repressive Opus Dei mother (Julieta Serrano) says grace and chastises her rebellious son, Ángel (Antonio Banderas), and in Saura's Cría cuervos (1975), the positioning of the characters in signifies distance (Evans, 1984: 19-20). Teresa and her parents are separated by the mise-en-scène with her father occupying an important central position. There are some shot reverse-shot sequences in the scene between Teresa, her mother and her father in medium close-up, but Miró mirrors the emotional distance between the characters by filming them predominantly in long shot with the high-class, formal decor and large table in full view. Teresa kisses her father and they leave the table, but it is a very formal kiss devoid of affection. She smirks outside the room, sure of herself and her impending mockery of the notions of honour, showing her menacing, metaphorical *vagina dentata* teeth while Miró highlights Teresa's sinister traits through unnerving music. Viewers see the emerging repressed power of female sexuality and sado-masochistic activity in the next scene set in Teresa's bedroom.

Teresa is equally restricted by her clothes, although patriarchy's designation of fashion as a female sphere backfires. Foucault argued that corsets caused physical incapacitation, becoming an emblem for the power of patriarchy's power to impose itself on the female body (cited in Crowley: 93). Auerbach (22) comments that corsets transformed women's bodies into a rigid construction and Teresa's costume emphasizes the ways in which patriarchy aimed to 'immobilize' women: corsets and long skirts clearly restrict her movement and even on the boat scene at the end of the film, Teresa seems hindered somewhat by her costume. Miró shows the viewers Teresa's constricting

undergarments on a 'realistic' level as Teresa dresses for the party and Francisca pulls in the stays of her corset. The abandonment of corsets was considered defiant, like bra burning (136). Significantly, Teresa is particularly monstrous and commits her first 'murder' when she removes her corset and is in bed with Miguel, although he has also overpowered her in the greenhouse and enjoyed pleasure in masochism with her. Once again, religion is aligned with restrictions in the sphere of costume in the section when Teresa visits church with Francisca in which both women wear head-scarves to cover their heads. Although Teresa sometimes wears very red lipstick and heavier eye make-up, especially when she commits the second murder, she also wears white dresses for the party and at home - symbols of innocence - and returns from the murder scene in a clean, white dress when her father announces her engagement. Moments before, when she went upstairs to change, Teresa looked down on the guests dancing at her party in a high angle point-of-view shot, a classic B or horror movie strategy. It is as if she is superior to the civilized world below her due to her slyness. She has successfully hidden the traces of her status as a 'castrating' woman, dancing with Mauricio as if nothing had happened.

Theories of masquerade link closely to the subversive strategies of masochism and masochistic theatricality which I will explore later, the duplicity of the *femme fatale* and repressed women, who use whatever tools available to gain some sort of pleasure. Masquerade is a decorative, concealing feminine layer that hides a non-identity according to Doane, but it serves to hide the possession of subversive masculine traits in addition to women's supposed 'castration'.<sup>7</sup> However, Teresa uses feminine masquerade through her dress to conceal her status as a *femme castratrice*. Exaggerated nineteenth-century femininity is a mask which can be worn or removed and this sort of masquerade - an excess of femininity of which men are highly suspicious and which they believe is evil - is aligned with the *femme fatale*.<sup>8</sup> Teresa has a fictitious interest in fashion - a sphere to which women were allowed access - as she supposedly goes upstairs to change her dress in order to look clean. Teresa uses excessive femininity as a defense mechanism to hide her defiance and the pretext of looking good to both dispose of Miguel's body and commit more atrocious acts. Teresa employs whatever outlet she can have within her restricted

environment to be monstrous and escape punishment. When Mauricio kisses Teresa, she spills red wine on herself and instructs Mauricio not to mention this to her mother because she will surprise her with another outfit.

Like the mute's girlfriend, Francisca is a conventional character with slight traits of subversion, who loves Teresa as if she were her own daughter. Teresa seems to feel something for Francisca because in the child's relationship with his or her parents, negative feelings such as jealousy are directed against the parent of the opposite sex within the child's experience of homosexual desire (Klein, 1973: 189). Teresa directs negative feelings towards Miguel and seems to strive to win Francisca's affection - her only source of warmth - by making Miguel seem naughty so that Francisca would punish him and reward her. Francisca appears to favour Teresa compared to her son, especially when they are children. However, Teresa's education in France distanced her from Francisca, although Francisca remains close to her as a lady's maid while Miguel becomes Teresa's object of desire.<sup>9</sup>

However, it seems that Francisca adopts patriarchal order, *although the situation is* confusing. She does follow the instructions of Teresa's mother on dress, who adheres to patriarchal ideology. Francisca voices dominant ideology herself when she commands Miguel and Teresa at the start of the film. Even though she is a matriarch, her part in civilized, household duties contrasts with Teresa and Miguel's subversions. She is a representative of the reality principle in some ways as she presides over kitchen duties, commanding the other servants not to flirt with each other or take wine without permission. There is a parallel use of language by Francisca to Teresa's parents when she scolds the servants for gossiping about the masters of the house immediately after the dinning room scene. Francisca is the voice of the work ethic in addition to the class hierarchy because she complains that the servants dislike work. However, she is not the exponent of the work ethic to Miguel in her maternal function; apart from her maintenance of the class hierarchy vis-à-vis his relationship with Teresa, she deviates from authority as she instructs Miguel not to work too hard. Teresa has partly lived in a matriarchy under Francisca's care but because Francisca adheres to patriarchal ideology, Teresa has turned into a monstrous

woman through extended patriarchal repression. Francisca is not a liberal mother, like María Rosa in Hablamos, who understands and accepts her son's homosexual preferences.

### SEXUAL ACTIVITY AND MOVEMENT

Teresa is not a character of stasis and this is reflected in both the plot and in the ways in which Miró films Ana Belén, such as tracking shots. Dyer's theories on how stars like Rita Hayworth resist repressive strategies, such as fetishisation, by moving more than the camera are useful here (Dyer, 1989: 97-98). Teresa does not move as much as Rebeca 2 in Beltenebros, who moves more than the camera, but she is constantly moving from one space to another. Movement symbolizes the threat that Teresa poses, especially given the Gothic genre's interest in instability and its stylistic, intertextual presence in La petición. As Punter comments:

Everything is a source of fear to the middle class except perfect stasis. [...] Realism sees things as gradual movement and equilibrium. The Gothic sees them as sudden, dizzying and violent because its perspectives are wider, less precise. Stasis depends on controlling the man within, for example the id (421).

Teresa moves a lot as a child. For example, there is a fast tracking shot of her piggy back with Miguel as she spurs him on to gallop. Miró uses speedy tracking shots partly out of necessity, but they also convey chaos. The adult Teresa dislikes staying in the house and constantly leaves it or looks out of the window towards more open spaces, towards the mute from her bedroom or she walks outside in the garden with Miguel. Movement and constant wandering match her rebellion.<sup>10</sup> Teresa waltzes with Mauricio when she is potentially imprisoned in an engagement; it is movement in a socialized form of dance, even though the waltz was considered subversive because it allowed sexual contact between couples.<sup>11</sup> However, Teresa's father and other guests condone the waltz since the couple are officially engaged. Teresa is associated with the transgression of convent rules, the punishment of which was enclosure - a typical feature of women's repressed existence

in houses according to Gilbert and Gubar (20, 39) - and could not enjoy walks, although Teresa wandered to the greenhouse.

When the adult Teresa appears beckoning to the mute, she is active and in motion. The camera moves down to Teresa's feet under her long, cumbersome gown. Viewers see Teresa's hand emerge from the door to pull him inside, leading him up the passage towards her bedroom. Her active sexuality, including her sadistic perversions, is coupled with movement since Teresa picks up the oar when she is on the boat and this murderous, menacing sort of movement both reinforces the return of the repressed while it corresponds to Sadeian ideas of sensuality through movement (Deleuze: 62). Miró also links movement to other transgressions against religion when Teresa and Miguel secretly deposit and collect the key from the baptismal font in the church and both make shock waves on the surface of the holy water.

In addition to being a victim of patriarchy, Teresa is an anti-heroine whom viewers can dislike or admire. Unlike Tirso de Molina's Don Juan in El burlador de Sevilla, Teresa escapes punishment because Miró avoids any open criticism. Nevertheless, Miró establishes Teresa as a dangerous character from the start of the film in all her relationships using the traditional, mythical iconography of the *femme fatale* who draws men to their doom. Biblical symbolism appears in the greenhouse scene when Teresa eats an apple which identifies Teresa with Eve, the first monster woman. Miguel excitedly removes her bloomers, but a close-up of Belén's face shows her smiling and expressing pleasure; her menacing teeth are also visible when she opens her mouth. The narrative constructs Teresa as an active temptress and the Biblical intertext reinforces this image, especially for a Spanish audience. The semi-operatic soundtrack leads viewers to assume approaching climax and will be important later because of its sirenian resonances. Teresa claws Miguel's back, emphasizing her animal nature and linking her to the long association of *femmes fatales* and cats, especially the cat women in Jacques Tourneur's Cat People (1942) in which men die after kissing mythical feline women. When viewers see the mute with his kitten, the camera immediately cuts to Teresa in her sex frenzy and through this parallel

montage, Miró contrasts the mute's harmless kitten, which is associated with his conventional girlfriend and domesticity, to Teresa.

Looking is important for *femmes fatales*, many of whom have fabulous eyes, a condition which Teresa evidently fulfills (Praz: 200, 217). Teresa is allowed the pleasures of scopophilia, often a substitute for sex and conventionally restricted to men gazing at female objects, just as she usurps the Freudian, patriarchal preserve of sexual activity for males only.<sup>12</sup> Miró gives Teresa a more rounded subjectivity by using point-of-view shots because subjective camerawork encourages awareness of a character's individual experience (Byars: 128). When Teresa is in church with Francisca, she is distracted from her prayers, turns around and sees the mute in a point-of-view shot. Looking between Teresa and the mute from window to window or on the carriage also initiates the relationship and corresponding exploitation which shows that Teresa and her male admirers are constructed as both subjects and objects of the gaze. Teresa's meetings with Miguel and the mute are mostly filmed either in point-of-view shot/reverse-shot sequences or with both characters in the frame without shot/reverse-shot editing. This places Teresa on an equal level with male characters and makes men just as much objects of her gaze as she is their object. The mute's relationship with Teresa is based on scopophilia and masochistic perversions as a replacement for genital sex. Viewers first see the adult Teresa looking at and beckoning to the mute from her window, but the male gaze still features in La petición because Miró projects his gaze in a point-of-view shot when he looks at Teresa as she puts on her stockings. There is a shot/reverse-shot sequence full of desire between the mute and Teresa's legs, which equally satisfies the viewers' voyeuristic desires. Teresa's eyes, which she fixes on the mute, suggest that she is trying to hypnotize him on the boat while she opens her fleshy lips, metaphorically devouring him with her gaze and *vagina dentata* and at this crucial moment, Teresa picks up the oar.

Nineteenth-century female writers used the moon to connote matriarchal puissance and the strength of woman's metamorphosis which allows her to destroy and reconstruct her world (Auerbach: 161). The murder scene, a moonlit lake, reinforces Teresa's power and Miró's use of aquatic settings is equally suggestive. According to Horney, men feel

drawn to women but simultaneously dread that they might die in their hands (1967: 133-146). Water represents the primal element, woman, and swallows up the men who succumbed to various forms of female enchantment.<sup>13</sup> Like the Sirens and their bewitching songs, Teresa lures men to their deaths with her physical delights. She is on a boat with her victims. Miguel, who almost falls into the lake when he picks a branch for Teresa, and the mute. The mist encircling Teresa and the mute makes the setting eerie and primitive, in addition to the natural sounds around them. Women gain strength if they become mythical (Auerbach: 34) and that seems to happen to Teresa when she is associated with the Sirens, reinforcing her horrific impact.

La petición depicts women not as angelic creatures to be worshipped, but monsters of desire, as Kristeva comments:

The aura of amorous idealization seems to appear as soon as one can ward off the fear aroused by the sexual desire that women are assumed to have for a man (163).

Miró shows that passion's wild power rules over women's minds and destroys relationships, like D'Anuzio who believes that the destructive elements in a woman become more evident the more violent her orgasm.<sup>14</sup> Characterization in La petición approaches Romanticism in the sense of the literary movement that took an interest in the fusion of sex, death and beauty which gave love [and Teresa] a new thrill (Praz: 31, 33). Sometimes writers admire the beauty and passionate energy of fatal women (200), but Miró leaves up to the spectator whether or not to desire or fear Teresa or both.

Teresa is established as a cruel, duplicitous character from the start in all of her relationships. The child Teresa, a woman-on-top, bites Miguel's ear, perhaps motivated by rivalry for Francisca's affections: childhood events seem to establish a pattern for their adult relationship. She insults Miguel, using her higher social status to humiliate him, an important strategy of sadism and masochism which I will discuss below. Nevertheless, she still seems threatened by the male because Miguel sits on top of her. Teresa, who retaliates by sitting on top of Miguel, seems as if she is going to kiss him, but duplicitously bites him instead. There is some activity on Miguel's part because he seems to initiate the adult

relationship. However, Teresa is equally active: she requests a piggy back, symbolically testing whether or not he would accept her sadistic domination once again and she continues to flirt with Miguel. Teresa admits that she read Verlaine poems and other transgressive books in the convent, which they used to hide, hinting that she could be a willing participant in subterfuge related to erotic subversion. Teresa victimizes him and, as an adult, resembles sadistic children with criminal tendencies. She asks for a branch that he cannot reach, risking a fall into the water where she will eventually deposit him, and pushes an oar into the lake, commanding him to retrieve it. Miró rapidly edits away from the oar. This rapid editing perhaps connotes violence.

When the adult Miguel gives Teresa a piggy back, they giggle like children. Teresa commands Miguel to stop and sadistically punches him when he refuses. Although Bataille (1987: 144) argued that beauty is profaned by uncovering woman's secret parts and putting the male organ into them, penetration does not give Miguel power. Miguel possibly believes that he is dominating Teresa and defiling her as he is somewhat of a sadist, but Teresa seems to enjoy it: he is also in danger because Teresa is a *femme castratrice* who preys on men. Horney's essay 'On the Genesis of the Castration Complex in Women' provides insights for an interpretation of this multivalent scene. Horney cites Abraham, who, like Freud, argued that many females suffer because of their sex, either temporarily or permanently, and object to being female due to coveting a penis when they were girls. Penis envy is a debatable concept, but Abraham's ideas are of interest. Although penis envy causes passive castration fantasies, active fantasies spring from a revengeful attitude against the favoured male (Abraham, 1921: vol. 3, 1). If women can castrate men whom they like sexually, this may explain Teresa's paradoxical behaviour. A more probable reason from Horney is that an attitude of revenge against men is directed with particular vehemence against the man who performs the act of defloration (Horney, 1967: 37, 52). This may help to account for Teresa's behaviour towards Miguel which is displaced onto the mute. She seems to enjoy sex with Miguel but may resent him for initiating it, not because she is deflowered, but because she enjoys domination, which she has been denied in this case. Teresa is not bound to anyone by desire and it seems that she

does not want to become indebted to anyone, using aggression to resist the loss of independence (Klein, 1937: 7). Teresa remains very mysterious, although this may be a feature of poor manipulation of the narrative. Perhaps she unconsciously murders Miguel so as to avoid dependency.<sup>15</sup> When Miguel appears in Teresa's room, she smiles: she seems to have mixed feelings about relationships, but she aims to control the situation in all of them, either directly or indirectly. Teresa's social status gives her an advantage with which to control others and establish herself as a *femme fatale* in her relationships with both men (Praz: 125). All-pervasive class hierarchies remind viewers of the omnipresence of oppressive authority. For example, Francisca warns Miguel that Teresa is his social superior. As the film develops, a message that desire knows no limits and effects all classes emerges when Francisca scolds the kitchen servant, Pedro, who flirts with a maid.

As Teresa and Miguel depose the law of the father and return to the world of animal instincts, there are a lot of shadows, movements and disorder when they roll around on top of one another *in the nude*, dragging the sheets with them, until Teresa pushes Miguel off her at the moment of orgasm and he hits his head on the headboard when she indulges in a sort of necrophilia. Teresa is a strong woman, who needs no male help to reach climax, although Teresa remains momentarily unaware of this, epitomizing what Carter defines as revenge on men in which women use males as disembodied phalli which are no longer symbols of malehood (Carter, 1979: 90, 126). Teresa's hair eclipses Miguel's face and she sadistically protests that Miguel is stupid to humiliate him. When she realizes that Miguel is dead, she pulls his hair and strokes a wet patch of blood, a symbol of her victims' 'castration' that is subsequently echoed in the red wine which she spills deliberately.

Women have power if they possess the ability to transform themselves from victim to instigator (Auerbach: 17-18, 24). Teresa's metamorphic subterfuge is very like the definition by Deleuze of masochism's mockery of the law. Teresa epitomizes Auerbach's hypothesis that love fails to calm women who are confined in domestic environments, who quickly use their mysterious powers against their tormentors, or in Teresa's case, any male substitutes of varied classes (Auerbach: 34, 37). Whatever men do to her, Teresa seems to

have a defense against victimisation, such as threatening to transform into an enemy. For example, she torments Miguel that she will shout to attract her father's attention. Teresa manipulates her sexuality from her first adult appearance in the film, promising the mute sexual favours in return for assistance, and as I have argued, initiating his enslavement to her by exploiting herself as an object of the gaze. In church, Teresa, who feigns religiosity, is interested in who is there waiting for her as opposed to religion, taking every opportunity to circumvent restrictions. The scene with the key shows how something sacred is turned into a witness of transgression because Teresa does not use the font to baptize a child, its intended function, but to further her opportunities for sex. The scene consequently mirrors Teresa's interest in sex for pleasure as opposed to procreation, the official function of sex within Catholic marriage vows. The church scene equally represents an erosion of binary categorization between the pure and the 'sinful' and shows how patriarchal repression of women backfires. Teresa uses a sphere to which women were allowed access, the church and its paraphernalia, to transgress Spain's Catholic morals on female conduct, such as purity and chastity. Teresa is ironically able to do so because she has been taken to church arguably providing an indirect, didactic message from Miró that, no matter what is done, the repressed returns. The church is a huge building with pillars which seems grey and ominous, for which Teresa has no respect.<sup>16</sup> After the church scene, there is a series of thematically interconnected dissolves to the fair beside the lake - during which a horse bolts and in which chaos is heightened by the presence of birds and rolling barrels - and subsequently to Teresa carrying out more disordered, sadistic acts with Miguel.

The most harrowing examples of subterfuge occur with Miguel's death, which she shrouds in secrecy, and the murder of the mute. When Teresa shuts the curtains around her bed to hide Miguel's body, there are lots of shadows on her which Cook links to duplicity, the subversion of the Symbolic and matriarchal power (1989: 69, 73). She tells the mute to hide if anyone comes in and even deceives Francisca, who has been affectionate towards her, by making excuses about the effect of heat on her irritated skin while Miguel's body lies concealed. Teresa leads the mute and they creep outside through the streets like fugitives, hiding from passers-by on the way to the lake. Miró's many rapid pan shots here

to passers by denote confusion and disorder. Teresa takes the red wine, which possibly symbolizes the blood of metaphorical 'castration' in this film, upstairs for her accomplice and tells him to drink it. This symbolism of castration has sinister resonances for Teresa's relationship with Mauricio, who dances with a 'pure' woman with a large mouth. The mute is oblivious that he is in danger of castration and Teresa's fiancee and her parents are ironically unaware of the danger she poses to convention.

### SADISM AND MASOCHISM.

Some of the most disturbing scenes for the law of the father involve Teresa and Miguel's sadism and masochism. Freud's theory outlined in 'Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality' (1905) that sadism and masochism, involving opposite drives could work in the same individual, with sadism as a projected form of masochism, fits Teresa and Miguel:

A person who feels pleasure in producing pain in someone else in a sexual relationship is also capable of enjoying as pleasure any pain which he may himself derive from sexual relations. A sadist is always at the same time a masochist, although the active or the passive aspect of the perversion may be the more strongly developed in him and may represent his predominant sexual activity (1977: 73-76).

However, Freudian theories on the origins of masochism as derived from sadism do not work on Miguel and Teresa. In Freud's opinion, sadism turns back against the self where a cultural suppression of the instincts prevents a lot of the destructive instincts from being used in life which appear in the ego as intensified masochism (1924: 425). Miró's material contradicts Freudian theory because she shows that repressed sadism does not cause masochism but an intensified sadism and that sadism and masochism are separate perversions. Freud's argument that a person's conscience becomes more severe and sensitive the more he refrains from aggression against others (425) does not apply to Teresa, who just expels her destructive instincts when no authorities are there to witness it.<sup>17</sup> Teresa does not have a super-ego. She is like the sadists described by Deleuze whose

super-ego is so strong that they have identified with and become the super-ego (102): had Teresa possessed a controlling super-ego, she would not be so transgressive.

An extreme sort of sexual activity allows Teresa to reclaim power for women. Miró is almost Sadeian in the light of Angela Carter's comments in that she gives woman the right to have sex actively, like Sade. Sex would be unjust while it was unequal for men and woman, but by having sex aggressively, woman could change history and their sexuality (Carter: 27). Teresa has a particularly powerful, active sexuality, even in childhood. Freud said there was a latency period in sexuality between the ages of 7-12 and although Teresa seems to be about 9 or 10 when she sadistically bites Miguel, she is possibly not in a latency period because she is sexually active as a sadist.<sup>18</sup> Teresa's necrophilia is a classic variation of sadism, even if she is unaware of Miguel's death (Deleuze: 32, 236). Following his conclusion that the super-ego and sadism involve cold thoughts, Deleuze identified sadism with being cold, and Sade himself prescribed that the libertine must exercise violence in cold blood (26, 109-110). These descriptions certainly fit Teresa, especially during the mute man's murder, although she may be motivated by aggression which built up during her childhood.

In sadism, the father is placed above the laws and he becomes a higher principle with the mother as victim; masochism gives control of the law to the mother who expels the father from the Symbolic. Nevertheless, women are not victims when they are powerful sadists, like Teresa. Miró turns around the conventions of sadism - in which the father victimizes the mother/woman (Deleuze: 78) - and reclaims it for strong women when Teresa attacks Miguel in La petición, demonstrating that women can be sadistic partners for male masochists. Miró empowers women in two ways in a new sort of sadism which differs from that outlined in Sade's writings. Firstly, Teresa needs no prompting from males to be a sadist because, even as a child, she showed sadistic traits and secondly, Miró reformulates conventional sadism for female viewers' pleasure. Since Teresa is an independent sadist, La petición banishes Sade's requirement for male guidance or input for female torturers (43). Teresa is not a victim at all and is capable of sadism with the mute man on her own. It is not only assumed that heroines imitate men and dedicate their

activities to them, but that man is the only spectator (50, 52). Again, this strategy fails to work in Miró's films because she shows an interest in female spectators in different scenarios of desire, especially in Gary Cooper and the night-club scene in Beltenebros.

Miró seems to correct two other faults in Freud's theories in 'The Economic Problem of Masochism' and 'A Child is Being Beaten' in which Freud argued that girls only desire to be beaters as part of a trans-sex identification, which is misleading, like Mulvey's theories on pleasure for the female spectator (1924: 424; 1919, 198, 201). When girls abandon their incestuous love for the father, including its genital aspect, they renounce their feminine role and activate a masculinity complex in which they desire to become boys because boys whip and are whipped (1919: 191). Williams comments that because women are often presumed not to have sexual agency, to be objects and not subjects of desire, masochism has been taken as the 'norm' for women under patriarchy (1990: 212-213). Teresa's behaviour in La petición refutes this incorrect idea for women in real life and art. Women can beat sadistically without masculinisation because femininity itself is clearly dangerous and active. This sexist point-of-view disregards that women can be active sadists.

Beating fantasies link to Klein and Rivière's theories on the development of aggression and fit characters such as Miguel and Teresa. Teresa seems to enjoy metaphorical beating fantasies. A male subject watches the beatings of girls in the first stages of the Freudian beating fantasy, which later becomes 'My father is beating the child whom I hate' for the sadistic character. Teresa similarly wants Miguel to be punished, at least by Francisca when they are children. However, unlike the Freudian masochistic character who turns this into 'I am being beaten by my father' or a representative of the father, Teresa - who is not a Freudian masochist - aims to escape punishment from her father. If we take into account Deleuze's theories on the importance of the mother as an agent of punishment in masochism, Teresa in La petición wants Francisca's attention and therefore makes Miguel seem bad through her sadistic bite. Teresa is more active than the girls listed in Freud's beating fantasies because she is not just a girl watching a male child being beaten or punished but takes on the task herself as a prelude to her role as a *femme*

*castratrice* and consequently disproves Freud's sexist 'norm', just as Creed and female monsters dispute Freud's ideas. Secondly, deprived of affection from her formal parents, she turns to Francisca. Teresa's subsequent sadism is the fault of her parents, namely that of her father. Her first experience of perversion, childhood sadism, lasts.

In Freudian masochism, when the girl feels guilty about her incestuous desires for the father and the boy for those of his mother, the fantasy of a child being beaten turns from the sadistic into the masochistic version - "Nor does he love you, because he is beating you" - which became the basis for Freud's argument that love and the sense of guilt turn sadism into masochism (1919: 189-190). It is important to remember this crucial point for Deleuze's re-reading of masochism. Teresa's repressive, cold background made her want Francisca's affection. She is not a masochist because of a sense of guilt: Teresa only has a theatrical and fictional sense of guilt which is really part of her concern for her own safety and ability to escape castigation. Miró problematises any definite interpretation of Teresa on account of Teresa's apparent disturbance when she realizes that she has accidentally killed Miguel. Her murder of the mute is a measure to hide her guilt, even though he is an accessory to her crime and cannot speak. Teresa seems to be more sadistic than masochistic but there is no evidence of her sadism turning into masochism through the mediation of a sense of guilt; rather the two perversions coexist within Teresa as separate entities. Teresa accepts Deleuzian masochism later on to neutralise the father before sex with Miguel, who is a father-figure substitute by virtue of his gender and punishes Teresa in sadistic and masochistic foreplay before consummation.

Deleuze demonstrates how the masochist proves that the law is useless because it provokes the very disorder it tried to prevent, comparable to Teresa who mocks the constraints of patriarchy in a similar way by adhering to the law in public and doing whatever she likes out of sight (77). In this sense, Teresa is paradoxically rebellious in her submission. Analogous to the conduct of Teresa, Deleuze's theories on masochism are subversive of the 'law of the father'; they undo its very foundations by neutralizing punishments because masochists gratify themselves in the knowledge that castigation has already occurred. In Deleuze's opinion, the super-ego, identified with the sadist, does keep

its power to judge, but the more authority it keeps, the more power appears derisory (108). On this level, Teresa also makes a mockery of patriarchal constraints on women's behaviour and manages to circumvent prohibitions without being discovered. Miguel believes he has already paid for subversions with punishment and placated maternal authority: "Si gritaras, acudiría mi madre y no diría nada" he says, at which point Teresa hugs Miguel, reaches for a candle, and drips hot wax down his back. Although Francisca embodies aspects of the law of the father, she is bound by affection to both her wards. On this level, Miró includes women in masochistic pleasures in La petición and Deleuze's ideas must extend to women as well. For Teresa, Miguel represents a punishing, sadistic father figure, identified with the super-ego. She can proceed with the pleasures subversion brings her after receiving punishment from the 'father'. Waiting and suspense are essential characteristics of the masochistic experience since masochists postpone pleasure in expectation of the pain which will make gratification possible and, in line with these thoughts inspired by Masoch's writings, women are attractive when they possess some sort of frozen quality like statues or paintings (Deleuze: 61-62). Miguel and the mute wait for Teresa (and pleasure) in her room. Teresa and Miguel's acts are certainly very suspended, theatrical and slow and therefore, the narrative 'pauses' on them. On the level of self-reflexivity, Teresa's guilt is very theatrical and fictional and Belén's acting is powerful, even excessive. It becomes all the more fictional when added to the colorful, Viscontian, period setting, although colour may emphasize psychological realism, even if a director uses it as a Brechtian, self-reflexive device.<sup>19</sup> Excessive or theatrical applications of punishment mock conventions of castigation because they are fictional and theatricality therefore links to masochism's project to mock the law and the conventions of guilt.

Teresa and Miguel bring Freudian pleasure from the stimulation of erotogenic zones as opposed to immediate genital sex into their histrionic, sado-masochistic foreplay (1977: 84, 130). Miguel slaps Teresa on the face and approaches him to kiss him and a lot of shadows eclipse her face. Teresa uses her breasts not as functional, maternal objects, but as objects of pleasure, like the baptismal font. Miguel caresses her breasts, twisting her nipple rapidly while Teresa suffocates her screams of pain and lets him kiss her. A lot of

their foreplay depends on the skin. Teresa cuts her hair with scissors, which she heats up in the candle and uses to burn Miguel's chin, or reaches for the candle to drip wax down his back. Shadows reflect on Teresa's face in this scene and once again over both Teresa and Miguel when she slaps him on the bed, where she becomes a woman-on-top with Miguel as the passive male. A reverse shot to Teresa waving her arms in the shadows show how her breast uncontrollably jumps out of her clothes, which symbolizes the release of female power. Teresa's breasts will not be bound up by the clothing/corsets of civilization and nineteenth-century restrictions on female dress and their escape is linked to bra burning and the liberation of women in the twentieth-century. Her hair, which is not tied up, similarly moves loosely. Teresa externalizes her destructive instincts more than Miguel in a particularly forceful sort of sadism. Miguel himself revels in masochism and is metaphorically 'castrated' by Teresa when he is accidentally killed, mixing Eros and Thanatos for both himself and the spectators. The mute similarly takes pleasure in masochism since monstrous women are attractive to those who mix sex, death, pain and pleasure in libidinal sympathetic excitation.

The characterization of female castrators either reinforces misogynist views that woman is dangerous or play on the spectator's fascination with the relationship between sex and death, like the murder scene of the mute; in films made by male directors, the *femme castratrice* is almost always represented as a stereotypical image of female beauty, above all for male viewers, which Teresa appears to be to some extent, although La petición problematises these definitions because of Miró's interest in female spectators, victimisation and the reclamation of sadism and masochism for women. Clover believes that female characters in the slasher film are constructed as victims to a greater extent because women have a fuller range of emotional expression: 'Angry displays of force may belong to the male, but crying, cowering, screaming, fainting, trembling and begging for mercy belong to the female' (Creed: 117). Not only does the female killer survive, but the mute's murder is filmed in graphic detail in Teresa's point-of-view and he cowers when Teresa beats him on the boat, even though he seems strongly built. Miró emphasizes male masochism, like the slasher film, despite the rapid shot/reverse shots between Teresa and

the mute which connote disturbance and reinforce the horror of the scene. Teresa seems to have no remorse or pity for the mute, feelings essential to the civilizing operations of guilt and repression. In horror, man-as-victim is not degraded like female victims and death scenes of male characters offer a form of masochistic pleasure to the viewer by associating death with pleasure.<sup>20</sup> Miró subversively associates masochistic death with enjoyment as well as punishments. Teresa seems like adults who retain masochistic phantasies who are sensitive to, irritated and offended by anyone whom they can include in the class of fathers (Deleuze: 195). Teresa castigates her father and patriarchal supremacy by proxy, using her two victims which may explain why she murders the mute, who cannot verbally disclose her crime. All men might remind Teresa of her father - especially the mute who seems a lot older than Teresa and consequently becomes more of a father figure than Miguel - and she wants to prevent them from gaining power over her.

The mute's masochism and the horrific aspects of Teresa are strengthened by looking, like their relationship: he gazes at Miguel's body on the bed and simultaneously sees Teresa pulling on her stockings in a shot/reverse-shot full of desire. He has evidence of the danger Teresa poses in front of him, but he also sees her attractions because he is a masochist who Teresa 'suspends' by making him wait. Before he throws Miguel's body into the lake, Teresa almost bites him and draws blood when she strikes his head. He submits and continues to look at Teresa with a sad expression, falling into the water, the sphere of the monstrous woman into which he sinks. There is no definite explanation as to why Teresa did this or why the mute allowed himself to be killed: viewers have to be accomplice readers and guess. The mute may take pleasure in his annihilation and this provides evidence for masochism, although his murder is less eroticised than Miguel's accident. Teresa vampirism perhaps constitutes further evidence because the vampire's attraction serves the entropic pull, which is eroticised in masochism (Punter: 263). However, Teresa's theatricality distances viewers from the horrific events on screen. One of the reasons why viewers and perhaps Miró disliked Teresa is the mute's murder because the audience can pity him. Miguel is an unsympathetic egoist who corresponds to Freud's description of true masochists, who take every opportunity for punishment and are

indifferent to their castigators in that they do not mind if they love the person who gives punishment or not (1919: 420). Miguel seems oblivious to Teresa when he shuts his eyes and displays a pleasurable grin on his face and is just as selfish as Teresa in his pursuit of pleasure.<sup>21</sup>

TERESA'S VICTIMISATION AND LA PETICIÓN'S POSITION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE HORROR GENRE.

Even though female characters can express power and desire in horror which associates desire with their independent acts of looking, conventional horror films punish women for this act and demonstrate that female desire is monstrous (Williams, 1990: 97). Miró inscribes the return of the repressed of the female spectator in addition to that of female desire in La petición. Williams comments that the female spectators' gaze at women in horror films was punished because they had to look at a reflection of their own powerlessness when female characters were raped or murdered (1984: 83). Men see their destruction and that of patriarchal supremacy in La petición which warns against the effects of the excessive repression of women and does not punish women. The female viewer's look at the monster in horror films is a subversive recognition of non-phallic power and non-phallic sexuality, such as vampirism. Female spectators of La petición witness the power of non-phallic, female sexuality in Teresa. On the one hand, Teresa horrifies spectators to divert their gaze, like the torture scenes in El crimen, which expose the horrors of masculinist power. On the other, Teresa proves that woman has the power to overthrow masculinist domination. Because Teresa enjoys the perversions of masochism and sadism, which are preludes to genital sex but which are also somewhat divorced from phallic sexuality, she deposes phallic sexuality to a certain extent, just as she also brings herself to climax independently of male power.

La petición's indebtedness to new psychological horror films matches the ways in which Teresa, the victim, attacks the oppressor. According to Williams, new psychological horror films such as Hitchcock's Psycho (1960), differ in terms of structure to classical horror film. The monster becomes the central figure of the narrative and the audience is asked to identify with the monster's point-of-view, sympathizing with the traumas which caused the monster to become abnormal (Punter: 348; Williams, 1984: 90). In Peeping Tom (Michael Powell, 1960), the character Mark punishes and murders women as a substitute for revenge on his dead father (played by Powell), who tortured him (Punter: 92). Teresa may attack her father metaphorically by punishing other men and this interpretation

based on horror films coherently links Teresa's masochistic irritation by father figures to her murders. Teresa, and other monsters, feel that they must have power over men in sex or murder, perhaps as a means to, '[master] their [her] own victimisation by gaining the means to victimize others' (Williams, 1984: 91).

Teresa's strict environment, on which Miró and Pérez Millán commented (97), has probably driven her mad. If viewers accept this hypothesis, it is possible to explain or even partly justify her seemingly evil nature.<sup>22</sup> Teresa is not bad, but psychologically damaged, madness being one of the effects of the surplus repression of women in patriarchy identified by Showalter (Showalter, 1986 cited in Lisboa, 1992: 140-145). During the mute's murder in particular, Teresa looks as if she has drifted into an uncontrollable state of lunacy due to Belén's staring eyes. Teresa seems to be sadistic all the time with some masochistic tendencies, only momentarily abandoning her subversions in order to escape punishment: she only appears to want to win Francisca's affection, but even her desire for Francisca's attention is related to her childhood aims to gain power over Miguel. Had Teresa been given access to affection and rewards instead of coldness and formality, she may have controlled her sadistic tendencies in order to gain love; whether she behaves herself or not, Teresa's parents seem to have denied her affection. The formalities of a convent education and emotional distance from her parents served in unison to exacerbate her capacities for hatred, sadism and madness, turning her into a criminal lunatic.

On the one hand, Teresa does not seem to be overpowered by her sense of guilt; on the other, she is shocked and afraid when Miguel dies in her bed, although her horror probably results from her instincts of self-preservation in case she is discovered as a possible murderer and sullied woman. Miró retains ambivalence because, as Bataille comments: 'Crime/murder is only a really pure evil deed if someone enjoys committing it, independently of the advantage to be obtained from it' (1977: 5). Teresa does not seem to be afraid when she is alone; she does have a public self, unlike Jodie Foster in Nell (Michael Apted, 1995).<sup>23</sup> Teresa has no pursuit in which to channel her sadistic desires into sublimation because she resides in a sleepy, rural village, although she paints, a pastime linked to the boredom of Teresa's provincial, high-class life. She has no socially

acceptable outlet for her aggression and hatred such as sport, something made available to males in the form of the men's swimming race in the lake.

Various technical capacities of film reinforce the themes of the narrative. Miró is very attentive to sound and conducts global searches to find the right soundtrack for her works.<sup>24</sup> The mute's kitten meows and the birds chirp loudly when the adult Teresa first beckons to him to participate in her crime: it is a *paysage état d' âme* situation in which nature tries to warn the mute of impending danger.<sup>25</sup> Natural sounds also contrast with civilization, the noises in Teresa's house and the 'civilized', orchestral music at Teresa's party, which does not sound particularly harmonious although it is meant to reflect celebrations. However, a shot of the mute and Miguel upstairs seems incongruous and highlights the situation's dramatic irony. The noises of the lake and animals in its surroundings are very sinister, emphasizing the powers of nature, including instincts, and the dark waters of the lake which will swallow the two men. The mermaid or siren noises reappear as Teresa pushes the mute over the boat and throws his hat into the water, actively rowing off into the darkness.

A dissolve to the lakeside scenes from Teresa's secret meeting with Miguel at church links the two incidents of disorder together. The editing is rapid or chaotic and has little continuity. There is also a lot of movement owing to the children in the scene who run around and jump or the couples rowing in boats. Miró juxtaposes civilized instincts with the flight of birds and the bolting of a white horse which knocks over a pile of barrels and almost hits Teresa until the mute pulls her to safety. A dissolve from this scene to Teresa and Miguel in bed, identifies them with chaos and yet another dissolve from Teresa beating Miguel to Carmen Maura kissing the mute contrasts the two couples. Maura is standing and he is seated and she is therefore in a superior position. Miró says that she places animals in the settings of her films in order to convey a sense of normality, even homeliness (Appendix 1: 3-4) and this is the function of the kitten. The contrast is further emphasized by the dissolve to Teresa and Miguel in a frenzy in bed. While Maura's character seems to be a conventional sort of woman, there is still a certain amount of role reversal in her relationship with the mute, mostly because she is the partner in possession

of language. She kisses the mute, although he pulls her towards him while she proposes and promises to be a conventional wife who would look after him, supplementing his meager income by sewing.

Kuhn's theories (1982: 17, 29, 34-35) argue that the resolutions of the classical narrative were about the production of the heterosexual couple or the recuperation of women from dissidence, which often occurred in film noir. For example at the end of Curtiz' *Mildred Pierce* (1945). However, this is not the case in *La petición*, despite the pairing of Teresa and Mauricio in accordance with patriarchal ideology because Miró shows viewers underlying, undetectable and therefore unpunishable subversion. Byars argues that there are contradictions to dominant ideology in life and texts (109), but Miró makes contradictions explicit in *La petición*. Following Duplessis's theories (1985), *La petición* is an example not only of contradiction to dominant ideology, but one of subversive parallel texts. Subversion is a major theme in the narrative, a Genettean 'pause' rather than 'scene' in terms of narrative time, as opposed to the conventions and restrictions of engagement parties which are not given so much narrative time (Genette, 1972: 99-102). The causes of the return of repressed desire are mentioned to provide contextual details, but outlined in ellipsis to give more scope for the development of desire.

Many horror films have powerful endings to match the threats posed by the *femmes castratrices* within them who escape castigation:

The threatening power of woman lingers in the final shot, pointing to the insecurity of the male imagination. Man must be ever on the alert, poised in phallic anticipation whenever signs of the deadly *femme castratrice* are present (Creed: 138).

The structure of the film reinforces Teresa's menacing future. Creed argues that if scenes of male castration are filmed as part of the present narrative as opposed to a flashback structure, they appear more immediate and dangerous and thus become more harrowing (137). Although Miguel's death was accidental and is placed in an intertextual flashback or *mise-en-abîme* text, the mute's death, a metaphorical castration, occurred more recently. In

the library with Mauricio, Teresa had just spilt wine, a symbol of blood, on her dress in order to escape; she subsequently spills the mute's blood in the boat and returns to dance with her fiancee. Temporal immediacy and parallel juxtapositions of scenes depicting the victimisation of Mauricio and the mute reinforce any possible threat to Mauricio, the man who has been handed a role in the Symbolic and its passage to future generations by Teresa's father.<sup>26</sup> Patriarchal ideology has backfired and through deceit, Teresa resists impending repression within the marriage contract.<sup>27</sup> Kristeva's comment and Praz's description of the *Mona Lisa*, given below, are of interest here:

A dark, abominable and degraded power when she keeps to using and trading her sex, woman can be far more effective and dangerous when socialized as wife, mother or career woman. The unbridling is then changed into crafty reckoning, hysterical spells turn into murderous plots (Kristeva: 168).

Teresa's 'imprisonment' within marriage by her father is an example of woman being socialized or 'castrated' precisely because man fears that she is not (Creed: 130). It is relevant that Horney commented on the impossibility of changing human nature through prohibition in an essay entitled 'Problems of Marriage' (1967: 128). In the light of Horney's comment, the prospects for patriarchal supremacy in Mauricio's marriage seem bleak. Praz says that fatal women, like the *Mona Lisa*, have unfathomable, sinister smiles: what they intend remains a mystery, like the end of La petición, where there is no dialogue. As in some Gothic works, facial expression is frequently the only evidence with which to assess the intentions of others (Punter: 82) and the mouth is very important in the fatal woman since women's mouths often terrify men (Praz: 218, 253, 264). Belén's mouth always seems very full and ominous, which Miró prioritizes in the dissolve from a long shot to a medium close-up of Teresa during the waltz, leaving her large fleshy mouth, the metaphor for the *vagina dentata*, and eyes in full view.

In the long shot, Teresa's sinister eyes full of desire, the tools of the *femme fatale*, and her lips are not clearly visible, but in the medium close-up, they come into full view as do her parted, reddish lips. The dissolve, or textual strategy of Miró's narrative, reminds

us that there are two sides to Teresa, a split personality which Miró has allowed viewers to see in detail, not only the split personality of Teresa but of society itself with its veneers of honour, chastity and female submission contrasted with the darker sides of life. The high angle long-shot to medium close-up of the waltz reflects the audience's privileged knowledge about Teresa's behaviour. Luis de Juan Hatchard argues that the existence of two images on screen at the same time in the dissolve problematizes the concept of reality and to this extent, the camerawork reflects Teresa's split personality (213-214). Hatchard aptly cites Rosemary Jackson's comments on the deformation of characters in the fantastic genre as a refusal of the structures of cultural order: 'Incoherent, fluid selves exist in opposition to precious portraits of individuals as whole [...]' (Jackson, 1981:87). Miró's camerawork further approximates La petición to Gothic narratives, like R.L. Stevenson's Jekyll and Hyde about the self that has been repressed according to social convention (Punter: 241-242).

La petición is comparable with Buñuel's Tristana or Carlos Saura's La caza in which neurosis is let loose with disastrous consequences. Miró similarly exposes social ills and repression to warn viewers indirectly. If society ignores the darker sides of sexuality, it only has a partial understanding of life. The sinister, extradiegetic music is similarly double edged. The 'civilized', diegetic waltz seems harmonious, but the extradiegetic harpsichord music, which was also used extradiegetically at the beginning of La petición during Teresa's sadistic piggy-back with Miguel, reminds viewers of her dark side. The dissolve and harrowing extradiegetic music therefore highlight Teresa's secret power. Despite these threats, Miró retains ambivalence through her complex attitude towards the monstrous. Monstrous women are attractive and thrilling, albeit through a macabre variety of beauty; Teresa, like other female monsters in horror film, is allowed grace which, in addition to her beauty and status as a victim, produces a complex audience reaction. In La petición, Miró shares the project of the horror genre to provoke tensions between various interpretations and simultaneous attraction and repulsion without overt didacticism (Praz: 25-26; Punter: 348-349, 370, 410-411, 420).

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<sup>1</sup> Teresa and other monstrous women prefer the first option, whereas Ugarte's rage has festered inside him.

<sup>2</sup> Freud, 'The Sexual Aberrations: Sadism and Masochism', On Sexuality, 70-71 and Beyond the Pleasure Principle, cited by Deleuze, 102.

<sup>3</sup> Deleuze, 38-39 citing Freud, 'The Instincts and their Vicissitudes' from Papers on Metapsychology.

<sup>4</sup> Freud argues that girls only desire to be beaters as part of a trans-sex identification, like Mulvey's Freudian views on female spectators, when they activate a masculinity complex in which they desire to become boys because boys whip and are whipped (1919: 191).

<sup>5</sup> "Woman destroys man because he destroys them first" (cited in Hopewell, 1986: 185).

<sup>6</sup> Horney's theories are similar to those of Klein which reinforce Teresa's status as a victim of her harsh upbringing: 'The more true satisfaction we experience, the less do we resent deprivations, and the less shall we be swayed by our greed and hatred. Then we are capable of giving love to others; and again receiving more in return [...] the [...] capacity for 'give' and 'take' has been developed in us in a way that ensures our own contentment and contributes to the pleasure, comfort or happiness of other people' (Klein, 1937: 118).

<sup>7</sup> According to Doane, 'Masquerade is femininity itself which is constructed as mask - as the decorative layer which conceals a non-identity' (1992: 234). Rivière describes the uses of feminine masquerade: 'Womanliness therefore could be assumed and worn as a mask, both to hide the possession of masculinity and to avert the reprisals expected if she was found to possess it' (Rivière, 1966 cited in *ibid.*).

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<sup>8</sup> 'It is this evil which scandalizes. Whenever woman plays out her sex in order to evade the word and the law. Each time she subverts a law or a word which relies on the predominantly masculine structure of the look' (Michèle Montrelay, 1978: 91-92).

<sup>9</sup> Miró did not explore the homosexual nature of relationships between mothers or mother figures and daughters again until she made El pájaro de la felicidad (1992).

<sup>10</sup> See Agnès Varda, Sans Toit ni Loi (Vagabond) (1985) for an example of transgression through movement. The unconventional female protagonist, frequently filmed in lateral tracking shots, wanders and escapes houses.

<sup>11</sup> Rust argues that social dance is closely related to the social structure of society, especially ideology and the attitude to women. The waltz was classed as promiscuous and immoral. It is interesting to note that *the waltz involved more movement than other social dances, such as the minuet* (1969: 68-69, 79, 124).

<sup>12</sup> Freud, 'On Touching and Looking' (1977: vol. 7, 69-70).

<sup>13</sup> Horney cites various literary references about women and water such as Heine's poem about the legendary Lorelei, who sits on the banks of the Rhine and ensnares boatmen with her beauty and Ulysses, who ordered his crew to tie him to the mast to escape the lure of the Sirens (1967: 133-135). See also Moi (117) for the connection between women and water.

<sup>14</sup> Trionfo della morte (1894) cited in Praz, 199.

<sup>15</sup> This strategy is made more explicit in her murder of the mute man, which I will discuss below, whom she kills so that her personal safety will not rely upon his loyalty and to avoid rewarding him with sexual favours.

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<sup>16</sup> Buñuel uses pillars as signals of repression in Viridiana (1961) and Tristana (1970) and so too does Lauro António in his adaptation of Virgílio Ferreira's Manhã Submersa (1979). See also Punter for a discussion of the ways in which architecture can reinforce themes (180).

<sup>17</sup> Also explored in 'The Ego and the Id' (1955: vol. 11, 396).

<sup>18</sup> Kellman, 'Introduction', in Horney, 1967.

<sup>19</sup> On colour, see Byars, 128. The Gothic, a genre with which La petición shares similarities, used stylistic conventions in order to circumvent the restrictions involved in its discussion of social problems. This does not mean that modern horror films' images lose their power to disturb the viewer if they seem fictional because fictional images gain impact from the underlying [psychological] truths which they represent (Punter: 62, 371).

<sup>20</sup> Creed, 130 and Elbert cited in Creed, 128.

<sup>21</sup> Miró uses sound to highlight particular themes or characters. For example, the mute is a pitiful character and his music always seems sad. No such melancholic music is associated with the antipathetic Miguel.

<sup>22</sup> Miró remarked: "Creo que Teresa es así como reacción a un tipo de educación absolutamente hipócrita. Lo único que pretende demostrar la película es que puedes mantenerte dentro de unas normas, de una educación convencional, con una familia, un ama, un colegio de monjas y unas reglas estrictas y, sin embargo, tener un sentido de la moral que es producto, precisamente, del rechazo frente a esa misma educación" (Pérez Millán: 101). See also Mary, 1976 and Umbral, 1984, 13 in which Miró remarked that the repressive education inflicted upon women often makes them evil. Miró also instructed

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Ana Belén to portray Teresa's character as pure evil (Hernández Les: 358), which is paradoxical given some of the remarks above.

<sup>23</sup> Nell grew up in the kristevian maternal 'order without shame' and does not seem to have a superego, which is evident in the bar scene when Nell uninhibitedly reveals her breasts to eager drinkers and is corrected by her doctor, Liam Nelson (Kristeva: 45).

<sup>24</sup> For example, when she made Werther, she searched at great length for the right recording of Massenet's opera (Pérez Millán in conversation, Logroño, May 1995).

<sup>25</sup> For a discussion of cats' psychic powers, see Gettings (1989).

<sup>26</sup> As Pérez Millán comments: 'Al final, el personaje de Mauricio es poco más que [...] la sospecha de que Teresa seguirá ejerciendo eternamente sus perversas maniobras de dominación' (97).

<sup>27</sup> According to Angie Hart, traditionalist Spanish men still assume that marriage is a contract in which wives are obliged to give their husbands sex whenever they want. See Hart in Cornwall and Lindisfarne eds., 1994, 61.

## CH. 2. TORTURE AND MASCULINISM IN EL CRIMEN DE CUENCA.

Whereas La petición explores the horrors and pleasures of masochism and reveals the shocking return of the repressed, El crimen is an exposé of the horror of historical truths in Spain and masculinist repression for the sake of political beliefs. Some critics praised El crimen as a realistic historical document of 1920s rural Spain, although others dismissed its torture scenes as unrealistic. The latter nevertheless adhere to historical fact (Amengual, 1980) and Miró's spectacle closely corresponds to critical definitions of torture:

Tortura es toda acción u omisión mediante la cual son infringidos, deliberadamente, dolores o sufrimientos físicos o mentales a una persona por los agentes de la función pública [...] ya sea para obtener información o declaraciones, para castigar actos cometidos o que se sospeche que lo hayan sido o para intimidar (de La Cueva, 1982: 12).

Although events in El crimen occurred in the early twentieth-century, they do have resonances in the Spain of the late 1970s despite the initiation of Spain's democracy and new Constitution in 1978, which held an amnesty for insurrectionist ETARRAS. Basque terrorists were both the main victims of torture and principle threat to the stability of Franco's regime, just as anarchists like Gregorio and Léon posed a menace to the conservatives. Franco's Civil Guard in particular tried to beat captured ETARRAS into submission.<sup>1</sup> One of the reasons for the suppression of El crimen was undoubtedly its relevance to such contemporary torture practices in the Civil Guard, which contribute to Spain's 'Black Legend' stemming from its violence in colonial epochs and against Moors and Jews during the Inquisition. The Francoist government tried to suppress the graphic depiction of violence on screen - which would evidently reinforce Spain's image as a brutal country - in the Spanish oppositional cinema of the 1960s and El crimen (Kinder: 154).<sup>2</sup> Indeed, Kinder describes El crimen as one of the political outlaw films of the post-Franco era, like Pascual Duarte (Ricardo Franco, 1975),

which often depict official acts of murder and torture designed to eliminate insurrectionists (156). In 1978-1979, Amnesty International reported 14 torture cases in Spain on political grounds (1980), although Forest estimates that the figure was over 500 (1982: 82, 88). However, institutionalized bureaucratic processes meant that the torturers escaped punishment, which made Spaniards unaware of official brutality (de La Cueva: 11). Despite alterations to Spanish law in the Constitution to abolish the death penalty and torture (art. 15), the torture of militants never ceased in Spain (13), although authorities could only hold detainees for 72 hours, who, at least in theory, gained the right to legal advice. At the end of the 1970s, Amnesty International noted an increase in complaints from prisoners tortured in police, and particularly Civil Guard stations, since certain parts of the law paradoxically facilitate torture. For instance, with the permission of any judge from the Audiencia Nacional in Madrid, *detainees may be held uncharged for 10 days in solitary confinement and denied legal advice, which contravenes constitutional rights and places detainees at the mercy of the police* (Amnesty International: 5-7; de La Cueva: 13). No mandatory procedure exists for the medical examination of detainees from their arrest onwards, providing no written evidence of mistreatment. Police officers can support each other to deny *allegations of abuse* and have also been known to pressurize doctors to leave unrecorded or minimize any injuries from torture (Amnesty International: 5, 8-10; de La Cueva: 18). Writing in 1982, de La Cueva commented that no public prosecutor had initiated cases against the police for torture, even though allegations continued after 1979 (13) and political parties still shrouded torture in secrecy (Morales, 1982: 50, 52).

Torture itself is a complex psychological and physical process both in Spain and elsewhere in which torturers attempt to tire and humiliate prisoners in order to destroy their self-confidence and dignity (de La Cueva: 23). Methods of torture and harassment reported to

Amnesty International were as brutal as those depicted in El crimen. For example, torturers threatened the victims and their family's safety. Many were deprived of food or sleep and repeatedly interrogated; others experienced exhaustion from enforced exercise or from standing for prolonged periods. Torture included blows to the head, genitals, breasts or fingers, suspending victims upside down from a bar, electric shocks, the extraction of hair and restrictions on access to washing facilities. Several victims suffered unconsciousness, bruising, internal hemorrhages, headaches, long-term apathy, timidity, anxiety, irritability, insomnia and personality changes (Amnesty International: 14-20, 22; Grupo de Médicos Contra La Tortura, 1982: 65-66, 68, 71, 74). Amnesty International recommended that the Spanish authorities abolished police powers to hold detainees for 10 days without legal assistance, employed inspectors to safeguard the rights of detainees held in police stations for questioning and ordered medical examinations to detect and reprimand torture (de La Cueva: 53).

The police frequently extracted false evidence using torture, especially from suspected Basque terrorists or members of the illegal PCE. For example, policemen forced a truncheon into one ETARRA's mouth and thrust toothpicks under his nails, which resemble *Taboada's* own methods in the film. Even the sound of cell doors opening and shutting caused great tension for detainees left in constant suspense, waiting for their turn to endure yet more pain (de La Cueva: 19-22, 26, 43). Miró seems very attentive to these issues because the ominous sounds of the cell doors, shackles, footsteps of the civil guards, screams of the prisoners and jailer's keys in El crimen resonates through the dungeons and it seems as if Miró has amplified these sounds in relation to other diegetic noises to make them stand out. Sound becomes an integral part of the harrowing atmosphere from the moment of Gregorio's arrest, which the narrative first reports through a close-up of Gregorio's hands being cuffed with

loudly clanking bolts and large chains. Making incidents of abuse visible as well as audible is a key strategy in the eradication of torture, an approach shared by both Amnesty International and Miró, who exposes repression in all of her films and was herself a member of the PSOE.<sup>3</sup> The content of El crimen is doubly relevant because of its reflection of Spain in both the early twentieth-century and 1970s in addition to its criticism of the Civil Guard through harrowing, realistic scenes.<sup>4</sup>

The right wing's dislike of anarchists in the Cuenca province appears against a backdrop of conflictive, socio-political events in the late nineteenth-century, just 30 years before the trials of Gregorio and Léon, although tensions between the right and left also mirror the savagery of the Civil War, an implied referent for much of the violence in Spanish cinema (Hopewell: 143). In the 1890s, Andalusian peasants demanded higher wages and the division of great estates by burning crops and assassinating rural policemen. In 1881, the Regional Federation of Spain convinced landlords that they were under threat from a vast, revolutionary organization which led to the Black Hand Trials (1883-1884), during which police tortured suspects and judges were determined to imprison leading anarchists, whether they were guilty or innocent of the crimes attributed to them (Carr, 1989: 442-443). Turn-of-the-century Spain's villages were still governed by land-owning classes and peasants all over the country, such as the owners of *minifundia* in Galicia or land-less laborers on vast estates in the South West, remained impoverished (Hopewell: 7). The year of Grimaldos' disappearance, 1910, became particularly significant and aggravated the right-wing: the year not only saw the election of the first socialist MP, Pablo Iglesias, in Canalejas' liberal government, but also brought the founding of the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT).<sup>5</sup> Disruptions continued in 1912 when the anarchist, Manuel Pardiñas, assassinated the government's leader, José Canalejas y Méndez, and in 1913 when the new political

unions, the Unión General del Trabajo (UGT) and the CNT, joined forces with progressive parties which unchained a great crisis. In 1918, the year of Gregorio and Léon's trial, seventeen members of the 1917 strike committee were also tried and imprisoned. At that time, Cuenca was under the control of the conservative oligarchy, who, in the wake of the 'Semana Trágica', tightened their resistance to left-wing political forces and Martínez de Contreras (the Fernando Rey character) became extremely worried by the scarce conservative votes in Osa (Maldonado: 37-38, 152-153).

Miró's protest against the oligarchy's corruption similarly angered traditionalists in Spain and led to castigation. Angela Carter believed that the depiction of violence, especially erotic violence by men towards women, would always be criticized and one of the reasons she gives for this is particularly relevant to El crimen: 'Any open discussion of violence makes explicit that force has always been the method by which institutions demonstrated their superiority' (1979: 22-23, 41). The visual medium of film is a particularly apt one for the depiction of aggression since violence is performed and often expressed in a theatrical way. The use of violence suggests that male political dominance might be the result of brute force rather than moral superiority, thus removing any prestige from dominance and equating men with femaleness or weakness which place individuals at a disadvantage in patriarchal societies (Kinder: 141). Elaine Scarry similarly argues that political torture relies on theatrical strategies in the display of its instruments or elaborate interrogations and that causing pain is in itself an indication of the torturer's power (1985: 36). Torture must be visible if it is to scare other dissidents or bolster the power of the (political) phallus in a type of theatrical masquerade of masculinism and this is partly why the civil guards force Gregorio and Léon to witness each other's torment. Peio Ugarte, a younger victim of torture

mentioned by de la Cueva, remarked that hearing shouting and anguish hurts more than physical pain (212).

El crimen was the first film in post-dictatorship Spain to be denied an exhibition license, which shows how political censorship still operated during the transition despite its abolition in 1979 on two *untouchable* topics - the monarchy and the military. El crimen was not released until the ‘Tejerazo’ of 1981 tarnished both the military establishment and the Civil Guard (Kinder: 6; Le Monde, 16/2/1980). The prohibitions placed on the film succinctly mirror its content because censorship by exclusion is a tactic reminiscent of the ways in which torturers control access to information in addition to subordinating others thorough pain (Forest: 77; Morales: 50). However, the torture scenes have *another critical* dimension. De Béchade describes the torture scenes as a true demonstration against violence and intolerance which turn the film into an open criticism of the regime’s duplicity (52).<sup>6</sup> The shocking violence in the film wounds the spectator because it is depicted through *tremendismo*: graphic details are not only visible but believable because they are based on historical facts (Jeancolas: 70-71). De Béchade thinks that some of the torture scenes are particularly unbearable (52) and Miró herself alluded to their harsh nature, her awareness of the historical and political context of *torture* in Spain, especially from 1910-1950, and the impact which the element of graphic Realism brought to the film:

El crimen de Cuenca is not a violent film. It is not a film about torture. Any film by Peckinpah is more violent. These images have an impact because of their realist element.<sup>7</sup>

Even though the film specifically refers to Spain, Miró believes that its depiction of violence has universal significance and allies to any epoch or location. However, she intended El crimen to criticize all the above repressive systems prevalent in Spain at that time (de Béchade: 53).<sup>8</sup> Miró acts as prosecutor against the jointly repressive forces of the Civil

Guard, other legal authorities, conservative dogmatism and masculinism while she defends the underdog, the left wing peasants and women, a practice repeated in the rest of her films.<sup>9</sup> Her comments in interview show that she informed herself about Gregorio and Léon's circumstances in detail:

At that time, there was rivalry between little villages because of the dominant ideologies in each one. The power of the right aimed to destroy left-wing groups since they did not easily submit. The disappearance of the shepherd is an excuse which allows the right to affirm their authority (de Béchade: 54. My translation).

She criticizes the above through an exposé of their brutality and corruption and makes explicit dominant ideology's ironic contradiction to its perfect and religious image:

I wanted to make the force of torture felt so that the audience would feel the effects of it. [...] The torture sequences are not gratuitous. Half of the film would not have had the impact it did if it had not exposed the terror of these people completely destroyed by the system in such a way (53).

Miró never dogmatically tells the spectators what to think: they are active and must decide for themselves, although involved in the action by virtue of emotional stimulus. Dogmatic classification is synonymous of literary paternity, binary categorization, authority and phallogocentrism, attitudes which she criticizes. Miró, who had wanted to make a film on the fallibility of the law for some time (53), shows that the law itself becomes chaos and that the right poses a greater danger than the left, although she also exposes the faults of the left-wing, namely in their relationship with women. Not only does she show that the institutions of law enforcement are untrustworthy, she also demonstrates -- like other researchers who have examined torture -- the ways in which the authorities are conscious of their own weakness throughout the practice of torture to bolster or masquerade their supposed strength so as to hold on to their power (Forest: 92).

The evidence for Gregorio and León's 'crime' is not only insubstantial but based on personal opinions and a conspiracy against the left rather than a crime founded upon sufficient proof (Fernando Savater: 152). Grimaldos' family brand Gregorio and Léon as bad and the judge's secretary agrees, although the liberal judge of Belmonte argues that Grimaldos' has disappeared and therefore, they must not make accusations. Miró especially highlights the political rivalry between left (La Osa) and right (Tresjuncos) when the judges meet to discuss Grimaldos' disappearance, conflict which is relevant to the epochs of 1910 and 1979. The liberal judge argues that Grimaldos is an adult, although backward; Don Francisco, a landowner and the men's employer, comments that they are rebels but *buena gente* who would not commit murder. Martínez de Contreras (Fernando Rey), the right wing judge, makes full-use of Gregorio and Léon's penal records and manipulates the sparse evidence against them.

Don Francisco, a landowner and therefore a member of the oligarchy, joins the side of his political allies and finds a way to dismiss León, ostensibly because he wants to sell his livestock, to protect his reputation. Gregorio scolds Don Francisco, realizing that his decisions are politically motivated, and criticizes the corrupt *turno pacífico*. Miró once again allies repressive, right wing authority to religion, which she believes is a tool of oppression especially in Cuenca (de Béchade: 54), in Don Francisco's reply: "Si ganamos los conservadores, es porque Dios lo quiere". She continues to reinforce the connection between the right and religion throughout parallel montage in the cut from a prison cell to the church in Tresjuncos. When Don Francisco receives the last rights and confesses that Gregorio and León killed El Cepa, religion is once again linked to conservatism and therefore Franco's regime, whose pillars were the army and Civil Guard. After the priest enters Don Francisco's room, Miró connects religion to legal authorities through a disturbing tracking shot in close-

up of Martínez de Contreras' black boots and stick - a symbol of authority and masculinist masquerade - tapping against them.<sup>10</sup> The tracking shot of Martínez de Contreras' boots links him to the Civil Guard; later on in the film, the camera moves down to focus on Taboada's boots tapped together in an assertive, soldierly fashion in Isasa's office. A fade-out-fade-in moves the narrative from Don Francisco's deathbed to Isasa's office when Martínez visits him, thereby linking religion to conservative forces once again. Soon afterwards, Martínez and the parish priest, who has forgotten Christian teachings on forgiveness and compassion towards the suspects, give Grimaldos' mother money from the parishioners to make her accusation against Gregorio and León legally.

The new, conservative judge, Isasa, the son of Cánovas, becomes a staunch ally of Martínez. Isasa orders Gregorio and León's arrest, obtains false confessions from them through torture and refuses to allow a doctor to visit them, masking evidence of abuse. Reinforced by the Civil Guard, Isasa forces the prisoners to show the authorities where they buried Grimaldos' body in the graveyard; through retrospective, dramatic irony Miró demonstrates the fallibility of evidence for the prosecution. The pathologist tells Isasa that the body which the prisoners uncovered was that of a woman buried two years ago; despite numerous investigations, the police fail to discover Grimaldos' body; Gregorio and León's lawyers have no success in their trial, even when they recount that Grimaldos had told others that he wanted to go to Brazil. They are forced to present their evidence differently in order to avoid the *garrote*, a fate for which León expresses a preference as opposed to life imprisonment in a damning condemnation of Spanish jails. Martínez and the priest, Don Rulfo, are shocked when Grimaldos demands his birth certificate ten years later, refusing to admit the possibility that he is alive and dismissing the documentation as a mistake. They conceal the threatening evidence from Gregorio and León's families, manipulating language

and truth from official positions of ecclesiastical authority. Martínez told the priest to keep *El Cepa*'s request a secret, but the sympathetic Alejandra hears their conversation. At the end of the film, Miró informs the viewers that legal action was to be taken against Martínez, Isasa, the members of the Civil Guard and Don Rulfo, but unlike the authorities, Miró democratically leaves the conclusions of *El crimen* open to doubt. All men died before they could be questioned about the error of justice, although rumours circulated that they committed suicide to escape castigation. Miró does not dogmatically state that the information she has found about the authorities is right or wrong. The foregrounded words on screen obfuscate their faded images and symbolically signify that Miró has taken power of the story to a certain extent; her democratic infrahistory has overpowered their images and surpassed their 'official' version of events.

Miró presents the evidence and allows the viewer or *lector cómplice* to decide: there is no overbearing categorization because that is what she opposes since classification is an ally of dogmatism. She avoids telling the viewers directly that the authorities are all bad or the prisoners positive characters whereas dominant authorities employ torture as they do censorship in order to deprive people of the capacity for independent thought (de La Cueva: 244). The film does not classify every member of authority as cruel: a civil guard left alone with Gregorio to whip him pities him, instructing him to shout while he lashes the wall. Miró's diegetic project to expose evidence democratically corresponds to her opinions on censorship to which she objects, which aimed to repress both the director and her film; she believes that viewers ought to have the right to agree or disagree with a film (Appendix 1: 3) and choose whether or not to view it. In order to contradict censoring strategies, Miró allows the prisoners to give their own opinions on screen -- something which official historical records would omit -- and provides full information for her viewers. León accuses Martínez

of manipulating everything during his trial or shouts from his cell, calling his torturers “hijos de puta”. Gregorio’s daughter openly expresses that she does not trust the priest and reads the letter about Grimaldos’ marriage, demanding concrete evidence. Religious authority embodied by Don Rulfo is consequently akin to the practice of torture, which restricts access to information (Morales: 50).

### GREGORIO, LEÓN AND GRIMALDOS.

The ‘authority’ of village gossip about Grimaldos and rumours of the violent tempers of the assailants exacerbated the suspects’ predicament. Although Gregorio is a victim of masculinism and repressive systems of order, he possesses some conventional masculinist traits, such as physical strength, and imperfections, exemplified in his violence against Dolores. For example, he forcefully lashes reeds with a scythe and later shows physical power when he works as a laborer. Gregorio hunts with Léon, a masculinist activity, but one which equally shows their male bonding and friendship ruined by their arrest, which causes them to detest one another, fight and accuse each other of giving false evidence. Miró used the erosion of their friendship in addition to the graphic scenes of torture to illustrate the ways in which institutionalized violence damages people (de Béchade: 53). Léon is aware of the destruction of his reputation: not only do his children think that he is a murderer, but he himself feels cowardly for pleading guilty and not having defended his honour. The end of the film erodes masculinism when Gregorio breaks his silence and forgives his wife, showing tenderness by embracing her; the two friends forgive each other, ending their separation by masculinist authorities and also show emotion as opposed to restraint, which matches the erosion of masculinist authority through its fallibilities in the legal sphere. Gregorio is able to clear himself of the ‘dishonour’ detrimental to his relationships with the rest of society.

Grimaldos himself is rumored to be stupid by one of the judges in conversation with Martínez. Salvador discovered that when he was a boy, Grimaldos went to fetch water and did not return for five days; on his return, he was unable to tell his family where he had been (32). He holds the *hoja suelta* upside down in the film and Miró prioritizes his illiteracy in the crowd by focusing on him in a medium close-up, explaining why he failed to read any news of the trial and his ‘murder’ in the press. His speech is of a very low register, another indication of his deficient education. All of these factors show that he would be incapable of reporting his absence to his family and the proof against Gregorio and Léon seems as absurd as ‘Desdemona’s handkerchief’ in Shakespeare’s *Othello*. Miró described the scant evidence against Gregorio and Léon in similar terms:

At that time, there was rivalry between little villages because of the dominant ideologies in each one. The power of the right aimed to destroy left-wing groups since they did not easily submit. The disappearance of the shepherd is an excuse which allows the right to affirm their authority (de Béchade: 54. My translation).

After Grimaldos finds out what happened to Gregorio and Léon, he is afraid for his own safety at the hands of the authorities, stammers nervously and hobbles along the road as if he were being hunted. Comparable to Gregorio and Léon, he is visibly dominated by the taller civil guards who escort him from his village so that he does not escape. Grimaldos naively believes that he will be punished and cries like a child at Gregorio’s feet, releasing remorseful emotion without masculinist restraint.

Given the severity of the Civil guard’s reputation in society and their behaviour elsewhere in the film, Grimaldos’ fear is understandable just as it is naive. Torture is not only a political and military practice to obtain information or the instrument of capitalism, but also responds to sadistic tendencies in human nature. Some torturers become very brutal, like Taboada who takes sadistic pleasure in torture (Alfonso Sastre: 125, 128, 145, 147), which

Miró highlights. The only possible sign of strength for a victim of torture is to resist, but this is difficult. Often, when victims provide information, the torturers continue to subject them to abuse and this happens in El crimen, emphasizing Taboada's brutal sadistic tendencies (Fernando Savater: 154; de La Cueva: 255). Torture even renders Léon unconscious. Five men beat Gregorio in the *ronda*, edited with rapid rhythms, like the brutal films of Sam Peckinpah, such as The Wild Bunch (1969). Taboada rams a poker into Gregorio's mouth, drawing blood which runs down the prisoner's face in graphic detail while Miró ironically cuts from this scene to Isasa's clean table at the inn. When they visit the graveyard, the civil guards shoot at Léon, who has tried to drink from the stream, and one of them knocks him out with a rifle. Kinder outlines the hunting metaphor, openly present in many violent Spanish films, like Borau's Furtivos (1975) and Saura's La caza (1965) which is at work in films, such as El crimen, which depict political violence, even when the hunting is not central to the plot (473). The Civil Guards push the two prisoners along with bayonets as they walk through the streets and kick Léon into his cell, as a farmer would herd an animal, and their pursuit of Léon in the graveyard makes this hunting metaphor more evident.

In so far as El crimen belongs to a group of Spanish films which Kinder classifies as 'oedipal narratives', Miró forces the audience to witness a metaphoric castration when Léon is suspended from the beams of the dungeon. String attached to his penis begins to give way as he tries to cling onto the beam with his feet and hands while one of the torturers observes from a corner. This incident of torture exemplifies the ways in which violence upholds the dominant order, as Girard comments (148).<sup>11</sup> Not only does Léon suffer violence, but castration, thereby linking torture and the law of the father. Taboada's threat to cut off Gregorio's tongue with the razor becomes another metaphorical threat of castration, as Kinder

argues, especially given the presence of blood when Taboada pulls out Gregorio's mustache (223).

The two prisoners' lawyers provide important insights into the ways in which the law fails to uphold its ideals of justice. One of the lawyers seems to have accepted the case as a last resort because he could not leave Léon without defense. The authorities waged a conspiracy in order to put Gregorio and Léon at a disadvantage when they denied the lawyers a postponement of the trial. The defense lawyer argues in court that the case is about the disappearance of Grimaldos and not a murder trial, but protests from the public in the gallery obfuscate the viewers' audition of the lawyer's voice. Although both defense lawyers have reasonable doubt about the men's culpability, they are forced to plead guilty to manslaughter in order to save them from execution, using the pretext that Gregorio and Léon had become abnormally intoxicated one night and accidentally killed Grimaldos during an argument. The jury's verdict has clearly been influenced by gossip about the 'crime'. They find both men guilty of murder, believe that they were both armed while Grimaldos was unarmed, that they were sober and that Grimaldos did not provoke a fight. The prisoners are once again led off and herded by policemen.

### WOMEN IN THE FILM.

Even though El crimen is not a woman centred narrative like La petición and Gary Cooper, it nevertheless includes comments on the situation and role of women at the time. Miró said that women were the most active characters in the film because they reported crimes and caused confrontations (de Béchade: 53). Grimaldos' mother is very conventional: she seems to possess excessive, maternal instincts and becomes an extreme example of idealized forms of womanhood in Spain, which in her case verges on hysteria, a

conventionally female illness pertaining to repressed women in patriarchal societies (Showalter, 1986 cited in Lisboa, 1992: 140-145). Miró seems to highlight the ways in which Spain's overvaluation of maternity has pernicious consequences for individual women and society as a whole through her character. Juana bases her certainty that her son is dead on her fanatical, maternal emotions as opposed to concrete facts. She is also obsessed with domesticity, convinced that her son must be dead because he had not come home to change his shirt. Her husband and the clerk join in her accusation and she is identified with religion: not only do the parishioners help her financially, but she herself sprinkles holy water all over El Palomar, where her son was 'murdered', and as a *beata*, she is identified with conservative, Catholic ideology. She seems to win Martínez's sympathy because of her acquiescence in and magnification of dominant ideology's roles for women, manifested by her fanatical maternal instincts and religiosity.<sup>12</sup>

Gregorio's wife, Dolores Varón, scolds Grimaldos' parents both verbally and physically for their suspicion of Gregorio and Léon and threatens to kill his mother if she accuses her husband of murder again. Not only does she demonstrate loyalty to her husband and strength of character with these actions, but they symbolically show that she is against dominant, conservative, religious beliefs represented by Grimaldos' fanatical mother. Although she is involved with conventional womanly pursuits, such as bringing out the washing and caring for her children and Gregorio in the film, Dolores was especially noted for her physical and psychological strength: 'La Varona era habitualmente mujer callada y obediente, pero si el caso lo requería [...] era capaz de cualquier cosa para defender a los suyos' (Salvador: 19). When the authorities search Gregorio's garden, Isasa questions Dolores, who admits that she overheard Gregorio telling Léon something about the graveyard, although she is uncertain. María Jesús, whom she holds in her arms, cries as if to protest at

the presence of authority. Isasa threatens her and digs his stick into the ground, insisting that they will never release Gregorio and León. The authorities try to manipulate her language by forcing her to make a statement, just as they manoeuvre Gregorio and Léon's confessions. In one scene after the graveyard episode, she walks over a field with her child and a dog; a voice-over by the male narrator reading false statements on Grimaldos' murder from the prisoners accompanies this shot. Dolores looks tired and anguished as she squints in the bright sunlight, a symbol of patriarchy and masculinism (Cook, 1978/1989: 69, 73). There is a dissolve from this scene to the empty, ominous, courtroom, a sphere of the law and masculinist domination and oppression.

Dolores becomes disloyal to her husband for the sake of her children which further identifies her with maternal strength. In the graveyard, Isasa warns her that Gregorio confessed to her participation the crime during the disposal of Grimaldos' body, which Dolores denies. Isasa threatens that he will force her to leave María Jesús at home, but she insists on keeping the child and leaves the child in the Imaginary. María Jesús' incoherent, gurgling noises and inability to speak reinforce the link between Dolores and the Imaginary, the pre-oedipal stage of togetherness between the child and its mother before the child's acquisition of language obtained when the father appears and separates mother and child. The message of the film seems to be that language, whether written or spoken, conveys no authoritative signifying power or truth and this notion provides a critique of Isasa, the law of the father and the Symbolic in which language is an important tool of domination. Isasa agrees to let Dolores talk to Gregorio under protest, but Taboada, an embodiment of the law, continues to torment her. He trips her up on purpose and snatches the child, which disturbs her and forces both Dolores and María Jesús into the Symbolic through their physical separation. Taboada stands over her as she cowers on the ground in a position of subjugation,

and looks down on her in a point-of-view shot. Taboada's brutality causes an abrupt entrance of the law of the father or Symbolic which is matched by rapid and harsh editing inspired by the violent editing strategies of Peckinpah and Saura.<sup>13</sup> When she visits Gregorio's cell, it is dark and full of shadows. She threatens to give the judge false information unless Gregorio confesses whilst her daughter cries and she whispers to her: "Pobrecita mía, pobrecita mía". Dolores takes control of her child as if Gregorio has nothing to do with her and is maddened by rage and her language gains speed as it loses coherence. Deprivation of fluids has also caused Gregorio to reach the verge of insanity. Reverting to his animal instincts of self-preservation, Gregorio crawls to Dolores, pulls the child from her breast and forces her to lie down. A close-up shows how he roughly squeezes her nipples and sucks brutally, unlike the innocent child. However, Gregorio is just as much a victim as Dolores of the Civil Guard's masculinist ideology, as Sartre's comment on torture and animality shows:

El objeto de la tortura no es solamente obligar a hablar, a traicionar. Es necesario que la víctima se reconozca a sí mismo por sus gritos y su sumisión como una bestia humana a los ojos de todos y a los suyos propios. Es necesario que su traición la aniquele, la destituya para siempre de su ser. Al que cede a la tortura no se le ha obligado solamente a hablar. Se le ha reducido para siempre a un estado, el de lo infrahumano (cited in de La Cueva: 13).

The civil guard, who pulls Gregorio from Dolores, represents the Symbolic once again, eradicating Gregorio's subversive returns to the Imaginary and natural instincts. Dolores is not only a victim of domestic violence, but indirectly becomes a victim of official, police masculinism which caused Gregorio's intensified thirst during torture. Miró changes details of infrahistoric events because, in real life, Gregorio knocked Dolores unconscious: leaving her conscious in this scene gives her a voice with which to protest about female victimisation, and allows Gregorio to seem more sympathetic or blameless here than he was in reality. The scene symbolically shows how fascism privileged the bond between father and son over the

son's oedipal desire for the mother (Kinder: 148) when the civil guard pulls him from Dolores' breast, breaking the scenario of the Imaginary and allowing Dolores to conceal traces of the abject apparent in breast feeding, which forces bodily fluids to cross boundaries and flow outside (Kristeva, 1982: 3-4, 69). Forest argues that both the victims, their families and social groups suffer the effects of torture (96). Not only is Dolores subjected to the effects of torture through Gregorio's madness and thirst, she is literally attacked by one of her husband's torturers and suffers, like Gregorio, from memories of abuse. As a result of false evidence, Gregorio refuses to speak to his wife and their relationship is ruined until Grimaldos appears and even then, she suffers from feelings of guilt. The revelation of the victimisation of children is part of Miró's indirect criticism of the law of the father and, in terms of reader response, it is highly strategic: they are not incidents depicted exclusively to pinpoint the struggles between the Symbolic and the Imaginary. Not only does María Jesús scream when the police arrest Dolores, but so too do dogs and cats join in protests in a sort of *paysage état d'âme* situation. Consequently, Miró appears to use sounds beyond those resonating through the prison cells to disturb the viewers.

Shots and editing highlight themes and provide dramatically ironic commentaries on the action. For example, there is a cut to the judges' sophisticated tea from scenes of fighting and torture. Close-ups and medium close-ups increase the already harrowing aspects of the film. For instance, the police place handcuffs on Gregorio, stitch his ear on in close-up and extract his moustache in medium close-up. The close-ups make Gregorio and Léon's torment seem yet more claustrophobic and inescapable. Miró films the torturers pulling off Léon's nails in close-up and there is a dissolve to Isasa neatly cutting fruit with silver cutlery which is highly ironic. Jeancolas comments that the torture scenes are an indispensable contrast to the comfortable lives of important men and the tranquil lyricism of the Castilian countryside

(1984: 70-71). However, the land of Castile does not connote lyricism; Miró shot the film in searing heat during the Summer and the bright sunlight, which shines on Dolores, clearly emphasizes the harsh nature of the area and the elements.<sup>14</sup> A pan shot focuses on Léon's face in close-up and moves around to the castration torture; further close-ups in the scene show how he is trying to cling on with his hands and feet, making full use of the camera so as to shock viewers. When the torturers punch Gregorio in the *ronda*, the camera pans rapidly to indicate disturbance and match the violence. Form and content both alarm the viewer and discourage any passive spectatorship. The editing of the child-snatching scene is also very rapid. Taboada and Dolores are framed together in medium-shot as she begins to walk off and the audience see Taboada move his leg, which Miró follows with a speedy cut to his foot and another to Dolores' face as she falls forward. Only then does the editing slow down as Dolores turns her head and the camera moves up to focus on Taboada, who looks imposing in her low angle point-of-view.

As in other films by Miró, the setting reinforces themes and conveys much symbolic meaning. A dog tied to a cart is pulled along against its will, like the pitiful dog in Buñuel's Viridiana (1961) which is indicative of deeper concerns on oppression in addition to a realistic practice in Spain at the time (Edwards, 1982: 156). Léon is beside the dog and therefore identified with oppressed creatures. The setting serves to heighten the atmosphere of enclosure. When Gregorio is arrested, the Civil Guards walk on either side of him, equipped with bayonets and Gregorio seems imprisoned. He is once again surrounded by several policemen in the graveyard scene and enclosed between civil guards at his trial. The crowds who pass judgment on the two men are just as oppressive and condemning. The mise-en-scène seems to convey the power of the social fabric over the individual and the notion that the victims are metaphorically sacrificed in public for the sake of official ideology

(Todorov in Kinder: 144). The sunlight in this scene is very strong and bright, and it once again signifies the prisoners' repression by the law. The court room itself also seems very ominous. Shadows of the bars in the prison cell are cast onto the walls, doubly reminding the viewers of their enclosure and the judge in the court in Cuenca has quite an imposing cross in front of him, linking legal oppression to religious authority.<sup>15</sup>

Scant dialogue helped intensify violence in Ricardo Franco's Pascual Duarte (Kinder: 184). In El crimen, Gregorio and Léon's screams are not only loud but are often their main utterances. The music has thematic and expressive functions beyond those of setting El crimen within its historical epoch and providing local colour (de Béchade: 54). Repetitive music in Pascual Duarte reinforces violence (Kinder: 186); unnerving, monotonous music in El crimen, such as the soundtrack played when the Civil Guard arrests Gregorio and Léon and marches them to Belmonte, has a forceful, violent base line, which equally matches the savagery in the narrative. The soundtrack used when Gregorio and Léon meet after Grimaldos' return is melodramatic, corresponding to their unrestrained emotions. Church bells frequently ring, highlighting the ominous presence of religion in the province.

Miró felt that when El crimen overcame problems with censorship, it would create a precedent for the liberalization of Spanish cinema. It would be a transition, after which no film could be censored in practice, sweeping away any traces of repression and dogmatism (de Béchade: 54). Critics recommended that in order to fight torture, people must be made aware of it (de La Cueva: 267), a democratic strategy to which Miró's film clearly contributes. She returns to another branch of torture stemming from masculinism and the reality principle in her next film, Hablamos, in which Daniel Dicenta (Luis María) once again succumbs to and escapes the pressures of patriarchal ideology, on this occasion through suicide.

<sup>1</sup> BBC, States of Terror, December 1, 1993.

<sup>2</sup> On the film's connection to Spain's 'Black Legend', see also the Diario de Cadiz, 1979.

<sup>3</sup> Amnesty International not only praised the film, but offered Miró its support when the Civil Guard confiscated El crimen and the UCD government refused to intervene on her behalf (Antonio Romero, 1989: 16). On Miró's own left-wing credentials, see E. de Juan, 1977, an interview in which Miró defined her political allegiance to the left and the Diario de Cadiz, 1979.

<sup>4</sup> This strategy is similar to Goya's use of art, another visual medium, to criticize politics. For example, in El 3 de mayo de 1808 (Kinder: 138).

<sup>5</sup> It is curious to note that Miró owns Pablo Iglesias' police record card, a gift from Felipe González which she proudly displays in her study at home (Piedad Moreno, 1989) along with a PSOE poster (Fernández de Córdoba, 1982: 26).

<sup>6</sup> See also Florez, 1980. The regime was duplicitous in this sense because of its public adherence to Catholic values and its suppression of violence.

<sup>7</sup> De Béchade, 53 (my translations). El crimen is harrowing in comparison to the violence in David Lynch's Wild at Heart (1990) or Blue Velvet (1986) which retain a lot of fictional distance and self-reflexivity by virtue of their postmodernist form.

<sup>8</sup> Salvador Maldonado, the co-scriptwriter, also hoped that the story of El crimen would make sure that evidence, be it true or false, would never again be obtained through torture (1979: 1).

<sup>9</sup> Miró prosecutes masculinism in La petición, Gary Cooper, Hablamos, Werther and Beltenebros. Here, she grants the prisoners a necessary right to defense from the early parts of the narrative, analogous to the liberal judge of Belmonte, who told Martínez de Contreras

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that Gregorio and Léon had legal rights to take local gossips to court on the grounds of calumny (Salvador: 33).

<sup>10</sup> When the physically feeble new judge, Isasa, visits Dolores, he prods his stick into the ground, an action which Miró prioritizes in close-up. He too resorts to the paraphernalia of performative masculinism to reinforce his power.

<sup>11</sup> On tortures in Spain involving such semi-castratory methods, see Muñiz, 1980.

<sup>12</sup> Alejandra, the conventional and compassionate maid who attends to Isasa at the inn and wants to help Dolores and her children, similarly wins Isasa's praise for her correspondence to patriarchal ideals of femininity.

<sup>13</sup> See Kinder (165) for a discussion of the influence of Peckinpah and Saura's editing strategies.

<sup>14</sup> Castile was backward at this time. Jeancolas argues that society in the film is still primitive because of its violence. The film's themes on hatred and brutality are akin to those running through *romances de ciego* and Machado's poems in *Campos de Castilla*, particularly 'la tierra de Alvargonzález'. Machado's descriptions of the strong emotions in Castilian villages aptly convey the atmosphere depicted in *El crimen*: 'Y cuando se pasa de las grandes ciudades a las ciudades pequeñas ... y de las ciudades pequeñas a los pueblos ... y de los pueblos a las aldeas y a los campos donde florecen los crímenes sangrientos y brutales, sentimos que crece la hostilidad del medio, se agrava el encono de las pasiones, y es más densa y sofocante la atmósfera de odio que se respira' (Helidoro Carpintero cited in Terry, 28-29).

<sup>15</sup> Miró's use of courtrooms and police stations in the film has hidden symbolic meanings. The Juzgado de Belmonte is a landmark in the history of religious repression in Spain

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because it was situated in an old sixteenth-century palace which the Inquisition used for the trials of 1,000 moors for practices against Christianity, such as covering their nostrils when bacon was fried. The moors were condemned to whippings, slavery in the galleys, life imprisonment, execution or the priesthood for such a seemingly insignificant gesture, amongst other crimes. The building's dungeons, which used to lock up the Inquisition's suspects, were re-opened for twentieth-century political dissidents (Salvador: 22). The Inquisition and war against the Moors and Jews helped to create the Black Legend. Because the cells in El crimen functioned during the Inquisition, they emphasize the film and Francoist ideology's own contributions to Spain's Black Legend' (Kinder: 143).

CH. 3. CREATIVE WOMEN, WRITING, MOTHERS AND FATHERS IN GARY COOPER QUE ESTÁS EN LOS CIELOS (1980).

Analogous to La petición, Miró once again focuses on a female protagonist in Gary Cooper, but one who lives in a very different, modern setting. The film also concentrates to a greater extent on sexual politics and gender issues at work, rather than the prioritization of political dissidence in El crimen. Andrea resembles Miró's later characters in Hablamos and Werther who gain power through their professional status, rather than through active or subversive sexuality alone, as does Teresa in La petición.<sup>1</sup> Women in Gary Cooper, Hablamos and Werther - curiously all played by Mercedes Sampietro - inhabit the technological, scientific worlds of television studios, neurosurgery and biological research. Andrea herself is often pictured beside editing equipment and when she is at home, she is usually at her desk surrounded by books and objects she needs for work. Domesticity holds little interest for her: at one stage, she stares at an egg and breaks its shell in her hand, allowing its contents to run into the sink below, down which she subsequently pours a glass of milk. This scene is also readable as a symbol of her enforced abortion in addition to her rejection of feminine roles and the autobiographical reflection of Miró's own dislike of cooking.<sup>2</sup> Andrea's involvement with television not only defies restrictions placed on women's creativity, but also provides a concrete professional step forward since women are seen to create both technologically and artistically in the film. Andrea not only inhabits a technological and creative environment, but she is seen working alongside and commanding men. She even dares to argue with her superior (Víctor Valverde), especially when he unknowingly belittles her pregnancy. In line with the ANME's hopes that women would progress beyond traditional female professions, such as nursing, Miró depicts individual feminist actions - her favoured strategy for the advancement of women as opposed to radical demonstrations *en masse* (Montero, 1978: 10) - in Andrea to promote positive, female roles in Gary Cooper. However, she provides a balanced and slightly cynical view of feminism in the film to which there are direct references. Andrea's friend, Julio, believes that his wife continues to be a *niña burguesa* at heart, despite quoting Masters and Johnston or threatening to move abroad alone. Viewers

are given the impression that feminism in Spain had not really improved the situation for many women or swept away traditional attitudes which remained at an unconscious level (Méndez: 262-263). Nevertheless, Andrea makes some professional progress in a male dominated sphere and, on those levels, can be seen as a figure for viewers to emulate.

Within her professional activities in a usually male-dominated sphere, Andrea displays conventionally masculine traits such as ambition, but this is not the only way in which she erodes traditional gender roles. Andrea's androgyny or fusion of masculine and feminine characteristics is suggested by her name's Greek origins and her wardrobe (Méndez: 260) which consists of feminine dresses and unisex or masculine clothes, such as jeans or shirts to match her masculine and feminine behavior. Andrea seems to embody Miró's views on women's behaviour, alerted to in interview a few years before the making of Gary Cooper. Miró remarked that she disagreed with women who felt weak just because of their gender and said that she would like women to react courageously in life, a strategy she herself adopted in her own stoicism which she defined as culturally-determined masculine behavior (Hernández Les, 1978: 361-363; Oltra, 1992: 104; Rigalt: 10); in her opinion, it was a mistake for women to restrict themselves to crying because they needed to prove to others their ability to conquer difficulties (Hernández, 1978: 361-363). She was appalled that society continued to underestimate women and believed that people ought to fight against sexist attitudes in order to make sexual equality a reality (Hernández, 1978: 361-363; María Pura Ramos, 1984: 15). Given her precarious circumstances, Andrea is strong and shows some stoicism, a conventionally masculine trait; her doctor believes that she can recover, fears that she will disappear because of her independent spirit and she does not lose as much weight as he anticipated. Andrea only cries once when she is alone at home looking at a photo of Gary Cooper, although dramatic music perhaps often conveys the sense of her inner turmoil, a common strategy in Melodrama and the woman's film (Doane, 1987: 97). Despite visiting Mario, she remains emotionally and economically independent of him and, even though Andrea feels frustrated, she only mentions her predicament to an actor to whom she does not seem close. Because Gary Cooper focuses on a female protagonist - often mostly in images with no

dialogue, especially in close-up - and possesses challenging openness, it becomes a feminist or feminine text in the light of Kuhn's definition of feminist cinema and feminine texts (1982: 11, 13, 17, 73, 90, 154). Méndez argues that Andrea searches for a father-figure in Gary Cooper (263). However, if one examines the contents of Andrea's box and home, another meaning becomes available: Andrea was a tomboy in the past and continues to be androgynous, a state hinted at by the toy soldier which sits on her desk. She is not altogether searching for a father figure, but identifying with the Gary Cooper persona and some of his conventionally masculine qualities, which I will discuss in greater detail below.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, pregnancy is one of the most feminine features of Andrea's androgynous character. Roxanne Dunbar (1970) argues that the female reproductive capacity has led to women being immobilized and restricted in jobs. However, Andrea rebels somewhat against this, remaining active when pregnant despite her exaggerated symptoms, therefore showing that she is neither strong nor weak. Miró's comments in interview with Benito González cited in the Introduction (1976: 26) shed light on this issue, although she has contradicted herself in conversation:

Andrea no se identifica con la fuerza de [la persona de Gary Cooper] o de nadie porque, *aunque lo parezca*, me parece que la historia cuenta más las debilidades interiores de Andrea que *las fortalezas exteriores* ... y su encuentro con Gary Cooper ... pues yo creo que es ... un encuentro con una persona, con un mito (Miró, 1995. My italics).

Although Miró ostensibly intended Andrea to seem a weak character, both her interest in the human and clues in the narrative encourage viewers to believe that Andrea is simply identifying with the human qualities inherent in the Gary Cooper persona, such as courage or strength, and perhaps both readings may coexist.

As an unconventional person, Andrea is not fond of adhering to any sort of rules, even those beyond conventional prescriptions on gender. For example, she causes chaos when she double parks her car outside of Mario's office. Sexual activity is another important part of Andrea's strength and liberated attitude, which she has clearly used for

pleasure as opposed to procreation, and her references to her past are important because they introduce the notion that she is in control of herself or was then. She had a termination before 1970, an immediate clue that the abortion was illegal since Franco's regime had banned abortion by choice. Andrea was about to become a single mother on this occasion, which was perhaps still quite rebellious in the context of the Spain of the 1980s. Miró, who believes that seduction is a form of power, strengthens Andrea in this way when she seduces Julio, a married friend (*El País*, 28/12/1993). Andrea might also enjoy other sorts of stimulus, although the film leaves this issue open to interpretation. The camera focuses on Andrea's face in close-up during the internal examination and makes possible two ambiguous readings of her facial expression: either she winces in pain from the insertion of the speculum or her slight smile expresses pleasure from contact between the instruments and erotogenic zones.

Andrea rebels through bisexuality, part of her androgyny, within the context of Catholic Spain which outlaws homosexual tendencies, but she also reacts against the wider masculinist world through her lesbian interests, which contravene heterosexism (Crowley: 130). Traditional psychiatrists and society have taught lesbians to believe that they are sick and instructed heterosexual women to fear lesbians as diseased or perverted (Shelly: 308-309), a position against which Cixous - to return to her for one context of reading - reacts in her belief in the inherently bisexual nature of all humans and dislike of classical Freudian theories on bisexuality (which hid bisexuality under the fear of castration, her own views allowing for the examination of what she called the *other bisexuality*) (Moi: 109). In her opinion, masculine and feminine live in every human, a position which multiplies the effects of desire over all parts of the body and stirs up differences (Marks: 46, 254; Moi: 109). Lesbianism constitutes a means of freedom from oppression by or dependence on men because lesbians can obtain love and sexual satisfaction from other women (Shelly, 1970: 306-307). Wittig, who provocatively proclaimed in 1978 that 'Lesbians are not women' and aimed to abolish the categories of gender and sex, argues that lesbians exist outside of the imposed institution of heterosexuality, comparable to fugitive slaves (Wittig, 1992: viii, xii-xiii). Her thoughts in 'The Category of Sex' particularly fit

Andrea, who previously escaped the enslaving heterosexual economy, of which reproduction is part, through her abortion which also allowed her to develop her career and ensuing economic independence (de Beauvoir: 152; Wittig: 5-6, 20). Joanna Ryan argues that the women's movement created a positive cultural appreciation and validation of sexual relationships between women, although coming out often demands courage, which Andrea has mustered at this point in her life owing to her illness.<sup>3</sup> Although the references to lesbian desire are small here, Miró is at least attempting to bring what are subversive desires 'out of the closet' as she does in El pájaro when Carmen (Mercedes Sampietro) kisses her daughter-in-law, Nani (Aitana Sánchez Gijón) on the lips.

A colleague at RTVE sees Andrea watching Bernardo's wife on a monitor and remarks that it is the first time he has seen Andrea pay attention to a woman other than Jane Fonda. According to Morin (1961: 39), stars are either ego-ideals or objects of desire (Dyer, 1979: 28, 31; Morin, 1961: 39) and it seems that both properties of stars could be at work in Andrea. Miró commented that Mercedes Sampietro was a 'tipo Jane Fonda' (Cambio 16, 1981) and the actress is probably an ego-ideal, but alternative readings are possible. Her questioning of Begoña (Carmen Maura) in order to ascertain whether or not she was once in love with her highlights any lesbian overtones. Andrea's potential bisexuality brings with it implications of transgression within the specific context of Spain in the 1980s. Even in 1992, discrimination against homosexuals continued in Spain and elsewhere.<sup>4</sup> Andrea is not at all shocked by her own question but Begoña is, attributing Andrea's reaction to insanity owing to the prejudices she holds. Andrea escapes classification once again in this scene as she, albeit momentarily, steps out of the category of women by rejecting heterosexuality (Wittig: 13, 20).

Despite these unconventional acts, Andrea's professional activities, like the advances in women's cultural creativity in the 1970s discussed by Montero outlined in the Introduction, are one of the main points of reaction against patriarchal proscriptions. Miró criticizes patriarchy indirectly by exposing its faults, especially those at RTVE, a male dominated institution which was considered one of the last remaining bastions of Francoism. As Miró remarked, the mere idea of a woman directing a film was considered

absurd (Hernández: 352; Hopewell: 113). Andrea is mistreated by those at all levels of RTVE to some extent: her inconsiderate superior (Víctor Valverde) fails to congratulate her on her prize and her subordinates, the assistants on set, ignore her authority by failing to find the correct decor for her. Andrea's predicament reflects the situation of many women in Spain who hold positions of authority, but receive no cooperation from male subordinates. Although Andrea eventually gets the opportunity to direct a film, she is dissatisfied with her previous pieces which will constitute her cultural legacy and professional reputation should she die on the operating theatre.<sup>5</sup> Male-engendered pregnancy and its corresponding malignancy annihilate Andrea's chance to direct; by implication, masculinism and the condition of being female relegate Andrea and ensure that her talent will go unrecognized in the future. It is significant that Andrea has been given Pardo Bazán's Los pazos de Ulloa, a work of female authorship, to direct and therefore a type of 'woman's film'.

Some of these physical restrictions placed upon Andrea in terms of sexual politics are perhaps less direct. Medicine is often dominated by masculinist powers (Brooke, 1993: 1) and Gary Cooper explores the sexual politics of medicine through Andrea's treatment at the hands of yet more patriarchal medical authorities. Andrea's illness both forces her into submission and introduces the themes of women in medicine, abortion and pregnancy. Many feminists, such as Brooke, argue that medicine is still phallocentric and when women are represented in the profession, they are frequently seen as ministering angels, such as nurses as opposed to doctors, which was especially true of the 1980s (Brooke: 1-2; Feder Kittay: 114). Miró does include female nurses in Gary Cooper, but the male consultant is not antipathetic. Brooke argues that women healers are gentle, whereas harsh, male mechanistic medical practices coldly rely on rationality within the patriarchal sphere of science. If men cannot produce life through childbirth, they can monopolize the skills needed to save life and their intervention in women's procreative functions is not limited to childbirth itself but extends to abortion and contraception (Brooke: 5, 39, 115, 147; Feder Kittay: 113-114). Andrea's doctor seems friendly, but the treatment she faces is still an assault on the female body using phallic symbols, such as needles which the viewer sees

placed into her veins. The anesthetist tells her not to look at the needle for her own good, but still denies her the right to the gaze, physically obstructed by the mask over her face which in turn obscures the viewer's vision of Andrea. The male auxiliary, who pushes Andrea to theatre, and the doctors, who lift her onto the operating table, place her into a submissive role. As Brooke argues, tranquilizers are modern patriarchal weapons used to curb women's independence that force women into submission (Brooke: 183), and the anesthetic symbolically places Andrea - a metaphorical Sleeping Beauty pricked with a needle - in the same position, from which she can only nod in reply to the doctor's questions.

The worst threat of all for Andrea is the possible hysterectomy during the abortion and the phallic needles become visual preludes for the impending abortion procedures. Miró does not definitively remove Andrea's uterus or maternal creative power, since viewers never discover whether or not she suffers a hemorrhage and hysterectomy, an act of control by men over female bodies and reproduction. Andrea still forfeits the right to self-determination when she loses the right to control her own body throughout the cancer which is linked to her stressful environment and Mario. Statistics show an alarming degree of male interference with female bodies owing to the fact that 80% of hysterectomies carried out in the USA in the 1970s were unnecessary and the way in which many doctors offered women abortions only if they agreed to be sterilized in return, therefore punishing them for their active sexuality (Cisler, 1970: 155). However, Miró leaves the film open to various possible readings.

Andrea's foetus is deformed and she therefore, on a realistic level, needs an abortion, but the narrative still brings to bear notions of the patriarchal aspect of the medical profession. The consultant claims the right to take her womb and its contents. Full details of abortion procedures are not mentioned in the film, but perhaps viewers recall them. Dilation and Curettage (D&C) - during which doctors dilate the cervix to scrape out the inside of the womb with a curette - was the commonest and most dangerous form of abortion in the 1970s. A mishandled curette can easily puncture the uterine wall, injure surrounding organs and cause potentially fatal hemorrhages to which Andrea's doctor

draws her attention (Cisler: 264). Although Andrea's facial expression during the internal examination is ambiguous, viewers see the invasive speculum, making the internal examination a correlative for later abortion procedures, especially given that the consultant tells Andrea in a voice-over that she will probably undergo a hysterectomy in addition to a D&C abortion immediately after this scene. Even though Horney argues that some women seek masochistic satisfaction from gynecological procedures and childbirth, Elizabeth Blackwell recalls her horror at witnessing how brutally male doctors treated women in gynecological examinations which she thought were indecent.<sup>6</sup> Technology and science are dominated by men (Embree: 1970); but men are not infallible, nor can they save others. When Miró uses an open ending, she rejects what Kuhn defines as patriarchal closure or the knowledge of resolution (1982: 11, 13, 17) and therefore refuses to admit that technology and the male-dominated medical profession will save Andrea.<sup>7</sup> By avoiding narrative resolution, Miró does not classify Andrea as helpless and leaves open to debate the possibility that a male-dominated sphere can succeed, a constant feature of her works, especially El crimen, Hablamos and Beltenebros, films in which she also erodes masculinist authority. All of these thematic concerns neatly match the textual strategy of the unresolved narrative.

In addition to ambiguities in Miró's representation of health issues, there are also multiple meanings for Andrea's personal relationships with men available to the viewers. The cancer metaphor in Andrea's relationship with Mario is an indication of the pernicious effects of *machismo* and previous cultural manifestations of the cancer metaphor exist in literature, which Miró possibly introduces for intellectual spectators and which links Mario to masculinist powers in medicine. Luis Martín Santos' Tiempo de Silencio (1961) pioneered the cancer metaphor to signify Spain's sickness resulting from the damaging effects of Francoism - a masculinist political framework which includes double-standards - and depicted the harrowing effects of an illegal abortion on El Muecas' daughter, a young woman who died from horrific mistreatment (Fiddian: 30-47). Carlos Saura also used the cancer or illness metaphor in Cría cuervos to reflect the Geraldine Chaplin character, María's torment caused by her husband in a repressive environment. *Machismo* within the

workplace and relationships makes Andrea ill and her ensuing sickness interferes with her opportunity to direct a film, hindering female creativity. The pregnancy, engendered by Mario, causes tumours to grow in her lungs, but it equally shows how female biology can impede women through debilitating physiological symptoms (Crowley: 64; de Beauvoir: 62).

Nevertheless, the representation of gender in the narrative is not clear cut. In an attempt to curb the excesses of feminism, Emma Goldman made a crucial point for any consideration of the representation of gender in Gary Cooper and the deconstruction of categories: 'A true conception of the relations between the sexes will not admit of conqueror and conquered' (cited in Carter, 1979: 151). Viewers cannot attribute victory, defeat or culpability to either Andrea or Mario, although Miró herself detested the character of Mario, whose antipathy seems to demonstrate the fallibility of male support (Pérez Millán: 178). Mario concentrates on the idea of developing his career and immortality in literary fame, analogous to Andrea. Indeed, the importance Mario gives to his career allows Miró to include contextual masculinist resonances as a backdrop to the events in the film. Mario is kept busy by the repercussions of the increasing violence in Spain between 1975-1980 emanating from the conflict between radical Basque separatists and the policies of the central government in Madrid which led to 96 deaths in 1980 alone (Méndez: 264-265; Rix: 178). Once again, by implication, masculinism in the form of political violence interferes with Andrea's personal fulfilment. However, Mario seems to hold a slight interest in personal relationships, despite his *donjuanism* and although Andrea is also unfaithful to him, it is only after she obtains evidence of his infidelity. Miró allows Mario to voice negative opinions about Andrea, who is reputedly opportunistic, merely using Mario to borrow his car, defensive and fails to give him sufficient affection. Nevertheless, when Andrea tries to hold Mario's hand in the car, he rejects her affection: he complains about her self-sufficiency, her control over their relationship, behaving just as though he had wanted the child and chastising her for making important decisions independently, as if he were a mere inseminator.

Another interesting psychological current on the relationships between the sexes is readable in the film within both Andrea's relationship with Mario and the doctors, which may account for Mario's hostilities towards her. Andrea seems to have approached the impossible ideal of gender fusion (or androgyny) as envisaged by Kubie:

In [women's lib, unisex clothes], it has become [...] evident that the unconscious drive is not to give up the gender to which one was born but to supplement [...] it by developing side by side with it the opposite gender, thereby ending up as both [...] (Kubie: 198).

Kubie's ideas for 'The Drive to Become Both Sexes' were inspired by Virginia Woolf's Orlando, the story of a man who turns into a woman and then back and forth between the two, but without ever losing completely his hold on maleness (191). Woolf's descriptions of Orlando remind viewers of Andrea, especially the scene in which she gazes at her reflection in the mirror. Andrea is linked to the feminine through pregnancy, but even considering her maternal features, she is still an enviable androgynous mixture for the men around her.<sup>8</sup> Womb envy, which corresponds to the drive to become both sexes and defines the covetousness men feel towards women's reproductive capacities, runs through Spanish culture, possibly from Tiempo de silencio to Vicente Aranda's La pasión turca (1995), in which Yaman (Georges Correface) is satisfied by the Ana Belén character, Desi's hysterectomy arising from complications during an abortion. Kubie, who discovered that some men long to impregnate themselves, believes that Freud concentrated on penis envy to such a great extent that he did not consider the reverse and complementary male envy of breast-feeding and childbearing (191). There is substantial evidence to support the concept of womb envy from psychoanalytical and anthropological data in primitive cultures (Bettelheim, 1962: 10; Horney, 1967: 20-21; Margaret Mead, 1949; Zilboorg, 1944). In 'The Flight From Womanhood', Horney analyzed men and noted the unconscious or conscious 'intensity of this envy of pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood, as well as of the breasts and of the act of suckling' (1967: 60-61).

This impossible 'drive to become both sexes' is destructive and may account for the hostilities in heterosexual relationships, analogous to the tensions between Andrea and

Mario. Mario seems to be suffering from womb envy, at least on a symbolic level: he gives no consideration for Andrea's wishes or her organs because he shows no concern for the risks to her health from a possible abortion. Some men attempt to withdraw from womb envy by glorifying devastation as opposed to creativity and the terrorist attack on which Mario writes symbolizes his engrossment in destruction (Feder Kittay: 120). He does not pause to speak to Andrea when she visits the site of the bombing and it seems as if he has lost interest in her. Breast envy is something which Miró possibly explored previously on an unconscious level in El crimen in the jail scene between Gregorio and Dolores, which prompts viewers to think of envy in the male characters in Gary Cooper. Kubie believes that men substitute creativity in other areas, such as writing and art, for their maternal lack, an interesting hypothesis that counteracts Gilbert and Gubar's ideas on the ways in which misogynist ideas linked the power of creativity to the penis. Kubie seems to say that men realize that their penis is not magical *per se* and - like Creed's theories about the monstrous feminine and the *vagina dentata* - his ideas deny phallic power and supremacy, binding neatly to Miró's demonstration that women also have strength and weaknesses. Some critics believe that intercourse and fatherhood served to affirm the penis, but Kubie's work reinterprets the situation and proves once again that men depend on women for creation (Kubie: 194-195, 203), hence Mario's complaints. Womb envy motivates men's indifference or hostility towards pregnant women and the female organs in particular and, on that level, Mario resembles Andrea's boss (Víctor Valverde), who belittles potential pregnancies and links to male, medical intervention in the childbearing process, a symptom of womb envy elsewhere in the film. Men's intervention in women's procreative functions is not limited to childbirth itself but extends to abortion and sterilization through which men try to control and therefore appropriate women's enviable powers (Feder Kittay, 1983: 97-99, 104-105, 112, 115). The doctor is not sure whether or not he will have to remove her womb; therefore, Andrea retains her maternal power to a certain extent and the harmful effects of male 'womb envy' might or might not prevail.

The character of Bernardo, who is not connected with womb envy, provides yet more information to give a balanced view of Andrea while his character indirectly serves to highlight Andrea's strength and independence. Bernardo seems slightly more sympathetic than Mario, although he also accuses Andrea of scorning Mario as she had spurned him in the past; on the other hand, he believes that she has lost her former aggressiveness and become softened. Andrea is aware that a relationship with Bernardo is impossible and consequently, she is not searching for a father figure in him and, even if Bernardo resembles a paternal figure, he possesses disappointing traits. At the end of the film, Bernardo comes to the clinic and the narrative pessimistically suggests that Andrea will not find reliable support from an old boyfriend. In fact, Miró herself remarked in interview that heroic men or partners do not exist and that there is no such thing as an ideal *príncipe azul* (cited in Marsillach, 1982). Bernardo does not even take the trouble to keep the precious gold chain which Andrea has given him, an act of neglect which Miró prioritizes through the grammar of the camera, focusing on the abandoned chain in a tracking shot forwards to medium close-up. Because Bernardo's letters lay in Andrea's chest alongside Cooper's photograph, this links Cooper to Bernardo's imperfections and fallibilities and vice versa. Cooper cannot help Andrea either, since according to Miró, he is a myth or unreal (Appendix 1: 4). The viewers enter into the sphere of pessimism and confusion which Miró feels about personal relationships (Berrocal: 49-50) in addition to the fiction or unreality of cinema. There is no narrative closure with a relationship within a happy ending, as in Hollywood classical comedies and Miró, like Woody Allen whose films she appreciates (*Tele Radio*, 1980: 13), questions in a postmodernist fashion the possibility of satisfaction and happiness from interpersonal relationships, be they platonic relationships with a father figure or amorous. Another father figure, the seemingly benevolent physician who represents knowledge and science, is part of the open ending. The viewers do not know whether or not he can save Andrea and he is aware that he is not omnipotent, but he does seem soft and benevolent. He does not deprive Andrea of knowledge about her condition and the presence of the doctor, who has some faith in his scientific knowledge as well as doubt, makes the open ending even more ambiguous vis-à-vis the supremacy or

efficiency of the father figure. Even though Miró associates the female body with disease which affects the character's life - a strategy of the woman's film - the doctor in Gary Cooper loses omnipotence in that his cure is not guaranteed, unlike doctors in the woman's film, even though he will, like these cinematic physicians, be able to gaze beneath the surface of Andrea's body in surgery, one of the empowering features of what Doane defines as the medical discourse in classical film (1987: 38-40, 43, 63).<sup>9</sup>

The doctor is not the only male character whose power is eroded because minor male characters in Andrea's life also seem fallible or at least distant. Andrea's brother and father, who are physically absent from the narrative apart from brief photographic or verbal allusions, perhaps lose influence. The only suggestions of her father's presence are a photograph of him in her mother's room and the medals in Andrea's suitcase, which she quickly discards in favour of photographs of film stars and Bernardo's letters. Andrea not only scorns her father, but symbolically the masculinist values of military establishment.<sup>10</sup> The narrative does not specifically state that they belong to Andrea's father, but viewers can piece together this sort of evidence. The terrorist *atentado* in Madrid similarly links to Andrea's scorn towards the military establishment, since one of the victims of the car bomb is an important member of the armed forces, and resonances of unconscious parricidal urges enter into play. Viewers of Gary Cooper are left with a minimal visual presence of a father, although Andrea's brother is visually absent but still has financial authority. The family is a microcosm of society and therefore a vehicle for examining the social situation of a given place (Méndez: 80) and Andrea's brother's role demonstrates that society's traditions remain, despite legal measures towards equality in the late 1970s: Andrea has access to finances belonging to her mother, but which are ultimately governed by her brother.<sup>11</sup> Only in 1981, one year after Miró made Gary Cooper, did *La ley 11* give wives control over property (Cambio 16, 1996).

Other sorts of paternal authorities also lose influence over Miró's protagonist. Andrea's atheism and rejection of the priest - a de-centering of the 'law of God the father' - matches her choice to have abortions thwarted by the Right and the predominance of Catholicism and her acceptance of female autonomy, which many religious Spanish

women rejected. Hopewell believes that Miró's films in general reflect a backlash against a severe, Catholic upbringing and her religious education (113). The title of the film, Gary Cooper que estás en los cielos, is almost blasphemous due to the ways in which it subverts the Lord's Prayer in that Cooper becomes 'god', the being from whom Andrea draws strength. Gary Cooper equally reacts against religion through Andrea's actions. For example, she rejects the assistance of the hospital priest, played by Francisco Casares, the actor who was Taboada in El crimen and who is therefore identified in this religious role with systems of repression and religion as an institutionalized force, despite the priest's seemingly sympathetic tone of voice or genuine concern for Andrea's spiritual well-being. In fact, religion and its sacred paraphernalia are reduced to *objets d'art* within the narrative. The church is a mere element of Miró's artistic creativity in the mise-en-scène of the outer or framing narrative and Andrea only enters it to seek Bernardo, who is carrying out restorations there. When Andrea's thoughts turn to her mortality, she buys a Roman vase as an urn for her ashes which brings with it implications of paganism. By rejecting the priest and religion, she not only casts aside an ISA of indoctrination, but the supremacy of males in society since, as Dunbar argues, the Catholic church reinforces masculine ideology owing to its emphasis on the family and the prioritization of men (489).

As in other films, Miró establishes perhaps more clearly defined opposites in the representation of gender. Despite the de-centering of the father, the presence of Andrea's mother is an important contrast to Andrea. Andrea's mother is a pale, passive, traditional figure who hands over important monetary affairs to her son, harking back to the obligatory position of women under Franco, who had no legal control over their finances, and she echoes current laws in Spain stipulating that women cannot inherit titles or the wealth that accompanies them (García Osuna: 118). Her traditional outlook is especially mirrored by her ruff-like collar which links her to the Spanish Golden Age, the colonialist epoch of Felipe II which Franco aimed to recreate, and the honour-bound El Greco *caballeros*. When she chastises Andrea's modern appearance, she not only criticizes her daughter, but the nascent new Spain and its modern ideas in all areas. Unlike Andrea,

existentialist immortality seems to hold no interest for her and she prefers the here and now of appearances as opposed to immortality through fame. Her attitude to life corresponds to predominant patriarchal views in Spain and elsewhere which measure women's value in physical terms as the objects of the gaze, while their work is rarely well received.<sup>12</sup> The photograph of Andrea's military father introduces the element of masculinist power into the scene: her mother, to whom the portrait evidently belongs, is correspondingly identified with the conservative beliefs of the military. The conventional Begoña (Carmen Maura) lacks independence and creativity despite her professional position. Unlike Andrea, Begoña fails to win prizes; she merely interviews personalities for television news reports and asks questions prescribed to her by superior authorities.

According to Kuhn, feminist texts within the 'New Woman's Film' focus on female characters (1982: 135-136) and this is another way in which the cinematic narrative decentres the father in Gary Cooper in terms of form and content in addition to the plot and the distance of some male figures of authority, despite Miró's affirmations that she is interested in human issues (Hidalgo: 58). However, male directors have also been responsible for some of the major woman-centred narratives in cinema. For instance, Hitchcock's Marnie (1964) or Vicente Minelli's Meet Me in St. Louis (1944). Hitchcock was arguably a misogynist, who looked unfavorably on female transgression while Minnelli's protagonist, Judy Garland, is a very conventional period character who is about to marry and the antithesis of Teresa in La petición. This does not mean to say that male directors were unwilling to give sympathy to female transgressors. Douglas Sirk's All That Heaven Allows (1955) does provide a sympathetic portrayal of a transgressive woman (Jayne Wyman) and Miró herself believes that genres are not restricted to the director's gender (March, 1996). In addition to a focus on Andrea, there are many point-of-view shots which display the objects of her gaze, such as Cooper's photograph or the toy soldier, the child in the park, who is literally in 'pause' in terms of cinematic grammar as Miró filmed the sequence in slow motion, Bernardo, the films she edits or the reflection of her own stomach in the mirror. Particularly disturbing point-of-view shots occur in the depiction of Andrea's journey to the operating theatre and within the extradiegetic

soundtrack, a base line subjectively conveys her pounding cardiac rhythms. These intensified depictions of Andrea's subjectivity in visual terms and in the voice-overs approximate the narrative to the intensive portrayal of female subjectivity in the woman's film, despite Gary Cooper's difference from the genre's medical discourse (Doane, 1987: 10, 34-35).

The camera importantly focuses on Andrea's face, especially when she is alone. Miró's former teacher, Saura, believes in the introspective values of facial interest:

A close-up of a face with some antecedent in a known context can be as expressive, as profound and as dramatic as five pages of literature explaining the state of mind of a character (cited in Hopewell: 86).

Morin comments that the close-up is an especially powerful signifier because it renders visible the merest movement, thereby exaggerating and prioritizing the actor's facial expression (Morin: 144). Miró adds an 'open' or unclassifying feminist character portrayal to allow the viewer to decide how to interpret the characters to her open ending. Miró's textual strategies to avoid dogmatism vis-à-vis El crimen are equally valid for Gary Cooper: "Tan sólo el espectador tiene derecho [...] a calificar sus contenidos" (Pérez Millán: 151). Strategies of non-closure mirror Miró's deconstruction of stereotypical Spanish women, who adhere to patriarchal ideology and Andrea's status as an existentialist, who refuses to close her existence and wants to leave her mark on life.<sup>13</sup> Miró's penchant for vague shots which leave gaps in her work (Pérez Millán: 178) - one of Kuhn's ingredients for the signification processes in a feminist text - is self-reflexively mirrored by Andrea who writes a question mark in her diary for the date of her operation. García Abril's musical leitmotif works in a similar way to other narrative gaps, prompting spectators to imagine Andrea's feelings and thoughts. Miró provides some information, but only sufficient detail for our imaginations to work pluralistically and the use of music instead of language perhaps constitutes a rejection of the symbolic order and the power of words to convey certainty, especially given the thematic concerns of Miró's earlier El crimen.

In addition to the *feminine form* of the text, given that Gary Cooper is a work about cinematic creativity, it is important to consider the presence of stars and literary art in the setting and their relevance to the film's sexual politics. Andrea's attitude towards the objects in her suitcase determine the viewers' readings of the presence of stars within it, the majority of whom are men. Louisa M. Alcott's Little Women (1868) is amongst her possessions, a novel which presents conventional and unconventional female characters whom Miró admired. Although Andrea smiles when she sees the novel, she pays more attention to the photographs of film stars, especially Gary Cooper. According to feminist critics, Beth in Little Women died in an angelic state of pre-pubescent and joined her father in heaven because she was too good to live (Carter, 1979: 56). When Andrea moves on to the pictures of stars, it seems as if she rejects conventionality to identify with the masculinity of the stars as ego ideals or gazes at the stars as objects of desire. Andrea shows more interest in her fountain pen, which she holds in a point-of-view shot and which is a sign of her artistic creativity and correspondence with Bernardo. Later in the scene, Andrea picks up Bernardo's letters and caresses them while viewers notice her eyes more in this section filmed in a tracking shot to extreme close-up and as she reads a few lines, they flicker with delight or nostalgia. The letters are a symbol for Bernardo himself and they link to Andrea's erotic activity in other parts of the film. However, there are no definite answers given in the narrative and the objects in Andrea's box contribute towards such ambiguities.

The influential grammar of the camera or close-ups of Andrea's gestures in addition to the extradiegetic music engender many possible meanings. Cixous in 'The Laugh of Medusa' commented that the female body possesses the ability to present various meanings (Marks: 251, 256) and such multiplicity seems to be in play here. Miró uses the close-ups precisely when Andrea looks at the photographs of stars in her suitcase. Critics, who believe that Andrea searches for a father figure during her illness whilst attempting to maintain her independence, are partly correct because Andrea prays to "Gary Cooper que estás en los cielos, librame de todo mal", but there are other possibilities. Andrea smiles when she sees Cooper and other actresses, such as Marlene Dietrich and Greta Garbo who

were as subversive and androgynous as 'Andrea' herself; she does not use words and the spectators therefore do not know exactly what her smile means. It is evident that Andrea rejects the medals in the case with a look of disgust and to some extent distances herself from the father figure. Cooper may represent an ideal father in the film or a hero, but Cooper's persona is not omnipotent (Browning: 201) in the style of James Bond, who always escapes unharmed from any conflicts. Cooper is often partly weakened in his films, such as Ball of Fire (Howard Hawks, 1941), and suffered from cancer in real life when he made High Noon (Fred Zinneman, 1952), the film from which Andrea's still came. One month before Cooper died, a threat which Andrea faces, he was awarded an honorary Oscar for his services to the film industry, comparable to Andrea who also wins a prize shortly before she falls ill (Shipman: 127). The young Cooper used his contacts well when he searched for work and had assistance from his girlfriend, Clara Bow, who according to popular rumour, secured parts for Cooper in her films in return for sexual favours.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, he was not omnipotent in professional terms.

It is worth restating the theoretically defined functions of actors here. Dyer and Morin comment that the actor or actress has two functions: he or she is an object of desire or an ideal which others strive to imitate, like Greek gods or myths (Dyer, 1979: 28, 31: Morin: 39). The photographs emphasize Andrea and Miró's interest in cinema and Andrea looks at them more than the medals, signifiers of masculinist rationality rather than artistic creativity. The audience witnesses the active, female gaze in operation as Andrea looks at male and female stars and obtains pleasure from this. There is a narrative 'pause' on Andrea's gaze in a point-of-view shot at the photographs and the pen which symbolize cinema and writing, two interrelated pursuits. Perhaps Andrea identifies with Cooper or she may desire and therefore objectify him. This is not certain. During the earlier parts of Cooper's career, directors put his natural beauty to use and dandified him in elegant suits, constructing him as an object for the female gaze. His entire star text, as Browning points out, was a mixture of the feminine and the masculine achieved by his roles in Westerns and his earlier feminine beauty, which gave him an androgynous look (1995: 193-195) and which could make his star personality approach that of Andrea.<sup>15</sup> One of the details of the

mise-en-scène of the film closely connected to Cooper's photograph, which I mentioned earlier, reinforces the interpretation of Andrea as androgynous. She keeps a toy solider on her writing desk, a toy conventionally for boys which reappears in El pájaro, and rests Cooper's photograph on the toy, juxtaposing and linking them to a certain extent. The viewers suppose that it is another of her childhood souvenirs as Andrea is an unorthodox woman and this detail suggests that she has never been conventional.

Critics need to ask themselves why Miró used such a strong presence of Cooper in High Noon in addition to the film's significant Spanish title (Solo ante el peligro) and its popularity at the box office, apart from the fact that Cooper is one of Miró's favourite male stars (Vicent, 1980: 53). Middle-age is a feature of Gary Cooper in this film which therefore links him to fatherliness. High Noon was one of the Westerns Cooper made in 1952, considered to be safe material for an aging star (Shipman: 127) and Cooper was a hero whose advancement in years had turned him into what Morin calls a real man with experience instead of wrinkles (23, 46) and these are positive traits for Andrea, who is on the threshold of middle age, to imitate. In High Noon, Will (Cooper) faces a death threat like Andrea, but from Frank Miller, an outlaw as opposed to a disease, although Cooper himself had cancer during the shoot. Andrea and Will are both engaged in a race against time to complete tasks before they face danger and near the end of the film, Will sits at his desk in the same position as Andrea while she drafts her will and both have a similar worried expression on their faces while they are composing. Cooper writes on the paper, folds it and puts it inside an envelope which he addresses - like Andrea before she leaves for the clinic - and departs from his office to meet the gang, which parallels Andrea's trajectory to confront her biological enemy in the operating theatre.

On the one hand, Cooper is a strong father figure in High Noon who adheres to ideals of heroism, to which the ballad leitmotif refers, and marries Amy (Grace Kelly). He is evidently a lot older than her, lifts her up, refuses to put her down until she kisses him, and protects her by ordering her to leave town. Kane also safeguards his town - which he had previously made safe for women and children after Miller had destroyed all sense of order - refusing to hand over duties to others and retaining his marshal's badge, which he

eventually throws down, until his replacement arrives.<sup>16</sup> In High Noon, Cooper ostensibly upholds the law, but there is still a deviation from patriarchal norms because patriarchy and maleness are not one and the same thing. Cooper resolves to do his duty for the sake of his own honour in addition to that of public safety and consequently, does not submit to the process of civilization, which provokes pleasure in the form of masculinist pride. Patriarchy demands 'male domestication', an oedipal requirement: the hero must enter society, symbolized by a marriage which is under threat in High Noon because of the enforced separation of Will and Amy. Cooper and Amy are therefore recuperated into the world of masculinist values. For example when she shoots his enemy and contravenes her Quaker pacifism. Such values are not necessarily synonymous with civilization, especially in the Western pre or nascent civilization in a stage of transition towards settlement (Barton Palmer: 151, 158). Therefore, in different ways, Andrea and Will both rebel against patriarchal norms. Kane also contravenes Amy's civilizing influence to defend his own honour - "You don't have to be a hero, not for me". Will is torn between sentiment and bravery; he does not want Amy to leave him, but he must do his duty and defend his honour. Cooper uses strategy to defeat Frank Miller and his gang by hiding in a building behind them and shooting one of the members, but it is not enough to save him from harm.<sup>17</sup> The gangsters shoot Will in the arm and set the barn in which he is hiding on fire: while he is prostrated on the floor through pain, he has to rely on female assistance through Amy's shooting one of the gangsters. Cooper's character receives no help from the church, although he is not irreligious and Andrea does not obtain any assistance from the church by choice. Despite his requests for assistance, no one in the town helps him except his wife, a teenager and a one-eyed man and he is therefore not an omnipotent force. Even in the highly masculine genre of the Western, Cooper's characters therefore convey not only powerful masculinity, but also a more vulnerable persona (Browning: 201).

In spite of all of these earlier ambiguities in the film surrounding the Gary Cooper persona and High Noon, the mise-en-scène at the end of Gary Cooper firmly situates the viewer and Andrea in a patriarchal realm because of the corridor and theatre's white decor and the bright lights (Cook, 1989: 69, 73). However, the ending of the narrative is left

open to interpretation. Andrea holds the doctor's hand as she did Bernardo's and there is still strength in her grasp, indicative of the power which viewers have seen in her throughout the film. Andrea is not yet unconscious and viewers are therefore left with an image of both male and female strength. Miró retains a strategy of 'enrichment by silence', a constant in Andrea's speechless moments accompanied only by music, which is a feature identified in modern prose narratives to maintain interest by keeping the characters as open constructs which viewers then try to understand (Chatman, 1978: 132). However viewers choose to interpret Andrea, and whatever signs of weakness there are in her personality, Miró admitted that Andrea does have power and, if Andrea has been strong, viewers remember her external strength in addition to her weaknesses. Jackie Stacey, who studied female spectators using fan mail, believes that the audience remembers a character's power instead of his or her weaknesses (141-161). As I have commented, Andrea is a mixture of both and, a likely reader response is one that would correspond to Stacey's findings. The presence of High Noon and the Cooper persona make Gary Cooper a subtle form of intertextuality: actors' star texts are closely linked to Miró's questioning representation of gender in Andrea, especially masculinity and androgyny, because Andrea thwarts definite meanings and classification through their presence. I will return to questions of stars in the last chapter, but let us move on to Miró's next critical representation of gender in Hablamos which she envisaged as the opposite of Andrea - the depiction of a successful male character, Víctor (Hernández Les, 1981: 36; El país, 1982).

<sup>1</sup> Comparable to Carmen in El pájaro, Andrea, Carlota and Julia are examples of 'mujeres que se enfrentan a la vida desde posiciones que rompen con su papel tradicional' ('IX Festival de cine realizado por mujeres', Mujeres, no.12, 3º cuatrimestre, 1993, 23).

<sup>2</sup> As Miró commented: "Ya saben todos los amigos que en mi casa se exponen a comer de lata" (cited in Arnaldo: 60).

<sup>3</sup> Joanna Ryan, 'Psychoanalysis and Women Loving Women' (cited in Crowley: 152, 172).

<sup>4</sup> For example, the Opus Dei newsletter, El Reaccionario (no.2 (Zaragoza, Spring, 1992) blamed the increase in AIDS cases exclusively on homosexuals, despite concrete scientific evidence that heterosexual activity transmitted the virus.

<sup>5</sup> Curiously, Miró thought of her films in an existentialist light. In interview, she commented that her works would survive her (Hernández Les, 1981: 36). Furthermore, she specifically chose Huis Clos (1944) as a text that would reflect Andrea's personality (Hidalgo: 58).

<sup>6</sup> Dr. E. Blackwell, Pioneer Work in Opening the Medical Profession to Women (1895), 190 cited in Brooke, 118 and Horney, 'The Problem of Feminine Masochism', 1967, 216.

<sup>7</sup> Miró interestingly commented in interview that "el cirujano no es un genio" (José A. de las Heras, 1976).

<sup>8</sup> 'Orlando stood stark naked. No human being, [...], has ever looked more ravishing. His form combined in one the strength of a man and a woman's grace ...' (V.Woolf cited in Kubie). Orlando also became pregnant.

<sup>9</sup> José María Bardavío linked the presence of Gary Cooper in the film to matricide since Cooper's wife died in childbirth in the film, A Farewell to Arms (Charles Vidor, 1957). (José María Bardavío and Jayne Hamilton, 'Gary Cooper que estás en los cielos', papers

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presented for the Comisión de Cultura (Filosofía y Letras), Universidad de Zaragoza, December 15, 1995). However, patricidal impulses coexist with the possibility of matricide as I will discuss below.

<sup>10</sup> Miró said in conversation that the medals in Andrea's suitcase actually belonged to her own father (Appendix 1: 4).

<sup>11</sup> The democratic Constitution (1978) stated that all Spaniards were equal (García Osuna: 109, 112; Roca Cubellis: 23) and the Statute of Workers Law (1980) abolished *licencia marital*, promised to penalize sex discrimination and granted equal pay for equal work (García Osuna: 43, 75, 127, 142).

<sup>12</sup> Aphra Benn cited in Adair, 91.

<sup>13</sup> For a discussion of Existentialism, see Cranston, 1962.

<sup>14</sup> For example in It (Clarence G. Badger, 1927) and Wings (William. E. Wellman, 1927). See Browning, 1995, 195-197.

<sup>15</sup> As Browning comments, Morocco (1930) fetishized Cooper just as much as it fetishised and masculinised Marlene Dietrich (193).

<sup>16</sup> See Babbington and Evans (182-184) who argue that Cooper is a prime example of stars who were fatherly, regardless of whether or not a film cast them in the role of a father. For instance, the father-daughter connection can be made if the male star in the relationship, such as Spencer Tracey in Pat and Mike (George Cukor, 1952), is older than the heroine. Cooper may be an incarnation of the father who possesses the phallus and the law, literally in High Noon, but his 'fatherly' image must be seen within the surrounding context of Miró's films and their unconventional representations of gender.

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<sup>17</sup> Cooper's characters in other films relied on strategy to defeat the enemy. For example, Unconquered (Cecil B. de Mille, 1947), in which he used his creative wits to escape fierce Indians.

#### CH. 4. SCIENCE AND MASCULINISM IN HABLAMOS ESTA NOCHE (1982).

Hablamos esta noche (1982) is probably Miró's most direct exploration and criticism of masculinist repression within all sorts of spheres. Méndez describes Hablamos as a probing of masculinity and a universal warning about the damaging effects of a rigid adherence to traditional male codes of behaviour (1989: 264-265, 268), although it must be added that Miró's warnings are never dogmatic. Miró has included various examples of ideological state apparatus as first defined by Althusser (1989: 54-56) within the narrative in order to highlight repression: the family, religious structures of ideology -- especially in the ominous funeral and exhumation scene with its overpowering crosses and other paraphernalia -- political ISAs in references to Francoist jingoism, communicative structures such as the press, TV and radio. She also includes recreational activities, such as sports, which are used to initiate and maintain masculinist behaviour. Miró immediately establishes an indirectly ironic strategy vis-à-vis masculinism to activate the viewers' questioning minds in her choice of the name Víctor for the male protagonist. In addition to his own masculinist conduct, Víctor's name seems to link him with a Francoist rhetoric of *triunfalismo* and victory through the noun's Latin meaning.<sup>1</sup> Like the conservatives and the Civil Guard in El crimen, Víctor silences anything that threatens his supremacy, even if the means which he uses and motives to cover up flaws are immoral and dangerous. In fact, the protagonist's ironic name thematically resembles Miró's tongue-in-cheek respect for the Civil Guard at the start of El crimen.

Víctor expresses verbal violence when he shouts and jumps at the football match, later admitting that he behaved like a hooligan. Football, a sport which prioritizes physical strength and skill, is traditionally a bastion of masculinism (Bruce Kidd, 1987: 251-252, 261) through which Víctor attempts to initiate Claudio into *machismo*. Indeed, *machismo*

is one of the traits that links Víctor to the Francoist past and his masculinist attitudes are closely connected with notions of sexuality (Méndez: 265). He is particularly shocked by Claudio's homosexuality which is linked to a suspicion of foreigners: Víctor is convinced that if his son had not lived with his mother and her Dutch partner, Hans, he would not have developed homosexual preferences.<sup>2</sup> Víctor's masculinism is also manifested in his violence and a dogmatic lack of understanding of the 'other', when he punches Claudio's partner. Claudio, who is a total contrast to Víctor, seems as if he is in an irrational, semi-conscious dream world when he looks out of the car window: he is relaxed, allowing Víctor to choose the venue for their meal together. Claudio is anarchic in terms of the regulations of *machismo*; but on a more mundane level, Víctor even has to command him to wear his seat belt in the car. On a personal level as a father, Víctor operates in an Oedipal situation linked to the Spanish concept of extended honour and pride. For example, Víctor does not discuss Claudio's homosexuality with Julia, his partner, to conceal the taboo subject. Julia disagrees and links his confidentiality to pride and egoism, an apt observation. She believes that Víctor, comparable with other traditional patriarchs, likes to boast about his son as a glorious image of himself and consequently, Claudio's sexual orientation troubles Víctor in terms of his own self-interest.

Comparable to the antipathetic Mario in Gary Cooper, Víctor himself is a Don Juan, an archetypal image of Latin *machismo*. However, there are ironies in this image because Clara (Amparo Muñoz), Don Mariano's niece, takes the initiative in the relationship; Víctor is not such an omnipotent conqueror of women when one of his 'conquests' actively wished to be seduced. He has three sexual partners - Julia and a woman to whom Julia refers at the start of the film in addition to Clara, who he may befriend in view of her potential influence over her uncle's decision about who to employ

as chief engineer in addition to her beauty. Julia chastises Víctor's donjuanism and chafes Víctor to hurry up his divorce from María Rosa, who may want to legitimize her relationship with Hans, but he seems as if he does not want to commit himself to any one particular woman, reserving his masculinist right to have many female partners. Miró does thereby acknowledge new trends in relationships, but the narrative also echoes double standards in Spain vis-à-vis women's relationships outside of marriage in Julia's comments on María Rosa.

Similar contradictions and instabilities are at work in Víctor's professional life, who, analogous to many scientists, is aware that he will be judged on his achievements (Easlea: 199). As a result of his job and his gender, Víctor likes to think that he is in control, despite subsurface problems. He demonstrates a strong attachment to the reality principle and the work ethic within the former from his entrance into the narrative. Méndez describes Victor as an emotional cripple and cites Miró herself, who commented on this in an interview during which she discussed her belief that men are less sure of themselves and contradictory, whereas women are often more assured of themselves and their role (265).<sup>3</sup> Indeed, when Víctor visits his father for the exhumation of his sister's remains, he feels that he must return to work as soon as possible because career advancement is more important to him than sentimentality. The importance he gives to his ambitions and image as an honorable patriarch over and above Claudio's feelings and well-being makes him exemplify the ways in which many men are concerned only for their own images (*La Vanguardia*, 1982).<sup>4</sup> And yet he is ironically manipulated by government officials, another sort of ISA, in mutually beneficial agreements regarding promotion and he receives orders from his boss, who is in turn the pawn of Don Mariano. Within the terms of their agreement, Víctor must allow Clara, Don Mariano's niece, entry into the

power station and worst of all, Víctor's superior more or less orders him to silence faults in the construction in order that the plant may open on time; this is for his own benefit so that he may accede to the position of chief engineer brought by an *enchufe*, a greater position with more prestige, including ample opportunity for self-glorification in society and scientific circles. Ironically, the 'conqueror' becomes the victim of socio-professional hierarchies and perhaps on that level, Miró arouses some limited possibilities of understanding from the audience vis-à-vis her protagonist.

Víctor attempts to control the plant and Claudio and believes that he can restrain or at least subdue the ecological protesters outside with the assistance of the power structures of the Policía Nacional.<sup>5</sup> Víctor uses language to command others in his professional activities as he had done previously to scold Claudio's boyfriend. Once again, he employs fictional, deceptive language at the press conference to state that the power station is safe. Víctor also manages to command fellow colleagues who could damage his and his establishment's reputation. Luis María caused an accident 7 years ago and because Víctor salvaged Luis María's career, he can manipulate him, silencing concrete reports on the dangers of seismic movements to the plant and public safety. Nuclear engineers have a contractual duty to protect both their employees and the public which Víctor ignores, exposing innocent citizens and employees to the horrific consequences of a nuclear accident, such as sickness and pain.

Despite Víctor's image of power, Miró demonstrates that Víctor is losing command underneath his controlled façade though the testimonies of others, especially Luis María. The narrative neatly links all of Víctor's various manifestations of *machismo*. In his conversations with Julia and especially Luis María, Víctor proves that Claudio's situation is something that he is unwilling to discuss and it therefore parallels his attitude to the

structural faults in the plant. Miró connects the silencing of homosexuality with the concealment of the threat of a nuclear disaster in addition to Víctor's ambitions of promotion and honour. She also brings in issues of nature versus civilization and the environment in Hablamos, which have greater importance in her next film, Werther. Víctor specifically silences the evidence that a seismic movement, which is something natural, may cause a radioactive leak and the collapse or melt-down of the man-made power station. As a result of these narrative concerns, it seems as if nature rebels against the threat of masculinism, emphasizing that oppressive civilization as it is seems both unnatural and unsafe.<sup>6</sup> Similarly within patriarchy, sexual aberrations are natural, but repressed sexual urges will escape, like the overrunning of nuclear forces' heat and radioactivity in a return of the repressed. Víctor, in parallel, silences the threat of disaster and attempts to masculinise his son by taking him to football matches. Luis María slams his hand on Víctor's desk when they discuss seismic movements and Claudio and for once, Víctor openly admits to his long-term colleague that he lacks control: "Perdóname. Tengo los nervios de punta". He relates this to Claudio's sexual orientation, chaos at work and Julia's departure for Italy, immediately resorting to nicotine to calm his nerves when he lights a cigarette.

A discussion which Víctor and Luis María have of Sartre and Camus is of interest in relation to questions of power. Significantly, these two authors both made important points vis-à-vis interpersonal relationships and the power of masculinism which are acted out in Hablamos. Camus' La Peste (1947) is specifically mentioned in Hablamos by Luis María and the character Dr. Rieux's remark that 'la peste c'est la vie' has resonances in the film: so too does the famous line 'l'enfer c'est les autres' in Sartre's Huis Clos, a work with which Miró is familiar and which also appeared in Gary Cooper. These lines are never

literally cited in either film, but the narratives reflect such existential concerns. Analogous to Franco and the Civil Guard in El crimen acting in the name of right wing authority, Víctor torments people under his command or the other, such as homosexuals because he silences anything that will threaten his supremacy. Thus the existentialist references have pessimistic resonances for the characters in Hablamos, since the characters in the French works are trapped by masculinism in one way or another: La Peste and its descriptions of plague are an allegory for the German occupation of France in World War II, an instance of masculinist violence on a political level. The death of the Othon child in La Peste given in graphic detail, becomes an extended metaphor for the effects of possible radiation sickness - a danger alluded to by Luis María - inflicted on innocent people, one of many modern 'plagues'.<sup>7</sup> Camus' remarks in La Peste are particularly relevant as they concern the fallibility of science. Despite his scientific knowledge, Dr. Rieux could not save lives. For example those of his wife or the Othon child. Víctor is in a similar position because his scientific knowledge is also fallible. Sartre's La Nausée (1938), mentioned by Luis María, is probably the most thematically significant literary echo in Hablamos for Miró's diatribe against the pressures of dogmatism. Cranston's description of the unhappy protagonist, Roquentin's day-to-day existence could just as well fit Víctor or any person living within a tense masculinist environment: 'His days are passed in a kind of dull depression, with intermittent spasms of nausea, vertigo, acute anxiety, and other forms of nervous tension' (14). Roquentin, who is ensnared just as Víctor and Luis María are trapped by the company and the dictates of masculinism, also finds that he is no longer able to do what he wants to and feels his freedom slipping away from him (15). Unlike Sartre's literary text, in Hablamos it is Luis María - a secondary character - who displays many of Roquentin's symptoms and attitudes as opposed to the protagonist, Víctor. Comparable to Roquentin,

Luis María becomes acutely aware of the unbearable external world: 'He feels it on his nerves; and often, it sickens him, bringing on what he calls "the Nausea" which becomes chronic and all-pervasive (ibid.). Luis María first mentions La Nausée and significantly, it is he who takes on board one of the main existentialist thematic currents exposed in its plot. As Cranston observes, in the novel, Sartre posits the existentialist theme that man is not only what he makes himself, but that he alone is responsible for his actions. However, such responsibility is not easy to bear, for it brings with it tormenting feelings of guilt (17-18), which Luis María evidently experiences in the film. But Roquentin himself does not want to feel guilt and thus, by evading any responsibilities, he avoids uneasiness by remaining in a state of self-deception or *mauvaise foi* (18). Luis María escapes his predicament through suicide, but Víctor continues to live in a condition of self-deception and, analogous to Roquentin, Víctor himself is 'degagé or uncommitted' (14) to the safety of the population in general or in his amorous and platonic personal relationships.

Víctor's father is ambiguous, but viewers find out more about him as the narrative unfolds through these significant references to literature. His dislike of foreign literature in particular allows Miró to introduce important contextual data on Víctor's background. Early on in the film, viewers notice that he is both restrictive and self-restraining, refusing Víctor's affection at the airport. Viewers sense that Víctor's father has instilled many of his right wing and masculinist values into his son, although Miró problematizes any concrete interpretation of Mayo's character as a confirmed masculinist because he seems to be surrendering to sentimentality in his advancing years. Luis María pinpoints Víctor's father's attitude to foreigners and subversive French culture in particular. In 1952, he detested Sartre and Camus, refusing to allow Víctor to read such 'diabolical literature' as La Peste or L'Étranger and he was shocked that they used to leave them within Charo's reach,

who he described as "una niña inocente". Luis María importantly mentions that Víctor's father was a colonel and the very presence of Alfredo Mayo, who played the virile male protagonist of Sáenz de Heredia's Raza (1941) which was scripted by Franco, bolsters these conservative, masculinist resonances (Méndez: 269): he is ostensibly the sort of virile character that Víctor is attempting to emulate and a contrast to the sensitive and artistic Claudio and his partner.<sup>8</sup>

All of these thematic preoccupations on gender and power can be related to both the mise-en-scène and sound. The soundtrack disturbs the viewers in many ways, because parts of it are perplexing and irritating, just as *machismo* or the law of the father in family life and other spheres is annoying and often detrimental. There is a peculiar, ominous Geiger counter noise present in a lot of the scenes, which is a sonic instrument used to measure levels of radioactivity which possibly represents the all-pervasive social sickness or *nausée* in Hablamos.<sup>9</sup> In the first part of the film, Víctor and Luis María discuss the faults in the plant for the first time, which Víctor chooses to silence. At this point, Víctor is departing for Santander to attend the exhumation of his sister's remains after 10 years and because of the paralleling brought about by the juxtaposing of these events in the narrative, Miró links the danger of radioactive leakage to Charo's mysterious suicide. The walls of the nuclear plant and the walls of the cemetery are adjoined, two images of death or potential deaths. Patterson comments that scientists' original idea for the warning symbol for invisible radioactivity consisted of a skull and crossbones, which they eventually discarded because they deemed it too alarming (1982: 128): Charo's bones serve to highlight this dangerous metaphoric current. While Víctor is in the cemetery, the Geiger counter once again resonates and coupled with the gloomy, overcast wintry landscape, it connotes death and desolation. The noise is an almost constant extradiegetic feature in

scenes filmed in Víctor's office block and its alienating effect links neatly to Miró's depiction of masculinism. It seems as if Víctor, neuroses and masculinist tensions, which he hides but which are embodied in the Geiger counter's readings of 'radioactivity' are highly dangerous, almost 'radioactive' sources in themselves, which are thereby linked to the cancer metaphor to connote the damage done by masculinism in Gary Cooper by virtue of their correspondence to the indication of carcinogenic leaks of radioactivity.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps the sounds reflect feelings of insecurity which Víctor denies in conversation with Luis María. Radioactivity is an invisible, silent and therefore dangerous force of contamination, analogous to many symptoms of psychological unrest often caused by masculinism. Víctor's office is the location of his institutionalized subterfuge, which could possibly lead to a radioactive leak: the Geiger counter returns in amplified form in his last meeting there with Luis María during which Luis María warns Víctor that 300,000 people could die should anything go wrong in Víctor's plant and it reappears during Luis María's funeral to mark an individual death which could be a prelude to many more indirectly or directly provoked by masculinism. It is equally associated with manifestations of masculinism in Víctor's private life. For example, it seems to convey his underlying and secret tension when Julia announces her departure for Italy. The noise is particularly strong when Rosa reveals that Claudio is homosexual and moments after Víctor receives the opera tape, which Claudio borrowed and which is included within his newly acquired musical tastes and homosexual awakening.

Miró's settings and costumes, like the soundtrack, equally reflect her thematic concerns. Víctor's costume mostly connotes power and the 'reality principle', comparable to the daughters' attire and accessories in Saura's Cría cuervos on their journey back to school, dwarfed by large briefcases and swamped by their formal uniform. Víctor's plastic

glasses, suit, tie, brief case, large black car and his office furniture carry resonances of formality and contribute to the atmosphere of rigid artificiality, especially his high backed, black leather chair which resembles a throne. Both the architecture and decor in the mise-en-scène are paraphernalia of repression. Víctor's office block within the metropolis of Madrid is the site of the manipulation of information against the natural environment, the abuse of power and the intrigue of language. Madrid is not only the site of what seems to be a central business district, but also represents the idea of centralized control and governmental repression. Víctor's office block, the façade of which is in reality a block of offices and apartments on calle Velázquez in Madrid, is made of solid grey concrete: its windows look very small from outside and the whole building seems square, imprisoning and immense. It swamps human occupants, rather like the way in which buildings in neorealist films, such as De Sica's Bicycle Thieves (1948), dwarf the characters in order to symbolize oppression through poverty.<sup>11</sup> It is full of typists, the sounds of work and the 'reality principle'. The basement, where Víctor parks his car, is similarly oppressive and gloomy: security guards, low ceilings and barriers all contribute to the atmosphere of repressive officialdom. Víctor's office in particular seems very bright and, in the light of Cook's theories, this connotes patriarchy (1989: 69, 73). His venetian blinds signify imprisonment and in addition to this, all of the windows seem narrow and claustrophobic. Their distinctive arches resemble the aqueduct in Segovia, one of Spain's oldest Roman landmarks and a great feat of engineering for its day which redirected the natural flow of water, and therefore corresponds to the ways in which nuclear physicists interfere with the natural mechanisms of atoms. Víctor holds power, but, as the mise-en-scène suggests, he is imprisoned by a greater power. Miró has aptly chosen the setting of Madrid's tallest and most modern buildings as a capitalist backdrop for Víctor's office. Behind Víctor, large

tower blocks or phallic symbols are visible, the epitome of 'civilization', masculinism and artificiality. Víctor and his office are dwarfed by higher buildings just as he is controlled by his superiors in the professional and social hierarchy. Víctor's office in Almonacil has white walls to emphasize the institution's scientific masculinism and a very small, imprisoning window. The construction of the plant itself compromises and therefore imprisons Víctor, analogous to the windows of his offices, because the company wants it to be switched on soon. All of these ugly architectural structures highlight the dehumanization of people living in so-called 'civilization' (K.Clarke: 1994). The buildings in the film turn Hablamos into a quasi-documentary in which Miró realistically depicts parts of Madrid, which brings the setting closer to neo-Realism. The architectural site of Luis María's suicide is also significant on a symbolic level. The plant walls forming the dam dwarf his remains: they are not in the shape of phallic symbols like the skyscrapers in Madrid, but their vast dimensions and gloomy, utilitarian colour dwarf him. Comparable to the walls of the dam and plant, Víctor's authority and that of the institution were too overwhelming for Luis María when coupled with his sense of guilt and respect for the welfare of others. Miró shows the viewers civilization at its worst, as in El crimen - concrete blocks in Madrid, the nuclear plant and the huge walls of the dam, down which the camera pans and 'pauses' to give the viewers a lasting impression of its ugliness.

The presence of the fire metaphor in the film is no coincidence since heat is generated in nuclear reactions, where at vast temperatures small nuclei fuse and produce energy during the fission process (Patterson, 1982: 51-53; Ward: 21-22). The immense heat generated can cause fires should the cooling systems of the reactor fail: these fires are particularly dangerous since they can lead to a 'meltdown' and a possible release of deadly radioactive material, which would contaminate thousands of square miles and the residents

within such an area (Ward: 23, 25).<sup>12</sup> Meltdown is one of the threats facing any power station as occurred in the Windscale 1 disaster (1957) (Patterson: 61), but especially Almonacil owing to the fault in its construction. Large doses of this radiation can kill any living organism's cells outright and lower doses can prevent a cell dividing or damage the genetic material, inducing cancers in any body tissue which may appear years later (Patterson: 43, 297-299).

Víctor and other men bear Luis María's coffin in a highly ominous scene. Before viewers see the coffin, Miró encloses a shot of an imprisoning glass door with a grid pattern. The church building in this scene, in which everything has a black and threatening air, is identified with the repressive structures of religion and right-wing ideology. The coffin is to be cremated, a form of disposal linked to masculinism given that fire is an element of patriarchy (De Armas, 1987: 65-75). Luis María believes that he has failed to prevent the future deaths of thousands of people and punishes himself with the death penalty in suicide, which means that he shares the same potential fate as the innocent people who he has not been able to defend against masculinism and radioactive contamination. It is interesting how Miró almost enters into the 'cancer metaphor', which she used in Gary Cooper, to symbolize the pernicious effects of masculinism. Luis María relinquishes life and his post like some nuclear engineers who have resigned over the issue of safety, especially the strength of the vessel surrounding the reactor core (Ward: 23, 25).

For all Luis María is a victim of *machismo*, he is also paradoxically an exponent of the phenomenon. For example, during dinner he avidly discusses French and English girls who came to Spain in 1952. This details once again show Miró's unwillingness to classify. Luis María differs from the masculinist ideal because he is nervous, open-minded, trying to understand unconventional behaviour of the other and this is evident in his sympathetic

attitude towards Claudio. His dramatic and mysterious suicide connects him to Charo, who also took her own life, and this correspondence is highlighted by Luis María's wife's bewilderment during her conversation with Víctor: "¿Por qué lo hizo? ¿Por qué lo hizo Charo?". The narrative is most cryptic, but it is possible that the two characters were victims of masculinist pressure, although ambiguity is a trait of Miró's cinema in general. Both suicides seem to be the pinnacle of damage inflicted by masculinism and its institutions, especially since Luis María is cremated.

It is highly significant that Claudio, a sensitive, artistic boy, attends Luis María's funeral accompanied by his older partner. Not only does their appearance contravene masculinist ideology present in the Church and society in general, but it also proves that rationalistic masculinism has not triumphed because it has failed to eradicate the 'other'. His partner's presence introduces a problematic note because, as a chemistry teacher, he follows the rationalism of science, yet he deviates from masculinism in his sexual orientation and his interest in the arts. Miró links Víctor's silencing of homosexuality to his secrecy vis-à-vis the threat of a nuclear disaster. Víctor silences the threat that seismic movements pose to the faulty construction of the plant leading to a radioactive leak: similarly, sexual aberrations or natural, but unconventional sexual behaviour will return if it is repressed. Resorting to the work ethic or reality principle, as Víctor does, will not change the situation and nature will eventually take her revenge on men for exploiting her.<sup>13</sup>

Claudio's attendance equally links him to Luis María, a connection which Miró has made loosely throughout the film in that Claudio and Luis María have both learnt to respect nature, although Luis María's lesson has been very difficult and painful: Claudio cradles and cares for his puppy, which is curiously almost the same colour as the teacher's

loyal and sensitive canine companion in Werther, as if it were a baby. He aptly names it Werther which strengthens any argument on the connection between the two animals and the two sensitive male characters. Like the teacher, Claudio seems extremely gentle and in tune with his natural environment and is a younger prelude to the animal-loving teacher, who also shares Claudio's interest in nature and the arts. Claudio even seems gentle when he buries his face in the soft wool of his new sweater, a natural fiber. Unlike his father, Claudio significantly has no inclination for sciences according to his partner and this fact proves how Miró links masculinism to science to a large extent.

Even though Miró conceived Hablamos as a study of a male protagonist, she also demonstrates an interest in the tensions within women's lives within the masculinist environment in Hablamos, as she did previously with the character of Andrea in Gary Cooper, Dolores in El crimen and Teresa in La petición. *Charo's suicide places her within* the sphere of female madness, a symptom of excessive repression to which patriarchy subjects women (Showalter, 1986 cited in Lisboa, 1992: 140-145). Indeed, Méndez even believes that Víctor is held partly to blame for his sister's mysterious death (268). Miró includes another criticism of patriarchy when Charo's bones are exhumed, an act which constitutes an assault on the female body, comparable to the implications of surgery in Gary Cooper. There seem to be some thematic connections between Andrea and Charo on this level because the gravediggers flick soil from her bones using picks, which are phallically intrusive instruments, not unlike those in the operating theatre in Gary Cooper that probe Andrea's body. Living female characters also encounter difficulties due to masculinism and rebel against traditionalist attitudes. Rosa (Amparo Soler Leal) is still Víctor's wife, from whom she is separated. On the one hand, she adheres to the traditional and maternal female role in that she demonstrates motherly preoccupation for her son, as

did Soler Leal in her previous role in El crimen. In Hablamos, she also has two daughters and as a teacher, Rosa exercises one of the professions prescribed for women in Spain since the nineteenth-century (Scanlon: 18, 34-35, 40, 43-44, 48). Although Rosa has a career, it is still one with vestiges of traditional gender roles and she is a teacher in a school as opposed to the uppermost hierarchies of the academic profession at university level, like Julia the research biologist, which are more male dominated. However, Rosa has a modern, open-minded attitude towards sex and sexuality and on that level, deviates from traditional stereotypes. For example, she would like Claudio to be open vis-à-vis his sexual orientation and allows him to sleep outside the home at his partner's. She herself forms part of a *pareja de hecho* and had daughters outside of wedlock with Hans. She agrees with divorce, which had been legalized in Spain by 1981, and displays unconventional attitudes in that she separated from Víctor, the representative of masculinism, and readily accepts foreigners.

Julia (Mercedes Sampietro) is another independent career woman. However her job gives her not only financial independence but prestige because she is an illustrious biologist in demand by foreign laboratories who has outgrown the lesser research facilities in Spain. Even though she is involved in science, biology is classified as a natural science and one which leaves the environment intact as opposed to physics and chemistry, sciences which alter and control nature (Easlea: 200).<sup>14</sup> She makes the decision to accept employment in Italy independently, although she attempts to discuss it with Víctor. Like Mercedes Sampietro's character in Gary Cooper, she drives a red car which signifies her independence and she assertively scolds Víctor's relationship with Clara and his mendacity. Domesticity holds little interest for her, like Andrea, because she does not have the time to prepare food for Víctor and gives him old fruit and meat. She paradoxically dresses up in a

feminine outfit when she has a meeting over dinner about her job in Italy, but does not seem to cast herself in a conventional, feminine image for Víctor's gaze.

Clara, like Julia, is a career woman who is studying for a masters degree in physics and she corresponds to the ANME's hopes that women would enter scientific professions. She has a wide grasp of scientific language because she knows the terminology and structure of the nuclear power station by heart. She also has a very active sexuality, takes pleasure in encounters with Víctor and demonstrates traits of the monstrous woman when she almost bites Víctor's ear. In other words, she seems to have interest in and knowledge of sadistic foreplay. There is an engaging scene when she enters Víctor's flat during which she kisses Víctor and goes upstairs whilst removing her clothes. Viewers see Víctor in Clara's point-of-view from a high angle, which gives her a marked air of superiority and control over him which matches her active sexuality, despite the obvious working of the male gaze. She unbuttons and removes her blouse in Víctor's low angle point-of-view and she seems to enjoy being the object of his gaze: the camera tracks forward to her face in order to prioritize its malicious smile full of desire.<sup>15</sup> However, Miró gives the sexes equal amounts of control in the relationship because she incorporates a reverse shot to Víctor's point of view which fetishizes Clara's waist and legs as she removes her clothing. As Miró fragments Clara's body, she makes her seem less threatening, especially since her mischievous smile is kept off-screen. After the camera goes down to Clara's feet, Víctor desiringly looks upwards and the camera pans down while Víctor picks up her blouse and removes her boots. Both male and female are active in this scene. Miró plays on the fact that Amparo Muñoz was a famous beauty queen who won Miss España and later on, Miss Universe in 1974. She earned substantial amounts of money from the competitions and therefore gained some degree of power, but often detested the ensuing media harassment.

Her title allowed her to rise from her lowly social status and did give her the opportunity to demonstrate that she had the ability to act, even if she initially gained some roles on the strength of her physical features alone (Lola Diaz, 1986; Pronto, 29/7/1981).<sup>16</sup>

The very presence of Clara at the end of the film assists Miró's open ending. On the one hand, the narrative couples Víctor and Clara, whom he watches play tennis at an exclusive sports club, since they are now free of all other sentimental ties - María Rosa and Julia. The use of Amparo Muñoz does sway the balance towards conventional coupling to a certain extent because of her role as Miss España. However, Clara is an unconventional character to a large extent and therefore, the ending becomes more unconventional because the coupling seems unstable. Clara is a scientist, albeit one who is embarking on her research career in nuclear physics, a particularly masculinist branch of science. Victor's masculinist supremacy as both scientist and active partner is questionable due to his involvement with Clara and the faulty plant. Miró leaves his status open to interpretation, while she neatly fuses and erodes two important thematic currents present throughout the narrative: masculinism in Víctor's personal life and professional activities. According to Penny Strange, the conquest of nature is a projection of sexual dominance in masculinist science and nuclear and scientific research can be described as a kind of surrogate sexual activity carried out by male physicists on female nature (1983: 24-25).<sup>17</sup> Víctor does not dominate nature or completely control women in his sexual encounters, like Clara who is active and Julia, who spurs his advances earlier on in the film. Women, the other, have some control in this film. Miró's next film, Werther, depicts women who have a certain degree of power, but once again returns to a focus on masculinism with a protagonist who, unlike Víctor, refuses to adhere to its prescriptions.

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<sup>1</sup> Víctor means conqueror. See First Names (Collins/Parragon, 1988: 360). See also Méndez (266). It is interesting to note Víctor's age. He tells Clara that he is 45, which means that he was born in 1939, the year of the Nationalist victory.

<sup>2</sup> Traditional Spaniards believed that tourists from the Netherlands and Sweden brought bad moral influences to Spain. See Miguel Delibes, Cinco horas con Mario (1966) and Carr and Fusi (1991: 93-94, 102) on Spaniards' attitudes to foreign tourists. The Dutch have a particularly strong reputation for tolerance vis-à-vis sexual orientation, succinctly described by Martin Dunford and Jack Holland (1994: 38).

<sup>3</sup> This remark by Miró was originally mentioned in Fotogramas (1982).

<sup>4</sup> Víctor's conversation with Luis María also expresses his attitude. Víctor - Tengo que trabajar/Luis María - Se trata de tu hijo./Víctor - Se trata de mí.

<sup>5</sup> There are numerous ecologist organizations in Spain against Nuclear power. See Patterson (1982: 321-322) for a list.

<sup>6</sup> There is no doubt that the discovery of how nuclear energy can be controlled and used is a scientific triumph (Ward: 21), but all technical processes nevertheless carry with them chances of failure: '[Nuclear power] has been called a Faustian bargain. But in view of the [...] potentially lethal effects of the radiation emitted by the nuclear reactions, [...] using these processes [...] could bring an [...] ominous myth into play - Prometheus stealing heaven's fire and chained forever to a bare rock' (23). Víctor, like Faust, moves away from virtue for his personal gain and masculinist pride. Seismic movements like this are part of nature and Miró's way of demonstrating that men will never be in control. Because nuclear reactors are built to withstand heat inherent in nuclear reactions, they are repressive

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structures. Some nuclear engineers have resigned over the issue of safety, in particular the strength of the vessel surrounding the reactor's core (25).

<sup>7</sup> Comments on allegory in La Peste from Albert Camus (1987, back cover).

<sup>8</sup> For a description of Mayo's virile character in Raza, José, see Méndez, 30.

<sup>9</sup> Miró deliberately chose the noise of a Geiger counter for the soundtrack (Appendix 1: 6).

<sup>10</sup> On the link between radiation and cancers, see Patterson, 43.

<sup>11</sup> The building used is above the branch of VIPS. On this level, Miró's choice of an actual building and location resembles neo-realist strategies. See Bordwell and Thompson (1990: 396).

<sup>12</sup> For case studies of accidents, see Patterson, 166-167, 169-171.

<sup>13</sup> Carolyn Merchant describes an appropriate metaphor for the seismic threat in Hablamos. She argues that scientists often portray nature as female and it is identified with the female, especially a woman hiding secrets. However, this is a female nature that might have fearsome powers (1982: 398-409 cited in Easlea: 205).

<sup>14</sup> Mercedes Sampietro has often been associated with important scientific roles in Spanish cinema. Miró almost cast Mercedes Sampietro as a biology teacher in Gary Cooper. In fact, Sampietro did play a biology teacher in Niño Quevedo's Vivir mañana (Spain, 1985), who won important *oposiciones* for a good post in Valencia, a psychologist, Dra Laura Barrinaga in El anillo de niebla (Gonzalo Suárez, 1985) and Carlota, a neurologist, in Werther (1986).

<sup>15</sup> See Lena Kotz (1992) on the pleasure of being the object of the gaze.

<sup>16</sup> Amparo Muñoz played a girl in an advert, who became the José Sacristán character, Enrique's objectified obsession in Vida conyugal sana (Roberto Bodegas, 1973) (Hopewell:

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83). Miguel Bayon (1989: 98) includes a small print of posters made for the film's advert depicting Muñoz on a bed.

<sup>17</sup> See also Easlea 195, 206.

## CII. 5. GENDER AND ROMANTICISM IN WERTHER (1986).

Werther, scripted by Mario Camus and Miró, shares an interest in the theme of masculinism versus nature with her earlier Hablamos. Indeed, Miró described the film and its topics as an escape from what is becoming an excessively technological or computerized era (de Pozo, 1986: 108). Since Werther's characters are modeled on those of Goethe's Romantic novel, they provide interesting material for an exploration of tensions between reason and emotion, a key issue involved in any discussion of masculinity based on the dominance of rationality over the irrational. The tension between nature/emotion/irrationality and reason/authority/balance is a key theme played out in many Pre-Romantic and Romantic works in addition to an awareness of the sadness of human destiny, on which Werther seems to comment, or at least the devastating consequences of masculinist rules on human behaviour.<sup>1</sup> Romanticism is a particularly apt outlook from which to borrow for Miró because it encouraged a questioning stance in various fields - such as politics, sociology and religion - when it abandoned the certainties of Rationalism (Furst: 62-63). Miró and her films, like Romanticism, equally question systems of order and she remarked that the passionate protagonist had always fascinated her precisely because of his radical outlook (Montero, 1982). Thematic tensions are also reinforced by Miró's employment of editing and mise-en-scène in addition to her use of characters, a few of whom represent contrasts to their Romantic others.

The teacher (Eusebio Poncela) rebels against masculinism in several ways. He seems to be one of the archetypal modern men, an emergent phenomenon in Spain in the 1980s and 1990s according to Ian Gibson, who are increasingly willing to involve themselves in domestic chores, such as cooking, cleaning and child care, although they remain in a minority to a certain extent in terms of EU statistics (Montero, 1995: 382).<sup>2</sup> The teacher cooks and cleans the house himself, refusing his uncle's offer to find him a suitable domestic help and as a teacher and private tutor, he actively participates in child-care duties albeit on a professional level, consequently contributing to a blurring of conventional gender roles. A narrative device for displaying new sorts of masculinities in Hollywood films of the late 1980s and 1990s was fathering (Cohan and Hark: 7) and Miro

suggests that men like the teacher who are sensitive can have a caring, maternal influence over children.<sup>3</sup> The script of Werther, which Miró changed during filming and editing, devoted more time to the boy's recollections of his teacher in voice-overs, whom he explains had a sensitizing influence upon him and perhaps becomes an ideal father figure:

Todo cuanto de él aprendí, lo guardo como el regalo más importante que he recibido en mi vida. Con frecuencia - cierro los ojos y puedo vivir de nuevo aquellos días [...] (Camus and Miró, 1986: 1, 5).

Other motives for the teacher's abandonment of masculinist behaviour stem from his Romantic temperament, sensitivity towards others and the environment and his lack of physical strength. He finds it difficult to chop logs and succeeds only after giving himself blisters. He is not a masculinist stoic and admits that he needs assistance, placing Jerusalén in charge of chopping his wood. He is very patient with Carlota's son, even when the child ignores him, and praises the boy if he does something well. For instance, when he wins at scrabble. He also shares in Beatriz's support for three children about to be unjustly expelled from school to the extent of resigning.

Carlota in particular is part of the teacher's Romantic character in addition to his questioning of educational authority and his relationship with her displays anti-masculinist features because he is neither insensitive nor emotionally detached. He caresses Carlota or her hair, pulls her nightdress over her in the bedroom scene, waits for her when she is called to the hospital, visits her at work bearing flowers and drives her home when she is tired. He is clearly a sensitive lover who treats Carlota as a person as opposed to an object as would a masculinist. Because modern Spanish women value kindness, tenderness and fidelity as much as physical beauty (García Osuna: 57, 144), this perhaps makes the teacher in Werther an idealized lover as well as a good father figure. The teacher's Romantic temperament emerges through his various sorts of emotional disturbance connected with love and extreme passion. For example, even when he discovers his father's love letters in his house, he cannot sleep and is highly restless when Carlota leaves him. The failure of their relationship disturbs him so much that he burns his translations of Aeschylus' tragedy,

Prometheus Bound, symbolically showing that the constraints of rationality kill art and emotion. The classical literary reference is worth pausing on briefly. Aeschylus' play is an appropriate choice by Miró and Camus for the teacher since the Romantics themselves valued its extravagant characters and its erosion of Aristotelian unities (Grene and Littlemore, 1991: 132). Whereas Aeschylus examined conflicts on a cosmic scale between Prometheus and Zeus, the play shares an interest with Werther in the ways in which Prometheus is tortured by a despotic force, represented by Zeus (133-134), just as the teacher suffers under masculinism, a more modern version of tyranny. The parallel between masculinism and Zeus is clear from the first section of Prometheus Bound during which Might and Violence - servants of Zeus - tie Prometheus to a rocky crag (139-142). Zeus tortured Prometheus because Prometheus asserted his own opinions and chose to help lesser mortal men by giving them knowledge of fire, agricultural techniques, shipbuilding and medicine (148-149, 156-157, 159). Analogous to Prometheus and El crimen's protagonists, the teacher is a victim of a tyrannical masculinist system of order. The presence of an edition of Prometheus Bound is therefore an intertextual complaint about any dogmatic authority and the burning of the translations may well be an allusion to the theme of fire - the element that Prometheus democratically passed on to mortals and therefore, his tool of transgression - in the play.

As the opposite of a masculinist, the teacher perhaps admired Prometheus' compassion for lesser mortals, but in addition to being a compassionate character, Romantic sentiment is of paramount importance to him. Love above all else is absolutely essential for the teacher's existence and the apparent loss of Carlota causes him to weep: he refuses to digest the information and does not expel her from his thoughts, committing suicide as an extreme act of rebellion against rationality. In fact, the teacher is never a character of stasis which seems to match his prominent irrationality and Romantic restlessness. He is almost constantly moving from the very start of the film on boats or riding his bike fast downhill towards the farm. Miró has a penchant for allowing Poncela to walk out of the frame without following him using a tracking or pan shot, which makes his movement seem greater. For instance, when he walks into and out of the frame as the

ferry docks at the start and end of the film. Perhaps his motion is another sign of rebellion against the rationalist, masculinist status-quo, rather like *Rebeca 2* and *Magda*'s movements set in different contexts which are greater than those of the camera in *Beltenebros*. Emotion forces him to contravene many sorts of mundane rules unconnected with love and sex, rather like *Andrea* in *Gary Cooper* who double parks her car. When he sees Carlota's car on the docks, he asks the captain of the ferry to return so that he may see her. His most irrational act, suicide, results from depression and an intrinsically sad and typically Romantic character, but also anger and frustration caused by masculinist rules. He not only maintains his own irrationality, but respects and defends that of others. He seems to be the mouthpiece of the film's themes when he defends *Jerusalén*'s passionate, Romantic behaviour and refuses to categorize acts:

¿Por qué, a la hora de opinar de algo, hay que decir en seguida "esto es una locura, es sensato, bueno o malo?" [...] Yo creo que nuestros códigos morales son antiguos y no corresponden más que a viejos y trasnochados intereses [...] No disculpo al asesino o al suicida. Trato de entenderlo simplemente.

The teacher believes that *Jerusalén* was an honorable, hard-working man who only tried to solve a conflict he had and who merits pity or envy: he voices the views of Romanticism itself to *Albert* when he argues that human nature has limits and that people will succumb if they have to suffer excessive emotional pain.

The teacher's own irrationality involves an air of mystery. He wanted to stop teaching Carlota's son initially because the boy would not communicate, but any hint of rationality gave way when an indefinable force made him carry on. This force eventually succeeds in diminishing the boy's timidity, unlike *Federico* and *Alberto*'s masculinist learning for success and glory based on ambition, which seems to be a message from Miró that following illogical emotions is advantageous. He describes his irrational, spontaneous teaching methods not inscribed in books as "las que surjan, las que me invente" and at that moment, Carlota significantly began to notice the teacher's special qualities. Importantly, his activities again involve movement - bicycle rides, flying kites or throwing a bottle into the sea from the cliffs - and his grandmother's irrational stories. Nature, to which the

teacher is constantly linked and yet another feature of Romanticism because of the movement's close connections with men's harmonious relationship to their natural surroundings, plays an important part in his spontaneous educational strategies and in the film in general. Firstly, he lives in the midst of a wood overlooking the sea on a cliff in harmony with nature in its pure state. Jerusalén's description of his garden is particularly significant: "Tiene las plantas y los árboles sin cuidar". Furthermore, the teacher's reply is indicative of his integration with nature: "Me gusta que estén así". He takes the boy to the woods and teaches him how to esteem nature as it is, arguing that a forest of beech trees is a gift of nature and personifying each tree, unlike the hunters, whose gunfire resonates in the background. In front of the *casa de los marineros* at the start of the film, the teacher was visually linked to the tree while discussing his own, melancholic temperament with his uncle: there the camera had moved up to the tops of the tree while Poncela's voice continued to describe his emotional traits.

Miró exploits a Rousseau-esque and conventional, Romantic *paysage état d'âme* situation through the mise-en-scène to convey his mood, further linking him to nature.<sup>4</sup> During the journey home on the ferry after his final meeting with Carlota, the clouds are dark and the sea churns around the boat. Even his dog feels his loss after his suicide when it lies down and hangs its head low between its paws at the end. The teacher had previously recited one of Ossian's poems about the withering of what was once a beautiful tree cited by Goethe in his novel, The Sorrows of Young Werther, on his weekend trip with Carlota. In the poem, a strong storm would blow away the tree's leaves, making it very difficult for a traveler to find it later on. Viewers suspect that the tree represents the teacher or their relationship.<sup>5</sup> Due to Carlota's voice-over at the end of the film reciting the same poem, it is perhaps clearer that he is the referent of the poem's symbolism. Viewers see the same tree which was linked to the teacher by a voice over and a camera movement upwards on the cliff-tops in a sort of amorous pantheism eulogizing the teacher's memory.

The sorrow of the natural environment at the teacher's suicide is not the only element of the narrative connected with the teacher that erodes masculinist rationality. The presence of the actor Eusebio Poncela is important here. According to Dyer (1979), stars

are texts who carry their roles with them in films, which effect the audience's interpretation of the character the star plays. Poncela's star text seems to reinforce Miró's attack on masculinism and rationality. As the non-dogmatic, understanding police detective in Pedro Almodóvar's *Matador* (1986), he also tried to understand the irrational in the guise of Ángel and forbidden desires, those of Diego and María Cardenal and his own, homosexual scopophilia. He once again played the 'new' man in Spain in *La ley del deseo* (Almodóvar, 1987). The Poncela character in that film, Pablo Quintero, is a gay film director who has an affectionate relationship with his sister's young charge and who together with his sister, as Méndez comments, represents an alternative to the conventional family (322). The final scene of *La ley del deseo*, during which Pablo cradles his dead lover, Antonio (Antonio Banderas), is particularly significant for the release of emotion and sensitivity. Miró originally wanted to cast William Hurt as the teacher for his own ability to portray sensitivity and took Poncela as a second choice (Appendix 1: 7). She believed that Poncela was the right sort of actor for the part, both physically and artistically, and he does seem to share William Hurt's sensitive resonances from various films, such as the adaptation of *The Kiss of the Spider Woman* (Hector Babenco, 1985) in which Hurt played the sympathetic Molina.

In addition to the protagonist's star text, secondary characters serve to bolster the thematics of Werther, especially the tension between irrationality and reason. The teacher's uncles and father were born at sea as opposed to dry land, a rational and secure sphere.<sup>6</sup> His grandmother had a mania, a clear sign of madness or irrationality which also stemmed from traditions within their seafaring family, to get onto a fishing boat when she went into labour accompanied by an unwilling midwife, merely to say that all her children were born at sea. She was symbolically and reassuringly removing herself from the masculinist sphere of science, which, in the nineteenth-century associated (female) madness with the possession of a womb (Lisboa, 1992: 140-143). Her imagination equally distanced her from the masculinist sphere of rationality and gave her oral creativity. Many Pre-Romantics and Romantics took a lively interest in imaginative oral narratives, fairy tales and folk stories like hers (Furst: 35, 47, 58). In recounting her stories to Carlota's son, the

teacher gives importance to the sub-genre of oral storytelling as well as female creativity and irrationality. One of his grandmother's stories was about a magnetic disk in the dunes that attracted pieces of metal from ships, forcing them to sink, a story that they never really believed, although there are lots of shipwrecks on that part of the coast. However, its watery setting and its content mean that viewers can identify it with Romantic irrationality, like the rest of his grandmother's behaviour.

His father's death has implications for Miró's critique of masculinism because he died on the Liverpool-New Bedford crossing and was consequently buried at sea. The teacher implicitly tells the audience that technology invented by men and science are fallible, as they are unable to resist the forces of nature and irrationality. This piece of information harks back to his grandmother's fantastic story of the magnetic disk embedded in the sand dunes which, in this way, comes to personify the forces of 'mother' nature. His father failed to adhere to the surplus-repressive moral values of the Church during Franco's regime because he had a relationship with another woman *apart from the teacher's mother*. Yet, although she was his great sweetheart to whom he wrote beautiful love-letters, he seemed to be distanced from or detach himself from her. She never placed any demands on him, loved him all of her life and waited patiently: all that was left for her to do after his death was to grow old alone.<sup>7</sup> He seems to have rejected her in favour of *marriage to the teacher's mother*. In Romantic fashion, she is one of the many premonitions of disaster (McGrady, 1986: 22) for the teacher's relationship with Carlota and one of the motives for his suicide in that she exposes the possible future despair for him of life without Carlota, devoid of a fulfilling relationship of requited love.

Beatriz (Vicky Peña) is one of the minor characters in the film who, nevertheless, reinforces its major themes, namely the criticism of unjust authority and masculinism. Like the teacher's praise and exoneration of Jerusalén, Beatriz supports marginalised children trapped in the social and educational systems. She virulently defends three pupils in the school, who are in danger of expulsion because they are falling behind in their work, against an unsympathetic colleague and the headmaster (Emilio Gutiérrez Caba), who are obsessed with progress and ambition for the sake of the honour of the school. This attitude

is detrimental to any pupil who does not meet their high standards. Beatriz thinks independently and is a strong, challenging character, but also shows sympathetic facets which approximate her to Carlota's caring, maternal traits in her profession as a consultant neurologist. She has taken the trouble to speak to the pupils in question, discovering that they have received 'special treatment' in the form of punishment from their teacher when they really need extra help. She argues that they have been reminded of their failures and marginalised by what critics would define as masculinist ambition, instead of being treated with the dedication necessary for academic improvement.

Beatriz maintains her convictions and confronts the headmaster when he expels the slow pupils in question, openly calling him a cretin and describing his action as an egotistic wish to display glowing academic records. She is particularly angry that he does not consult his colleagues and compromises them when he takes extreme action. The headmaster, Federico, is very cold and reaffirms his right to take responsibility for the running of his school and the maintenance of its reputation. Beatriz is courageous when she devalues his claims of authority and ambition as *estupideces* to which she refuses to listen. In her compassionate opinion, the students have problems which would be easy to correct. Her comments expose the absolute injustice of masculinist attitudes towards social hierarchies and wealth with the school: the headmaster did not expel other pupils from more privileged social backgrounds experiencing worse difficulties with their academic studies. Beatriz is painfully aware that she is imprisoned within the education system and, by extension, masculinism in that she cannot submit her resignation because she needs her salary. The resonances of Vicky Peña's character, Martirio, in Camus' adaptation of La casa de Bernarda Alba (1987) are also interesting here since Beatriz is a martyr of the masculinist system who is made to feel frustrated in her desire to be just and compassionate: in La casa de Bernarda Alba, Martirio's frustration resulted from the traditional, patriarchal urge to specularize women for its own scopophilic pleasure, forcing them to conform to its ideals of perfect beauty as objects.<sup>8</sup> Like the characters of Huis Clos in Gary Cooper, the tortured prisoners in El crimen and the nuclear engineers in Hablamos,

Beatriz has no exit and her situation constitutes a Romantic premonition of the teacher's own dilemmas.

Her private life also reflects her deviation from established authority. She is not only self-sufficient, rejecting the assistance of male friends, but has experienced an adulterous relationship with the local judge. However, she refuses to pursue the relationship because the judge is married and she maintains Romantic ideals of loyalty. The difficulties in Beatriz's relationship with the judge consequently become yet another Romantic premonition of the outcome of the teacher's relationship with Carlota. She associates with the Romantic teacher socially and aims to draw him out of his sadness and isolation. She is consequently in tune with the angelic woman stereotype in her social life in addition to that of the monster woman and therefore thwarts binary categorization.

Beatriz is not the only female character who dissolves binary opposition. Owing to her short hair and professional status as a consultant, Carlota is somewhat androgynous, analogous to Andrea, and as is the case with Beatriz, she is a fusion of the two female dichotomies. She is also willing to grasp independence and safeguard her career through her marital separation, but on the other hand, she is an angelic woman. One of the typical features of the angel woman is maternity and Carlota shows great concern for her son's well-being to the extent of re-entering a dry marital relationship with Alberto for the boy's sake. She wants to meet the teacher in person to see if he is suitable for her son and, unlike Alberto, she is not exclusively concerned with his academic recommendation from the headmaster. The significance she gives to her son is evident from the presence of his photographs in her office, showing the audience that he is an equally important part of her life as caring for other sick children. Carlota gives the teacher more details about the boy and his emotional life, caressing a toy while she does this which is perhaps an objective correlative for her own child and the affection she feels for him. The camera cuts to a close-up of her face to highlight her concern devoid of masculinist ambition: "Alberto quiere ignorarlo. Yo no puedo".

Carlota's family also has a history of promoting irrationality over rationality on her mother's side. Her own mother, rather like the teacher's grandmother, was very irrational.

She used to tell Carlota stories and the dreams she had dreamt, filling her daughter's head with things that were of no real practical use, but which would do her some good, whereas her father taught her to be practical. Since Carlota's mother died when Carlota was only fourteen, she had to promise to look after her younger brothers and sisters, once again adopting a caring role. Carlota felt the need to care for others when her brothers and sisters grew up and consequently chose to become a doctor, thereby mixing science and emotional attachment. The *mise-en-scène* of her office, which is not only an area of science and business, but also contains the presence of nature in the form of a plant as well as photographs of her son, reflects her eclectic attitude to medicine.

Carlota's career has given her importance as an individual in addition to an opportunity to care for others. As Brooke argues, when women are portrayed in medicine, they were conventionally seen as ministering angels, but in an ancillary role as opposed to the post of consultant (39), stereotypes with which Carlota contrasts. Although Miró depicted women in ancillary roles as theatre nurses in *Gary Cooper*, she deviates from stereotyping here. Women finally entered degree courses in medicine, even in Spain in the late 1970s (Inés Alberdi: 74-75), but female doctors have often had to defend their right to practice. Carlota identifies with many novel attitudes towards treatment which are the antithesis of traditional, masculinist medicine and exemplifies Kate Campbell Hurd-Mead's theories that women doctors in particular are gentle (cited in Brooke: 39). Wendy Savage believes that a good doctor will adopt the role of counselor rather than that of an authoritarian and Carlota seems to match this model (1986: 59, 177 cited in Brooke). The sympathetic nature of Andrea's doctor in *Gary Cooper* shows Miró's interest in the human once again as opposed to the gender specific, but Brooke's comments on female physicians apply to Carlota, especially given her mother's irrationality. Whether Miró was aware of the history of women doctors in Spain or not, the Spanish context still provides an interesting backdrop on female doctors owing to the country's long history of women physicians. The Moors trained Spanish women in their healing arts because no male physician could attend female patients under Islamic law. Arabic physicians, such as Phazes, observed that many Spanish women were good doctors from whom male

physicians could learn a lot and often succeeded where male physicians had failed by using kindness and optimism (Brooke: 2, 5, 32, 39). These descriptions resemble Carlota's professional attitude, especially vis-à-vis her patient from the Cantabrian village. Carlota is not coldly detached from her patients, which is apparent when she openly discusses with the teacher how difficult it is to operate on a helpless child: she has evidently never become hardened to suffering through her experience as a doctor and continues to treat her patients as individual human beings. The boy from the village seems so close to her that he can call her by her first name and he is pleased to follow her instructions. She is clearly proud of saving his life, travels to the village just to visit him, promises to return and bends down onto his level, taking the child by the waist. When her pager sounds during her romantic encounter with the teacher, she answers it, not only because of the reality principle or work ethic, but also as a result of her concern for the sick.

Carlota is also unconventional in that she breaks rules for the teacher's sake. For instance, at the start of their relationship when she stops the traffic upon seeing the teacher in the street on his bicycle. She longs for emotional closeness with the teacher, which he willingly gives her when she tells him how she is incapable of working and driving without seeing him. The camera and the editing mirror the growing intimacy in her relationship: when they meet in the bar for the second time and discuss his family, there is no conventional shot/reverse-shot structure for some time, indicating togetherness and intersubjectivity or equal participation in the relationship for each partner as the two are framed together. One night after operating on a small child, Carlota feels the need to see the teacher: he enters her car and the two are framed together from behind. Initially, there is no shot/reverse-shot pattern and when Miró decides to establish this cinematic convention, she makes sure that Carlota and the teacher are kept in close-up in order not to shatter the notion of intimacy and 'intersubjectivity' or the input of equal amounts of feeling into the relationship. A point of contrast to this idea of cinematic intersubjectivity is the scene in which Carlota is called to the hospital: the camera has framed them together on the sofa and then follows Carlota, panning left to break up their intersubjectivity, just as

her professional commitments or the 'work ethic' momentarily interrupt their growing intimacy.

Despite Carlota's sensitivity, there is some tension between the irrational and rational or socialized parts of her character. Carlota is somewhat governed by rationality in contrast to the teacher, even if it is only a momentary adherence to the reality principle followed by her attempt to salvage their relationship. It comes as a shock to the teacher when Carlota asks him to leave her alone, but he argues that others, such as her husband, her father and her son, have imposed expectations on her which are scary and confusing. During a subsequent meeting with the teacher, she talks about Alberto and their relationship. She separated from Alberto because he wanted them to live with his parents and could not become accustomed to her work while Carlota herself took no interest in Alberto's job. These details about the relationship perhaps serve to avoid overt categorization of Carlota as all good or idealized, like Mario's comments on Andrea. When Carlota realizes that she does not want to live with Alberto, it is tragically too late for her to recuperate her Romantic relationship with the teacher. It is important that she leaves the house, a sphere of female enclosure, and engages in movement in her car when she does decide to follow her emotional demands and break with the imposition of masculinist norms.

It is interesting how Miró uses restricted, controlled movement through the ballet presence within the narrative to convey some of the tensions within Carlota's psyche between rationality and emotion. The ballet school's building is imposing, despite its cover of plants and ivy: it somewhat resembles Carlota's large house made of bricks which contrasts to the teacher's house made of wood and surrounded by plants, harmoniously blending in with nature. During the classes, Carlota always works at the *barre* doing set exercises and takes instructions from her ballet master. At first, the teacher cannot enter the studio and waits for her to come out, peering through the studio door, although he is denied a point-of-view shot. The ballet master who takes the class is a representative of traditional, patriarchal authority (Adair, 1993: 82-119): in Werther, Miró even gives the ballet master a stick, a tool of traditional patriarchal authority often used in Spanish film

and literature.<sup>9</sup> When the teacher visits the studio for the second time, Carlota leaves the class and tells him that she does not want to see him anymore, although instinctively she wants to pursue their relationship which the viewers sense. At that moment, Carlota listens to her super-ego which encourages her to do the right thing for honour's sake and return to her husband. Perhaps ballet serves to signify her dilemma and her aim to fit in with rational society because classical ballet is governed by set rules and is an agent of women's oppression. It seems that Miró, who is interested in dance, has used classical as opposed to more liberal contemporary dance for a reason.<sup>10</sup> The ballet master is a minor representative of masculinist authority, but still serves to reinforce thematic tensions in the film.

Alberto remains the main embodiment of patriarchy, although owing to Miró's policy of non-classification, even he is not so clear-cut. Nevertheless, Miró and Camus immediately situate Alberto in a sphere of masculinism or male privilege, the men's club, and his attitudes similarly reflect masculinist ideology. One facet of this is Alberto's obsession with ambition within the concept of extended honour affecting his son. He refuses to pay attention to Carlota's 'irrational' arguments about the boy and states that his son does not have any special problems, other than absent-mindedness and timidity; he is concerned that his son is both falling behind the rest of his fellow students while the child himself seems to view the learning process as a condemnation; he makes decisions about his son's highly recommended tutor without consulting Carlota and gives the teacher formal, rational instructions such as a timetable and salary, treating education as a business deal. Carlota is left to provide the more intimate and irrational details about the boy's character and experiences whereas Alberto buries the crisis within his son's passage thorough and rejection of the male socialization process, rather like Víctor's concealment of Claudio's homosexuality in Hablamos. Alberto does not want his son to mix with Jerusalén, a marginalised, 'criminal' representative of Romantic irrationality and emotion, who has transgressed the law of the father or state. Unlike the teacher, he has no compassion for Jerusalén's predicament because he considers Jerusalén's irrational behaviour inadmissible under any circumstance.

Alberto's hobby, hunting, represents men's domination and destruction of nature, one of the cornerstones of masculinism. The teacher, who respects nature as it is and remains in touch with it, contrastingly departs from masculinist ideology. Alberto does go hunting, even though he walks more than he hunts which makes his character less clear-cut. The hunting party has been trying to kill wild boars since dawn and the sound of their guns disturbs the teacher's discussion of trees with the boy. Alberto's kissing of his son does not completely compensate for his participation in the killing of the quarry, although as I have said, Miró problematises this issue because Alberto has walked more than he has hunted and also kisses the boy. She does include an example of visual *tremendismo* in order to criticize the murderous excesses of masculinism and rationality reminiscent of *tremendista* hunting episodes in earlier Spanish films such as Carlos Saura's La caza, José Luis Borau's Furtivos and *tremendista* scenes in La petición and El crimen, especially the castration torture of Léon who, comparable to the boar, hangs from a pole. The camera cuts to the carcass of the wild boar tied to the stick being brought in by two men and a dissolve links the boar and the teacher, two victims of masculinism, in a premonition of the teacher's suicide.<sup>11</sup> The masculinist hunting party, which uses several motorized vehicles as opposed to ecologically friendly modes of transport such as bicycles, participates in the destruction of nature, the environment and a subordinate creature. The wild boar is linked to the teacher through a dissolve, a 'lesser' man in terms of the masculinist and rational hierarchies, who is also destroyed by masculinism and rationality, analogous to Léon. Alberto is in discord with the environment and, by extension, emotion when he plays the music from Massenet's Werther - linked to deep and irrational passion in the film, something of which Alberto seems incapable - out of tune on Carlota's harpsichord. During the dinner scene, reminiscent of the formality in Saura's Cría cuervos, Alberto seems very cold and excessively polished: the way in which he pulls his expensive pen, which his son significantly rejects, from his inside pocket and his shirt and tie make Alberto seem as if he is more appropriately attired for a business meeting as opposed to a family gathering and marital reconciliation.

In spite of Alberto's efforts, his son resists the process of masculinisation. The boy initially refuses to speak and writes instead, like the teacher who wrote down his feelings for Carlota. The child's refusal to enter into the initial stages of masculinist socialization is apparent in various ways in the film. Firstly, Carlota describes the ways in which her son lives isolated in a world into which no one can enter, even his mother, which she attributes to a childhood trauma. When he began school, he had two friends: a year previously, one of them committed suicide and since then, her son has kept newspaper cuttings about similar cases.<sup>12</sup> He is still emotional, irrational and sensitive because he is a child, but also because he is a possible alter-ego of the teacher. Carlota describes the boy's irrational, restless Romantic temperament in some detail and the conversation gives the audience scope to associate the teacher with the boy through its linkage of their indefinable, mysterious solitary characters. As Carlota remarks about her son: "Rechaza cualquier razonamiento y esquiva cualquier posible compañía. Hay un proceso angustioso que no se entiende".

The teacher is one of the only people who are able to bring him out of his solitary shell, although he ignores the teacher for some time and first answers bluntly with the word "no". It takes a while for the teacher to encourage him to smile, but he eventually breaks through the boy's solitude perhaps because he too is sensitive and not a *machista*, like the boy's father. The child's maternal grandfather is a hunter, but he also seems to be a benevolent paternal figure towards the boy, his limited amounts of affection being as much as the codes of masculinity permit. The child is dwarfed by the ship-building mechanisms of the masculinist work ethic within his grandfather's yard, but his grandfather does stop work to talk to him and is very touched by his grandson's desire for his company. Once again, Miró does not classify the grandfather as a complete masculinist owing to these quite affectionate incidents, which soften masculinist detachment. The child rejects masculinist ambition which initiates in the classroom: in the playground, he is pictured within a dream-world, ignoring and therefore refusing to participate in the children's game of football, another tool of patriarchal socialization for boys intended to teach them aggression, competitiveness and masculine strength. At the end of the film, he returns to

his old habit of writing down his opinions and his dream-world of solitude, perhaps partly to protest that Carlota is leaving the teacher and returning to rationality. The boy himself not only becomes a narrative device through whom Miró can demonstrate the impossibility of rationality and masculinist socialization, but his protest encourages Carlota to reconsider her rational decision and return to the more positive sphere of emotion and nature.

As I have said, the secondary characters in *Werther* serve as important contrasts or thematic reinforcements to the teacher or Romantic outlooks, no matter how small their part. The boy is not the only character who shows the impossibility of and damage done by rational behaviour. Comparable to the teacher, Jerusalén the noble peasant is damaged in his struggle against the rationalistic forces of masculinism and, in retrospect, seems to function as a premonition of the teacher's own fate.<sup>13</sup> He had fallen in love with a land-owning widow, who was substantially older than him, and wanted to marry her. The age difference between them makes their relationship rather unconventional and arouses suspicions, just as Carlota and the teacher's relationship goes against the grain of the code of honour. The widow's brother greedily wanted the land she had inherited from her late husband for himself and his children, forcing her to dismiss Jerusalén, in a bid to increase his own status within the masculinist spheres of ambition and power. On a symbolic level, the widow's brother perhaps resents the fact that she has some degree of power and independence owing to her financial status. Jerusalén describes the unfortunate events and his desire to remain close to her and the ways in which Miró edits the scene further links the two characters. The conversation is filmed using a shot/reverse-shot structure over each character's shoulder, keeping the two together in the frame, the grammar of the camera therefore linking not only the two in conversation, but also their fates.

Jerusalén has a Romantic temperament which is evident from the teacher's uncle's descriptions of Jerusalén's disturbance because he cannot see the widow owing to her brother's prohibitions. When Jerusalén visited her in secret, the widow's brother beat her up, resorting to the masculinist preserve of violence to punish her transgression. Jerusalén's irrational emotions erupted into aggression, one of the forms of release available to men within masculinism, but in his case, it is connected to love: "La amenazó

y la pegó delante de mí y yo le maté". The teacher is shocked, but sympathetic towards Jerusalén. It is no coincidence on Miró and Camus' part that two Civil Guards refuse to allow the teacher, a fellow Romantic and deviant in terms of masculinism, to visit Jerusalén in the cell. They not only represent a realistic detail connected to criminal law, but also an Ideological State Apparatus or law of the father in an institutionalized form. The transgressive, adulterous judge allows the teacher entry into the cell because he is not unsympathetic to the marginalised Jerusalén's situation and seems quite reminiscent of Poncela's role as the kind detective in Almodóvar's *Matador*. The judge, like the teacher, is quite domesticated: he offers the teacher coffee and needs to know why Jerusalén beat the widow's brother to death, actively taking an interest in emotions which escape the confines of rationality. He refuses to listen to local gossip - a tool of the code of honour - motivated by questions of money and interest in land-ownership. According to such defamatory rumours, Jerusalén took advantage of the widow. Significantly, the teacher gives his truer description of Jerusalén on a boat upon water, an element associated, as we have seen, with irrationality. He argues that Jerusalén acted out of love and reports that he could not eat or sleep when he lost his job: "La vida lejos de esa mujer no tenía sentido". The teacher never heard Jerusalén discuss land or money and consequently dispels local rumors. He states that love and passion are not poetic inventions, less so amongst men with lower levels of education pertaining to social classes at the bottom of the hierarchy. Looking out over the sea, the sphere of the irrational, the teacher also comments that Jerusalén will one day succeed in committing suicide. Jerusalén's choice of weapon - a civil guard's gun - symbolically reflects the way in which the repression of patriarchal, rationalistic forces has become damaging and also strengthens the augural link between Jerusalén and the teacher's fates.

Premonitions of the teacher's end perhaps extend beyond Jerusalén into the very form of the film since the editing itself highlights and acts as a premonition of the themes and events which will unfold in the narrative. When the teacher and his uncle converse in the garden, there is no shot/reverse-shot sequence: they are both members of an unconventional family harmoniously at one with irrational nature, as his uncle implies

when he discusses the behaviour of their irrational grandmother. The camera and editing convey the wholeness and warm harmony of nature by omitting the cutting, fragmenting action of the conventional shot/reverse-shot sequence. By way of contrast, when the teacher and Alberto discuss his son and ambition, the editing is in a conventional, classical shot/reverse-shot pattern because their dialogue refers to and follows rules and formality, rather like the dining room scene between Alberto, Carlota and their son later on. When Carlota tells the teacher about her son, Miró keeps the teacher exclusively in the frame in Carlota's point-of-view with her voice off-screen to show the teacher's reactions to her, the information he receives and to indicate her growing, Romantic interest in the teacher. The sequence also defies rules on classical continuity editing (Bordwell and Thompson: 218-230) by pausing on Poncela while Carlota speaks, just as Carlota's nascent liking for the unconventional teacher here contravenes masculinism.

It is no accident that Miró and Camus set *Werther* in many rural areas of Northern Spain, which is greener and seems to possess more harmonious, exuberant features of nature than the arid South (Guarner, 1986). The mise-en-scène reflects important themes in collaboration with the technical considerations of editing. For instance, the grass and greenery around the teacher's house in which he feels happy, is quite wild. His uncle sentimentally anthropomorphosises the house: "Esa casa tiene dentro el calor de un montón de parientes nuestros". Leafy plants also cover the wall and tombs on the cliffs in front of the house. The dog barks and runs around the garden: it is perhaps in its natural state owing to its long hair and seems free because the teacher does not keep it on a lead. Significantly, the dog forms part of a touching *paysage état d' âme* scene at the end of the film when it searches for the teacher and waits loyally and sadly in the doorway. The dog is readable as a narrative device corresponding to Pre-Romanticism and Romanticism's project to arouse pity for innocent victims (Furst: 27-28). The teacher is frequently seen on boats with waves lashing beside them, like the scene in which he converses with the judge. Scenes associated with the teacher are often the most visually attractive. After his meeting with his uncle in which they walk to the cliff edge and the teacher leans on a tree, there is a dissolve from its leaves to the teacher on his bicycle riding down a hill to the farmhouse,

where irrationality and emotion prevail over cold rationality through Jerusalén, the two areas where nature and emotion are intertwined through the dissolve and Jerusalén's employment as laborer and gardener in both.

In contrast, Don Alberto's club is very plush, polished and ordered because it is an area of male privilege through masculinist exclusion in which no women, who symbolically represent irrationality and inferiority, can enter. It is part of the artificiality of urban areas which contrasts with the Romantic spontaneity of nature surrounding the teacher's house, key oppositions (nature versus the artificial) explored in Romanticism (Furst: 31).<sup>14</sup> The table during the final dinner scene between Carlota, Alberto and their son is highly polished and tidy, imprisoning flowers in a classical, white architectural structure with pillars connoting rationality through classical structure and its white colour (Cook, 1989: 69, 73). Of course, Carlota journeys between the two environments - her more artificial house and the teacher's rustic home or country villages - and this is a mixture that somewhat reflects the tensions within her character between love and rationality. The ways in which Miró places the camera enhance her depiction of nature. After she films the teacher on the boat there is a fade-out/fade-in to the *casa de los marineros* and the camera tracks forward rapidly, focusing on thick, unkempt grass. When he shoots himself off-screen, his body falls rapidly into the frame and this movement is a visual means to convey Romantic excess. During the last scene, her static camera allows the teacher's suicide and rebellion against rationality to take on added force. His lifeless body enters the still frame very rapidly, with all the repressed force of Romantic emotion, making one last critical statement against the rigid, restrictive power structures to which he has succumbed, through dramatic movement. It is interesting to note that Miró made one of her spontaneous alterations to the script of *Werther* in order to give the teacher more movement at the moment of death.<sup>15</sup> Initially, she wanted Poncela to fall forward onto the desk after the shooting which would not have conveyed the surge of repressed energy. Miró's next film, *Beltenebros*, also develops the theme of movement in relation to gender, but in quite complex and different ways and in its narrative, she also examines these key tensions in men between emotion and masculinism.



<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of these issues, see Furst, 1969, 2-4, 26-30, 32, 50-51, 55.

<sup>2</sup> Ian Gibson, 'La nueva moral', The Spanish Collection, BBC 2.

<sup>3</sup> Miró remarked that one of her male friends regularly looked after Gonzalo and she consequently reflects personal knowledge of the nurturing qualities of men in Werther (María Luisa Blanco, 1987a: 75). Contrastingly, she recognizes her own ability to alter gender roles in her observation that her own relationship with Gonzalo resembles that of a 'father' to his son (Hernández Les, 1981: 34).

<sup>4</sup> On *paysage état d'âme* see Furst, 1969, 31-33.

<sup>5</sup> Antonio Machado used a dying tree as an objective correlative of his relationship with Leonor, his mortally sick wife, in 'A un olmo seco' in Campos de Castilla. See Terry, 1973: 53-56. The kind of symbolism used in Ossian has a very long history to which Romanticism gave a very particular twist in the elaboration of the empathetic projection of the soul's emotion out onto the language and landscape. See Cuddon, 587-588, 671-674 and Furst, 31-32, 47, 55. Ossian's poems particularly influenced the Pre-Romantics (Furst, 31-32, 35-36).

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of the sphere of water and irrationality, see Auerbach, 1982 and Lisboa, 1992. Lisboa discusses Torga's insane character, Raquel, in 'O Milagre' Novos Contos da Montanha, who hurls herself down a waterfall to end her life.

<sup>7</sup> Some cross-reference between the father's love letters to his mistress and Bernardo's love letters to Andrea in her suitcase is interesting here. The appearance of love letters in a pessimistic context in Werther reinforces Miró's depiction of Bernardo as a negative and fallible figure in Gary Cooper.

<sup>8</sup> In the play, Martirio is sickly, skinny and partially deformed.

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<sup>9</sup> See Adair (1993) and Saura's exploration of the authority of the flamenco master in *Carmen* (1983). Powell and Pressburger's *The Red Shoes* (1948) also constitutes an interesting examination of the authoritative choreographer. c.f. Lorca and Camus' *La casa de Bernarda Alba* (1987) and Miró's exploration of the stick as a signifier of authority in *El crimen*.

<sup>10</sup> See Ordish (1978) and Cosi (1978). Miró commented on her interest in dance, especially North American contemporary dance, such as Cunningham, in interview (Appendix 1: 3).

<sup>11</sup> Miró possibly alludes to the mythological connection between Adonis and the boar in this sequence (Brewer, 1989: 12; Fraszer, 1978: 619). Poncela is perhaps a representative of the ideal, sensitive man in terms of personality, although he possibly could not be defined as an Adonis, a term used to describe any handsome man (Brewer: 12).

<sup>12</sup> The teacher also hoards case studies of emotion in the form of his father's love letters.

<sup>13</sup> Miró seems to adopt the Romantics' praise of the peasant through Jerusalén. See Furst, 3.

<sup>14</sup> The opposition between the natural and the urban or civilization is also explored in *Beltenebros* through the thematics of the Edward Hopper intertext, as I will discuss in chapter 8.

<sup>15</sup> On Miró's spontaneity when filming, see Hernández, 357.

## CH. 6. FILM NOIR, WOMEN AND MEN IN BELTENEBROS.

Antonio Muñoz Molina's novel, Beltenebros and Miró's adaptation are intertextually connected to the noir genre (Bermúdez: 9). Film noir is notable for its treatment of women because it concerns itself with all their facets, whereas Westerns and other genres place female characters into background roles - those of wife, whore, mistress or lover - while prioritizing male characters' experience (Kaplan, 1978/1989: 2). In film noir, a female figure becomes central to the story line. For instance, women within the dangerous worlds in which the noir hero moves during investigations. These female characters become part of the hero's detective work in a double quest to solve the mystery and know the woman. Since the transgressive noir woman, the *femme fatale*, is often enigmatic she becomes the subject of investigation (Gledhill, 1978/1989: 15; Dyer, 1978 1989: 93). While a thriller concentrates on issues such as corruption, film noir investigates female sexuality, male desire, submission and dominance. Such a focus brings about a concentration on the detection of woman, whose image is usually produced during the course of a male investigation. The *detection of woman may even interrupt the male* character's investigation of crime (Gledhill, 1978: 14-15), like Darman's investigation of the Rebecas. Film noir adopts patriarchal dichotomies and consequently does not always present female characters who defy masculinism or completely triumph over repression. However, it does provide a genre in which women are active as opposed to static, intelligent and powerful - even if destructively so - and derive strength from their sexuality. Noir women consequently usurp activity restricted to males in several spheres in addition to sexuality. Part of this aspect of the genre results from its historical growth amidst changes in 1940s American society, namely the entry of women into the work-force during World War II (Gledhill, 1978: 14; Place: 35,47, 52; Cook, 1978: 68-69).

Before moving onto the modern film noir Beltenebros, it is useful to outline the features of the stereotypical images of conventional noir women to obtain an idea of the degree in which women in Beltenebros adhere to and deviate from generic convention. One of the noir archetypes corresponds to Gilbert and Gubar's 'angel woman' because she is the redeemer who aims to integrate the hero into a normal environment; she often points to

any vulnerability in the hero's 'masculine armour', saving him from the excesses of masculinist values, like violence and crime (Gledhill, 1978: 14-15; Place: 42, 50; Barton Palmer, 1984-5: 156-162). Place defines the notion of 'interdependence' in which one character, usually the male hero, is emotionally crippled and another is physically damaged. Perhaps one can extend the notion to being in need of rescue. The angelic noir woman offers the hero support, but she is usually the victim of violence and, in turn, requires assistance. She is often the long-suffering girlfriend, faithful lover, fiancee or wife of the loser/hero who contrasts with the subversive underworld, particularly since any sexuality she possesses is channeled into procreation and sanctified within marriage (Place: 41-42, 50).

The antithesis of the angelic woman is the *femme fatale* in whom emphasis is placed on sexuality, which is denied to the angelic woman (Dyer, 1978: 91). Owing to her sexuality, the *femme fatale* gains access to both the male's sexual activity and, by implication, his power in all other areas (Place: 36). Unlike the asexual angel, the *femme fatale*, who asserts her sexuality independently of men, uses it to suit her own aims as opposed to procreation and consequently represents a dangerous threat to traditional patriarchy in all other areas of activity (Gilbert: 21, 28; Gledhill, 1978a: 126). She exploits sex and love for money and independence, transgressing bourgeois ideology which sanctifies sex exclusively within marriage (Place: 36). Self-interest becomes more important to the *femme fatale* than devotion to a man: love for the hero often fails to pacify or return her to the fold. Her active sexuality in turn makes her duplicitous or suspect, a trait which is sometimes represented by a visual splitting of her image using mirrors (Harvey: 32; Place: 47).<sup>1</sup> The *femme fatale* has various archetypal, suspect occupations - mistress, gold-digger, working as a night-club singer or in a world of cheap dives and penumbras, a realm appropriate for her if one recalls Bachofen and Cook's comments on the signifying of instinct and female power through the use of shadows and darkness (Gledhill, 1978/1989: 14-15; Place: 41; Cook, 1978/1989: 69, 73).

Since the *femme fatale* is explicitly sexual and divorced from maternity, the family becomes absent from much film noir and this further situates the woman in the world of

action (Kaplan, 1978: 3). However, there are exceptions to this rule, such as Michael Curtiz's Mildred Pierce (1945) in which the protagonist's absent husband prompts her entry into the work-force so that she may support her family. Because couples in film noir are often placed outside the law or normality, their situation does not allow them to function as normal couples who are acceptable to patriarchal beliefs, and their position outside family life emphasizes their departure from convention (Gledhill, 1978: 115).<sup>2</sup> *Femmes fatales* do not have a completely negative effect in noir films; they do offer a temporary satisfaction to men as prizes or desirable objects, despite their dangerous sexuality, sometimes preventing the noir mood of loss (Harvey: 26).

Dress, part of the monster woman's subversive allure, emphasizes one of two facets - sexuality or her masculine independence. Masculinisation results if costume includes suits, like the attire of the independent Mildred Pierce; sexual emphasis ensues when costume is scant or consists of long, artificially shiny hair, flowing and tactile fabrics such as velvet or satin (Place: 35-36, 45; Dyer, 1978: 93). However, the performance of *femme fatale* roles given to noir women by male storytelling foregrounds their image as artifice and suggests another semblance behind the image or unnaturalness of costume where the real woman might be. Apart from the ways in which women demand investigation because of their enigmatic status and detract from the film's detection of crimes, there exists another way in which the *femme fatale* can gain access to the viewer's attention. Male dominance in the advancement of plot or subversive themes is not exclusive since the monster woman also actively erodes institutions of the conventional status-quo, such as family life. For instance, Rita Hayworth in The Lady From Shanghai (1948) interferes with the male's monopoly on narrative focus and detracts from his investigation (Harvey: 31).

In order to maintain the dominant ideology, active females must be punished and objectified because female activity, above all excesses of sexuality and independence, has to be repressed so that it does not in turn destroy men (Kaplan, 1978: 4). Traditional patriarchy tries to restrain movement which is a feature of the active monster woman in film and which, as Thomas comments, signifies a breakdown in the stability of appearances. Film noir often aims to explore and destroy the sexually strong and

manipulating woman, whose activity is frequently represented visually through the grammar of the camera and the setting: if woman has dominated over man in visual terms, the control of her activity might also be expressed visually (Kaplan: 3; Thomas, 1992a: 81). However, although dominant ideology required that transgressive women should be punished, there is a certain amount of ambiguity present. *Femmes fatales*, like Gilda (Rita Hayworth), or Mildred Pierce (Joan Crawford), could win the audience's sympathy owing to the fact that the audience may want to see characters transgress against unjust masculinist treatment.

Despite the punishment of the *femme fatale's* transgressions, the energy given to these acts often produces an excess of meaning which cannot be contained by any narrative closure (Harvey: 32), the typical ending of a classical or dominant film (Allen and Gomery, 1985: 81; Deleyto, 1992: 2). Place comments on this aspect of the noir woman's evasion of castigation:

It's not their inevitable demise we remember but rather their strong, dangerous [...], exciting sexuality. [...] the final lesson [...] often fades into the background and we retain the image of the erotic, strong, unrepressed (if destructive) woman. The style of these films thus overwhelms their conventional narrative content, or interacts with it to produce a remarkably potent image of woman (Place: 36).

Therefore, even if a monster woman in film noir leans towards the side of convention, the very style of the genre may reinforce any transgressive behaviour (Harvey: 33).

A third, complex type of noir woman is more relevant to women in Beltenebros. The heroine's characterization is often fractured so that it is not evident whether she fits stereotypes or not (Gledhill, 1978: 18). Viewers see a series of partial or contradictory characterizations and, to some degree, the women of this paradoxical type defy their fate. If film noir portrays unstable climates, it follows that sometimes character portrayal within it is also uncertain owing to its mixture of archetypes (Place: 36). Within this character strategy, some *femmes fatales* prove not to be wicked and are redeemed. Thomas, who believes that many transgressive women turn out to be good, argues that *femmes fatales* pose no more of a threat to the male character than the redeeming woman, who aims for the

return of the transgressive hero to the values of the status-quo (Thomas, 1992: 59, 64). According to critics, it is beneficial for feminists to find inconsistencies through which one may encounter ideological contradictions operating against the grain of the film's immediate message so as to produce a progressive reading apparently reactionary films (Byars: 165; Kaplan, 1978: 3-4). Given Miró's interest in contradiction in earlier films, viewers perceive this facet of film noir in Beltenebros. Complex implications result from conflict between two voices and, in addition to this character strategy, film noir provides generic scope for such a feature since various voices often struggle for narrative control within the film (Kaplan, 1978: 4; Gledhill, 1978: 15).

As Kaplan argues vis-à-vis Fritz Lang's The Blue Gardenia (1953), film noir reveals the ways in which men distort women, which I will apply to Bernal's misleading description of Rebeca/Kensit later on. Secondly, the genre often warns against an acquiescent acceptance of male ways of seeing when films like The Blue Gardenia or Beltenebros establish two conflicting discourses in place of the monolithically male discourse of traditional film noir, giving space for a female voice to develop which subverts norms (Kaplan, 1978: 4). One could include the visual capacities of film in addition to dialogue amongst these, since cinematic art relies on visible signifiers to convey meaning. Owing to Miró's attention to every aspect of her setting, the 'visual' discourse of Beltenebros gains a crucial role in the development of the conflicts in discourse.

One might ask why a woman would direct Beltenebros, a film which depicts violence against women. In order to explain this paradox, one must return to El crimen and Miró's thematic and textual preoccupations. Miró was not exclusively responsible for its script because the *tremendista* film depicted historical events. In Beltenebros, Miró, Camus and Juan Antonio Porto use material already present in Múñoz Molina's novel, even though they alter it. Miró has admitted that for her to make an adaptation of a literary work or direct a script written by another author, the work in question must have themes in it which interest or concern her (Pérez Millán: 259). However, if one examines the narrative, it is evident that men also suffer from all of these manifestations of masculinism and it is

here that the answer to the apparent paradox lies: Miró explores themes on a human level rather than adopting a gender specific focus (Benito González: 26; *Reporter*, 31/1/1978: 74). However, the woman question is still present in her works whether she intended it or not and *Beltenebros* is no exception to this pattern present from *La petición* onwards. Film noir as a genre has certain thematic and structural features that appeal to Miró - a disruption of the norms of classical film, engaging visual stylizations, an interest in the character's psyche, attention to excessive sexuality and male figures who are internally divided by and alienated from norms on masculine identify, desire and achievement or systems of repression (Krutnik, 1992: x, xii).

Representations of women and men already powerfully signify the social position of the sexes even before a film does anything with them because film portrays social reality (Cowie and Pollock cited in Dyer, 1978/1989: 98-99). In contrast to this approach, Dyer and Place both agree that consistent meaning is not necessarily the entire signification in any single image: narrative procedures and star images are some of the features of film which deconstruct conventions (Place: 43; Dyer, 1978/1989: 98). Such is the case of Rebeca 2 in *Beltenebros* who - owing to various textual strategies concerned with narrative time, the grammar of the camera, artifice, intertextual dialogue with the star personae of Hayworth and Kensit - manages to contradict stereotypes by entering into the paradoxical third type of noir woman, who both adheres to and simultaneously deviates from the angel and monster woman mode. She also corresponds to the tendency in post New Wave films in which actors and characters have the potential to escape interpretation (Dyer, 1979: 115). Rebeca's contradictory image places Miró's work in line with feminist theories on art outlined by Gilbert, Gubar and Cixous in which women writers produce characters who defy patriarchal stereotyping (Gilbert and Gubar: 44; Toril Moi: ch. 6). Miró produces a complex character in Rebeca 2. I will return to Miró's disturbing, intertextual strategies vis-à-vis Rebeca/Kensit in chapter 5, but at this point, it is relevant to outline the features of the angelic and fatal woman exhibited by Rebeca in order to demonstrate how she evades dichotomisation.

Rebeca 2 takes risks to care for Andrade. Our first meeting with Rebeca is the warehouse scene when she brings him food and it is important to consider that costume often indicates personality (Dyer, 1979: 122, 138). Owing her accessories - the head scarf covering up her hair or the shopping bag containing bread - she does not resemble a *femme fatale*. Rebeca displays a courage alien to the angel woman, since she enters the ominous warehouse alone, but it is part of her altruistic attempt to assist Andrade. She appears on a level with the camera and is dwarfed by the building's architectural framework. She is arrested, visually imprisoned by a grid in Darman's point-of-view shot from a high angle and forced into the detectives' car in a scene which possesses punishing visible conventions usually applied to the subversive *femme fatale*. However, Rebeca does not represent a real threat to patriarchy, except on a political level because of her sympathy for the outlawed Andrade. Viewers are unaware at this stage that she is something 'worse' than a singer as Bernal described her. Of a similar calibre are her plots to stop Darman from finding Andrade due to her concerns over Andrade's safety. Her caring nature as the long-suffering girlfriend forces her to resort to subterfuge to steal his passport from Darman. When she takes the passport to Andrade, it is significant that she is once again wearing her concealing head scarf in an attempt to achieve some sort of anonymity because of her evident terror, despite her seductive black stockings. The film's iconography places her partly in the state of a non-person, a characteristic of the angel woman who never draws attention to herself, and it is her red-haired wig that it covers which is part of her subversive Gilda costume. Not only is Rebeca the long-suffering girlfriend who sympathizes with Andrade's plight and consoles him when his colleagues have deserted him, but she is also partly a victim in need of rescue herself by the hero, Darman, whom she comforts on the train by caressing his hand after she removes her wig.

Rebeca does demonstrate many features of the monster woman. She seems to be independent for most of the film and her financial independence brings with it threatening connotations for masculinism, especially in its Francoist context: Rebeca is not only self-supporting but exploits her sexuality to gain autonomy and it is through her professional activities that she transgresses masculinist prescriptions on female sexuality's passivity.

Bernal becomes the mouthpiece for patriarchy's ideological opinion about women like Rebeca - "cantante o algo peor" [my italics] - since phallocentric culture aims to devalue the monster woman to defuse the threat she represents to its supremacy through scornful language and signifiers such as 'bitch' (Gilbert and Gubar: 28). She is also believed to be a traitor's mistress at this point and consequently represents a political threat to the masculinist party. The generic conventions of film noir place strong women in roles which produce powerful images, such as night-club singers, and because film noir is emphatic, it makes the sexually expressive woman even more potent (Gledhill, 1978: 15; Place: 36). Since the viewer's access to cinematic characters is more direct than in the literary text, film can have a terrifying directness (Horton: 284, 292).

Recent works on striptease within feminist documentary practices which aim to bring new subjects into discourse are of interest to an examination of Rebeca. Because Beltenebros was filmed in 1991, the film steps out of the novel's historical context in 1942/1962 and, whether Miró intended it or not, corresponds to contemporary debates on the re-appropriation of pleasure by women in the sex industry. Kotz's study of striptease in the documentary film (1992) provides insights which apply to Beltenebros, even though Beltenebros is not a documentary, a genre with which Miró has worked (Pérez Millán: 345). Kotz argues that some feminist discourses have been used in moralistic ways to devalue prostitutes. However, there has been a recent shift from the anti-porn stance of the early 1980s in a reworking of Radical feminist attitudes to explore a re-eroticisation of dominance and submission. Part of these new approaches stem from the political movement for prostitutes' rights which argues against feminists' analysis of sex work as exploitative victimisation (Kotz: 47, 53). These new theories do not ignore that sexual and economic exploitation are features of sex work, but choose instead to suggest that women in the sex industry do have some degree of agency or activity.

Strippers or prostitutes have moved away from 'respectability' out of need or a refusal to adhere to acceptable female roles and they become targets for scorn (50-51). On the one hand, women working in the sex industry as strippers feel repressed by striptease because it reinforces constructions of femininity and identity by placing them into the

category of objects not subjects; on the other, it can empower since it challenges conventional constructions of femininity. Stripping is often a way of gaining control over sexual expression. Women may still feel cheap or abused by men, but gain control over any objectification when they demand money for access to their bodies. Their sexuality in itself gives them some degree of power over men and their professional sexual encounters in particular may counteract any sense of powerlessness they feel in the outside world.

Rebeca does enjoy this sort of power. She marches gleefully to Darman's hotel, content to work in a luxury establishment and Miró specifically wanted her to seem confident (Thompson, 1991: 179). A character's speech is an important indicator of personality: Rebeca insists upon financial control as well as her bid for power through defensive language. Rebeca utters the words "*Primero tiene que pagarme*" in an imperative tone and in her taunting comment to Darman -"*¿Paga siempre a las mujeres?*" - she insinuates that women habitually control Darman in this way. However, Rebeca does not always use language assertively to dominate men: she uses language to defend Andrade, reporting that he has escaped. Even her first words to Darman in her dressing room connote power: "*¿Quién es usted? A los clientes no les está permitido entrar en los camerinos*". Similarly, when Rebeca meets Darman later, who inquires about her delayed arrival, she uses language to assert her right to work as a prostitute, "*trabajar*". One may argue that the hotel scene connotes oppression because Rebeca submits to Darman after he slaps her. However, to discuss only sexual violence and oppression ignores women's experience of sexual agency (Vance, 1984: 1-27; Williams, 1990: 26). Rebeca is, in part, a willing participant in this scene, but seeks to dominate indirectly. Rebeca has not only gone to Darman's room as a prostitute but actively instructed him with the command "*fóllame*". Female spectators may not identify with the female character as a passive victim in sadomasochistic scenes if she has agreed to play that role perhaps so as to enjoy pleasure and therefore, Rebeca does not seem such a victim (Williams, 1990: 176, 196, 214-215). Rebeca does not attempt to fool her superego as would a masochist in Deleuze's theories since, as a prostitute, she is already marginalised and openly revels in pleasure in various ways (Deleuze, 1971). Female masochism cannot be defined as subordination and

passivity because, as I argued vis-à-vis La petición, a certain degree of activity works in masochism. Many different things give pleasure to men and women, including dominating and being dominated. Masochism is a source of pleasure because pleasure is empowering, regardless of its form, and the notion of power in pleasure is something that 'good' women have traditionally been instructed to ignore (Williams, 1990: 21-27, 217). A single image can convey several qualities at once such as cruelty and sensuality: in film, the grammar of the camera, above all close-ups and editing, situate the viewer in an ideal position to glimpse bodies' confessions of pleasure, as is the case with *Rebeca* when she accepts Darman's kisses. Rapid montage in pornographic films imitates the rhythm of orgasm: in this scene, the editing from Darman's slap to *Rebeca*'s fall to the ground when she violently invades the frame is rapid and symbolically suggests their approaching sexual pleasure which occurs in a narrative ellipsis (32, 83). Sexual enjoyment is connected to masochism here - the pleasure that viewers do see on-screen - as a result of Darman's assault on *Rebeca*.

According to Kotz, the body is not only constructed as a site for labour, control and exploitation, but it also as a site for pleasure and fantasy. Acts of revealing and concealing have a liberatory potential and are an exchange of power between viewer and viewed in which the woman maintains some control to read, engage and manipulate the audience directly. When women remove clothing, they defy men's oppressive and exclusive rights to their bodies and replace their clothes so as to re-appropriate their space (Kotz: 43, 47-48).<sup>3</sup> Some Western feminist discourses, such as Mulvey's theories, examine how looking is considered a position of power whereas being the object of the gaze is a position of powerlessness. Some critics have attempted to re-read Mulvey's theories, such as Harvey who explains that there is pleasure in being looked at in addition to scopophilia (24). Striptease equally raises questions about the relationship between the viewer and the viewed. Engaging and manipulating the look is a skill in itself, but also represents a means of exchanging pleasure for money, of receiving pleasure and self-affirmation, an acknowledgment of one's independent existence. Strippers employ strategies of self-theatricalisation to attract and manipulate positions available to them structured by

economics and gender. Through self-theatricalisation in performance and masquerade, the stripper creates an on-stage persona that becomes both a fantasy and a protective shield which operates in two ways. Firstly when men project their fantasies onto the woman/object, but the woman builds and projects her own fantasies and desires into the performance, she makes herself a subject of the act. When I discuss Rebeca's own pleasure in her performance, it is important to consider that she has a poster of Hayworth in Gilda in her dressing room strategically placed beside her mirror, possibly a reference for the creation of the image for the performance or at which she gazes pleasurable. The poster of Hayworth is also a clue to Rebeca's own voyeurism in the cinema. Although self-theatricalisation, like masquerade, is a power tool, it possesses another dimension. Kuhn examines the implications of the artifice of representation for the spectator which she believes adds to the voyeur's pleasure (Kuhn, 1985: 30). Rebeca's routine in Beltenebros was intended to please the club's male clients. However, because she acts as an exaggerated sex object in her eulogistic parody of Gilda, she turns objectification into performance or masquerade.<sup>4</sup> The documentary, a genre concerned with realism, pays special attention to the physical sites of strippers - their dressing rooms and homes - to portray them as subjects or individuals crossing from one identity to another, although such settings can increase pleasure for the audience (Kotz: 50-52, 57).

Miró uses these tactics in her portrayal of Rebeca. The noir heroine's sexuality is usually highlighted and introductory shots of her catch the hero's gaze, sometimes placing the heroine at an angle above the onlooker (Gledhill, 1978: 19). In Beltenebros, Miró interrupts this model. Darman seems to be more interested in Rebeca's connections to Andrade when she first appears. As I already mentioned, Rebeca has hidden her hair in a scarf and she is filmed level with the camera and then from a high angle with Darman looking down on her through an obscuring, imprisoning grid. Moments later, Ugarte's men arrest her and she seems terrified. Her status as victim at this crucial introductory point in the narrative, coupled with the high angle of the camera and her attire, once again indicate that she is not a conventional *femme fatale*. Rebeca's explosive entry on stage into the frame filmed from a high angle is certainly eye-catching, but her femme fatale role is part

of the artificial performance. Rebeca is disgusted by parts of her work as a prostitute, especially the horrific scene with Ugarte in which Miró explores abusive practices and captures Rebeca's reactions of disgust to the ordeal in close-up, an example of film's use of the visible body to convey mood through the language of the face (Dyer, 1979: 133, 184). Since Miró and the noir genre concern themselves with the investigation of women, Beltenebros presents all of Rebeca's facets, and as a visual means of expression, the film can give women dominance in visual style which becomes their strength: the artistic medium takes responsibility for giving Rebeca more power by releasing her voice visually (Place: 54; Horton: 292).

Rebeca is in control. She fastens her gown when Darman enters the dressing room and chooses when to remove her clothes, just as she reserves the right to demand money in return for sex. It becomes even clearer that she derives power from her role as a stripper/singer/dancer when she is with Ugarte. Rebeca is in a situation without a mass audience to whom she could perform and in unfamiliar surroundings in which she can hardly see her client and is instructed when to move. Viewers never see money exchanged between the two and when she asks Ugarte if she should remove her clothes or dance for him, she is making a bid for power. Ugarte - who represents the masculinist law of the Francoist state despite his duplicitous political position - orders Rebeca to stay still, objectifying her and defusing her power to overcome subjugation to male fantasies through dance and pleasure-seeking in a macabre re-working of the Pygmalion myth. In order to criticize socio-political and institutional *machismo*, Miró turns to her textual resources or grammar of the camera to focus on Rebeca's reactions to his brutality in close-up and simultaneously to restore to the objectified Rebeca some form of subjectivity, even if it is only a focus on her protesting grimace. Her strength to resist evidently lies in the manipulation of the image (Gledhill, 1978: 15). Rebeca is powerful because she not only enjoys dancing, but also being watched, uninhibited by the gaze of the audience, although Ugarte's gaze seems to unsettle her later on.

Dyer's remarks on female beauty and desire are helpful here: 'Since women were the beautiful ones, there was a logic in representing female desire as not being turned on by

men but by their own bodies, i.e. as narcissism' (1986: 53). In film noir, the independence which transgressive women aim to achieve is often visually presented as 'self-absorbed narcissism' which is dangerous: female narcissism contravenes patriarchy which, as Cixous argues, has convinced women to detest their bodies, creating an anti-narcissism. But she believes that repressed women's bodies are beautiful and that their force will inevitably escape (Marks: 248). Narcissism sometimes results when the woman looks at herself in a mirror and ignores men in her presence to focus on her own image (Place: 47). On a realistic level, Rebecca spends time in front of her mirror removing her wig and false eyelashes in her dressing room while Darman is there. She does not look at or acknowledge him that often, as in a typical shot/reverse-shot sequence, although Miró does use this convention later on in the scene. Perhaps there is an element of narcissism in Rebeca who does not pay much attention to Darman until she pleads the case for Andrade, an activity within her angelic function. The way in which Rebeca caresses herself, like Marilyn Monroe, in the scene with Ugarte or during her Gilda imitation before she removes her dress, allows her to turn herself into a subject to some extent (Dyer, 1986: 53). However, Rebeca's image does not seem to insist on female sexuality only for herself: the fact that she willingly offers it to others, namely Andrade, removes any threat to men (27).

Place argues that there is no reason why heterosexual men should not enjoy a sexual position of passivity in cinema, normally denied them by patriarchy (24). Darman's and Rebeca's afterplay in the hotel clarifies this aspect of film noir. Afterplay is an important feature of recent pornography films which redefine the role of women and their pleasure, focusing on afterplay significantly more than conventional, phallocentric pornography. Rebeca, devoid of her wig and costume, kisses Darman's torso which he enjoys, but although Terence Stamp seems calm and collected, background information about the film shoot helps critics to explore male pleasure in passivity further because Stamp became sexually excited during the scene (Thompson: 182).

Some feminists accused Mira Nadir, the director of *India Cabaret*, of pandering to the male gaze because she dedicated four minutes of narrative time to showing women performers (Kotz: 54). She defended the inclusion of the scene within her film on the

grounds of its realist documentary aesthetic: "I must show the dancers dancing because that is what they do to make a living" (ibid.). Beltenebros is not a Realist film, but one must remember that women worked as strippers and prostitutes in the 1960s. Luis Martín Santos' Tiempo de silencio (1961), set in the 1960s, and Camilo José Cela's earlier La colmena (1951), which Miró suggested that Kensit should read to obtain a picture of the socio-historical context of Beltenebros, refer to prostitution in Madrid as a fact of life. Such scenes have the potential, like Nadir's depiction of dancers, to allow viewers entry into a sensual world where women are at ease with their bodies, refuse to be victims or ask for help, but survive through resistance and strength. Despite Kotz's theories, Mulvey's comments that women are constructed 'to be looked at' and confirmed as such by the spectator and diegetic male gaze are partly true for Rebeca/Kensit, who enjoys drawing attention to herself on stage.

The grammar of the camera at the start of the Boite Tabú scene reinforces Rebeca's status as both subject and object. In classical cinema, looks tend to originate with male characters, but Miró introduces elements of contradiction owing to unrealistic camera distance.<sup>5</sup> Viewers eventually see Rebeca from a collective audience's point-of-view, not from Darman's or Ugarte's because Ugarte's point-of-view would have to be conveyed in a high angle long shot, which occurs initially. However, the camera cuts to close-ups of Rebeca on stage, like Gilda, to show off her hair. Because of the way the editing operates, these could not be either Darman's or Ugarte's point-of-view shots: both male characters are seated at a distance and that would mean that Rebeca would need to be in a long shot (at a lower angle in Ugarte's case) in order to correspond to their objectifying subjectivity. The unrealistic camera distance allows Rebeca to escape the gazes of the male characters.<sup>6</sup> However, the fact that she is not filmed in a long shot throughout the routine permits her to give the cinema audience, both male and female, increased access to visual pleasure. The issues of the female or human gaze and the way in which it is constructed ties in very neatly with Beltenebros' wider thematic concerns, notably the release of the female voice and even more aptly, these camera movements occur precisely during the release of the female voice in Rebeca's dance.

Miró's use of camera distance to release Rebeca from objectification manifests itself in other ways. A long-shot of a woman such as Rebeca's entry on stage is perhaps not so objectifying because the male character in a point-of-view shot, like Ugarte from the circle, does not see so much of the woman due to her distance. When Rebeca puts on her clothes in front of the camera in her dressing room, she is not filmed directly in Darman's point-of-view since he is on the left of the camera is at the back. The audience only sees Darman's reflection looking at Rebeca and he turns round, trying not to objectify her, like Andrade who watched Rebeca in a different way from the other spectators in the *puticlub*. However, one must not forget that Rebeca is also objectified by the camera off-stage, for instance in the hotel where she is framed by the doorway in Darman's room after a camera up and camera down movement presented her legs in a fragmented form to the audience.

In Beltenebros, because women's desire is developed on the slightest level of signification, there are also female viewers. As the camera pans right when Darman makes his way towards Rebeca's dressing room, it both prioritizes Darman's movement and a woman at a table, who moves to the music, smiles and evidently experiences visual pleasures at the sight of Rebeca's semi-clad body off-screen. In a self-reflexive comment on our own spectatorship, Miró shows the audience that it is natural for women to enjoy watching nude individuals of the same gender and by extension, condones women's narcissism. Even without a point-of-view shot from the woman, the impact of the scene still takes effect in this way. Miró also implicitly breaks away from remaining taboos against lesbians present in Spain in the 1990s (Cambio 16, 1993: 20). Given Miró's previous works such as Gary Cooper with Andrea's point-of-view shots to Cooper's photograph and her own body in the mirror, one cannot reject the implications of these female extras for the development of female subjectivity. One may argue that women would not be in a strip club in 1962 given Spain's *machista* double standards unless they are fellow prostitutes or strippers: Miró herself commented on their role as extras in the sex world to give the film a realistic, *costumbrista* feel (Thompson, 1991: 170-172). Nevertheless, an implied existence of homosexuality proves that there is an economy of desire other than a phallic one to cite Luce Irigaray's theories in The Sex Which Is Not One

(1977), replacing the monopoly on sexual subjectivity that the phallus stands for (Williams, 1990: 248, 258). Miró wanted to show men enjoying women in the club, but she did not enter the pitfalls of the larger patriarchal world which conceals the truth of female desire since the more discourses of sexuality there are, the more hierarchies governing such oppositions as male/female or subject/object tend to crumble (273, 278). Miró's setting once again reinforces these themes because Rebeca gazes at both male and female stars, whose pictures are by her dressing room mirror, like Andrea in Gary Cooper. Rebeca also has point-of-view shots to Darman. For example, when she finally looks at him in his suit in her dressing room, viewers see Darman from her low angle; she stares at him in bed when the camera deforms her face and viewers see her actively gazing at the naked, passive Darman in the hotel scene, although the two are framed together. Another important example of 'intersubjectivity' is the first scene in the station. There is no shot/reverse-shot between Rebeca and Darman when she tells him that she is afraid and therefore, she is not placed in his point-of-view. Perhaps Miró avoided a shot/reverse-shot structure here because Darman's point-of-view would have placed Rebeca in a slightly high-angle shot, giving Darman a superior position. Because the two characters are both victims, Miró has framed them together to banish hierarchies. Miró only begins to use the shot/reverse-shot convention when the two are inside a cabin. The first shot is from Rebeca's point-of-view to Darman above her, but then he sits down. Andrade, whose photograph is on her dressing room mirror, is similarly objectified for Rebeca's gaze in a static art form or framed like a picture in the window of the bar waiting for and gazing at Rebeca.

Rebeca and the female extras in the puticlub are not the only women to receive the gift of subjectivity. Rebeca Osorio looks at Darman as the two are framed together when she types. Although there are no shot/reverse shots here, viewers notice that she has been looking at Darman. Magda, the Polish dancer, equally enjoys the gaze. She is not a passive, fetishised exhibitionist. She is captivated by the elegant Darman who becomes the focus of her point-of-view in the narrative, framed for her like a picture by the door. Darman revels in passivity, letting himself be taken by Magda as the recipient of her

desires. For the first part of the tango, Miró specifically instructed Stamp to behave passively (Thompson: 122-123). The camera does not fragment their bodies and there are few shot/reverse shot patterns, rather like the subjectivity of togetherness or intersubjectivity established in Fassbinder's *Fear Eats the Soul* (1973) when Ali and his partner dance in the bar, or some of the scenes in *Werther*. Miró gives the audience man and woman as both object and subject and most importantly, Magda as agent and subject in this scene. Miró unconsciously follows Cixous' and other recent feminist criticism favouring fluid movement from male and female spectators between conventional masculine/active and female/passive identifications to help viewers understand previously overlooked enjoyment of males in passive pleasures and the active, objectifying pleasures of female viewers, deconstructs sexual difference which viewers had been taught to accept (Williams, 1990: 206). Miró wanted the tango to be symbolically like the sex act and her instructions to Stamp are described by Thompson. One of the crew commented on Stamp's performance: "Parece que la está follando". Like Rebeca, Magda moves more than the camera, but has a full figure and is therefore visually assertive through size as well as movement. Thompson describes Magda as 'la tentación ambulante' (Thompson: 124-125). Miró inscribes a double challenge to oppressive systems of order through the gaze. The dogmatic voyeur is 'blinded' by light and loses his main organ of sensual gratification while women receive the gift of subjectivity, formerly the preserve of males, and pleasure in their own bodies.

Just as Rebeca escapes stereotypification, she escapes Darman's watchful eye only to be followed by the camera to meet Andrade on the metro or to walk home, her 'private moments' - as Kotz calls them - or own discourse invading the story. Gledhill recalls that in film noir, a narrative structure employing flashbacks and other devices, can lead to a distance between male judgments or narrative control and the woman who is under investigation. The woman's discourse may appear and assert itself in a heroine's resistance to the male control of the narrative. Through the heroines of film noir, male narrational control is rarely given the full expression it enjoys in Realist fiction, i.e. works of 'literary paternity' which metaphorically convey male omniscience (Gilbert, 1979: 4, 6-7, 12:

Gledhill, 1978/1989: 15). Rebeca is Darman's key to reaching and helping Andrade, but because of the time given to Rebeca's imitation of Gilda, Beltenebros enters a temporal narrative mode which Genette describes as 'pause' rather than 'scene' (Genette, 1980: ch.2; Pinto de Castro: 72). The detection processes are consequently displaced by the genre's interest in women from the centre of the film (Gledhill, 1978: 15). Miró's apparent predilection for the investigation of woman, even though she prefers to explore human behaviour, is once again at work. Significantly, Miró's detection of female pleasure and activity displaces the male monopoly over narration or narrative time in terms of dialogue, images and memory in this case. Not only does Rebeca's striptease disrupt the male sphere of detection and action, but she herself also disturbs the detective and organization's attempts to solve the plot, to come to a conclusion or classify.

I shall leave the implications of the use of Gilda as an intertext until chapter 7, where I will discuss it alongside Kensit and Hayworth's star images, and now examine Rebeca's movement in the *Boite Tabú*. Film noir's visual style gives the *femme fatale* freedom of movement (Place: 54). Place reminds one that meaning in any film image is a complex function of the image's visual qualities - composition, angle, lighting, camera movement - in addition to its content - the acting, the stars and iconography - which in noir films is explicitly sexual. For example, the *femme fatales* with vigorous long hair, make up and jewelry coupled with her subversive role in the narrative's content (41, 45). The strength of monster women is signified visually by their dominance not only in composition, angle and lighting, but also by camera movement. Since striptease involves movement, it is important to examine motion in Beltenebros. Beyond occupying the centre of the frame and the compositional focus of film noir, strong women can actually command camera movement, directing it whilst simultaneously controlling the audience's and hero's gaze, like strippers who have the power to manipulate their spectators.

Rebeca not only determines a substantial amount of the camera movement on stage, but also manages to move more than the camera. While enjoying attention from the audience's scopophilia, she evades a situation of stasis in which she could seem constructed for male pleasure, despite the presence of female voyeurs. The camera only cuts to close-

up to reveal her swaying hair or to follow some of her movements, reinforced by the shining stage floor which reflects Rebeca's steps, with her shadow cast onto the stage by spotlights. When Rebeca is in Darman's hotel room, he prevents her from removing her dress because he wants to talk to her, but movement is also hers. Rebeca protests - "No me ha pagado para hablar" - and she stretches out her arms on the bed to fill the frame and make her presence felt.

The *femme fatale* loses her physical motion and influence on camera movements at the end of films which reinstate conservative ideology. She is often really or symbolically imprisoned by composition with control expressed visually: sometimes she may be behind bars as in for instance in *The Maltese Falcon*, trapped through framing, or by the 'happy' protection of a lover or husband (Place: 45).<sup>7</sup> Even though Darman rescues Rebeca, she escapes this sort of return to patriarchy's fold for several reasons. She has been rescued by Darman, who has rebelled against the Law of the Father in the form of his party or the police and killed the man who abused Rebeca. Darman himself seems a devastated emotional wreck in need of her comfort.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, they are both escapees of oppressive systems of 'order'. Darman has a wife in England, so he will still be transgressing 'normality' if he has no fixed destination, and takes Rebeca with him, turning her into an accomplice in his adultery, a social fact scorned by the Catholic Church, and the State's laws.

Imprisonment within marriage, the weakness which Rebeca experiences, or any other suitable castigation is an ideological operation to control strong, sexual or independent women (Place: 45). The socio-historical context of the noir genre's development is partly responsible for these castigatory plot resolutions. The 1940s in the USA was a decade in which society conditioned women, who had gained power and independence through economic and professional activities during World War II, to return to their passive roles in domesticity as wives and mothers through the media. *Beltenebros* is a film made in 1991 in modern, post-dictatorship Spain even though its ending is set in 1962, and the increasing power and departure from traditional roles of women in Spain in the 1990s influence the film's reworking of these stereotypical noir conventions.

Conventionally, the ideological operations of the noir text work through the demonstration of the monster woman's dangerous power and its subsequent containment. Ultimately, despite repression, viewers remember women's strong, exciting sexuality as opposed to their punishment and their strength to resist stereotypification. Within this sort of 'reader response' to films, viewers of Beltenebros remember Rebeca/Kensit's sensuous imitation of Gilda. Beltenebros is an example of the genre's style overwhelming the restrictions of conventional narrative content or interacting with conventional parts of the narrative to produce a potent image of women (Gledhill, 1978: 15).

It is obvious how the denigration of the transgressive woman through language - Bernal's "cantante o algo peor" - fails. Miró denies the scorn of patriarchal language which not only insults 'monster' women in an attempt to erode their power, but places women into dichotomies and the phallic laws which dictate to women that they are wicked if they indulge in sexual gratification.<sup>9</sup> Miró shows that monster women are a source of pleasure; striptease, one of the activities in which they are conventionally engaged, is fun. Miró demonstrates that they are objects of beauty and can even be victims themselves, arousing the audience's sympathies for Rebeca. It is also suggestive that Bernal makes these linguistic assumptions vis-à-vis a monster woman who turns out not to be one. Firstly, Bernal has just witnessed his daughter's marriage, reinforcing his traditional position as a patriarch. Secondly, he is highly unquestioning, acquiescing in the order of the organization since even left-wing systems can also be oppressive. He is wrong about Andrade who is linked to Rebeca and not a traitor but a victim. Bernal's naiveté about his organization links to his dearth of knowledge about women and realistic, female behaviour.<sup>10</sup> Significantly, Rebeca's kindness towards Andrade, a victim of corruption, who also reminds Darman of Rebeca Osorio and Walter, also devalues Bernal's comments. The woman question, political issues and the theme of authority fuse coherently. Rebeca has already voiced defensive language to Darman in his hotel room for Andrade's sake as well as scornful comments about Ugarte's voyeuristic perversions. Her enticing body language serves to reinforce Miró's textual/political issue on the erosion of authority, especially if one considers Cixous' theories in 'The Laugh of Medusa' on how women

visually materialize their thoughts with their bodies instead of their voices, because women's bodies can present several meanings as opposed to possible containment in language. Writing is a sort of discourse, like speaking with the body: consequently, Miró visually supports the Cixousian 'logic of her speech' (Marks, 1981: 251, 256) through Rebeca/Kensit.

Whereas Rebeca 2 resembles Miró's earlier exploration of female desire and subjectivity through Teresa in La petición and Clara in Hablamos, Rebeca Osorio parallels Miró's professional female characters, such as Andrea in Gary Cooper, Julia in Hablamos and Carlota in Werther, who contradict masculinist proscriptions on female professional activity, although they too are also actively engaged in erotic pursuits. Rebeca 1 does not fit into female dichotomies, posing a threat to masculinist, Francoist society in various ways. She asserts her own sexuality, although when she commits adultery with Valdivia she aims to comfort him which is a function of the angelic woman: she is attracted to Darman, although she is embarrassed about giving him one of her novels. She fusses over Valdivia in other ways, instructing Darman not to let him talk in excess or smoke because he is still weak. However, she does make pleasurable noises when she is with Valdivia. It is significant that two of female rebels in pleasure against patriarchy, Rebeca 1 and the tango dancer, are linked by juxtaposition in parallel montage using dissolves during Darman's bath: the first dissolve to the tango is followed by a second to Rebeca typing. Rebeca 1 transgresses Francoist and religious ideology while simultaneously stepping outside of the sphere of female passivity through her role as a political activist. Rebeca's writing gives her power which is doubly subversive: she not only writes novels to subsidize herself and Walter so that they can continue to fight Francoism and therefore keeps her husband, but it is also within her novelistic plots - which are arguably not great works of intellectual merit but part of popular culture - that she places information given to her by Walter in coded form to circumvent political censorship. Her sentimental novels are vital to the organization because its members depend on the clues within them. Men depend not only on sentimental novels - a woman's genre as Bermúdez points out - but on Rebeca herself and her favoured genre invades the territory of the noir thriller (1994: 21-

22). The sight of her novels in the warehouse arouses Darman's guilt, encouraging him to reject the masculinist organization's missions. On that level, it is significant that the voyeur, Valdivia/Ugarte who would turn Francoist, locked and enclosed Rebeca 1 into her room while she was typing.

Rebeca 1 loses her sanity in the novel and writes continuously on her typewriter. In Miró's Beltenebros, Rebeca 1 also goes mad, like Teresa, but she demonstrates lunacy by taking her own life. Lunacy and suicide are traits of rebellion or escapism according to Showalter, with which women unlearn traditional submission in hostile atmospheres (Lisboa, 1992: 140-145). Rebellious madness is implicitly connected to the triumph of Francoism if one recalls that Ugarte, who had kept Rebeca at his side, turned Francoist. One way to constrain the madwoman was by enclosing her (for example in a room), a strategy that Ugarte had already adopted when he locked Rebeca into a room with her typewriter while Darman murdered Walter. The group's hiding place from the regime in the cinema is a sort of cold, incarcerating room with low attic ceilings and beams in which Rebeca 1 is framed between the door and wall when the viewers first see her enter it with Darman and the notion of the mental asylum becomes another enclosing framework (Lisboa, 1992: 140, 145). It is significant that both Rebeca 1 and male activists are enclosed because Miró examines systems of oppression on a human level and masculinism affects both men and women. Rebeca 1's screaming and pounding on the door not only indicates her approaching madness, but also constitute the raised voice of a woman who fell in love with Walter, an individual physically marginalised by and transgressive of regime ideology. Her voice makes itself heard in protest against the organization after twenty years through Darman's conscience when he remembers her and sees her novels and Rebeca 2. Within the narrative structure, after Rebeca 1 pounds at the door approaching

madness, Rebeca 2 appears at the metro station on her way to meet Darman - a private moment in which she evades male narrative control - and minutes later, Rebeca 2 defies Darman's chastising comments about her tardy arrival, defending her right to be a prostitute. The conventional angel woman dies passively from an undefined debilitating illness, possibly tuberculosis: within this context, suicide is a form of protestatory escape and an active death transgressing passivity (Lisboa, 1992: 146, 150). The character of Rebeca 1 is a criticism of any repressive political organization. Like El crimen, her actions show how political repression can harm individuals. Within a Spanish context, suicide, like adultery, also contravenes Catholicism, a pillar of the patriarchal regime. It is interesting to note that Rebeca's transgressive, independent activities are reflected by her masculine attire - a suit and her relatively short hair.

### MEN IN BELTENEBROS.

Castro comments that Muñoz Molina's narrative deals with topics such as friendship, loyalty, belief in determined ideas and the fight for freedom, none of which he believes appear in the film, which he labels a failure (Castro, 1991: 31). However, it seems that Beltenebros does concern all of these and wider, related themes. Film noir is about the blockage of men's emotions, the definition of male behaviour according to conventional norms of toughness, ambition, respectability and sexuality which form a substantial part of Beltenebros (Thomas, 1992a: 79). In addition to the suppression of men and women in marriage or stereotypes, the noir genre discusses containment and control in other areas - such as the keeping of secrets, laying traps or catching criminals - which are all at work in Beltenebros (*ibid.*). Noir films usually have a prevailing mode of anxiety, which lingers even after a hero has been restored to his rightful, manly, place and which is connected to

the pressures of being a conventional man (Thomas, 1992: 59; Dyer, 1978/1989: 91). All characters in Beltenebros - both male and female - are victims of anxiety and the system and this highlights Miró's interest in the human in addition to her provision of insights into the role of the sexes. I have already discussed the tensions in the female characters' predicament. I will now examine male characters in Beltenebros, who, comparable to other noir men, inhabit a bleak world within which they experience tension when trying to be men (Thomas, 1992a: 80). As in Hablamos, Miró maintains an interest in subjectivity or the construction of the self vis-à-vis male characters in Beltenebros, and consequently, the noir genre and its themes are relevant. Miró delves beneath the surface, as she does with *Rebeca 2*, to portray the real person behind the façade of masculinity. On that level, Beltenebros resembles some of the noir thrillers of the 1940s which Krutnik feels offer a more skeptical view of male cultural authority by depicting tough, controlled masculinity as a model that is neither worthwhile nor realistic (Krutnik, 1992: 88), rather like Miró in Werther and Hablamos.

There is a recurring desire in film noir to deviate from one's ideologically ordained position: Darman, like many noir men, is divided between adherence to the socially imposed norms of toughness or ambition and a desire to escape these (Thomas, 1992: 67; Thomas, 1992a: 82; Dyer, 1978/1989: 91). Positions of power and responsibility make characters anxious and although the loss of commanding positions is also a source of anxiety in conventional heroes, the aging Darman, who now wants a tranquil life, is keen to reject dangerous missions (Thomas, 1992a: 84; Thomas, 1992: 59). Noir heroes frequently have ambivalent attitudes towards their gender roles as well as their professional power: as I already pointed out in my discussion of *Rebeca 2* in particular, Darman displays both active and passive sexuality.

Darman is a man who obeyed orders in the midst of personal conflicts. Analogous to other questioning noir men, the mellowing Darman has a more skeptical attitude towards such prescriptions for male behaviour. Darman painfully discovers that there is more than one version of 'truth' and that his missions had been traps plotted by superior members of the party's hierarchy (Pérez Millán: 259). He has already proved his worth as a man to his organization and won the respect of its younger members, a status of which Darman is not proud and which represents the triumph of institutionalized patriarchal authority<sup>11</sup> He subsequently places himself outside the values of the organization, rejecting his title of captain, like the skeptical outsider-hero described by Houseman (1946-7: 161). Darman also rejects masculinist violence, until he has to use it to execute the traitor and with him, the masculinist doctrine of ambition which Ugarte had closely followed.

Beltenebros is a film which deals in the theme of emotional restraint, a mainstay of film noir. Literal coldness has been used in film noir to connote emotional coldness. For example, in On Dangerous Ground (Nicholas Ray, 1951), the landscape of cold, packed snow reinforces the frozen emotions of its characters (Thomas, 1992a: 79). Miró and Muñoz Molina's choice of locations for Beltenebros - England (Scarborough), Poland as opposed to Paris in the novel and a wintry Madrid - reflect the coldness of the character's masculinist environment. Miró seems to prioritize the snow in Poland, one of the foreign centres of the political organization, from Darman's very arrival. Hard-packed ice and snow are visible at the airport, on the road and in Krakov town: Darman's hot breath issues forth in the sub-zero temperatures, indicating his lack of affinity with and opposition to the masculinist environment. The contrast between Darman's hot breath and the cold air is particularly significant, since viewers first hear the first indications of his reluctance to participate in the mission while he is in Poland.

Darman and Ugarte's lives have a lot in common because they both inhabit the emotionally constricting environment of masculinist pressures. Rebeca says "ninguno tiene sangre en las venas", which Darman refutes with passion, making love to Rebeca, whereas Ugarte uses her to enhance his own pleasure.<sup>12</sup> Darman may seem cold, but his blank façade results from the masculinist organization's devastation of his life, burdening him with a sense of guilt. This seems to be why Miró has cast him as expressionless: it is not a flaw in Stamp's acting ability as some critics believe (Castro: 33). Stamp was particularly flamboyant in *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* (Stephan Elliot, 1994) but acted quite expressionless in character for his role in *The Collector* (William Wyler, 1965). Noir men are prone to release floods of violence, an emotion, which may paradoxically increase male emotional blockages and this seems to be the case with Darman after he has executed Ugarte. He seems quite frozen and pale on the train to Lisbon (Thomas, 1992a: 79-80). Ugarte's emotion lies within the spheres of hatred and envy, but Rebeca's description seems to show that he restrains all other sorts of emotion in line with masculinism. Ugarte is as much a victim of the masculinist system as he is a perpetuator of it: desire for glory and his shame at his inability to bear torture due to a lack of physical stoicism caused him to change sides.

In addition to mental tensions, noir men undergo suffering and even torture: their bodies are subject to hostile treatment. The conventional hero is typically tall and tough with a firm and well-defined body, whereas noir villains or gangsters, who are often crippled, are soft or fat and provide examples of deviant, fragmented forms of the body (76). One way of avoiding fragmentation or softness in conventional noir films is to become tough and respectable. Any splitting, like softness, implies that men try to adhere to norms but consciously or unconsciously deviate from them (59, 84). In addition to

wholeness, being upright signifies power to the noir man, although this is often under threat. Sometimes, a consoling female character may encourage a male character to rest, removing his upright and therefore powerful status. Although the exhausted Darman sits down on the train at the end or lies down in a hot bath, he is quite rigid for a lot of the film and he is tall: on the other hand, Rebeca Osorio encourages Valdivia, who is unwell, to rest and his sickly constitution symbolizes the pressures of - and his perhaps unconscious desire to evade - masculinist demands on success (85).

Whereas Thomas argues that fragmentation is always apparent in film noir in a thematically implicit way (78), Miró makes these splits obvious in her narrative events. Ugarte attempts to gain respectability after his failure to bear torture by becoming a *comisario*, perhaps to compensate for his physical inferiority. However, Miró demonstrates the impossibilities and tensions of possessing or attaining solidity. The physical body and the body of texts, the reels of film, are not indestructible and they both burn in the cinema. Ugarte is literally and figuratively fragmented owing to his split personality as Valdivia/Ugarte, his duplicity to his party and his literal shattering as Darman castrates him. Ugarte has not merely lost the penis, the anatomical organ which connotes maleness and on which masculinist authority is based. The blood issuing forth from his fragmented organ, crossing the boundaries of containment, turns the symbol of masculinity into the abject which is conventionally associated with the feminine (Creed: 9-11, 13-14, 25, 31, 37, 40-43). Similarly, Ugarte's refusal to penetrate has already called into question the status of his phallus/penis as a masculine symbol of authority. Miró's choice of José Luis Gómez to play Ugarte/Valdivia is equally significant because he is small and therefore deviates from the conventional, tall heroic shape. The noir protagonist may let go, for real or metaphorically. Such noir men, who seek release from the burdens

of male responsibility in defeatism or passivity (a lost identification with the stereotypically 'feminine') are typically tired and easily drawn to sleep or even death, perhaps in suicide. Alcohol is another source of liquid oblivion and merging with darkness, like Ugarte, is equally a metaphorical way out (Thomas, 1992a: 78, 82, 84). The tired Darman willingly doubts his strength to escape and wants Luque to tell his superiors that his hands shake and that he cannot shoot anymore: he is deliberately detracting from his own reputation and calling into question his physical strength. Thomas identifies the feminine with flow and liquidity as opposed to masculine solidity (82). Although men can direct camera (and narrative) movement as a sign of power, Darman is quite liquid in that he is a wanderer in the wider sense of the film's geographical locations. He is perpetually in exile for his political involvement with the organization and moves from country to country on dangerous missions - England, Poland, Madrid via Paris and Portugal: in 1962, his wandering is significantly associated with his desire to evade his mission. He cannot be pinned down, like a liquid, and even though he has settled in England, he is constantly removed from his conventional lifestyle. The protagonist's simultaneous desires to be strong and to let go and the anxiety associated with these positions are reflected in struggles to gain and relinquish power, which materialize in a range of sadistic and masochistic desires (84). Ugarte tortures others, but in reality wants to let go. Darman's shooting of him allows Ugarte's annihilatory, masochistic tendencies to emerge. He is not like Andrade, who matches the heroic model to a greater degree and resembles Darman in his quest for justice: Andrade risks and loses his life to defend his honour and tell Darman who the traitor is so that he may rectify the situation. Andrade has let himself go emotionally with Rebeca and depended on her assistance. He has also deviated from conventional roles and marital duties to his wife by committing adultery with Rebeca 2 and

analogous to Darman, he lacks a penetrating and omniscient gaze, becoming in turn the object of Rebeca's gaze in reality from the cafe and photographic forms.

Ugarte has been crippled by the regime of masculinism, comparable to Darman's own emotional state. It is particularly significant that Ugarte is sensitive to light, a symbol of masculinism (Cook, 1978/1989: 69, 73), and lives in the shadows, which Thomas believes are a means of escaping masculinist roles and the pressures of being male (78). Miró's use of lighting not only complements Muñoz Molina's novel, but it also highlights Ugarte's abnormal physical constitution. Castro relates Ugarte to vampires who are also abject figures in horror films: 'La aversión de Valdivia por la luz es aprovechada para hacer de él una especie de nuevo vampiro, que precisa vivir en la oscuridad' (Castro: 33). His costume, especially his dark glasses, reinforce this image. On the one hand, Ugarte/Valdivia is indeed constructed to resemble a vampire which has thematic relevance. Given that vampires dislike light, their behaviour is symptomatic of masculinist tensions in society. The light which hurts Ugarte's eyes is a visual metaphor for masculinism, which has ruined his life and against which his glasses are a shield. Contrastingly, although Bernal meets Darman in a darkened office, he does use a strong table lamp which has some thematic relevance: Bernal, who holds a position of power in the party, seems more comfortable within his masculinist environment than Ugarte. Given that aspects of noir characters are reflected in the setting, darkness also has other significant implications which reinforce Ugarte's behaviour. The connection of one of the representatives of the law, who would be linked to light in conventional noir films, and darkness highlights the corruption within the regime (Cook: 1978/1989: 69, 73).

Castro believes that the conflict between Darman and Ugarte at the end of Beltenebros is excessive:

El enfrentamiento entre Valdivia y Darman - en la vieja tradición del cine americano en que la película debe concluir necesariamente con un duelo en que el bueno vence al malo - dura bastante más de lo que es habitual en los films en que se inspira, y resulta extraordinariamente forzada y artificial (33).

Miró's film is not artificial in a negative way, as Castro believes. In addition to providing theatrical distance, this scene constitutes an important 'pause' on violence and a discussion of masculinism and envy. Spanish art forms, like the *esperpento* and other sorts of theatrical exaggeration - such as Galdós' excessive interpretation of the confines of motherhood in the character of María Remedios in Doña Perfecta (1896) - work as criticism. Miró seems to exaggerate Ugarte's masculinist ambition and 'pause' on his explanations of his behaviour for the same purpose. Miró makes a very important deconstruction at the end of Beltenebros. Having proved that masculinist ideals are unrealistic, she exposes Ugarte's mendacious narrative, which Bernal accepted and reiterated to Darman. Both men believed that Valdivia had been tortured and shot and become a martyr to the cause, but Ugarte deconstructs his own fictions: "Me inventé una muerte gloriosa". The exaggerated style of the scene reinforces the fictionality of any masculinist invention in terms of oral texts or accepted prescriptions on male behaviour in society.

Ugarte has masqueraded as a representative of the Symbolic, yet despite his efforts, he is castrated as Darman shatters his penis/phallus. Ugarte's masculinist supremacy, and by extension that of the edifice of Francoism and masculinists in general, is a fiction. Characters in society, such as Víctor in Hablamos or Teresa and her parents' in La petición, are all living a lie under masculinism with their façades of respectability. However, Darman - on a par with Miró's entire cinema - destroys the illusion, just as he literally shatters the phallus because he is a 'paused' expose of masculinist damage and fictions,

during the typical noir process of exorcising the past by avenging Walter's unjust death sentence. Unlike many characters in the noir genre, who fail to discover or resolve the cause of their anxiety, Darman has managed to end some of the sources of his conflict and expose the dangers of any sort of authoritarianism for others (Thomas, 1992: 68). Deconstruction of the text as the product of the auteur and erosion of masculinist narratives for both male and female characters goes hand in hand.

Although film noir in the 1940s often examined problematic and illicit potentialities within masculine identity, it could not fully endorse such subversive attitudes (Krutnik, 1992: xii). However, Miró can and does deconstruct masculinism in Beltenebros, favouring and encouraging deviations from its repressive systems of order. Freud discussed how the hero in popular fictions will often serve as an ideal ego and a central point of interest, for whom the writer tries to win our sympathy (Freud, 1908/1985: vol.14, 137-140). Miró provides ideal models of manhood for viewers to imitate - the teacher in Werther and Beltenebros, in which Darman corrects some of the errors in a masculinist system, redressing the balance. As Miró showed in El crimen, acquiescence in official 'truth' is harmful: one must preferably always adopt an open-minded, questioning approach. Miró's male characters are not infallible heroes, like James Bond, who constantly promote the ideology of masculine omnipotence and invulnerability (Krutnik, 1992: 87).

#### RELATIONSHIPS WITH WOMEN, GENDER AND NARRATIVE.

Ugarte's relationships with women were problematised by masculinism and his detachment. He lost Rebeca Osorio to insanity when he told her the truth about Walter's death. While showing more success than Ugarte as a partner, Darman's relationships have nevertheless suffered. Thomas argues that noir men do not marry until the dangerous

alternatives to a conventional marriage have been proved to be dead ends and when they do, they may choose marriage fatalistically as a last resort (1992: 65; 1992a: 84). Darman appears to be lonely, even though he has a wife, in whom he cannot confide the secrets of his life in the party and to that extent matches John Houseman's definition of the hero of tough crime thrillers to some degree who is denied the love of women and companionship (161). Darman's wife does not seem to threaten him, but their relationship does have quite a tedious air. Darman does not seem passionately happy with his wife, who appears to be part of his 'normal' lifestyle in England, analogous to the conventional decor in his house: Rebeca Osorio, an exciting woman in a more unconventional sphere, is constantly in his thoughts, although Rebeca 2 replaces her.

Rebeca 2 fulfills two functions in that she satisfies Darman's desire, but she is equally a consoler, doubly preventing the mood of loss associated with film noir. The tension which Darman seems to feel when he is on a mission or amongst the party's officials seems to decrease when he is in the company of the Rebecas, although Rebeca Osorio's presence in flashbacks reminds him of his guilt about Walter. Darman's recollections of Rebeca Osorio are often accompanied by melodramatic music and her part in the narrative seems to turn Beltenebros into a male-centred melodrama, a frequent occurrence in films with older protagonists, although music can represent desire in film noir (Thomas, 1992: 68; Thomas, 1992a: 82). As Bermúdez points out, the presence of the sentimental novels introduces an important element: readers may wonder why Darman, a character who ostensibly answers cultural models of masculinity, even though he deviates from these underneath, would read such fiction. His liking for sentimental *novelas rosas* highlights his deviation from masculinism. Having a character who is a spy and who simultaneously reads sentimental novels has destabilizing repercussions, which cause us to

revise assumptions on sexual identity and its representations in film and literature (Bermúdez, 1994: 8, 10). Bermúdez discusses the notion that sentimental novels give women greater narrative time, but not power because the female characters correspond to patriarchy's definition of women as passive (9). However, Krentz argues that, even when romantic novels maintain binary categorization, they 'invert the power structure of a patriarchal society because they show women exerting enormous power over men' and Darman is to some extent, influenced by both Rebekas (Krentz, 1992: 5 cited in Bermúdez: 9). Darman's interest in sentimental novels detracts from the generic current of spy novels, which are about active male protagonists and the empowerment of male characters (Bermúdez: 9). It is quite significant on this level that Ugarte takes no interest in Rebeca Osorio's books.

The generic hybridity of the novelistic content - the 'feminine' *novela rosa* and 'masculine' noir traits - reinforces the questioning of masculinity. The narrative structure of Beltenebros similarly mirrors Miró's depiction of masculinity as unstable. In the novel, as Bermúdez comments, 'Beltenebros, siguiendo las fórmulas del thriller, favorece la masculina "voz" del narrador Darman como resalta el "man-hombre" de su nombre' (15). However, Miró undoes her Darman's narrative authority, just as she incorporates the sentimental novel and men's desire to let go into the narrative. It seems that Darman's letting-go of the narrative symbolizes his escapism in other areas in a coherent way.

Miró's material, the novel itself, forms female resistance to the anxiety over the existence and definition of masculinity using two strategies identified by Bermúdez. Firstly, it subverts cinematic notions of the gaze and the image. In addition to making reference to Dyer's article on Gilda and movement which I will discuss in chapter 7,

Bermúdez believes that Mulvey's theories work on Beltenebros, the novel (16). For instance, Darman describes how the men in the audience watch Rebeca performing as Gilda: 'Las miradas y las manos y las respiraciones de los hombres habían gastado su piel pulimentando su blancura y volviendo todo su cuerpo tan dúctil como seda muy usada...' (Muñoz Molina: 167). However, Miró allows Rebeca to further escape the gaze as it is narrated by the novelistic Darman, due to unrealistic camera distance. As in the novel, narrative events surrounding the Rebecas start to displace the masculine and the male gaze is undermined. Secondly, Darman cannot control the direction of the novel's events (Bermúdez: 16), succumbing to a mental and physical inability to face his situation: "Pero la memoria se me iba, igual que perdía el equilibrio cuando me levantaba" (Muñoz Molina: 148).

In the film, Miró demonstrates similar preoccupations. Krutnik comments that the depiction of the hero in the 'tough' noir thrillers of the 1940s tends to be structurally unstable, despite any masculinisation in the form of action or language (88). Although Thomas argues that the male character's point-of-view is privileged through first person narration and subjective framing devices like flashbacks, she also sees that there is usually an undermining of this point-of-view through two features. Firstly, labyrinthine plots - which seem to escape the character's attempts to give them coherence in his narration - and secondly, breaks in the protagonist's conscience when he is drugged or knocked out: these discontinuities and losses in narrative control may even be seen as willed by the protagonist (1992: 67). Darman does seem exhausted when he begins the narration from the train and there are multiple flashbacks, which give the plot a labyrinthine quality. The frequency of flashbacks in the noir genre suggests the neurotic compulsion to repeat and also the noir protagonist's reworking of the past in order to try to master it throughout his

narration, which is something that Darman attempts to do vis-à-vis his assassination of Walter. The flashbacks serve to reinforce the ways in which Darman is a fragmented adherent of masculinist norms (71). Darman's voice over also quickly disappears. When he enters the cinema, there has been a narrative ellipsis and viewers are unsure of how he has come to arrive there, although Muñoz Molina makes it clear in the novel that there is a secret passage, used by Ugarte, from the strip club to the cinema. In addition to these features, the narrative escapes his control in that viewers see events concerning Rebeca 2's secret meetings with Andrade or sessions with Ugarte, which Darman could not possibly have witnessed and which distance him from the narration, just as his gaze in point-of-view shot is unrealistically represented and therefore distanced from Rebeca 2's performance on stage.<sup>13</sup> Darman failed to see the truth at first when he assassinated Walter, but he slowly discovered it. His perception is therefore not authoritative, just as he lost control of the narrative in the film (Bermúdez: 22). Darman is exhausted and viewers of Beltnebros may read these lapses in narrative control as unconsciously willed, comparable to his rejection of masculinism. The two rejections are linked because male narrational authority from an omniscient narrator with voice-overs is often linked to male dominance and control in society. Once again, Miró's form matches her content (Kirkham, 1995: 17).

Another more subtle aspect of the narrative mirrors such thematic preoccupations. In line with her erosion of masculinist domination, Miró uses a very interesting framing device at the start and at the end of Beltenebros. The sympathetic ticket collector is played by Francisco Casares, the actor who took the parts of Taboada in El crimen and the priest in Gary Cooper. Miró softens his formerly harsh image since his character departs from his previous oppressive, masculinist roles to assist the fugitives of masculinist violence and politics. It is significant that viewers see him from the start of the film due to the flashback

structure and probably remember this softening which summarizes the content of the narrative which is about to unfold. Miró uses varying and more complex degrees of self-reflexive narrative devices to mirror her questioning theatics elsewhere, which I will discuss in the next chapter.

<sup>1</sup> The Lady From Shanghai (Orson Welles, 1948) is a an example of this strategy.

<sup>2</sup> For instance in They Live By Night (Nicholas Ray, 1948).

<sup>3</sup> Comments from a naked dancing girl in Mira Nadir's India Cabaret, a 60 minute documentary film about sex workers, sum up these encouraging views about strippers: " If the viewer does not feel shame, why should the viewed?" (Kotz: 47).

<sup>4</sup> I am borrowing from Dyer's theories on the objectification of Monroe here (1986: 22).

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion of unrealistic camera distances during the objectification of Marilyn Monroe, see Dyer, 1986, 64-65.

<sup>6</sup> When Rebeca visits Ugarte, she is in his point-of-view for a while as he stands behind his desk. When she protests about her arrest, the camera cuts to a medium close-up of her. This unrealistic camera distance momentarily releases her from the grip of Ugarte's gaze.

<sup>7</sup> In Michael Curtiz's Mildred Pierce, the deposed matriarch is taken from the police station on the arm of her husband and then repressed symbolically by the masculine power of the sunrise conveyed by the film's lighting and implied, by extension, in the submission of two cleaning women, scrubbing the steps of the police station, an architectural symbol of patriarchal supremacy (Cook, 1978/1989: 81).

<sup>8</sup> Rebeca seems to adhere to Thomas' descriptions of positive relationships in conventional film noir: ' [...] positive male/female relationships in *film noir* (in cases where the women evade the dichotomous stereotypes of *femme fatale* and would-be-wife may be presented via such narrative strategies as either turning the couple into pals or transforming the woman into a figure of spiritual redemption, de-centering the sexuality of the relationship to an extent, at least in conventional terms' (1992a: 82-83).

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<sup>9</sup> One is reminded here of the similarity of Miró's work and Cixous's critical descriptions of patriarchy's denigration of the female body as the 'old fools' game' (Marks, 1981: 256).

<sup>10</sup> I use the term realistic since the dissolution of female dichotomies corresponds to real-life women according to Gilbert and Gubar, whereas binary categorization represents an unrealistic falsification.

<sup>11</sup> Darman has followed the path of other noir heroes. As Krutnik comments: 'The hero proves his worthiness to take up his place as a man, by accomplishing a series of directed tests: a process which will often culminate [...] with his integration into the cultural order through marriage' (1992: 87).

<sup>12</sup> Despite the way in which Darman slaps Rebeca 2, Miró instructed Terence Stamp to act out the scene as if he were in love with her (Thompson: 181).

<sup>13</sup> I will discuss the intertextual role of Edward Hopper's paintings in the development of these distanced, non-omniscient points-of-view in chapter 8.

## PART II. METAFICTION

CH. 7. AUTHORSHIP, ACCOMPLICE READERS, METAFICTIONAL TEXTS AND  
INTERTEXTS.  
AUTEURS.

[...] los directores no somos una isla, sino parte de un bloque en el que somos sólo una pieza responsable (Mario Camus, Barcelona, May 1985).<sup>1</sup>

Cinema is the work of a single man, the director (Orson Welles) (Cook, 1987: 132).

These two quotations from Camus and Welles correspond to differing notions of authorship in cinema. Welles' matches what has become known as the *politique des auteurs* first formulated in the 1950s by critics, such as Truffaut, in *Cahiers du cinéma* (Cook, 1987: 114; Giannetti: 377-378). In spite of the industrial nature of film or studio production, they argued - like the American critic, Andrew Sarris - that the director was still the sole author of the film or source of meaning (Cook, 1987: 160; Sarris: 1962). Auteur criticism was said to be of more use in Hollywood and commercial cinema, whereas it was conventionally thought that directors of art cinema would produce their own films and consequently have more creative influence (Kuhn, 1990: 31). Other critics attacked the notion of the director as auteur. Historical and political changes - especially in the wake of socio-political unrest in 1968 - led to a reformulating of the assumptions of traditional auteur theory. The new currents of thought in particular disagreed that the artist was the sole creator of the art work. Within independent British cinema of the early 1970s, they led to the favouring of collective working methods to reject individual authorship (Cook, 1987: 114-115, 192). Miró is making films in a very different context, but it is still useful to remember that film is a collaborative enterprise. Such theoretical positions emphasize that collective authorship is more appropriate for film studies, arguing

that a film text consists of many different authorial voices of which the director is but one - for instance the cinematographer, producer, scriptwriter and actors - as opposed to the sole source of creativity or meaning, which had political implications (Caughey, 1981 cited in Dyer, 1979: 173; Cook, 1987: 179, 203; Dyer, 1979: 168, 172). The members of the team may or may not work in harmony and this can lead to ideological contradictions in the text or authorial intentions (Caughey cited in Dyer, 1979: 173). Nowell Smith argued that the process of assemblage by which a film was put together - which can be directly exposed in anti-illusionistic narratives as I will discuss - shows that the 'author' just organized the film coherently (Nowell Smith, 1976 cited in Cook, 1987: 183). It is sometimes useful to employ the notion of the director as the sole source of meaning to look at the development of a director's work in terms of themes and style and to show how a film becomes his or her artwork rather than a commercial product (Cook, 1987: 115, 123). Knowledgeable viewers will consequently recognize characteristic features of a particular director throughout his or her works (116). The notion of 'free cinema' from the 'Free Cinema Movement' in British cinema, which was devoid of the commercialism of Hollywood, favored the personal, poetic interpretation of reality and perhaps on that level, Miró is somewhat of an auteur, although she is never completely the source of creation as a result of her assistant authors (Cook, 1987: 147). Viewers can recognize her ongoing interest in oppressive systems of authority, film and culture more generally.

Critics posit that in auteur theory, artistic decisions lend to the creation of the film - even if the film is based on ready-made narratives or relies heavily on pre-existing star images - because the auteur molds them to create his or her intentions (Dyer, 1979: 172). The auteur is not only engaged in forging a personal style with his or her material, but one that is adequately responsive to his or her situation as an artist in history (D. Andrew: 25:

Foucault in Rabinow: 111). Analysis of Miró's films must take into account this aspect of auteur theory since Miró does stamp features of Spanish history and some of her personal vision on texts - especially in La petición, Werther and Beltenebros - but ones which are co-scripted by others writing with Miró and only partially faithful to the original texts upon which they are based. Miró is not an entirely autonomous creator because she borrows from texts written by others, although her guiding hands or those of her co-scriptwriters, such as Camus, are behind her work to a large extent, while she also listens to the ideas of her entire team (Santa Eulalia, 1976).

Structuralism - which was concerned with the dissolution of the notion of man as a full, original presence and source of meaning - also adopted a different view of the role of the director in creating a film (Cook, 1987: 166). While traditional auteur criticism saw the work of art as the expression of the intentions of the individual artist, structuralism suggested that the 'author, far from controlling the meaning of the work, is an effect of the interaction of different texts or discourses which have their own autonomy' (166). Like the collective authorship arguments, structuralist criticism opposed the view of art as a closed, self-sufficient system in which the intentions of the auteur were to be found (170). Analogous to Heath, Dyer also agrees that the text expresses both the author's personality and his or her unconscious because expression sometimes escapes those who use it (Dyer, 1979: 173; Heath, 1973 cited in *ibid.*).

The post-1968 rejection of dominant, commercial cinema 'not only involved an attack on hierarchical production systems in favour of collective working methods', but also demands to demolish hierarchies between high art or art cinema and popular film, a feature held in common with postmodernism (Cook, 1987: 113-114, 173). Resistance to Hollywood cinema argued that Hollywood film was illusionistic and posited itself as truth

or 'natural' when it was not, rather like postmodern rejections of the classical film as fictional (173). The 'deconstructive auteur' relies on metafiction (for instance, intertextuality) and draws attention to the process of construction of his or her text, displacing himself or herself from the centre of the work (175). Even the reader can try to construct the meanings of the film (189), a strategy which Miró has acknowledged and favored: "Cada uno debe pensar lo que quiera. Cada espectador recibe las películas de una manera distinta" (Appendix 1: 3). A work can often generate meanings independently of the author, especially as a result of the reader; the film or artwork even becomes a sort of factory where the author and reader collaborate to produce different, conflicting meanings or interpretations. This notion means that any creative activity would be a 'work in progress' and could never provide a final or correct meaning (Cook, 1987: 183). Miró's ideas on film approximate her work to this definition, especially owing to her open endings.<sup>2</sup> Miró also prefers to let her material speak for itself rather than intervene to fix meaning for the viewer:

To change things, it is necessary to show them - to make the audience understand them so that each person can draw out the consequences from them, evaluates the situation in his or her own way and has a choice (cited in de Béchade: 54, my translation).

As Cook comments, such a strategy minimizes overt intervention by the director or author and distances him or her from the text (1987: 203).

### MIRÓ'S ASSISTANT AUTHORS.

One strategy for the rejection of the notion of individual authorship in new, revolutionary cinema and art which is applicable to Miró is the idea of collective authorship (1987: 192). Immediately after making La petición, the director herself alluded

to her 'teamwork' on set as opposed to sole authorship of films in interview, although critics who favour the traditional approach to auteur theory might interpret her remarks as those of an auteur who is in control of the working ensemble. The director's comments are worth pausing on briefly:

Aunque siempre sé lo que deseo [...] a veces me falta conocer la mejor manera de conseguirlo. Entonces, necesito rodearme con técnicos en los que confío. [...] El rodaje es un labor de conjunto y cuanto más integrado, mejor sale la película. [...] sé que para hacer lo que propongo, es imprescindible la colaboración de los demás (cited in Santa Eulalia, 1976).

Miró equally relies on collaborators before film shoots. For instance, co-scriptwriters such as Mario Camus, Juan Antonio Porto or Antonio Larreta supported Miró for her films and she takes inspiration from the ideas of others, even if they are not script-writing specialists (Pérez Millán: 278).<sup>3</sup> Her films consequently have examples of assistant authors in addition to actors - the topic of chapter 9 - whom she has pinpointed in interviews. Certain sections of La petición were inspired by the ideas of film director, Claudio Guérin, even though he did not write the whole script with Miró. The scene with the plant pot in the greenhouse was one example, as she remarked:

El plano del tiesto es un vestigio consciente de las teorías de Claudio Guérin. El decía que cuando en una historia va a ocurrir algo violento, alguna ruptura importante, tiene que haber una imagen que lo anuncie. Y en la escena del cobertizo me acordé de aquello y me dije: 'Aquí es donde debe pasar algo'. Y rompí el tiesto... (Pérez Millán: 104-105).

The way in which Teresa throws the oar into the water while she is in the boat with Miguel is a similar premonition of her murder of the mute with the oar inspired by Guérin's theories on film (105). Since La petición is an adaptation, Zola consequently becomes another prominent assistant author, as do Muñoz Molina and Goethe for Beltenebros and Werther respectively. Scriptwriters equally assisted Miró for her next film. Alfredo Matas

actually gave Miró the script of El crimen, but she was interested in the story herself; the production company decided to use both the ideas of Juan Antonio Porto and Lola Salvador's version of the script, although Miró did make some changes to it (125).

Editors are yet another group of professional assistants, although editors were once given the status of auteurs to the same extent as directors (Miguel Rubio, 1980). The editor, José Luis Maetesanz, worked with Miró on El crimen and Werther later on. Miró particularly likes his patience about her constant changes of opinion over good material while they edit, arguably a feature of auteurism in the director (230). However, despite her comment that "en el montaje, no me gusta escuchar otras opiniones", she admitted that she always worked with her particular editor, whose help she relied on (Santa Eulalia, 1976), and the editing process of her films is therefore not a solo effort. In addition to Maetesanz's input, she also borrows from the art of José Gutiérrez Solana and Spanish legal history for El crimen, which I will discuss in more detail in chapter 8. It is interesting to note Miguel Rubio's argument here that the military court adopted the view that Miró was the only guilty auteur of the film, thereby siding with the traditionalist conception of the individual auteur as opposed to the perhaps more democratic notion of collective authorship - advocated by Rubio - in revolutionary art (1980).

Pérez Millán believes that Gary Cooper is an auteurist film (174). Miró relied on assistant authors and some material that was not of her own making. Miró discussed the ways in which she changed its script with the assistance of colleagues. At first, Miró constructed Andrea as a secondary school teacher, until the producer, José Vicuña, suggested that Andrea should have a more modern job. José Antonio Páramo added his recommendation that Miró should turn Andrea into a film director, the job which Miró herself knew best, and she believes that Páramo's suggestion vastly improved the film

(Hidalgo: 57; Pérez Millán: 168). Antonio Larreta, her co-scriptwriter, wrote the 'escena de la despedida' between Andrea and the actor (Augustín González) after the rehearsal of Huis Clos (Pérez Millán: 176). The cinematographer, Carlos Suárez's photography helped to produce a cold-looking environment by using bluish background lights, which help to focus the audience's attention on Andrea's facial gestures, and by reinforcing the light on the windows (169). Some scenes in Gary Cooper actually happened by chance. For example, the scene in the park when Andrea sees a child on a swing, who Miró filmed spontaneously because she suddenly thought that he contrasted with Andrea's own situation representing life, although the way in which she depicts the child in Andrea's point-of-view shot in slow motion tends to minimize this contrast (175). Miró is ultimately behind the camera, but her use of chance elements for the narrative erodes any idea that she is original and omniscient, a situation of which she appears to be aware judging by a comment she made in interview: "No tengo la perspectiva suficiente como para saber siquiera si el resultado de mi trabajo es coherente y responde a la idea inicial" (Tele Radio, 1980: 13). In fact, Miró frequently finds fault with her films after they are finished, which is hardly the attitude of an omniscient auteur. For example, soon after El crimen was released in 1981, Miró remarked that "ahora encuentro que El crimen de Cuenca es bastante incompleta" (Beaumont: 24).

To return to the actual making of her works, not only did Alfredo Matas carry out half of the production of Gary Cooper, but Miró used houses belonging to friends for the setting in addition to her own flat (175-176).<sup>4</sup> The collaborative efforts on Gary Cooper reflect the film's economic arrangements to some extent: Miró set up a production cooperative, for which she assumed some responsibility, and encouraged friends and colleagues to contribute financially. Alfredo Matas funded half the costs and the rest of the

money came from Miró and her colleagues' production company 'Pilar Miró Producciones Cinematográficas'. Her crew also agreed to wait until the film had made enough money at the box office for their salaries (Miguel Rubio, 1980a). On the artistically creative side, Miró praised Mercedes Sampietro's acting skills and she seems to be the most active of Miró 's assistant authors in the film (Blanco y Negro, 1980; Pérez Millán: 176), as in Werther. Miró had a good professional rapport with her on set: Sampietro could understand exactly what Miró wanted to achieve without lengthy instructions, freeing Miró to concentrate on the character of the teacher (Pérez Millán: 228-229). On Werther's release, Miró said that Sampietro and Poncela "interpretaron perfectamente sus papeles tal como yo los ideaba. Son espléndidos actores" (de Montini, 1986: 135). Miró also made eulogistic remarks about the acting talents of the British actor, John Finch (Blanco y Negro, 1980) and Blanca Astiasu noted Ignacio López's similarities to his character, the boy in Werther. The fact that López had spent all of his life up until the shoot in Madrid meant that, comparable to the boy during his excursions with the teacher, he was very interested in the natural surroundings (Adelaida González, 1986: 178). Last but not least, Terence Stamp actually convinced Miró that he could play Darman better than any other actor, a belief that Miró now shares with him (Perales, 1991). A constant feature of her work alluded to in interview is the way in which Miró, to a large extent, in general allows all actors to develop their characters during shoots (Ordóñez, 1981: 31).

In the case of Hablamos, Antonio Larreta worked on the script with Miró, who did 50% of the production with Alfredo Matas (Pérez Millán: 185). The production company told Miró that the fall of a journalistic empire - her original idea - was uninteresting; Miró subsequently decided to hinge the plot around nuclear energy, a dramatic and real danger (Pérez Millán: 201; La Vanguardia, 1982). Although it was Miró's own decision to make

Werther, the script was a joint effort between Miró and Camus with cinematography by Hans Burmann. Juan Antonio Porto and Mario Camus once again worked on the script of Beltenebros with Miró, while Javier Aguirresarobe and Miró collaborated on Beltenebros's cinematography (Pérez Millán: 244, 262). In many parts of the film, as in the final cinema scene with Ugarte, Aguirresarobe chemically deformed the celluloid to take the colour from it, leaving it almost black and white with mere touches of colour to foster coldness (Heredero: 43-45). The street scenes in Poland not only have this special effect but real snow which enhances coldness and hostility. The facts behind the production and the burning of the film itself on screen highlight the fragility of celluloid because Aguirresarobe left a section of film in the projector to burn, showing the fallibility of the text's material, which has wider implications, just as his role as an assistant author assaults the notion of authorial originality. He remarked that projectionists often burnt films by accident during the showing of films if they left a section of the celluloid in the projector too long, an experience upon which he simply drew for Beltenebros (47-48). Aguirresarobe's is not the only visual input in Beltenebros because Miró borrowed from the works of the American artist, Edward Hopper, for the costumes, settings and selected thematics of Beltenebros, which I will discuss further in chapter 8. Miró's collaborators gave her particular assistance with the dance numbers in Beltenebros. José Nieto, the musical director for the film, spent time discussing details of the Gilda scene with both Miró and Kensit (Thompson: 38). Thompson also describes the suggestive and powerful choreographic talent of Goyo Montero, who created the tango and striptease numbers and rehearsed them carefully with Magda and Kensit (40-42). On a more practical level, Miró communicated with the British actors through an interpreter on set, Oscar Thompson, who translated her instructions on their acting and costumes and the script itself, together with

John Hopewell, before the shoot began (16-19). Thompson's book on the shoot, Beltenebros. Historia secreta de un rodaje, lists crew members in the UK, Poland and Spain, giving insights into the usually unseen collaborative efforts involved in the creative process.

Assistant authors are just some of the postmodern traits of Miró's cinema. These remarks on auteur theory and the deconstructive auteur fit many of the features of Miró's postmodern films - the metafictional textual strategies, intertextual borrowings and the active reader - which I will discuss before examining the role of culture - film, art and history - as assistant author on which Miró borrows. An understanding of assistant authors and differing notions of authorship are important to death of the author approaches to artworks, equally a feature of metafictional pieces, which I will now outline.

#### POSTMODERN METAFICTION: THE DEATH OF THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSIONISTIC NARRATIVE.

The notion of the artist in metafiction matches Barthes' theories and the post-1968, de-auterising argument that the author as god-like creator and original source of meaning is dead (Barthes, 1972: 7-8; Hutcheon, 1991: xvi; Waugh: 16). As Saïd remarked, the metafictional writer thinks less about writing originally but more about re-writing (Hutcheon, 1991: xvi; Saïd, 1983: 135). Both post-1968 death of the author approaches and postmodern metafiction have political implications behind them. For instance, Dina Sherzer has linked feminism and postmodernism, in which metafiction appears, as part of a decanonization process of authoritative power structures (156-158). In this chapter, I propose to examine the metafictionality of Miró's films in order to prove that her films' often unconventional content - in terms of gender issues and the criticism of oppressive

authorities - is coherently mirrored by their textual strategies to implicitly erode systems of order. As I emphasized in the Introduction, authorial originality and control have been linked to male authority in society: given that a classical, original, controlled and illusionistic text symbolizes masculinist authority inside and outside the work of art, the erosion of textual authority can be used, by implication, to target the various manifestations of a dogmatic system of order which Miró criticizes in her films' content - masculinism. In one way or another, Miró's films demonstrate a certain degree of self-consciousness, mostly because they display their intertextual sources of inspiration.

Film and photography are conventionally thought to be good mediums through which to truthfully depict reality. Classical fiction films apply textual strategies corresponding to those of the nineteenth-century mimetic or Realist novel and employ certain narrative devices - for instance, continuity editing or the 180-degree rule (Bordwell and Thompson: 218-230) - to make the viewer accept the illusion that he or she is watching scenes from real life (Stam: 10). However, photography nevertheless transforms reality using such features as soft focus, painterly effects or filters, developing its own signifying power rather than remaining a slave to truth, just as film has evolved beyond Realism (10-11). Metafiction, the antithesis of mimesis, defines fiction that encompasses within it some sort of commentary on its own narrative identity, usually as a result of any laying bare of the methods of fictional creation (Waugh: 4, 6). By doing so, reflexivity or metafiction interrogates aesthetic conventions and breaks with art as passive enchantment, subverting the Realist or classical cinematic idea that art can be a transparent, faithful medium of communication which presents facts and real characters, situating resistance within the form of the work itself (Stam: xi, 1; Waugh: 7).

Therefore, features of aesthetic forms that mirrored reality, such as chronological sequence or omniscient authors, disappear in metafiction (Waugh: 7). Not only is metafiction about the laying bare of artistic creative processes, it also constitutes an uncertainty or questioning about the power of art to convey truth or its abilities to be authoritative (2). Consequently, metafiction breaks artistic and extra-aesthetic norms and its self-conscious textual strategies become an implicit form of criticism, especially since postmodern art encourages the reader to question his or her beliefs in art rather than satisfying them (Hutcheon, 1988: 8, 45; 1991, 144; Stam: xiv; Waugh: 67). According to John Barth, postmodernism reflects a loss of belief in authoritative systems of order, not merely in the artistic texts which it metaphorically declares invalid (Hutcheon, 1991: 48; Waugh: 21). Metafiction explores the possible fictionality or performative nature of the world outside the literary fictional text (Waugh: 2). Postmodernism is equally aware of social practices and institutions that shape all sorts of discourses and texts: it makes readers question their assumptions about how they acquire knowledge and demands that the viewer critically examines certain features of discourse in life as well as art (Hutcheon: 1988, 54; 1991: 147). By implication, it questions the bases of any certainty or any standard of judgment which was - like death of the author approaches - partly a result of the de-centred revolt of the 1960s (57). Metafictional texts leave the reader with the idea that the most honest fiction is that which acknowledges its fictionality or might one add - owing to the fact that words are used hypocritically - the inadequacy of language to communicate truth. Through the awareness of their own fictiveness, artistic texts develop a political function to challenge and contest (Hutcheon, 1991: 49, 104, 134), of which Manuel Puig's El beso de la mujer araña (1976) is an example.

Analogous to Miró and her attack on oppressive systems, postmodernism challenges political and artistic institutions which were also questioned by de-auteurising approaches. Not only does postmodernism reveal the limitations of language and texts or problematise the role of the reader, it also erodes hierarchies. For instance, it fuses high art and popular culture in its project to avoid any false artistic categorization which creates a very artificial product (Hutcheon, 1988: 9, 20; 1991: 98-99, 134). Metafictional postmodernism does not so much deny as contest the 'truths' of reality and fiction - the human constructs by which we manage to live in our world (Hutcheon, 1988: 40). The left-wing of film theory, influenced by Althusser, believed that reflexivity was a political obligation as opposed to a means with which to renew outdated art (Stam: 13). In Althusser's conceptions on ideology, the dominant style of Realism made spectators see only dominant, bourgeois ideology in the artistic work. As Stam comments: 'Rather than give the public a cold, invigorating shower of demystification, realism gives it a bath in the tepid water of its own ideology' (ibid.). Postmodernism challenges models of unity and order, presenting multiple and provisional alternatives to traditional, fixed concepts (Hutcheon, 1988: 57, 59). Like Miró's films, postmodernism argued that to classify or categorize is a betrayal of experience, a falsification (Hutcheon, 1991: 89). It aims to assert difference and by virtue of its contradictions - which, like Cixous' theories, reject any neat binary opposition - it attempts to provoke change from within the text (Hutcheon, 1988: 6-7, 42-43).

Hutcheon believes that such self-reflexivity - with origins in the epoch of the Renaissance and the Romantic novel - has nowadays become a convention in itself (1991: 1-9; Stam: 2-3), but has nevertheless become a source of inspiration for many artists (Stam: xi) in film and literature, like Almodóvar or Woody Allen. Modernism, which aimed to

provoke the audience to make them notice faults outside the world of art - for example social issues - also indulged in self-reflexive discontinuity in terms of both space and time (7-8). Hopper's modernist paintings are an example of discontinuity and one of the metafictional references in Beltenebros. Discontinuity is also one of the attributes to which postmodernism resorts to break the charm of the spectacle and awaken the spectator's critical intelligence (9).

Stam defines three sorts of metafiction: the playful - as in Borges - the aggressive - such as *deshumanización* - and the didactic - for instance Brecht and Godard (Stam: xvi-xvii). The didactic is of most interest to an analysis of Miró's films, although Beltenebros does include some degree of dehumanization which Miró had read about in the writings of Ortega y Gasset (Montero, 1978: 8). La petición and Hablamos contain suggestions that stories are lies and that all human beings are mendacious, a key postmodern topic indicated by Stam (8-9). Miró also uses a form of Brechtian alienation which creates what Thomas Mann calls 'responsible disengagement' (quoted in W.R.Magretta: 252) in a set of 'readerly texts' which cause distancing, one way of forcing the reader to reject simplifying, subjective attitudes towards the story (key features noted by Larkin, 1977 cited in W.R.Magretta: 252). Modernism, especially in its practices of dehumanization, rejected the practice of realistic narrative, taking Cervantes' criticism of fictions to an extreme.

#### FEATURES OF METAFICTIONAL NARRATIVE STRUCTURE.

Metafictional works frequently interrupt the flow of narrative to foreground the specific means of literary and cinematic production (Stam: xi, xiii). As Christian Metz comments, the display of the apparatus is self-reflexive and this practice shows that the work is aware of its medium (Hutcheon, 1991: 99; Metz, 1991; Stam: xiv). In film, such as

the self-reflexive works by Godard in the New Wave, viewers may see people writing or filming, as in Godard's *Número Deux* (1975) (Stam: 17). This strategy can be extended to the view of cameras or video screens in film and matches somewhat the reminder to the viewer that he or she is viewing a film or reading a work by the inclusion of what Hutcheon defines as an *intradiegetic reader*, who appears in the narrative (Harcourt, 1981: 271; Horton: 319; Hutcheon, 1991: 143). For instance, the presence of a photographer reminds the viewers that cinema relies on a camera to create its illusions and underlines the technical components of cinema (Horton: 113).

Every text is what Kristeva calls a conscious or unconscious 'mosaic of citations' which absorbs other texts (Stam: 20). However, the metafictional work explicitly shows that many of its referents are fictive when the postmodern author turns to previous texts for inspiration (Hutcheon, 1991: 29; Stam: xvi) and the fiction of the original creative subject (the author) gives way to quotation or artistic plagiarism (Hutcheon, 1988: 11). Intertextual references in a film may be explicit or implicit, conscious or unconscious (Stam: 132), which explains why they are sometimes difficult for the audience or critics to identify. An intertextual reference can appear as an allusion in a verbal or visual evocation of another film or a clip in a new cinematic narrative (23). The metafictional frame-within-a frame structure results from intertextuality. *Mise-en-abîme* devices break frames and contest the reality of each text as a section plays out in miniature the processes of the text and viewing as a whole (Stam: xiv; Waugh: 22, 30). In addition to being an example of self-reflexivity, the co-existence of several cinematic genres in a work is part of postmodern contradictions, such as the mix of high and low culture (Hutcheon, 1988: 5).

Stylistic virtuosities and any open or overt parading of the text's style of writing are symptoms of metafiction (Hutcheon, 1991: 99; Stam: xi). For instance, metafictional

filmmakers can use colour (or the lack of it) to call attention to the artificiality of cinematic colour in all films (Stam: 256). Spanish cinema is a particularly rich source of this type of metafiction. For example, Almodóvar's overt use of colour in Matador or Aguirresarrobe's faded effects in sections of Beltenebros. Reflexive filmmakers can also exploit all kinds of film movement - movement within the shot, camera movement or movement created by montage (257): an optical camera movement, in which the camera zooms out or zooms in, is such a feature (258). For instance, in Beltenebros when the camera zooms in on Darman's reflection in the mirror of the warehouse which is also an intertextual feature borrowed by Miró from Carol Reed's The Third Man, in which the camera tracks forward to Harry, just after he is discovered in a doorway by Miss Schmit's cat. Dramatic or obvious camerawork - such as cocked angles - both disturbs and involves the viewer in the film through perception (Brunette: 202; Horton: 15, 17). Such disturbing shots, as Brunette comments, 'force us to consider [...] the nature of the activity we are involved in' (or watching a film) (200). Filming with a distorting lens or with the camera at an angle gives a sense of being off-balance in addition to its reflexivity (T.J. Jefferson in Horton: 233). Dissolves were used as ellipses in classical film, but in the post- or anti-classical tradition constitute another sort of narrative movement that can become reflexive owing to their fluidity and because they remind viewers of the faculties of the medium of film (Stam: 258). Sound can also be self-reflexive. In classical, illusionist film, sound reconstitutes a recognizable, auditory world and highlights the film's mimetic powers; reflexive films make sound clash with the images or exploit sound to de-realize the image (261), strategies in which Miró indulges to a certain extent, as I will discuss below.

Metafictional works also contain direct addresses to the reader from characters or narrators which overtly point to subject positions within them, those of the reader and

producer. Direct addresses to the camera shatter film's illusion of fiction and its status as a sealed-off entity (xiv). Fiction films usually shelter viewers from the glance of the actors because viewers look at the people on-screen who do not look back at them (59). These sealing-off strategies are part of cinema's construction of spectators as voyeurs: one of the conventions of naturalistic film was that the actors should not address the audience because it was assumed that spectators would feel uncomfortable if they were challenged or discovered in their position as voyeurs (40). A similar metafictional strategy occurs in surfiction, when a narrator overtly enters into a text (Waugh: 14). Although dissolves are a cinematic way of matching or portraying dream sequences they can, as I have argued above, highlight the tools of cinematic character portrayal as well as the medium's technical capabilities (Stam: 37). Metz argued that any sort of subjective imagery offered a degree of reflexivity (Metz, 1991 cited in Stam: xiv) and uncanny flashbacks are self-reflexive (T.J.Jefferson in Horton: 232). In addition to technical experimentation, advances in point-of-view make film anti-illusionist (Isaacs: 130). Dehumanization of a character is another metafictional strategy stemming from the reflexive features of modernism and the hallucinatory states often reflected by dehumanization are equally self-reflexive (Waugh: 22, 31).

Cinema - especially the classical film - traditionally held spectators in the security of a willing 'suspension of disbelief'. However, in line with de-auteurising approaches to art, this text-spectator relationship could be transformed into a more actively questioning one. The fault with mainstream cinema was that its escapist nature encouraged the audience to forget harsh social realities (Cook, 1985: 196). The extreme readability of traditional cinemas also does not force the viewer to reflect on what he has seen. Akin to postmodernism, counter cinema interrogated the strategies which sustained suspension of

disbelief and narrative coherence so as to produce new knowledge 'which would lead to analysis and understanding', like didactic, Brechtian reflexivity outlined above (Brunette: 205).

In metafiction, readers are given an active role in the construction of meaning - unlike illusionistic art which solicited reader passivity - and become co-authors of works of their own creation or interpretation (Horton: 221; Hutcheon, 1991: 39; Waugh: 13). In line with de-auteurising approaches to art and the strategies of counter cinema, metafiction turns the reader into a collaborator instead of a consumer and the reader partly fills the author's position, almost equating the acts of reading and writing (Hutcheon, 1991: xv-xvi, 27). Reading and writing are both creative activities, but in postmodernism the power and creativity of reading intensifies (36). The postmodern reader or viewer must frequently sort out multiple levels of narration in the text, accepting responsibility for the act of reading and decoding and is therefore disturbed and forced out of acquiescence (39, 49). Alienation occurs when our conditioned sense of causality in films - the classical narrative mode of beginning middle and end - is challenged and by extension, so too are all systems of meaning interrogated (Brunette: 200). Non-linear plots can frustrate or distance the reader and are a result of metafiction's aim to change the way viewers think and read (Hutcheon, 1991: 56, 158).

In metafiction and, to a certain extent most death-of-the-author approaches, both the reader and writer have not only the duty, but are given the right to exercise their own imagination (63). Certain genres actually favour the participation of viewers or the production of accomplice readers. The detective story is one of these as readers are involved in the discovery of clues (74). However, with or without a detective plot, intertextuality in particular obliges readers to behave as active accomplices or 'detectives'

in order to discover the original sources of intertextual references. Leaving blanks in a text promotes active reader involvement: the metafictionist lets the reader complete the open 'work', granting him or her the freedom to use his or her own imagination (142, 152). Derrida argued that closure was neither possible nor desirable and postmodernism likewise contests narrative closure in addition to textual originality (Hutcheon, 1988: 12, 22, 59). Metafiction offers no comfort which is traditionally supplied by a sense of an ending or resolution (Waugh: 12).

It is often thought that novels require greater participation from the reader than films because they demand that the reader visualizes scenes. Edel argues that novels make us active, imaginative readers whereas films reduce us to inert spectators (1974: 188). Magretta and Magretta disagree with Edel and the description they give highlight's the potential of film to actively engage viewers:

In watching (scenes in films), we must ourselves perform the interpretation; we must 'read' the event before us [...]. We are able to do this by attending not only to the language of words, gestures and facial expressions, but also to cinematic languages of framing and shot distance (1981: 292).

Fassbinder stated specifically that he wanted the audience to be actively engaged in a process of imagining, to 'read' the film. He said that films were different to novels, in which the reader has to imagine what a character looks like. In film, the setting and character are there, already complete, and provide scope for spectatorial passivity, which he tried to counteract in *Effi Briest* (1974) (Thomsen, 1976: 46). In *Effi Briest*, the act of reading required of the audience is not simply a more intensive and critical effort of interpretation, but an act of producing a text (W.R.Magretta: 250). Barthes' distinction between readerly and writerly texts is useful here. According to Barthes, texts can be an uneven mixture of readerly and writerly models: the readerly text (*lisible*) is a closed or

traditional text which the reader approaches as a consumer 'with no more than the [...] freedom either to accept or reject the text', but the writerly text is marked by the limitless plurality of meanings (Barthes, 1974: 4), rather like Kuhn's notion of feminine film-making or Cixous' concept of feminine writing (Kuhn, 1982: 11-12, 16-17; Moi: 105-106). In exploring actively the play of intelligibility, the reader becomes a producer of the text, rewriting the text in the process of reading it (W.R.Magretta: 250-251).

Metaficitonsists intend to disturb the reader through their textual strategies (Hutcheon: 151). Miró's metafictional texts therefore not only disturb the viewer through their form, but also their often *tremendista* and unresolved or open content. This is not to say that Miró favours self-reflexivity as an omniscient model. As Stam remarks, a lot of films in his study of reflexivity do not turn to metafictional practices as omniscient models to imitate: many films employ some self-reflexivity, without allowing such a practice to over-run the text, rather like Miró, whose films include metaficitonality but who does not use the aesthetic if it does not fit her particular film. Just as Miró avoids dogmatic classification in her sexual politics, she seems to maintain this posture in her textual policies. As Stam argues:

No textual dogmatism will simplistically pit "good" reflexive texts against "bad" illusionistic texts. Instead of a binaristic division between reflexive/non-reflexive, we will find a nuanced spectrum or continuum of reflexivity (xvi).

### METAFICITON IN MIRÓ'S FILMS.

Miró's films are all metafictional in one way or another. La petición, Werther and Beltenebros are adaptational intertexts, based on literary works; El crimen - which I will discuss as an example of historiographic metafiction - turned to history and the Spanish

literary traditions of *coplas de ciego* and *tremendismo* for inspiration in addition to the art of Gutiérrez Solana and Goya; Beltenebros is perhaps Miró's most self-conscious film with its evident theatricality, exposé of the notions of writing and references to previous films and genres. At the other end of the spectrum, Hablamos is Miró's least self-conscious film, but even so contains references to the genre of the disaster movie and French literature as well as alienation through the Geiger counter's intrusions into the sound track. Miró's wide reading and viewing of films (Pérez Millán: 279) and her comments on the ways in which culture influences people, help to explain why she is a metafictional director (Appendix 1: 1-2). I will examine Miró's discussions and uses of art in the later section on art in her films in chapter 8, but now, let us examine some of the other metafictional features of Miró's cinema.

### DISTANCING DEVICES.

Miró has indulged in self-reflexive technical experimentation and advances in point-of-view, possibly inspired by Bergman, one of her favorite directors, who critics have described as self-reflexive (Isaacs: 130; Pérez Millán: 279).<sup>5</sup> Miró had already experimented with form during her earlier television work. For example, in an episode of the adaptation of Balzac's Eugenia Grandet (1977), the protagonists (Eusebio Poncela and Carmen Maura) turn towards the camera and interrupt the action (116-7). Her films are an extension of earlier formal experimentation. For instance, Andrea's strange point-of-view with crooked camera angles on her trajectory to the operating theatre as she looks at the walls from the trolley, which Pérez Millán describes as 'inquietante' (168); Darman's point-of-view constructed with the technical features of film - such as dissolves for flashbacks - or the vertical shots of stairs in Poland are also rather alienating. Although dissolves are a

cinematic way of matching or portraying dream sequences, they highlight the tools of cinematic character portrayal as well as the medium's technical capabilities (Stam: 37). Darman's dissolves in his bath-tub are part of a dream-like sequence and subjective time, but they equally highlight the medium of film. Dehumanization of a character is another metafictional strategy conveyed by a disturbing display of subjectivity which relies on the artifice of the camera for its construction. For example, Rebeca in Beltenebros filmed in an extreme close-up in Darman's hallucinatory, drugged point-of-view. Miró also explores this possibility with sound in Beltenebros because Ugarte's voice in the cinema - a site of fiction - roars and seems inhuman. In addition to experiments in point-of-view, Miró also uses movements as distancing devices. For example, in Beltenebros, with the optical movement of the camera, when the camera zooms in on Darman's reflection in the mirror of the warehouse. This optical movement is also an intertextual feature borrowed from Carol Reed who has consciously inspired Miró, as I will discuss in chapter 8. Miró said that Beltenebros enters a less Realist phase when Darman goes from his room in the Hotel Nacional to the roof. She gave the scene gray light, with Aguiresarrobe's assistance to take colour out of the film, and a markedly different and haunting sort of music to achieve this effect. Miró thought that Muñoz Molina's novel had a well developed tendency to cross between Realism and fiction when Darman passed from one atmosphere of the real to follow the action in another environment (Pérez Millán: 254), which she translated to her film. Pérez Millán believes that the roof-top scene most reveals the influence of Reed's The Third Man (1949) (256): it is a highly stylized scene due to the camera angles and its location amidst the dramatic columns on the roof of the Bellas Artes building.

Miró also achieves distancing in terms of the representation of both subjectivity and time. Narratologists use the term 'story time' to mean the time of the imagined events of

the fiction and 'discourse time' for the time it takes to watch a film. Narrative artists can emphasize the discordances between story and discourse time, a discordance which classical films attempted to masque by skipping over the 'dead spaces' through ellipses; self-reflexive films often aim to highlight the shifting relations between story and discourse (Stam: 140) - comparable to Miró and Darman's flashbacks in Beltenebros. Flashbacks to Teresa's childhood in La petición and the re-ordering of the story are minor examples of this. Within this sort of self-consciousness, stylistic flights and essayistic digressions are also distancing (146) in that they decelerate the flow of the narrative. Although Werther's classes on Sophism are thematically relevant to the film's questioning nature, they nevertheless retard the narrative of his relationship.

According to Morin, editing can encourage the spectator to suspend disbelief (148). However, he refers to continuity editing: Miró's editing is often used to pull the viewer out of disbelief and show that the text is a text. In El crimen, editing is particularly excessive, fast and violent, especially in the scene between Dolores and Taboada in the cemetery. In addition to the alienatory Geiger counter sound in Hablamos, Miró breaks image and sound synchronization in Gary Cooper during Andrea's first consultation and in the scene when she meets Bernardo. Loss of synchronization is a disquieting, alienatory device which detaches viewers from the text while it matches Andrea's own disturbance during two particular crisis points in her existence (Pérez Millán: 169). Ugarte's voice at the end of Beltenebros is also very loud and resonates around the cinema, intermingled with the soundtrack of the film. That, in itself, is distancing - without taking into consideration its location in an intertextual, theatrical sphere - and disturbs viewers as a strange, self-reflexive use of sound.

### MISE-EN-ABÎME DEVICES.

There are several intradiegetic readers, writers or directors in Miró's films, another feature of metafiction. Darman sells books for a living, looks at maps to find Andrade's hiding place, reads Rebeca's novels and sees her writing them; the teacher in Werther, whose life revolves around books professionally and privately, reads books and love letters, recites poetry with Carlota and writes because he is a translator; Miguel also recites poems and Teresa mentions reading Verlaine in La petición; Luis María and Víctor have read thematically reflexive French literature; Andrea in Gary Cooper looks at her copy of Little Women, reads her scripts or love letters from Bernardo and Mario's profession as a journalist brings yet more intradiegetic writers into the film; characters in El crimen are seen listening to and reading the *coplas de ciego*. In Beltenebros, Rebeca 2 is an intradiegetic performer creating her image for the stage.

The presence of a photographer reminds the viewers that cinema relies on a camera to create its illusions and underlines the components of cinema (Horton: 113). Self-conscious works often depict the artist as protagonist and use the creative process as a plot, like Miró, above all in Gary Cooper (Isaacs: 130). Andrea makes a tape recording to send to Bernardo as well as films and television programmes and the sound of Andrea's tape appears when Bernardo plays it in his car. Begoña and her technical team's shoot of Andrea for a report is yet another *mise-en-abîme* narrative in the film. As Pérez Millán comments, viewers see the point-of-view of Begoña's camera, not Miró's (169). This makes viewers feel that they are witnessing sections of another film or report. The filming and editing of Huis Clos on screen again provides a Chinese box structure in addition to its existentialist, thematic significance within the main narrative. If a character assigns precise movement and attitudes to actors or other characters, that character becomes a mirror of the

director or producer (Stam: 64), which is literally the case with Andrea. These self-reflexive devices are matched by Ugarte's production of fantasy in Beltenebros when he directs Rebeca 2 as Rebeca Osorio, which becomes a 'play within a film'. Walter's profession as a projector in the Cine Universal also injects such self-consciousness into the narrative. In addition to the fact that Huis Clos constitutes a *mise-en-abîme* device, the intertext has other repercussions. In Fellini's 8 1/2 (1963), there is a double mirror construction, as Stam comments: ' [...] it's a film about a director [...] who is reflecting himself into his film' (102). Andrea films Huis Clos which also reflects her own predicament and she edits the Especial Víctor Manuel y Ana Belén, which in reality was one of the programmes Miró directed in 1977 (Pérez Millán, 115-116, 173). Metafiction can result in a film through the mere presence and flickering of a television set (Harcourt, 1981: 271): Andrea switches on her television set to watch the news, making metafictionality all pervasive.

Metafiction in Gary Cooper also possesses a political or questioning purpose as a result of the on-screen presence of Begoña and her report for RTVE on Andrea's prize. Miró seems to have taken a special and self-conscious interest in the interview mode, rather like Woody Allen who mocks the interview and documentary genre's potential as media of truth with his historiographic metafiction in Zelig (1983). Miró herself made and continues to make documentaries - which often rely heavily on interviews - before and after Gary Cooper. For example, Nacho Duarto y la danza (1992). As in the feminist documentary films of the 1970s examined by Kotz which became a site of women's empowerment and self-articulation, Miró is able to show the gaps and the true power relations within the process. By revealing that interviews are not transparent but are instances of highly coded social positions and discourses, there is an undercutting of the

conventional realist uses of interview material. Miró and feminist documentaries present a set of relations and discourses which viewers are to read and understand rather than absorb and unquestioningly accept. These different ways of presenting interviews and alternative interview techniques allow for the problematic beyond purely textual strategies to emerge, such as gender issues (Kotz: 57-59). Miró certainly alerts the reader to the conditions of textual production, both here in this interview and in El crimen, where she questions the production of historical and official texts, as I will discuss later. Andrea can and cannot express her views and, most importantly, she does not have the freedom to criticize the male dominated Spanish Television industry. Her interview becomes a sort of performance. She is caught up in the power relations existing between herself and the interviewing body, not just Begoña but patriarchy. RTVE has its own rules and forbade its employees to criticize it whether they were male or female. However, viewers cannot divorce implicit gender issues for this scene. Through documentary metafiction - an attack on the authority of texts as signifiers of truth and revelation of their constructedness - Miró not only uses the interview as an expose and criticism of the trappings of oppression and patriarchy. She also gives the audience a glimpse of the real Andrea presenting her own critical opinions and personality traits, denied to other viewers by censorship. This process mirrors the use of the mask in the operating theatre which obscures Andrea's face and the ways in which the surgeons silence her by not giving her the chance to answer, but merely nod. Miró explores themes beyond the gender issues implied in the interview. As Stam remarks, any sort of criticism (or self-criticism) within a film is self-reflexive (155). Andrea not only exposes RTVE's interviews as false accounts of any given situation, but she also criticizes her own work as "mierda". Within this thematic vein, Miró and Aguirresarobe analogously show that celluloid is unreliable and fallible in Beltenebros as

the film burns in the projector. Carmen Maura has a cameo role in Hablamos as a photographer in the press conference, where Víctor lies for his company. The intertextual presence of such a well known actress, especially the resonances of her role as Begoña in Gary Cooper, is important here in addition to the fact that an appearance of a photographer is self-reflexive. Her presence in Hablamos indicates the fictionality of reports on the plant and the pretense that nuclear energy is safe and emphasizes Miró's thematic concerns in Hablamos.

Essayistic digressions, a type of *mise-en-abîme* device, to some extent break the outer frame of the narrative (Stam: xi). Werther's classroom scenes have such a self-reflexive quality. While the teacher's classes on Sophism are thematically related to his profession - on the film's realistic level - they are also a sort of intertextual digression from the main plot. He tells his pupils, Carlota and her son stories within the main plot, just as Carlota tells him stories about her mother in which Miró once again breaks with sound and image synchronization, her form therefore mirroring the irrational content of Carlota's information about her mother. They match with the authorial intrusions (Stam: xi) - another metafictional feature - of El crimen in which the authors of the film interrupt the narrative with textual quotations, even though the latter are part of the film.

Shots filmed through windows put an inside frame around the action which reminds us of the exterior frame constituted by the film image itself (Brunette: 200). Door frames and mirrors have an analogous effect. Such inner framing devices are not only part of Miró's own cinema, but equally a feature of one of her sources of inspiration - Hopper's paintings, which I will discuss more fully in the section on art in chapter 8 - which is in evidence when Darman is in his hotel room and framed by mirrors and the window. The mute and viewers see Teresa framed by her window in La petición, a film which uses

window frames to remind viewers that Teresa is constructed as a fictional character within them, who is duplicitous to the mute and pretends to others to be what she is not. In *Beltenebros*, the door frames near to Bernal's office make the dance floor or ballroom seem like a stage, as the party guests exit en masse when Darman emerges from the office. Luque is pictured leaving but framed by the doorway. The camera then focuses on Darman as he notices the band and Magda. Darman has been framed by the doorway, just as he has been set up as an object for her gaze in the scene. The outline of the hotel corridor in Madrid similarly frames Rebeca as she arrives and knocks on Darman's door.

### INTERTEXTUALITY.

As I have already pointed out, Miró has read widely and viewed many films, demonstrating an interest in and knowledge of various genres in her works: a period genre in *La petición*, historical film in *El crimen*, Melodrama in *Gary Cooper* and film noir in *Beltenebros*. Her passion for other genres manifests itself as part of her work's stylistic intertextuality. Following Stam's remarks that multiple styles in one particular work remind viewers of the 'multiplicity' of styles available to an artist and that self-reflexive works are often stylistic exercises (164), let us examine Miró's stylistic intertextuality.

Theatricality and excessive acting in *La petición* link to masochism's project to mock the law and conventions of guilt. Teresa and Miguel's acts are certainly very suspended and excessive and Teresa's expression of guilt is theatrical or fictional, her fear of being caught correspondingly becoming a parody. Miró has commented on the sonic excesses of *La petición*, which indicated Teresa's lunacy, although Miró did not intend them: "Me equivoqué en algunos momentos con la música porque me empeñé en que hubiera una voz de soprano y creo que no funciona, además de utilizarla en exceso" (Pérez

Millán: 104). The colorful, period setting of La petición resembles the films of Visconti, such as Senso (1952), and the setting highlights the ficitonality of the acting. This may not be the only time Miró referred to Visconti in her films. Pérez Millán has identified a eulogistic parodic reference to the first sections of Death in Venice (1971) at the beginning of Werther and Miró named Visconti as one of her favorite directors (Appendix 1: 4; Pérez Millán: 279).<sup>6</sup> However, the opening sequences in Werther also share similarities with Bergman's Summer With Monika (1952). There are dissolves around the port of Stockholm at the start of the film, including scenes of shipbuilding and cranes. This may have been Miró's reference, especially given the influence of Bergman's technical features on her works. Bergman sometimes keeps the speaker off-screen, as does Miró when the teacher visits Carlota's office. For instance, in Through A Glass Darkly (1961), Minus shouts at Karin to tell her to keep away from him. In the scene, Bergman gives the viewers a reverse shot to Karin's face and the camera remains focused on Karin while Minus tells her to refrain from kissing him. Just as Minus is finishing his list of instructions, the camera cuts to his face. Bergman has therefore prioritized Karin's reactions through the grammar of the camera. When Minus admits to Karin later on that he loves her inside a shipwreck, Bergman keeps the two in the frame together, by avoiding shot/reverse-shot patterns, analogous to Miró in some of the scenes between Carlota and the teacher. There are other thematic similarities between Bergman and Miró. His films seem to concentrate on emotion rather than developing elaborate plots, as does Miró in Gary Cooper. For instance, in Autumn Sonata (1978), the plot is bare, but the protagonists, who are mother (Ingrid Bergman) and daughter (Liv Ullman) prioritize emotion as they discuss their relationship.

Even though the main stylistic dialogue in Beltenebros is with film noir, other genres are in evidence as intertexts. Miró wanted José Luis Gómez, one of the Spanish actors whose talent she greatly admires, to exaggerate his performance (E. de Juan, 1977; Pérez Millán: 264). Not only is it theatrical, but it is also inspired by other films and in a semi-*mise-en-abîme* section. The theatrical nature of his performance is reinforced by two features. Firstly, he is on a stage in front of a film and the screen, thereby juxtaposed with fictional characters. Secondly, Ugarte is giving a speech or monologue, the fictionality of which can be explained by Harcourt's comments:

In the cinema [...] the device of the extended monologue acquires the force of italics. Because (classical) film tends towards naturalistic representation, in which people on the screen pretend to be speaking like people in real life, characters who speak in monologue appear as highly theatrical or 'denaturalized' (1981: 267).<sup>7</sup>

The setting itself is excessive and theatrical owing to the fire. Given Bazin's comments on the way in which cinematic decor infects the actor with drama, Ugarte's performance is made doubly histrionic.<sup>8</sup>

Beltenebros and La petición seem to be in an intertextual stylistic dialogue with modern horror films and Hitchcock in addition to the Gothic. According to Williams, new psychological horror films, such as Hitchcock's Psycho (1960), differ in terms of structure to classical horror film and Hitchcock is one of the directors to whom Miró refers through Andrea in Gary Cooper. Hitchcock's Hollywood films overlap with film noir (Deborah Thomas, 1992a: 85) and at the very least, Miró's themes in Beltenebros seem to resemble those of Hitchcock. Physical imperfections, such as being crippled or deviations from masculine wholeness and toughness, affect Miró and Hitchcock's characters - Valdivia/Ugarte in Beltenebros, James Stewart who suffers from vertigo in Vertigo (1958) and a broken leg in Rear Window (1954). Some of their characters reject the demands of

masculinism, comparable to Luis María in Hablamos. For example, in Hitchcock's Shadow of a Doubt (1943) where, as Thomas comments, Uncle Charlie has a desire to relinquish the power and responsibilities of adult masculinity, a desire represented in his tiredness, his recumbent postures and his fatal fall from the train (Thomas, 1992a: 85). Miró depicts masculinsim and envy as two possible causes of trauma to Teresa (envy of men's freedom) and Ugarte (covetousness of other men's success).

Beltenebros is connected to the Gothic through the novel's allusions to Daphne du Maurier and Hitchcock's Rebecca (1940) in the writings of Rebeca Osorio (Bermúdez: 21; Punter: 411). To some extent, the Gothic genre had already been inscribed into the material and Miró turns to the genre as a cinematic, stylistic intertext. Gothic fiction examines and analyses suppressed impulses, taboo subjects and repressive systems, such as the Church or State: it acknowledges that to channel sexual activity into narrow confines of conventionality is repressive and dangerous. It is a denial or repression of Eros which returns as threatening violence and the genre shows that the powers of civilization are therefore fallible (Punter: 411, 417, 419, 425-426). As Punter comments, Gothic fiction is almost never didactic because it is too tentative or hesitant about its own perceptions; it also showed sympathy for the monster, analogous to two of Miró's films, La petición and Beltenebros. Also germane to Miró's practice is the way that, as Williams has suggested, the monster becomes the central figure of the narrative and the audience is asked to identify with the monster's point-of-view and sympathizes with the traumas which caused the monster to become abnormal (1984: 90). Teresa in La petición escapes patriarchy's control and civilizing processes and Beltenebros examines the effects of masculinist systems on Ugarte with background details about his life to show that he is a victim of Spanish masculinism and envy just as much as he is an adherent to or exponent of

masculinism. Gothic characters are exaggerated owing to the genre's interest in the return of the repressed (Punter: 409) and if Ugarte and Teresa seem excessive or parodic - Gothic genres being a sort of parody - it is a form of stylistic, intertextual criticism from Miró aimed at what has repressed them (396).

Given that Beltenebros is set in Madrid, the place of origin of the *esperpento*, it is feasible to argue that Ugarte's excessive performance is an example of that genre in addition to the Gothic.<sup>9</sup> The *esperpento* is certainly metafictional and alienating because it corresponds to Ortega's notions of dehumanization. Both it and the Gothic have critical implications embedded in their excessive, deformed styles. As Stam comments, self-reflexivity can lay bare the devices of art while exposing the mechanisms of society and can consequently have a cultural or political dimension (Stam: 166). Miró's stylistic and thematic dialogue with the Gothic genre and the *esperpento* has such political implications vis-à-vis her representation of gender and repression.

Beltenebros is a mixture or palimpsest of stylistic references. Miró's use of the Gothic and the *esperpento* in Beltenebros may well be unconscious, but she has identified some specific references. For example, Pérez Millán believes that the influence of The Third Man as one of Miró's chosen stylistic references is noticeable in the general tone of Beltenebros, the planning of several of the action scenes and the atmosphere based on lighting and photography that is most apparent in the shoot out on top of the Hotel Nacional, which is very stylized owing to the camera angles and setting (251, 255-256). Dramatic camerawork and cocked camera angles are a feature of Miró's works, such as Gary Cooper, but she also provides a double or even triple distancing through the intertextual sources of these distancing devices. They are features of her cinematic, stylistic intertexts in Beltenebros - both film noir and The Third Man.

Stylistic intertextuality appears in other films by Miró. In addition to Saura's tutelage, she has mentioned Sam Peckinpah's films (de Béchade: 54), which may have influenced her depiction of violence in El crimen and elsewhere. Saura's La caza had great impact on Peckinpah, who reportedly told Saura that seeing it changed his life. Peckinpah adapted these same strategies of dramatic pauses and varied rhythms in films like The Wild Bunch (1969) (Kinder, 165; Hopewell, 76). Peckinpah wanted to make Cela's La familia de Pascual Duarte into a film before Ricardo Franco directed Pascual Duarte (1975) and has therefore been influenced by *tremendismo* in Spanish culture which possibly exerts a reciprocal influence on Miró (Kinder: 184). Perhaps Miró borrows from *tremendismo* in Saura or all of these cultural texts have influenced her simultaneously.

#### SPECIFIC INTERTEXTUAL REFERENCES IN MIRÓ'S FILMS.

There are various literary and cinematic *mise-en-abîme* devices in Gary Cooper and later films by Miró. Andrea utters a quotation from Shakespeare's Hamlet when she is in Julio's bedroom. As Stam comments, Elizabethan theatre is a self-reflexive genre: Hamlet foregrounds its own artifice through the play-within-a play device. Hamlet recommends naturalistic acting to the players - holding a mirror up to nature, which is the aim of mimetic art - that underlines the theatricality of a play in which he is the protagonist by alluding to the theatrical conventions (3). This literary reference somewhat mirrors Andrea's function as a director of a play within a film. Critics, such as Besas, noticed similarities between Miró's film and Agnès Varda's Cleo de cinq à sept (1961) (Besas, 1981: 20). Cleo - who fears the worst after tests and later discovers that she has cancer - attends a tarot card reading in which the death card emerges. Comparable to Andrea, Cleo is given to looking at herself in the mirror and both enter a park in the course of the

narrative. Cleo, a singer, remains stoical but also receives help from a quasi-absent male, a soldier she meets in the park who is about to leave for Algeria, but accompanies her to collect the test results, although she does not tell her friends or her manager. Cleo's male doctor, who is in a rush to leave his place of work, shows a lack of consideration towards his patient, abruptly telling her that two weeks of radiotherapy should cure her cancer without any other reassurance.

Directors can hide other texts that have influenced them or they can cite their sources in 'cinematic footnotes' in the form of titles or film posters (Stam: 134). Some directors do so by leaving clues or pictures within the narrative, like Miró's films whose viewers must be accomplices to notice such evidence. The stills in Andrea's box are intertextual *mise-en-abîme* images, examples of the photographic works of others borrowed by Miró and they also highlight her cinematic interests. Miró refers to a possible source of inspiration for Hablamos in the film. Luis María's passing reference to Sartre's La Nausée encapsulates the film's thematics as I argued in chapter 4, but it only functions as a relevant intertext for intellectual viewers, turning the narrative into a 'writerly' film. As Stam comments, La Nausée is a modernist working-out of the theme that all human beings are liars:

This is what fools people: a man is always a teller of tales, he lives surrounded by his stories and the stories of others, he sees everything that happens to him through them; and he tries to live his own life as if he were telling a story (Sartre, 1938: 60).

Sartre's protagonist, Roquentin, argues that if stories are lies, history is a complete fabrication, anticipating historiographic metafiction (*ibid.*). The reference harks back to El crimen, whose critical historiography I will discuss later on in this chapter. Roquentin chooses to abandon his project to write about a historical figure as a result of such insights.

For the modernists in particular, all historians and all human beings, are "unreliable narrators" (ibid.). Hablamos also borrows from the disaster movie genre, particularly The China Syndrome (James Bridges, 1979), to which Miró compares her film negatively: "Al verla ahora, tengo la impresión de que es una mala copia de una mala película americana [...]" (Pérez Millán: 201).

In Beltenebros, viewers see pictures of Rita Hayworth in Gilda (Charles Vidor, 1946) and other stars - such as Cooper - by Rebeca's mirror, rather like the sequence of Andrea's memory box which shows Miró's sources of inspiration. In comparison to other films by Miró, Beltenebros relies most overtly on intertextuality. The song, costume and Kensit's dance are copies of Gilda. Not only is it an intertextual homage to Gilda, but it is also crucial to the meaning of Beltenebros itself and the development of Rebeca 2. Gilda's audience is made up of well-dressed Americans, whereas Rebeca performs in an atmosphere of sordid illegality (Pérez Millán: 256).<sup>10</sup> Ugarte watches Rebeca/Gilda as opposed to Johnny (Glen Ford), but even Ford's slapping of Gilda appears in Beltenebros in Darman's hotel room when Darman hits Rebeca. Pérez Millán believes that Darman and Johnny have similar reasons for hitting Gilda/Rebeca, although in my opinion, Darman's situation is quite different. Johnny slaps Gilda when he discovers that she works as a sort of prostitute whereas Darman is fully aware of Rebeca's profession. The medium of cinema lets Miró play with the gaze and allows her to employ some of the camera movements from Gilda to reinforce the notion of intertextuality which in itself erodes and assists the camera's grammar to evade the voyeuristic control of males since it assaults the metaphor of literary paternity and, by implication, authoritative systems of order.

For these reasons, the allusion to Gilda in Beltenebros is by no means gratuitous. Miró has briefly explained her colourful addition to Muñoz Molina's text:

Es una copia literal. Pero no por el gusto de copiar, sino porque el espectáculo en el que trabaja Rebeca es una copia de una película que en aquella época estaba marcando a este país. No es 'Gilda'. No estamos en América de los años cuarenta, sino en la España de los sesenta. Me pareció útil, atractivo y sugerentemente peligroso hacer una copia de Rita Hayworth interpretando ese número. Pero por muy exacta que sea, el contexto es muy diferente. El paralelismo acaba ahí (Pérez Millán: 256-257).

However, the parallel between Rebeca/Kensit, Hayworth and the characters they play in both films is richer than Miró leads us to believe and, whether Miró intended it or not, the implications that the use of the similar personae of these two female singer/dancer stars brings to Beltenebros are relevant and inject complexity and a mirroring, metafictional feature into the narrative.

Hayworth herself has been identified with vamp roles, for example in Orson Welles' The Lady from Shanghai (1948) and Mamoulian's Blood and Sand (1941); her provocative, physical image did show highly erotic traits (Geoff Brown: 11; Shipman: 290, 292), but there was more to Hayworth's persona. Dyer describes Hayworth's image as sexual for the woman herself, soft and blurry (1986: 57), terms which could equally be applied to Kensit and Kensit's pleasure in her own performance. However, Hayworth's films comprise angelic roles, such as a frigid daughter wooed by Fred Astaire in You were Never Lovelier (William A. Seiter, 1942). Hayworth, who often felt shy (Shipman: 290, 292), began playing small dancing parts in films such as Charlie Chan in Egypt (Louis King, 1935). Hayworth is also a star associated with artifice in that Columbia studios changed her name and her first husband, Ed Judson, altered her hair colour to auburn (Brown, 11; Shipman, 291). Rebeca's wig and costume thereby remind the spectators of the artifice of Hayworth and all performers. Although she was packaged by Hollywood

according to Brown (11), her own talent did burst out; consequently, she retained some power because she equally became her own subject, evading total objectification, rather like Rebeca 2.

Brown believes that the bulk of Gilda, Hayworth's most memorable performance, resides in Gilda herself whose role is a sexual image of power (Brown, 11: Dyer, 1989: 48). Like Rebeca, Gilda exploits her sexuality for money as a means of gaining independence which allows her to abandon her husband, Johnny. Hayworth's dancing is interesting as movement in its own right and for its style, but it introduced interesting problematisations of objectification into Gilda (Dyer, 1989: 96). Her erotic, Latin American-style dance without male partners became pure self-expression and self-assertion (97), an instance of narcissism and eroticism for the spectator and Hayworth herself.

Hayworth/Gilda's sexuality, as Dyer explains, is largely constructed in terms of movement. Mulvey suggests an opposition between stasis which fixes the object of desire for the spectator's gaze and movement which escapes this sort of control (1975/1992). Stasis is a tool of patriarchal repression in the light of Mulvey's theories in some ways, which denies pleasure and activity to women, who are restricted to passive positions. Dyer outlines several artistic traditions which fix woman in place as a sex object, amongst which are choreographic traditions that minimize movement, such as the fashion show and the pin-up since it depends on the stillness of the subject; if the subject is in close-up, or pictured in any other practice which isolates and fragments the female body, she is further objectified (1978/1989: 97-98). In Gilda, Hayworth is first cut in tossing her hair back and her dance numbers are both important parts of the film in which the narrative dwells on her sexuality and moments of escape in narrative terms reinforced by her talent: 'She could achieve more with her finger-by-finger glove removals in Gilda than most strippers could

achieve armed with a complete wardrobe' (Brown: 11). Owing to movement and her Latin American dance, Dyer correctly believes that it is possible to read Hayworth as Gilda in Rosen's terms, which resembles Kotz's descriptions of strippers: ' [...] for the first time, a heroine seemed to say, "This is my body. It's lovely and gives me pleasure. I rejoice in it just as you do" (Rosen, 1974: 226).

Casting Hayworth as Gilda gives the character a positive charge (Dyer, 1989: 96), comparable to Miró's use of Kensit to play Rebeca, which I will discuss in chapter 9. Star texts could place an actress into the third type of noir woman, who escapes categorization. Analogous to Kensit, popular in Hollywood and the notorious ex-wife of Jim Kerr and wife of Oasis's Liam Gallagher, Hayworth already had a well-known star image when Gilda was made. Although Hayworth was a star for heterosexual males, her real-life publicized by the media allowed many female spectators to identify with her and which, as is also the case with Kensit, problematised her vamp role (96). By 1946, she had married and become a mother. Hayworth's star image establishes her as an individual, but Gilda also makes her a subject rather than an object: Johnny (Glen Ford) becomes an object of desire for Gilda to 'a surprising degree', as is Stamp in Beltenebros. For example, he is well dressed rather like Darman. According to Dyer, there is a reciprocity in the number of looks between Gilda and Johnny in the first meeting signifying Johnny's establishment as an object of desire and which is maintained as such throughout the film in the way he is photographed. Miró's reference to Gilda is suggestive for Beltenebros's historical situation in 1962 because the première of Gilda caused scandal in Spain in 1947 (Hopewell, 1986: 158). However, Hayworth's image and the way in which she escapes classification are also important in the persona of the actress/dancer/singer Kensit and her effects on Rebeca. Rebeca/Kensit and Hayworth equally indulge in what Cixous in 'The Laugh of Medusa'

calls the pleasure-giving 'wonder of being several' or alterability (Cixous in Marks: 260).

Not only is Rebeca alterable in her own right, she is also associated with Kensit's star persona - the subject of a section of chapter 9 - and Hayworth, who has also projected pluralistic signification and her subversion is thus reinforced threefold. In addition to Gilda's status as a frame-breaking device, Miró's unconscious use of the Gilda intertext and Hayworth persona might be an example of the way in which meaning can escape control of the author. There are multiple levels of meaning and distancing operating in this one metafictional feature of Beltenebros.

Gilda is by no means the only overtly intertextual reference in Beltenebros. The 'Cine Universal' is turned into not only an 'unreal' but also an intertextual space. At the end of the film, Rebeca 2 somewhat resembles the Joan Fontaine character in Hitchcock's Rebecca owing to the latter's distressed state during the fire at Manderly, although Maxim (Laurence Olivier) does not need to rescue her as Darman does Rebeca 2. There are other similarities between the two films. On a mundane level, Rebeca Osorio's costume - a knitted twin-set - became known as *una rebeca* in Spanish (Bermúdez: 21) and, like Maxim's wife in Rebecca, she commits suicide which is not a feature of the novelistic Rebeca Osorio. Perhaps the clearest key link between Beltenebros and Rebecca is the fire scene at the end. In Rebecca, Maxim's housekeeper goes mad and sets the house on fire, remaining trapped inside as the flames destroy the building. The camera tracks forward through the flames and falling beams in the West wing to focus on Rebecca's pillow, just as Miró makes the camera track forward to prioritize Ugarte's glasses amidst the flames on stage. The housekeeper is framed by the windows and runs around, putting her arm over her face to protect herself from the flames, but is unable to escape as debris fall on top of her. Ugarte also tries to protect his face and eyes from the light in the cinema using his

arms and like the housekeeper, he behaves in a histrionic fashion. Muñoz Molina alluded to Frank Lloyd's Mutiny On the Bounty (Rebelión a bordo) (1935) in the novel, which reflects the theme of betrayal and rebellion (Pérez Millán: 258), but in many ways, the intertextual clips in Beltenebros reflect Miró's artistic preferences. She praises American films of the 1940s-1960s in particular (La Actualidad Española: 1978, 80). They Died with their Boots On (Raoul Walsh, 1941) is one of Miró's favourite films from which she selected extracts to coincide with the moments when Rebeca Osorio and Darman meet and part (Pérez Millán: 258). Walsh's inner narrative reminds viewers of Beltenebros that they are watching a fictional text and awakens their 'disbelief', encouraging them to become active readers.

#### ACTIVE READERS.

W.R. Magretta's comments with reference to Fassbinder's Effi Briest (1974) are valid for Miró's films:

No gesture, no stylistic feature is wasted; each is endowed with several levels of significance. Like a good book, the film cries out for re-viewing [...] to discover additional subtleties, for the kind of intensive reading which Roland Barthes gave to Balzac's Sarrasine. All of these devices produce a complex interplay of distancing and involvement which is at the heart of the film (249).

Owing to the fact that Miró allows the viewers of her film to have their own opinions (Appendix 1: 3), she gives them the right to use their own imaginations and fulfills the project of metafictional art. If the artist inflicts his or her imagination on the (passive) viewer, that is a form of tyranny. Miró has already agreed with the metafictional aim not to classify or categorize because this would constitute a betrayal or falsification of experience (Hutcheon, 1991: 89). Gary Cooper is full of silences and close-ups which

speak for themselves whose meaning the viewer is left to fill in; Hablamos also contains silences in which the viewer imagines Victor's tensions being released. This concern of the writerly text and active reader/viewer ties in neatly to the shattering of binary categorization and Miró's open-minded content.

Contrary to Fassbinder's views on film being a readerly text, some critics believe that cinema does provide scope for active reading. The involvement of spectators is particularly active in cinema according to Morin. Affective participation is a complex of projections and identifications in which everyone transfers to someone else certain feelings and ideas attributed to that person: the audience lives the spectacle of the film, mentally integrating themselves with the characters and action (Morin: 146). The spectator's identification is spurred by the rhythm of the film and music, lighting, camera movements and the position of the camera which gives life to the inexpressive face of the actor and objects (148).

Certain character strategies can encourage readerly activity and Miró's characters in La petición and Gary Cooper correspond to modern narrative strategies which favour an active approach to narrative. The employment of 'enrichments by silence' in film frees the viewers to use their own imaginations in creating characters. Such practices maintain the viewer's interest by making the characters open constructs. Miró retains a strategy of 'enrichment by silence', a constant in Andrea's silent moments alone accompanied only by music, a feature identified in modern narratives for keeping the characters as open constructs which viewers try to understand (Seymour Chatman, 1978: 118, 132 cited in Horton, 258). It is also a part of the more vague, feminine writing as defined by Kuhn (1982: 11-12, 16-17), which I outlined in the Introduction. Narrative becomes a search for something that is absent, for something more with creation happening in the collaborative

viewer's imagination (Horton: 264). Andrea searches for courage and meaning in her life: viewers search for and try to decipher meaning which gives the narrative structure an allegorical dimension. The enrichment by silence of characters is a constant in Miró's films from the inconclusive ending of La petición and its waltz to Beltenebros. Castro complains about Beltenebros that 'apenas sabemos nada de los personajes' (30). He fails to notice that the lack of information about the characters is part of Miró's indirect style in which she presents characters by suggestion. Viewers can deduce that Víctor in Hablamos suffers from stress through the Geiger counter on the soundtrack, but the narrative still retains a certain degree of vagueness. The boy in Werther is particularly mysterious, even though Carlota explains the reasons for his timidity. Such a dearth of information, indirect style and objective presentation are advantageous in the development of active readers because they force the viewer to be a perceptive, *lector cómplice*, which is particularly developed in Hopper's art and Beltenebros as I will discuss in chapter 8.

Beltenebros is based on a self-conscious genre requiring the reader's input - a detective story with multiple time levels. However, it is not the only film by Miró which involves detection skills on the part of the reader. In a sense, viewers are detectives who have to discover Miró's interests and intertextual clues owing to the highly intellectual nature of her films. In some metafictional works, the reader has to decide if a crime has been committed: La petición constitutes not only the trial of a monstrous woman but also the trial of masculinism, as does Hablamos. The viewer of La petición has to be actively involved in the story to decipher the temporal structure of the film. The narrative starts with a flashback to Teresa's childhood, jumps forward to a section nearer the end of the story and enters into another flashback, depicting events in the present form Teresa's encounter with the mute onwards (Pérez Millán: 101). The viewer decides to what extent

Víctor in Hablamos is a victim of his society's attitudes to men or guilty party, but as in Beltenebros - with Ugarte's plots - La petición - as a result of the linguistic control placed on Teresa by her parents - or Hablamos and Victor's mendacity, Miró metafictionally shows viewers that 'any use of language is [...] a means of interpreting reality, an ideological filter' (Hutcheon, 1991: 134). The next chapter explores the influence of three intertextual sources of inspiration for El crimen and Beltenebros alluded to by Miró in interview - Edward Hopper, José Gutiérrez Solana and Carol Reed - and her questioning historiographic metafiction in El crimen.

<sup>1</sup> This interview with Camus took place in Barcelona on May 23, 1985. Details of the press cutting, which lies in the Filmoteca's press file on Camus (Madrid), have been lost.

<sup>2</sup> "Siempre dejo los finales abiertos porque creo que la vida es abierta" (Appendix 1: 5).

<sup>3</sup> Even when Miró alters a script by another author, she still believes that the particular plot remains his or her property. (Comments made with reference to Camus' script for El pájaro in Sánchez Costa, 1992).

<sup>4</sup> She once again borrowed a friend's flat in central Madrid for the interiors of Rebeca 2 and Andrade's meeting place in Beltenebros (Thompson: 195).

<sup>5</sup> Miró alluded to her admiration for Bergman and other directors in interview: "No me importaría tener puntos de contacto con Ford, con Visconti, con Bergman, con Sidney Pollack o con Woody Allen" (Tele Radio, 1980: 13). See also Santa Eulalia, 1976.

<sup>6</sup> The reference to Death in Venice is of thematic interest in terms of Miró's erosion of masculinism in Werther. The Francoist censor cut Gustav's verbal expression of homosexual love to Taddeo from Visconti's film by changing Gustav's declaration, "Te amo", to "Hijo mío" (Seguin: 34).

<sup>7</sup> See also Harcourt, 1976, 228-229.

<sup>8</sup> Bazin believes that the drama proceeds from the actor; in the cinema, the drama goes from the decor into the actor. André Bazin, 'The Theatre and the Cinema', What is Cinema?, trans. H. Gray (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1967), 79 cited by

Brigitta Steene, 'Film as Theatre: Geissendorfer's The Wild Dutch (1976)', in Horton, 309.

<sup>9</sup> Luis Alonso Fernández defines the *esperpento* as: ' [...] una degradación consciente de la realidad a través del prisma (espejo) cóncavo-convexo, que encuentra sus disculpas en el

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callejón del Gato de Madrid, pero que tiene su origen en el 'desencanto' de la España mítica. A esta España [...] infrarreal y estilizada hasta lo grotesco, le va a tratar Valle-Inclán por vía esperpética, cifrándola en su concrección burocrática y plebeya: Madrid' (1985: 94).

<sup>10</sup> Gilda itself was premiered in Spain with great scandal, as Hopewell points out (158).

The film's reputation in Spain consequently assists Miró in the creation of a risqué atmosphere in the club.

## CH. 8. ART INTERTEXTS AND HISTORIOGRAPHIC METAFICTION.

Film has been described as a hybrid medium which adopts many different aesthetic directions at the same time - literature, theatre, painting, photography and music (Horton and Magretta, 1981: 318). El pájaro de la felicidad (1992) - a film about an art restorer - directly includes the mixture of art and cinema as does Miró's documentary, Velázquez (1990), but her interest extends to previous cinematographic works. Miró's films not only draw upon literary and cinematic texts or styles, but also resort to static art forms:

Cada vez que hago una película, tengo una referencia iconográfica concreta, aunque sólo sea para poder hablar con mis colaboradores. Unas veces es un pintor, otras un tipo de cine en particular, otras una película. En [Beltenebros], la referencia fue 'El tercer hombre'. Por el estilo de los decorados, por la iluminación, por los personajes ... Me parece que la historia lo pedia (Pérez Millán: 256).

This aesthetic tendency is also alluded to in interview (Appendix 1: 7-8). However, Pérez Millán has been able to identify clear references to the painting styles of Goya and, to a greater extent, Gutiérrez Solana in El crimen (in conversation, May 5th, 1995) and Miró based a lot of Beltenebros on the paintings of Edward Hopper (Appendix 1: 7-8) in addition to Carol Reed's The Third Man. Although Beltenebros does resemble Reed's film, it seems that the setting has more in common with the art of Hopper, and whether Miró realized it or not, Beltenebros owes much of its rich complexities to Hopper's questioning thematics. Miró's cinematographer for the shoot - Javier Aguirresarobe, Spain's specialist in *chiaroscuro* lighting - admires Hopper and together, they paid special attention to detail, especially the framing of the settings (Heredero: 26, 43). I will first examine the resemblances of Beltenebros to Hopper's paintings and move on to draw parallels between the film and The Third Man.

Ivo Kranzfelder has identified Hopper's reciprocal influence on film noir and Hitchcock's Psycho, who took inspiration from Hopper's House by the Railroad (1925) and

its low vantage point (32, 45, 76).<sup>1</sup> Hopper seems to have inspired the costumes, settings, selected perspectives and perhaps most of all, the representation of voyeurism, the gaze and the distancing problematisation of the viewer's own spectatorship in Beltenebros. Owing to the ways in which Hopper denied the spectator a complete, omniscient view, he alienated the viewer from the scene and therefore discouraged acquiescence: viewers of Hopper's paintings are forced into the position of the questioning reader, who must complete and interpret the scenes. Miró also borrows Hopper's depictions of the gaze off-screen, denying viewers a character's point-of-view. His style and themes aptly match Miró's concerns in Beltenebros and his characters' blank moods seem to find an echo in her's. Not only does Hopper's art match the bleak representation of men in Beltenebros, he equally resembles Miró's choice of hairstyle and costume for the Rebecas, especially Rebeca 2 who parallels Hopper's confident strippers and women in bedrooms engaged in a dialectic between concealing and revealing (Kranzfelder: 50), which she executes on and backstage. Another parallel is Hopper's frequent interest in theatrical, *mise-en-abîme* devices. Hopper frequently used the painting within a painting motif (53) or depicted the audience as part of the scene in a theatre, undifferentiated from the stage (142-143). Intermission (1963) represents a movie theatre (146) and its setting perhaps inspired the scene in Miró's club as Darman walks off towards the dressing rooms.

Miró plays with the gaze using inspiration from Hopper from the start of Beltenebros when viewers do not initially get Darman's point-of-view as he walks through the station or a shot of him from the front. The camera, positioned behind Darman and Rebeca 2, tracks forward, pans right and right again as it takes profile shots of the two descending the stairs, finally turning right to focus on them on the staircase in a frontal low angle shot. If a character's back is towards the camera, viewers are unable to see his or her

reaction (W.R.Magretta: 253) and this scene includes the 'view from behind', a strategy to which Miró will frequently resort in Beltenebros. Later on, Darman looks out of the shop window when a contact comes to view a book, and in Krakov, Miró does not give the audience Darman's point-of-view to the object of his gaze outside of the hotel room, but a flashback to Rebeca Osorio. Moreover, the room's decor resembles the 1920s or 40s when Hopper painted, rather than the chronological setting of 1962. Rebeca 2 also receives a Hopper-like subjectivity: she lies on Darman's bed, analogous to many of Hopper's female characters depicted in rooms, and stares at Darman off-screen without point-of-view. In the *puticlub*, the female spectator views Rebeca's performance, which is also off-screen, while she is in profile.

Another cinematic distancing device which conveys alienating subjectivity is shooting scenes through obstructions - nets, gauzes, or grillworks (W.R.Magretta, 1981: 259) - a strategy adopted by Miró when she obscures Darman's view of Rebeca 2 through a grid. The eye of the camera is thus not omniscient, nor can viewers penetrate fully as there is a barrier preventing identification with an actor, maintaining the spectator's awareness that he or she is watching a film (259). The opaque windows of the hotel have a similar effect. The restrictions on the representation of a character's gaze are mirrored by both the novel and film through Ugarte's thick glasses, who fails to 'see through' or deconstruct his culture's masculinism - prioritized honour and ambition - as Darman finally manages to do. Comparable to metafictional art, Hopper questioned what reality and perception were in addition to the representational capabilities of painting (Kranzfelder: 43-44, 51) and this is something Miró achieves in her cinema, especially El crimen and Beltenebros, which analogous to Hablamos expose the limits of truth.

Although Hopper was more interested in spectatorship than female objectification, he frequently depicted nude or clothed female figures, often in intimate moments usually unwitnessed by outsiders, in which the viewer becomes a voyeur (38, 41, 45-46).<sup>2</sup> For example, Hopper's Summer Interior (1909) or Summertime (1943) (37-39, 120, 122-123). Similarly, Rebeca seems relaxed in her dressing room in Beltenebros while the audience become voyeurs (50, 53). She is in the centre of the frame whilst undressing, but Darman reflected in the mirror turns away, denying himself the gaze and makes his abdication from voyeurism and issues of perception the main subjects here, like the earlier Gilda scenes on stage and their problematisation of the objectification of Rebeca. Rebeca's dressing gown in Beltenebros situates her in a dialectic between covering and revealing, which Hopper explored in High Noon (1949) (46, 51, 102). Hopper also painted confident women in the sex industry. For instance, the red-headed stripper in Girlie Show (1941), who - analogous to Rebeca - seems self-assured (27-28, 144).

His characters' cold, blank, lonely expressions and restrained postures inspired by the impersonal monotony of cities - which Kranzfelder believes show the sublimation of instinct and rules of civilization (48, 103, 137) - parallel film noir's examination of the coldness of masculinity and herein lies the parallel between masculinism and the blankness of Darman. Gert Mattenkrott (1986: 31, 132-133) has said that the fading of character is an effect of city life which makes everyone conform to uniform models of conduct. Mattenkrott's description matches Hopper's and Miró's characters in Beltenebros, especially Darman, although he revolts against his orders. In a similar vein, Sennett identified alienation and coldness - all elements of masculinism - as the by-products of civilization (Kranzfeld: 141; Sennett, 1977: 15-16) and Miró herself commented that Madrid was an aggressive city that hardened its inhabitants (Madueño, 1993: 18-19). The expressionless

faces of Hopper's characters show a decrease in social empathy as loneliness persists, even in crowds or public places, such as cafes (145-146, 153). Like Darman, who seems lonely and introspective even in public bars, the characters inside the café in Nighthawks (1942) seem isolated from one another (148-149, 150-151). Life in Madrid or Krakov certainly looks emotionally cold and Hopper's mood therefore fits Beltenebros. Hopper gives the impression that the city damaged relationships, especially those between men and women. For instance, the expressionless characters and posture in Room in New York (1932) connote boredom and fatigue (115, 127, 129, 132, 189). Darman's downcast vacant, tired look in the railway carriage and his silence in the train are likewise symptomatic of the effects of masculinism.

Owing to gaps, viewers of Hopper's paintings or Beltenebros never gain a sense of omniscience from Darman or Miró's narration. Viewers do get Darman's flashbacks to Rebeca Osorio from the window in Krakov and consequently - although viewers do not see what he is looking at outside - Miró allows them to know what Darman is thinking about. The use of Hopper as a stylistic reference is important for the development of the themes of knowledge and fallibility in Beltenebros. Viewers are distanced from the expressionless Darman due to the absence of some of his point-of-view shots and the imitation of Hopper here emphasizes the detachment in his environment. The audience sees some of Darman's emotion when he lets go with Rebeca or thinks of Rebeca Osorio, yet he retains an air of mystery. Miró does not allow viewers to know the characters for a thematic reason. Darman is distanced, blank or detached because that is the mood of film noir and his blank expression aptly connotes the tiring effects of masculinism. Comparable to Gutiérrez Solana, Hopper grips the spectator, albeit in different ways from the macabre Spanish artist. Perhaps Miró imitates Hopper's melancholic blankness so as to arouse the viewer's

sympathy for victims of masculinism and therefore, to indirectly criticize patriarchy. Castro, who disliked Stamp's acting (1991: 33), has failed to notice that it is related to Hopper's blank characters and, by extension, the numbing effect of masculinism.

The way in which Beltenebros is filmed parallels some of Hopper's works, which have unusual perspectives and rarely invite viewers to enter the scene at eye-level. Compositions in which the scene is viewed diagonally from above which in cinematic terms would be a high angle shot on a diagonal - as in Night Shadows (1921) - are examples of these perspectives (Kranzfelder: 19, 33). Such a perspective is again similar to Miró's camera angle at the end of La petición during the ball. Hopper sometimes adopts a low vantage point, enlarging objects he paints (32). For instance, his lighthouses depicted from a low vantage point soar to monumental proportions.<sup>3</sup> Office in a Small City (1953) exhibits an artificial point-of-view, 'like that of a camera installed on a crane outside an upper floor of the building' (158), to which Miró resorted to film the scene in Darman's room in Krakov. Miró uses low angle shots when Darman is in Atocha station and when he is on the roof of the hotel, making the pillars of Bellas Artes seem monumental. Such shots are also connected to The Third Man as a stylistic reference - which I will discuss at the end of this section - and they are elements of film noir, analogous to Hopper's harshly contoured shadows. Other features of Beltenebros in Madrid and Krakov which resemble Hopper's paintings are the 180-degree, noir shots of stairs. Stairs featured frequently in Hopper's work as a mark of transition (32, 35): here, they convey alienating self-reflexivity because of the disturbing, noir angles. When Rebeca leads Darman up the stairs in the cinema, the setting vaguely resembles Hopper's painting of stairs, for example Stairway at 48 rue de Lille, Paris (1906), especially owing to

the low angle Miró has taken (35). Hopper frequently painted rooftops which Miró also includes in the hotel scene when Darman jumps from the roof during the chase.<sup>4</sup>

Other aspects of the mise-en-scène reveal parallels between Beltenebros and Hopper's paintings. The hotel room in Hopper's art is associated with mobility and speed (48) which applies to Darman, who rushes from place to place and cannot settle. Hotel Lobby (1942) (168) appears as a direct reference in Beltenebros. When Darman is in the foyer of the Hotel Nacional, he carries an overcoat and a bag, analogous to the character in Hopper's painting, who curiously looks very like Stamp and has the same sort of mustache and blank expression. Hopper painted railroads, trains and scenes inside trains (66). For instance, his etching Night in El Train (1918), which depicts two lovers flirting in a carriage, or Railroad Train (1908) and Chair Car (1965) (56, 58, 67). The female character in Intermission (1963) has ginger, bobbed hair like both Rebecas (146) and the woman in Morning Sun (1952) has reddish hair held in a little pony tail, rather like that of Rebeca when she sits up in Darman's bed after making love (52).

As I have demonstrated, there are evident parallels between the setting of Beltenebros and Hopper's paintings. However, Miró admitted that she has borrowed from The Third Man which shares similarities with Beltenebros in terms of mise-en-scène, including the positioning of characters within a cinematic narrative in addition to lighting and objects within it. Reed frequently films from a low angle in The Third Man which, like Hopper's low perspective, seems to increase the size of the buildings. For example, the main door of Harry's apartment building is filmed from a low angle. Analogous to Beltenebros when Darman emerges from the hotel in Krakov, the building is in profile with the camera close to its walls in order to focus on Holly walking towards it. Reed focuses on the stairs in Harry's building from a high angle as Holly mounts them, which he

switches to a low angle as Holly nears the top, and self-reflexively tilts the camera. When Reed depicts the porter's point-of-view to Holly in medium-long shot on the stairs below from a high angle, it is then that the narrative's parallels with the setting and technicalities of Beltenebros become more evident. Miró gives a vertical, downwards shot of the stairs in Krakov; Reed almost films from a high, 180-degree angle at this point and later on, uses a vertical shot upwards when Holly makes a sudden exit from the literary meeting, running up a spiral staircase. I have already drawn attention to the tracking shot to Harry's face as an example of a self-reflexive camera movement (ch.7: 210). When Darman is rummaging through Andrade's things in the warehouse, there is a track up to his head from behind towards his facial reflection in the mirror from a medium close-up to close-up, a shot possibly inspired by Reed's film.

The shadowy, nocturnal streets through which Holly searches for Harry bear some resemblance to the settings for Darman's journey to the warehouse through old Madrid. The graveyard where Harry is 'buried' parallels the snowy, cemetery in Warsaw which is the setting for a meeting with Bernal recalled in Darman's bath-tub dissolves, the fictional intertextuality of which is highlighted by its depiction in a self-reflexive, dream-like, subjective dissolve. The opening shots of the Viennese skyline against a hazy background somewhat resemble the establishing shots of Krakov against a backdrop of a grey, cloudy sky. Holly visits a theatre in the film to watch Miss Schmit perform and Reed films Holly in the audience from a slightly low angle and almost in profile against a backdrop of the stalls. When Holly gets up, he walks out of the frame to the right like Darman, who also exits the audience of the *puticlub* going towards the right, although the camera tracks Darman somewhat while Reed leaves the camera still and allows Holly to walk out of the frame towards the dressing rooms backstage to talk to the mysterious woman involved in

his investigation. The scene between Holly and Miss Schmit in her dressing room bears some resemblance to the backstage scenes in Beltenebros when Rebeca removes her wig after the Gilda imitation. Miss Schmit, who has just performed on stage, removes her false eyelashes and a wig while Holly stands on her right, but on the left of the frame - Darman's position during his conversation with Rebeca about Andrade - observing her actions whilst engaged in conversation about Harry, the man he seeks.

It is possible that Miró has referred to both Hopper and The Third Man in unison for Beltenebros. Miró has commented that artists are influenced by everything they read and see (Appendix 1: 1-2) and perhaps Beltenebros is similarly a fusion of Miró's artistic and cinematic interests. In addition to her references to genres and artists, Miró chose to imitate the photographer, Robert Capa, who took pictures of the Spanish Civil War and World War II. Not only did she imitate Capa's photographs, but she also featured in the photograph in Beltenebros, like Hitchcock and Buñuel who often appeared in their own films and produced an element of self-reflexivity in their cameo roles, although Miró's presence in the photograph was also a result of circumstances (Appendix 1: 7-8). The picture attains a doubly intertextual quality because it is a photograph that features in Darman's memory - one of the subjective, self-reflexive sections of the narrative which uses dissolves. Whichever artist (Hopper or Reed) was her main source of inspiration, Miró has nevertheless chosen thematically appropriate references for Beltenebros. Miró also made a highly apt choice in her employment of Gutiérrez Solana's paintings as culturally-specific visual references for El crimen.

### GUTIÉRREZ SOLANA.

Los cuadros de Solana tienen algo más que técnica, excitan el corazón y el pensamiento [...]. Ante un cuadro suyo, es imposible la indiferencia (Antonio Espina, 1920: 8-9 cited in Alonso: 34).

De Béchade describes the effect of El crimen using similar terms. She believes that the images' strength and intensity particularly grasp the viewers attention owing to the unease they cause (52). Solana's art acquired a disconcerting tone from his childhood when he drew carnivalesque masks and funerals: death in particular obsessed Solana who painted *La España negra* in a harsh, *tremendista* style. This disturbing 'Realismo exacerbado o expresionista' of Solana's work explains why it appealed to Miró as a visual reference for El crimen in addition to his choice of subjects - low class characters, rural Castile, martyrs, priests, *beatas*, condemned prisoners - and its context in more or less the same epoch as the persecution of Gregorio and León (Alonso: 16, 20, 22-23, 37, 68, 101). Solana's macabre works, which Alonso describes as *eserpentos de la España negra*, inspired Valle Inclán, who particularly admired and chose to imitate Solana's style in his *eserpento* (Alonso: 24, 59; Gómez de la Serna: 85). Jeancolas drew parallels between Goya's etchings of horrific events, El crimen's torture scenes and religious paintings in Spain depicting the flesh of the martyrs (70), of which Solana's works are prime examples.<sup>5</sup> Solana's often *chiaroscuro* works possess a gloomy tone, comparable to El crimen and the works of Goya, whose art Solana admired and imitated, above all the black paintings (Alonso: 35, 49, 51, 57, 70, 90; de Béchade: 52). In fact, de Béchade said that El crimen was part of Spain's *cinéma noir* or films depicting horrific violence, the cinematic equivalents of Goya's paintings and part of Spain's Black Legend (52). Miró herself commented on Goya's influence: "There is a relationship between colour in the film and certain scenes from Goya's black period. But it

is also the colour of Castile" (53-54). Although Pérez Millán emphasized Solana as the main reference above Goya (in conversation, May, 1995), Miró belongs to a long-line of oppositional directors who imitated Goya's radical, direct style used to attack any form of orthodoxy in their own cinematic depictions of violence (Kinder: 138-139). Solana himself said: "Hay que pintar todo, sin engaños [...] la pintura [...] debe decirlo todo. Mejor o peor" (Alonso: 101).<sup>6</sup> Analogous to Goya's paintings and Miró's films, Solana's depictions of religion and violence are so graphic that they do not attempt to condone violent brutality: he participates in the direct attack on cruelty performed for the sake of any orthodox system, which had become a model for the depiction of violence in the post-Franco era (Kinder: 139). Solana's style is often very baroque or theatrical and he attempts to show his subjects in detail, which reinforces the painting's *tremendismo*, like Miró's attention to the details of torture in close-ups (Alonso: 69-70, 78).

Solana wanted to capture 'esa horrenda religiosidad española que críspa los nervios y eriza los cabellos del extranjero.' (22). The gloomy Procesión de Toledo, depicting *nazarenos*, a nun and priests, shows the austere side of religion (21). Many of the wrinkled and troubled *beatas* in his religious and village paintings resemble Grimaldos' mother. For instance, those dressed in black in El cristo de la sangre (1920) or the weeping *beatas* in Tránsito de San Ignacio (1931) (103, 109). La visita del obispo (190) depicts another severe religious figure, but a serious, grey-bearded man in a rocking chair on the extreme right looks rather like Contreras (Fernando Rey). Perhaps this similarity is coincidental, but Miró may have been creative when casting and looked for actors to match her visual references, as she perhaps did with Terence Stamp and the character in Hopper's Hotel Lobby. Similarly, Solana's bishop, who is gathered around a table, is somewhat like Don Rulfo in El crimen.

Solana's figures often seem enclosed (34), a good example of which is Garrote vil (Antes de la ejecución) (1931) painted against the backdrop of storm clouds in which three men tie a prisoner onto the scaffold in the background while others watch (218). A group of civil guards on horseback brandishing bayonets seem to be restraining the crowds. Another prisoner in the foreground is tied up; a priest beside him points to a crucifix with a macabre grin and a civil guard on the right of the prisoner holds his arm. Solana consequently identifies two sources of oppressive, cruel authority in Spain in the painting. The civil guard in the foreground tightly packs himself around the prisoner, analogous to the civil guards in El crimen who escort the prisoners. Solana captures human terror in his paintings, like Miró, above all through facial expression and posture. Incendio en un pueblo (Suicidio general) (1907) shows characters in shock because of a fire in a narrow street of white houses: men are diving out of first-floor windows to escape the flames in a frantic fashion (139). One woman's face seems like that of Juana López (Mary Cariño) in El crimen and the street itself resembles the white houses in the film's villages. For instance, when the civil guards arrest Gregorio and lead him to jail, they pass similar houses. The correspondence of the houses may be mere coincidence, just as the colour of Castile gave Miró's film an air of Goya as she herself commented with de Béchade above. La posada (c.1917-1920) depicts an inn courtyard which resembles Alejandra's courtyard in Miró's film and the setting of La merienda (c.1940), in which three men eat at a table, recalls the mise-en-scène of half of the courtyard in El Palomar (Alonso: 257, 288).

Parallels in costume between Solana's paintings and El crimen result from Miró's use of contemporary dress. The characters in Reunión de botica (1934), especially the spectacled character reading a newspaper - who bears striking similarities to the liberal judge in El crimen - look like the judges and secretaries in the film (Fundación Cultural

MAPFRE VIDA: 143). Men in Los jugadores de bolos wear the same sort of berets as Gregorio and León and the rural woman in the centre of Los traperos (1921) dress in clothes and a scarf which resemble Dolores' garments (Alonso: 77, 97). Solana preferred greys, black, ochres and yellows, which closely match the harsh, sun-drenched landscapes of Cuenca and tighten the parallel between the film and his works (70). Solana often painted blind men. For example, El ciego de los romances (c.1915-1917; 1921) which depicts a *ciego* in medium close-up holding an instrument and *hojas sueltas* in his hand (68, 155, 177). It may be coincidental that Miró's film resembles Solana's paintings of blind men because *romances de ciego* were a fact of life at the time - like the repressive nature of the Civil Guard - and Miró simply refers to such *costumbrismo*. However, El cartel del crimen (El cantor del crimen y el coplero callejero) (c.1920) bears some resemblance to the scene in El crimen (172).

Any attempt to analyze Miró's sources of inspiration is, to some extent, problematic as the director's own commentaries on the influence of art on her films reveal (Appendix 1: 8-9). The *tremendismo* of El crimen has as much in common with the films of Peckinpah, especially the rapid editing and bloody aspects, as it does with the paintings of Solana or Goya. However, Solana seems to have been the most important visual and atmospheric reference for Miró in that he captured the specifically oppressive atmosphere of Spain which is what Miró depicted in the narrative's content.

Me interesa más la 'atmósfera' que otros elementos quizá más evidentes. Creo que una película no se cuenta sólo con los primeros términos de cada plano, sino con todo lo que aparece en él, con el ambiente que se crea, y nunca quiero que se me escapan los detalles... Los planos de El crimen de Cuenca que me gustan son el de la llegada de Gregorio y León al cementerio, con la gente del pueblo alrededor y, por ejemplo, un corto del juez, en cuyo fondo se ve, desenfocada, la figura de un guardia civil contra una pared blanca ... Me resultan tan propios de este país. Algo de eso quiere ser la película: no las escenas de tortura directa, sino esa atmósfera opresiva permanente... (Pérez Millán: 139).

Miró's photographer for El crimen, Hans Burmann, had experience of and a talent for depicting the darker sides of Spain's socio-political context from his close collaboration with Mario Camus. For example, during Los días del pasado (1977). Burmann used low light levels to characterize the film, especially for interior settings:

La acción transcurría en un pueblo perdido en la montaña y durante la España de los años cuarenta. Lo que buscaba [...] era crear una atmósfera opresiva, muy marcada por la oscuridad general de la época y por esa tonalidad típica de la posguerra (Heredero: 215).

What Pérez Millán describes as the 'lóbrega sordidez de los calabozos' in El crimen is therefore attributable to Burmann's photography (138) and the use of natural light entering the cells in the film is also a typical trait of Burmann's work. For instance, when Burmann photographed the interior of Francisco Rabal's house in Camus' Los santos inocentes (1984), which *required a darkness or gloominess to match Rabal's character. As Burmann explained: "Allí iluminaba siempre con luz-día, tanto desde fuera como en el interior, para que fuera más homogéneo y menos vivo"* (225). Burmann prides himself on his ability to match lighting to a particular character or situation (227) and Miró certainly paid attention to Burmann's ideas during the shoot, turning him into an assistant author:

[Pilar Miró] te daba bastantes facilidades e incluso escuchaba mis opiniones cuando le sugería una determinada posición de cámara. Luego, era ella la que decidía, pero en principio te hacía bastante caso (219).

Nevertheless, Miró relied on other visual references in El crimen other than Solana, especially in her discussions with and instructions to Daniel Dicenta and José Manuel Cervino so that the two actors would manage to concentrate their expressions of shock in their reactions to torture in the eyes:

No me cansaba de decirles que no hicieran gestos de ningún tipo, que todo tenía que expresarse con los ojos: 'Vosotros, como Kirk Douglas y Gary Cooper, que parece que no hacen nada', les repetía constantemente... (Pérez Millán: 140).

However, Solana's paintings to a certain extent depict expressive eyes. The characters' facial features in Garrote vil are well-defined, but the eyes of those in the foreground help to achieve an oppressive effect. The prisoner shuts his eyes as an expression of despair or desire to escape his fate: the priest provides him with no sense of comfort and displays an evil glint in his eye. Although the facial features and harsh wrinkles of the characters in El beso de Judas (1932) are well-defined as a result of Solana's employment of shadows, their eyes also have a sinister glint resulting from Solana's use of light (Fundación Cultural MAPFRE VIDA: 111). Perhaps one could describe some of Solana's paintings as primarily 'cuadros de miradas', terms Pérez Millán refers to describe El crimen:

El crimen de Cuenca, película de acción donde las haya [...], es ante y sobre todo, una película de 'miradas', que sabe reflejar, en la intensidad de éstas, toda la brutalidad de aquéllos y de sus consecuencias devastadoras sobre los personajes (142).

El crimen is not only interesting because of its references to Spanish art. Indeed, Miró's visual sources of inspiration help her to create historically realistic settings and costumes in order to produce an account of history or historiograph, the subject of the next section.

#### INTRAHISTORIOGRAPHIC METAFICTION: EL CRIMEN DE CUENCA.

Miguel de Unamuno first discussed the concept of *intrahistoria* in his essay, 'La tradición eterna' (1895) included in the collection En torno al casticismo (1902), to define the part of life in a country that takes place beneath the surface of well-known historical events (Terry: 20).<sup>7</sup> To use Unamuno's own terms, the lives of ordinary people were not part of the 'historia mentida que se suele ir a buscar al pasado enterrado en libros y papeles'

(Unamuno: 1986, 33). In a sense, Unamuno was prioritizing what mainstream history - or the recording of the lives of great dignitaries and those in power - had cast to one side. The project of *intrahistoria* is consequently partly analogous to Miró's intentions to depict the *pueblo* in El crimen and to the ways in which she obtained information from the residents of the area and the victims' families in order to privilege an underlying set of truths as part of her general democratic project. In fact, as Pérez Millán comments, a lot of the real events surrounding the 'crime' were not very familiar at all (134) and Miró had a special interest in making the truth surrounding them known (Cebrián, 1979).<sup>8</sup> El crimen also attempts to re-define history or the writing about or recording of history and consequently, intrahistoriographic research matches some of the intentions of what in postmodernism has been defined as historiographic metafiction, which I will discuss below. Like Cervantes' embryonic version of historiographic metafiction in Don Quijote through his suggestion that a supposed historical account was written by an Arab historian, Miró similarly examines the fallibility of historical records.

El crimen is not an adaptation of a literary text like Beltenebros or Werther, but the film nevertheless enters the sphere of metafiction in its historiographic form, therefore matching Miró's employment of self-reflexivity in other areas of her cinema. The representation of history or historical narratives in postmodernism is always a critical process (Hutcheon, 1988: 4). As Hutcheon argues, history and fiction are unoriginal, textual constructs because they rely on past intertexts (112) and to that extent, El crimen is metafictional. Jameson argues that both the linear novel and historical representation have undergone a period of crisis (1984: 180). Historiographic metafiction - a consequence of and response to the loss of confidence in the writing of history to convey truth - injects self-awareness into the writing of both fiction and history by suggesting that history both

refers to and exists in texts (B.H. Smith, 1978: 8-9; Hutcheon, 1988: 5, 106, 119). It argues that history is a construct influenced by the cultural, social and political contexts in which it was written and its writer's own beliefs - like a novel or film - as opposed to an objective, omniscient or truthful account of events and thereby problematises the possibility of real historical knowledge through texts (de Certeau, 1975: 65; Hutcheon, 1988: 105, 120-123; White, 1978: 69). Within this period of crisis, Jameson believed that the historian should attempt to produce the concept of history rather than attempting to record history as it actually happened (180). Miró deviates from some real events, but does manage to discuss the concept of history or the idea of the events and how history is written.

Although Miró discusses political and historical realities, the film - as a fictional construct or work of art as well as a historiograph - incorporates a self-conscious awareness of Spanish literary and artistic traditions of *coplas de ciego* and *tremendismo* in addition to Spanish painting, as I have already discussed below. The Spanish audience may already have been conscious of the historical case on which the film was based - especially given the scandalous publicity surrounding the film itself - and would therefore be doubly aware of El crimen's historiographic metafictional exposé that history itself is often a falsifying fiction in its aim to problematise the nature of historical knowledge (Hutcheon, 1988: 111): the civil guards falsely recorded or made 'history' by extracting mendacious confessions from the prisoners.

Before examining the content of history from which Miró borrows, it is relevant to outline some of the distancing features of historiographic metafiction which installs order in a narrative and proceeds to deconstruct this order of the text with metafictional strategies. For example, through the employment of intertextuality or fragmentation (116). In literary historiographic metafiction, readers witness not only the collecting of

information, but also the attempt to make narrative order: every piece of information is textualised as the work shows readers how people obtain access to the past through texts (114). Miró includes titles in her film mentioning geographical locations and dates. On one level, these titles are a convention of documentaries. However, her use of these initial or framing subtitles and explanatory references or endnotes are a feature of postmodern works which give additional explanations - such as footnotes - outside of the main text to question the latter's authority (123). Dividing up a work into sections or chapters equally highlights that work's artificiality and structuring (Stam: 1985, 147-148). As Stam comments, several periods of cinema have also employed this device. For instance, silent film exploited the unreality of titles and used them to explain narrative ellipses, like Miró whose titles give dates further on in the chronology. Godard also superimposed dates and other chapter-like titles on his films - for instance Pierrot Le Fou (1965) - as in comic vein has Woody Allen in Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex But Never Dared to Ask (1972) - and Fernando Colomo in Cuentos eróticos (1979). Miró's employment of the dating device is slight in comparison to Godard, who changes chronology in his films, and although references to time are part of the historiograph, they nevertheless carry implications of self-reflexivity. The self-reflexive cuts, fade-outs-fade-ins and dissolves in the film - which fragment the narrative and enable Miró to switch between locations - are features of film-making in an editing suite during which the director and editor splice tapes to create a whole narrative. They are comparable to the auto-reflexivity of the freeze-frame of the *ciego* at the start of the film, which sets the tone for the constructed nature of the following narrative. The voice over of the narrator later on in the film sounds fictionalized and intrusive as a result of its seemingly greater volume.

The variety of written and oral source material closely connects to the questioning thematics of the film. Dominick LaCapra said that documents utilized by historiographers as sources for accounts of history are not neutral: official documents depend on institutions and eye-witness accounts rely on the perception of individuals (1985: 45). Miró consequently opts for multiple sources of evidence - intrahistorical or individual varieties in addition to official papers. Gregorio and Léon's children and grandchildren were still alive in 1979 and she reconstructed the story from oral information, eyewitness testimonies and statements (de Béchade: 53). Miró, who had studied law at university, also obtained a lot of the source material from the archives of the Grimaldos case of the Tribunal Supremo (Salvador Maldonado: 1). Comparable to many postmodernist authors, she almost seems to tell viewers that she and they can only know the past through its *textual remains* (Hutcheon, 1988: 118). In addition to the de-stabilizing implications of historiographic metafiction, a director's use of written records - such as legal documents - turn a film into a sort of documentary in which the 'auteur' functions as editor as opposed to creator: Miró consequently becomes the 'compiler' of history (Chatman, 1978: 19; W.R. Magretta, 1981: 282).<sup>9</sup> Her assistant author, cinematographer Hans Burmann, also *injected his knowledge* of Spanish historical contexts into the narrative. Although the *mise-en-scène* of El crimen is metafictional in that it is an intertextual reference to Goya and Solana, Burmann is an apt photographer for the shoot of a historiographic film that equally intended to refer to the realities of its setting. Burmann explained to Heredero in interview that he dislikes using filters or any other devices which could distance his photography from reality (Heredero: 208).

The characters and events Miró depicts in the film represent historical fact - the conflict between the left-wing Osa and Tresjuncos, village gossip and the persecution of

Gregorio and León. However, owing to poetic license, Miró once again changes parts of the intrahistory obtained from relatives, neighbours and official records perhaps for thematic emphasis. She consequently resembles many historians who use techniques of fictional representation to create imaginative versions of the real world, something which historiographic metafiction seeks to emphasize (Hutcheon, 1988: 106). Don Francisco was described as a good man who was not very rich, although Miró depicts him as wealthy man indoctrinated by right-wing ideology and Catholicism. When Don Francisco became seriously ill, he wanted to solve the mystery of Grimaldos' disappearance and paid the priest to say mass for the victim (Salvador: 13, 41). Miró adds the confessional scene and incorporates the pan down to Fernando Rey's sinister boots, linking the oligarchy to religion through the technicalities of film. The torture scenes were also inspired by historical fact:

*Se decía que los colgaban atados de sus partes para que dijesen la verdad, que les rompían los dientes con la culata de la pistola, que si les arrancaban todas las uñas de los pies con una tenaza (86).*

After Gregorio and Léon fought in the cemetery and failed to unearth Grimaldos' body, the torturers' cruelty intensified. An eyewitness described a particularly brutal torture which Miró depicts in ellipsis. This means that only the police resemble masculinist castrators as opposed to Gregorio and Léon 'castrating' and punishing one another. However, the historical detail demonstrates the authenticity of almost 'castratory' tortures that were used on dissidents to which the film refers:

*Les dejaron desnudos [...] y les arrancaban el pelo [...] de la entrepierna, con tenazas de las de arrancar clavos. Luego les ataron una cuerda larga a sus partes y sentados en el suelo, uno frente al otro, con las piernas abiertas, les hacían tirarse el uno al otro. Al que tiraba más fuerte le daban luego de beber. Después les metían un palo entre las cuerdas y hacían torniquete hasta estrangularles los testículos y hasta que confesaron (97).*

The Civil Guard pulled out Gregorio's moustache, forced the prisoners to eat dried cod and deprived them of water, locking Gregorio into a cell for four days during which time he refused to see Dolores or his children, suffered from headaches, became delirious, insomniac and so thirsty that he licked the humid walls (56, 67, 71, 101). When the police eventually gave Gregorio water to wash himself for a meeting with Grimaldos' relatives, he drank it.

Miró's alterations to the incident with María Jesús in the graveyard have the effect of heightening the intrusion of the Symbolic into the Imaginary world of matriarchal power, although Miró now questions why she did alter the scene. Policemen took Dolores to El Palomar and Isasa had them bury María Jesús up to the neck in one of the holes they had dug while searching for Grimaldos' body, pretending that he would order them to shoot her so that Dolores would know how a mother feels when she sees her child buried (Pérez Millán, 143; Salvador: 86).<sup>10</sup> Dolores, who was illiterate, did not understand Isasa's legal jargon and was afraid. Salvador describes her reactions with some poetic license: 'Apretaba a su hija entre los brazos, como si ésta fuera un contrapeso al equilibrio que en cada instante estaba a punto de perder' (Salvador: 87). These descriptions confirm that her daughter is a means for her to retain matriarchal power. The real Dolores turned into a *beata*, wore crosses and held a rosary in court: contrastingly, Miró distances her from the paraphernalia of religion and religious oppression in the film (116). The only *beata* in El crimen is Juana López, who in reality threw Holy Water on the Town Hall: in the film, she splashes it in Gregorio's yard and Miró's alteration heightens her religious fanaticism (21-22).

Miró makes Gregorio a more sympathetic character in the film because in reality, he had a history of violent behaviour towards his wife unconnected to police torture. Gregorio was delirious when Dolores went into his cell, could not stand up and knocked Dolores unconscious to quench his thirst. The real Dolores, who had slept in their barn for some time, partly gave evidence against Gregorio so that she could escape his violent outbursts (88, 98, 104). These are elements of the story that Miró once again tones down in the film perhaps so as to expose the brutality of the civil guards, emphasize the victimization of Gregorio and give Dolores a protestatory, conscious voice.

The real Dolores wept when Gregorio returned, but the fact that she does not cry in the film indicates the depth of the conflict between the couple and heightens the harmful effects of masculinist, political dogmatism (136-137). One of Gregorio's colleagues, who worked on the road, described Dolores' reaction when she told Gregorio about Grimaldos' appearance: she threw herself at his feet and 'gritaba como si en un ataque de locura' at which Gregorio realized that León was also innocent and began to cry himself (139-140). Gregorio's tears do not feature in the film, possibly to show that he is exercising self-restraint in this thematic current. Daniel Dicenta portrays Gregorio as quite blank after his release from jail, rather like Terence Stamp and Darman, until he re-encounters Léon and they embrace dramatically.<sup>11</sup> Miró also cut a reported conflict between the two when Gregorio saw Léon in Socuéllamos station on their release in 1924, threatened to kill Léon and drew out his knife (133). Miró may once again have omitted this detail in order to make Gregorio more sympathetic so that the audience would feel that he and Léon were mostly victims in order to concentrate her criticism on institutionalized powers, to whom she attributes their broken friendship.<sup>12</sup> Paradoxically, some of the events which would have heightened the victimization of Gregorio and Léon do not appear in the film. For

example, Miró ignores that people threw excrement at Gregorio and León's houses (Salvador: 40), perhaps so as to concentrate on the authorities as a source of victimization through omissions of other examples of popular victimization with the exception of gossip.

Some of the details surrounding the case feature in the narrative in less detail. Having already discussed the miscarriage of justice with the events included in the film, Miró does not need superfluous historical details. Isasa was also cruel to León's wife for telling a neighbour that León had been falsely imprisoned and threatened to tie her to the tail of a horse (86). Miró needed to exercise narrative restraint and therefore, this reference would be superfluous owing to the scene between Taboada and Dolores in the cemetery. Since the narrative could succinctly convey Grimaldos' return through the *coplas* scene, Miró excluded how Grimaldos knocked at León's wife's door to ask for food or visited his sister in Hontanaya, who told locals that she had seen a soul from purgatory, adding to the harm done to others by religion as an institution (129-130). Miró did not need to connect the insubstantial evidence on Grimaldos' disappearance to religious indoctrination from local gossip because she had already constructed Grimaldos' mother as a fanatical *beata*. Francisco Serrano, who enjoyed teasing people, reportedly told two girls walking on the road to take another route, mentioning that a man had been killed there to frighten them. Serrano was amazed when the priest told the girls to inform the judge because the evidence could be connected to his parishioner's disappearance, although he recalled commenting that Grimaldos wanted to go to Brazil, an act which Serrano thought was probable given Grimaldos' fantasizing nature. He could not even remember seeing the girls and believed that they had given false evidence because the priest in Tresjuncos had indoctrinated the younger villagers (16-17).

Not only did Miró co-write the script of the film with Lola Salvador or borrow the idea for the film from Juan Antonio Porto, but she also publicized the fact that El crimen is a team effort by a collective group: 'Dedicamos esta película al pueblo de Osa de La Vega.' She also took inspiration from Spanish literary traditions in addition to Solana's paintings. An evident influence on Miró is *tremendismo*, which matches what Jeancolas describes as the films' 'surgical Realism' and which critics define as the depiction and savoring of both mental and physical brutality or bloody deeds (Hen: 8; Jeancolas 70; Russell: 422). Cinematic *tremendismo* is even more harrowing than its literary counterparts because film is a directly accessible visual medium. *Coplas de ciego* - popular broadsheet accounts of sensational crimes used to transmit news or tell stories - are an important Spanish tradition on which Miró drew which expressed public reaction to violence and other themes that replaced the 'heroic' subjects of traditional ballads (Salvador: 122; Terry: 29, 45). Indeed, Unamuno himself stated in 'La casta histórica Castilla' (1895) that *romances* were a source of *intrahistoria* (1986: 67). The only true information in the *coplas* surrounding Gregorio and Léon's 'crime' was the reference to the awfulness of Spanish jails (Salvador: 125). The ballad in El crimen reflects the tradition and corresponds to Miró's intrahistorical project to represent events from the popular point-of-view of the victims' relatives and friends. Her use of *coplas de ciego* also links to the mix of high art - such as the intertextual references to Solana's paintings - and popular culture present in postmodernism. Miró democratically used high and low art forms, therefore avoiding elitist aesthetic classifications. The film gives viewers the impression that she did not write the *coplas*: like Cervantes' ready-made documents on the life of Don Quijote, they act as another 'found element' from which Miró borrowed. The *coplas* constitute a self-reflexive framing device in the film to inform the viewers about the events

from Gregorio and Léon's entry into jail. It is thematically fitting that José María appeared when the blind man was reciting the verses, the moment at which the law or masculinist ideology was proved wrong and part of the narrative in which Miró showed that she was not the author of the verses, abdicating from any position of authorial authority.

Historiographs and literature are both objects of a writer's understanding of a particular subject or character (Ehrman, 1981: 253). Miró's alterations show that the writing of history is problematic and frequently subjective, as Pérez Millán and Miró herself realized owing to the constraints of production: in addition to the need to remove the whole sub-plot relating to León and his family and to cut down on cast, shoots, and extras, Miró also finds faults in the film:

Hay escenas enteras, como las de 'La Varona' deambulando con la niña después de haber hecho su falsa declaración, que resultan fallidas porque no pude rodar las reacciones del pueblo que la acosaba. [...] cada vez que veo las imágenes de León voliendo sólo al final, no puedo dejar de pensar en que eso no fue así, no estaba solo... En conjunto, la película me parece esquemática, simplificadora, lógicamente no puedo verla con objetividad [...]. En la película se resumen demasiadas cosas en un sólo rótulo y se dan pocas explicaciones. Y seguramente esas pocas explicaciones se notan demasiado (in Pérez Millán: 144).

Alongside her collaborators, such as Salvador, Miró made a film that is part history or intrahistory and partly her own fiction - a hybrid, postmodern mix - to mirror the real events surrounding the victimization of Gregorio and Léon in the content of her text. Isasa and the right wing wrote their own fictions or historiograph of the 'crime' to explain Grimaldos' disappearance motivated by their own subjective desires for revenge against the socio-political other. El crimen is metafictional in the sense that viewers see the mechanisms of historiographic construction at work - torture, lies and imprisonment.<sup>13</sup> In addition to doubting her own film as a veritable, reliable or exact account, Miró questions

the writing of history by dogmatic authorities, just as historiographic metafiction exposes the constructed and imposed nature of the meaning of fiction and history's mediation of the world for the purpose of introducing [the writer's own] version (Doctorow, 1983: 24).

Miró's film - with or without her knowledge - also questions itself as well as the official depictions of historical truth. A director has to be selective to condense events spanning several years into a film; however, Miró has deliberately made alterations to the records of history to suit her own thematic purposes or interests and the film therefore matches the way in which historiographic metafiction suggests that history contains both fiction and fact (Hutcheon: 1988, 113). She even believes that the film somewhat escaped her control:

Creo que la película tiene una fuerza que está por encima de mí y que radica en su realidad. Las cosas importantes en ella son las que han transcendido la historia real a lo largo de los años: todo el mundo nos contaba que Gregorio no volvió a hablar nunca con su mujer, que el pueblo no les perdonó jamás ... (Miró in Pérez Millán: 146).

Her own text is open to interpretation, fallibility in the recording of real events or subjective bias in alteration, like some of the historiographic metafictions discussed by Hutcheon which deliberately falsify recorded history to produce a distancing mistake so as to highlight the fallibility of all historical records (1988: 114). Consciously or unconsciously, Miró has produced both a questioning and self-questioning work in that El crimen not only undermines the official historiography of the Spanish legal authorities, but its very own ability to portray 'truth'. Analogous to postmodernist works, El crimen shows how legal records or (official) history, like Realist texts - classical film or Realist novels - derive their force of objectivity more from verisimilitude than from objective truth (Hutcheon, 1988: 105). El crimen is not the only film by Miró to make viewers aware of

the need to question versions of history. In Beltenebros, Darman questions history on numerous occasions. For instance, he refutes Luque's references to the way in which he had supposedly murdered with his bare hands and proceeds to deconstruct Valdivia/Ugarte's mendacious evidence against Walter and Andrade.

The ending of El crimen, in which Miró mentions the popular rumor that the guilty authorities committed suicide, aptly mirrors the rest of the film's questioning theatics and the project of historiographic metafiction:

Postmodern fiction suggests that to re-write or re-present the past in fiction or history is [...] to open it up [...], to prevent it from being conclusive [...] (Hutcheon, 1988: 110).

Miró and her collaborators show a postmodern loss of confidence in their or other people's ability to know the past with any certainty (1988: 119). Parallel to Miró's films in general and their openness, the message of El crimen seems to be that viewers can never classify or know everything. Even though Miró uses a voice-over from a narrator in part of the film, a sign of authority (Kirkham and Thumin, 1995: 17), she removes this at the end when the narrative leaves the historical data open to interpretation.

<sup>1</sup> Hopper has also influenced many cinematographers (BBC2's series on American art,

December 16, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> Miró uses such a strategy with Andrea in Gary Cooper and Teresa in La petición.

Whereas Teresa is aware that the mute watches her, Andrea believes that she is on her own. Andrea's gaze at herself in the mirror in her flat is one example.

<sup>3</sup> For instance, The Lighthouse at Two Lights (1929) (108-109).

<sup>4</sup> Rooftops (1926) El palacio (1946) (65) are examples.

<sup>5</sup> For instance, El cristo de la sangre (1920) (Alonso: 103). Pérez Millán also believes that the fight between Gregorio and León in the cell resembles Goya's Los garrotazos (136).

<sup>6</sup> For example, La corrida de toros (1923) shows bloodshed on the ground, a dead horse and a bull goring a white horse. El desolladero (Patio de caballos) (1924) depicts various corpses and the expression of fear in the horses' faces, gazes of terror which Miró transfers to the prisoners. See José Solana. Exposición y homenaje (Centro Cultural Conde Duque, Madrid), 60-63.

<sup>7</sup> Miró is familiar with the writings of Unamuno (Montero, 1978: 8).

<sup>8</sup> According to Luis Jímenez de Asúa, the Spanish government censored discussions of the 'crime' and the torture suffered by the prisoners (Carlos Muñiz, 1980). In fact, Jímenez de Asúa had to resort to publishing his account of the events in Argentina (1970).

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of the notion of the compiler used by Augusto Roa Bastos in Yo El Supremo, see Ezquierro, 62-65.

<sup>10</sup> As Pérez Millán and Miró comment: 'A la directora, le pareció excesiva y en su lugar rodó los planos de la zancadilla: "Hacía falta que el espectador viera una agresión a la niña,

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y como no rodé lo que me contaron, al final hice ese cambio, pero hoy creo que no tiene sentido..." (143).

<sup>11</sup> An eyewitness said that when Gregorio and Léon saw each other again "allí lloraban hasta las piedras" (142).

<sup>12</sup> Miró described her intentions in the depiction of the breakdown of Gregorio and León's friendship: "Era imprescindible mostrar [las escenas de tortura] con claridad, y que el espectador sintiese de verdad el impacto en el estómago, porque, al fin y al cabo, fueron las torturas las que desencadenaron el mecanismo por el que dos hombres que eran amigos acabaron revolviéndose uno contra otro y destruyéndose salvajemente". The film is mostly about Spanish power structures rather than torture: "[...] creo que la película dice muchas más cosas sobre el poder judicial, la iglesia o las fuerzas vivas en general que sobre quienes ejecutaron materialmente unos hechos violentos" (Pérez Millán: 146). See also p.135.

<sup>13</sup> The Vietnam War aroused a distrust of 'facts' as presented by the military and the media in the USA which filtered into historiographic metafictional novels of the 1960s and 1970s that questioned who determined and created truth (Hutcheon, 1988: 115-116). Similarly, El crimen stands against a backdrop of mistrust of official records, as I have already argued. Franco's dictatorship disguised many facts and controlled the media through censorship; it is also evident from accounts of torture of ETARRAS in the 1970s that there was a comparable mistrust of officialdom in Spain. Muñoz Molina's Beltenebros shares some of this lack of confidence in reported evidence.

## CH. 9. A SPECIAL CASE OF METAFICTION: THE STAR INTERTEXTS OF ANA BELÉN AND PATSY KENSIT.

It is interesting to examine Miró's conscious or unconscious use of stars and discover how they work both in ways she intended and produce unintentional meanings which are readable by the *lector cómplice* whom Miró agrees is free to interpret the texts as he or she chooses (Appendix 1: 3, 6-7). Critics who read against the grain must therefore stress that it is their own reading of her films and not necessarily Miró's intention. Let us outline relevant theoretical aspects of 'star studies' on authorship, performance and, in particular, the star intertext in order to discuss how selected actors assist Miró in the creation process. In the light of 'death of the author' approaches and the corresponding erosion of authority through radical, metafictional textual strategies, actors assist Miró in her indirect attack on (patriarchal) authority through the metafictional deconstruction of the metaphor of literary paternity as assistant authors. The actors both help to construct their characters by bringing with them intertextual features which Miró intended to function in her films and, since they carry with them their own meanings, provide counter-traits beyond authorial intention. Just as her texts seem to resist classification of characters, the actors are used openly in that the viewer reads the actor and his or her work as he or she wishes. However, despite the fact that actors are assistant authors, they are ultimately directed by Miró who, to a large extent through the joint processes of direction and editing, controls the creation process.

### THE STAR INTERTEXT.

Unlike characters in films, stars are real people with their own existence in the extra-diegetic world (Dyer, 1979: 20). Earlier, traditional approaches to star studies arose through interest in the star's biography: for an actor to become a star, his or her activities in the real world had to be as important for the audience as the star's films themselves (Gledhill, 1991: xiv). Personal realities such as family background or social class come into play in the creation of an image (42), but Morin highlights the star's physical beauty, love and personal relationships as categories of special interest (1961: 10, 23, 27, 42, 46-

47, 51, 58). Stars and their images have since come to be defined as texts in their own right by Dyer and in his sociological-semiotic approach to star studies, he demonstrates how stars are part of the process of signification (Gledhill, 1991: 1). The star's status as a cinematic signifier helps to explain why some viewers confuse the characters he or she plays with the actor and the fact that his or her image and physical characteristics are always pre-signifying because these features have socio-cultural meanings attached to them before the actor in question begins to perform lead to further confusion (Dyer, 1979: 24; King, 1991: 173). In view of these properties of the actor as signifier, critics like Dyer suggest that we examine the 'total star text' when viewing films which consists of information about the star from both official and unofficial media sources - newspaper articles, criticisms, commentaries, adverts, films, television programmes and interviews - which provide a backdrop of their lifestyle for appearances in films (Dyer, 1991a: 50, 71; Gledhill, 1991: 89). The most interesting information often derives from what the press discovers or interview revelations (Dyer, 1979: 69). Photographs are also an important element in the formation of the star text (Dyer, 1991a; Wolfe, 1991: 89). Therefore, star intertexts are composed of visual, verbal and aural signs which are just as important because the speech of an actor and character, its sound in addition to its content, expresses personality; the actor's physical appearance or physiognomy already signify in addition to costume and the performance of gestures (Dyer, 1979: 50, 122-124). The star can be typecast within certain personalities owing to his or her physical features (14). Sometimes, certain features are not stressed until a later point in the actor's career. Events long after the shooting of a particular film assist in analysis because they allow viewers to re-read the star's performance in retrospect. Star images are not static and undergo continuous transformations (Dyer, 1979: 32): using later material, viewers can reinforce the angelic aspects of Ana Belén and Kensit because both stars became mothers shortly after their appearances in La petición and Beltenebros.

Films are the most important parts of the star text. As I already mentioned, stars are often assigned film roles corresponding to the sort of characters associated with their physical, artistic, sociological or political image (70). Sometimes, stars are associated with

a particular genre, for example John Wayne and the Western or Belén and the *tercera vía* in Spain (Hopewell: 82-83). However, actors may and often do cross genres, especially more important stars (Andrew Briton, 1991: 198-206). Hence Belén has been associated with the varying genres of comic *españoladas* such as Aunque la hormona se vista de seda (1974), the horror genre in La petición and the *marisolismo* of regime ideology in Zampo y yo (Luis Lucía, 1965).<sup>1</sup> Audiences frequently have generic preconceptions about actors and expect them to appear in roles similar to their habitual genres. Films are often built around star images themselves if directors and scriptwriters keep a particular star in mind when writing or often contract stars to play a type with which they are associated (Dyer, 1991: 69-70). It is interesting to note this possibility, although Miró has never written a script with a particular star in mind as was the case with Azucena Rodríguez, who wrote Entre rojas (1995) thinking of Penélope Cruz as Lucía.<sup>2</sup> Eusebio Poncela was not Miró's immediate choice for the protagonist of Werther since William Hurt was unavailable to play the part (Appendix 1: 7). Miró clearly does have certain actors in mind for roles, even though the distribution company for La petición wanted Belén to play Teresa, as Miró remarked: "A mí la intervención de Ana me pareció muy bien, había trabajado ya con ella y pensaba que no habría quien lo hiciera mejor" (Pérez Millán: 87-88).

An actor's physical presence in itself brings with a history of certain meanings on which directors borrow (Barry King, 1991: 175; J.O.Thompson, 1991: 183). Conventionally, the role must be adapted to an actor who possesses or can assume the necessary features to make the part a success (De Cordova: 26; J.O.Thompson: 193). Although the actor becomes a basic form of the sign - in which the meaning of the signifier is the substance of the signified - that directors may use to fit the part (Barry King, 1991: 174), there is a possibility of contradiction: this feature is of interest in an analysis of star contributions in the films of Miró in which she uses actors who, on the whole, seem to fit their roles - such as the unmarried mother, Mercedes Sampietro - others whose star text partially corresponds to their characters - Kensit in Beltenebros - and Belén, whose star image makes possible a re-reading of Teresa in La petición as a victim, especially owing to her timidity and fears of insignificant things, while it simultaneously reinforces some of

Teresa's traits, such as strength.<sup>3</sup> Since Dyer's early, largely sociological account of stars (1979), star studies has been influenced by theories such as psychoanalysis (Gledhill, 1991: xiv) and Marxism which displaced the individual as the guarantor of discourse. The aims of these theories seem to coincide with certain lines of thought developed by Derrida's deconstruction in which the signifier does not automatically lead to a signified, but is tied to an infinite chain of signifiers and sees meaning as unfixed, just as postmodern texts refer to other texts as opposed to reality (Hutcheon, 1988: 11; 1991: 29). Derrida's theories are a significant base for the notion of the deconstruction of binary opposition developed by Cixous, theories which are of importance in any examination of Miró's open, non-dogmatic character portrayal and her granting of leave for the viewer to read the films as he or she wishes. The attack on dogmatism in life or art is closely linked to the radical textual strategies of postmodern metafiction, the implications of the use of an accomplice reader and stars as assistant authors. Consequently, it is of interest to outline them briefly. Dominant ideology, such as patriarchy, presents itself as the ideology of society as a whole and tries to refute oppositional perspectives: stars similarly may be used to reinforce stereotypes but they may imply contradictions to the types of dominant ideology and discrepancies which expose the weaknesses inherent in the establishment of ideological monoliths and, by virtue of contrariness, refuse to validate dominant ideology (Dyer, 1979: 2). Theoretical approaches, such as psychoanalysis, argue that there is a 'reality' or truth under the surface and in suppressed behaviours that they aim to uncover. This strategy to discover truth or reality is relevant to Miró's films since one of their recurring themes is the exploration of what is underneath the surface - corruption in El crimen, Hablamos, and Beltenebros, the monstrous feminine in La petición, the private moments and tensions of Andrea in Gary Cooper and the artificiality of a *femme fatale* in Beltenebros. This is a theme available to accomplice readers or critics and I will look under the surface of Kensit's and Belén's star texts for this purpose.

A film can attempt to hide traits of the real star so as to conceal contradictions between star and role (Gledhill, 1991: 38). However, star texts can influence actors' relationships with their character or social type in varying degrees and thus may reconcile,

conceal or expose ideological contradictions because an actor rarely reflects one type (xiv). The star may transcend the type to which they belong, remaining individual, producing a gap between the actor's self and the performance which becomes part of the meaning of the film or they can embody the type's facets such as beauty, strength or evil to the maximum if their star image harmonizes with character. In certain cases, any gap between star and role or performance may be minimized due to a star's acting talent which can conceal his or her real image (Dyer, 1979: 18, 24, 54). However, this does not mean that intellectual viewers will refrain from applying information about the star to a performance and find contradictions, which seems to be a possibility with Belén's performance in La petición as an evil *femme castratrice*. In what Dyer terms 'inflection', the stars differ from type to the extent of maintaining individuality whilst still belonging to their type, but reveal the contradictions of the type or draw out its hitherto repressed elements. If stars try to overthrow the type to which they belong, they both assert their individuality and may expose the oppressiveness of the particular type (Dyer, 1979: 111-113). Miró's opposition to dominant ideology (namely masculinism) from her censorship problems with La petición in 1976 onwards and the rebellious personae of her actors mean that readings of stars in Miró's films often produce contradictions whether Miró intended them or not. The star images of Belén and Kensit, composites of angel woman and monster stereotypes, similarly lay bare patriarchy's oppressive denigration of women who display active sexuality as monstrous. This is an option that Miró seems to acknowledge because she permits the viewers to assert their individuality and form their own opinions and chooses open endings to avoid narrative closure as part of her artistic and democratic project to reflect that life itself is open (Appendix 1: 5).<sup>4</sup> J.W. Harvey recognizes that if an artist allows characters to be individuals he or she must permit them to escape ideology, including his or her own limited view (1965: 25). Of course, as J.O. Thompson argues, the sign systems of cinema, like language, are never textually embodied together at the same time and he advocates analysis attentive to elements outside the particular film or films in which the star appears (1991: 195). In this sense, Miró resembles Brecht who thought that characters ought to be inconsistent, like the world we inhabit. Within this analytical strain,

Barry King and Dyer argue that extra-cinematic discourse has the most powerful impact on the audience's knowledge of the star and leads to contradictions of what appears on the screen at the level of performance or role (Dyer, 1977-8: 30-52; King, 174). Press interviews, during which the star has his or her own freedom of speech, make public any discrepancies between the star's image in films and the star as a person. The viewer's opinion on character is frequently determined by what he or she thinks is the real personality of the star playing the part, although it is a mistake to use star images as omnipotent keys to reveal truth about characters (Dyer, 1979: 140-142). Indeed, it is problematic and difficult for directors to hide those elements of the actor's appearance and behaviour that are not intended to enter into character portrayal (173).

#### THE ACTOR AS (ASSISTANT) AUTHOR.

All stars are assistant authors in addition to often problematic types or fits to any particular characters by virtue of their already signifying star intertexts from which the director may borrow. I shall leave open the issue of authorship in Miró's cinema. Ultimately, Miró is the director of her films and presides over the joint creative process of direction and editing, but she has assistant actors, scriptwriters and cinematographers who I mentioned in chapter 7. The extent to which a particular viewer considers an actor as author depends on his or her knowledge of the actor under consideration outside of film. Critics or intellectual viewers may uncover areas that Miró did not take into account or intend, perhaps comparable to my own readings of Belén and Kensit.

Patrick McGilligan (1975: 199) revises auteur theory by considering the contribution of actors and he argues that, under certain circumstances, an actor may influence a film as much as a writer, director or producer. Some actors have more influence than others: a few performers have such powerful personae and acting skills that, despite directorial intentions, they define the meaning of their films because their acting has gained the force of an auteur. Critics ought to differentiate between varying degrees or types of star authorship, for example whether authorship is engendered by the actor's intertext or their performance (such as in method acting) or the degree of control they have

over their image. Some stars, like Fred Astaire, completely controlled their image on screen whilst others maintained only partial control or were just one voice amongst a whole team of assistant authors (Dyer, 1979: 175). In terms of star intertexts, such a reading of a film may depend on how much the accomplice viewer knows about the actor or on the extent of the actor's notoriety. Belén, a very well-known figure in Spain by 1976, does seem to influence the signification processes of La petición and to some extent, makes the narrative her own through the joint influences of talent and fame.<sup>5</sup> If the director involves actors in any artistic decisions, they achieve the status of accomplices. Once again, this theory is applicable to Miró's films because she tends to involve artists actively in discussions about their scenes. For example Belén, Sampietro and Miró discussed their characters' feelings before shooting scenes in La petición, Gary Cooper and Werther respectively (Diez Minutos, 1987; Hernández: 358; Pérez Millán: 170-171, 176, 229-232). Miró went over Kensit's scenes in Beltenebros in detail, above all the Hayworth parody (Thompson: 37-39, 170-172). As will be argued in the Kensit section, Kensit herself refused to follow Miró's instructions, controlling the amount of clothing she wore for the semi-nude scenes in Beltenebros (170, 172, 174-175, 177). Actors who influence artistic decisions - especially casting, writing and directing - and place limitations on their screen image are partly auteurs because they shift meaning. Kensit influenced the film in this way when she drew Stamp's attention to his suitability for Darman (32).

Even if the star does work against the director, he or she constitutes ready made material or a recognizable personality which the director can use to fit the film. Much auteurist criticism examines how the actor and director help one another (Dyer, 1979: 177). On the other hand, the director is not completely creating original material in this case, but using what is there already.<sup>6</sup> It would be a mistake to approach the relationship between the director and minor assistant actors or authors like most criticism by privileging the director over the star. It would also be erroneous to believe that only actors in theatre enjoy creative input into their roles or greater influence (Barry King: 167). Indeed, certain technical properties of film can equally return creative power to the actor, such as the close-up which as J.O. Thompson suggests 'invests greater meaning in the actor as a

signifying mass' (1976: 173), and which is a textual strategy favoured by Miró - for example in Gary Cooper and Beltenebros. Clearly this is something unavailable to theatre actors.

Actors can resort to various acting techniques to assist in the creation of character. The Stanislavsky method is of most relevance to the discussion of stars as assistant authors: Belén trained in this method, a fact well documented by the Spanish press. In methods by Diderot and Coquetin, actors base performance on observation and theatrical conventions of expression, acting from the outside in. The Stanislavsky method implies acting from the inside out and requires the actor to draw on his or her own lived emotions, basing the performance on how he or she feels or has felt inside (Dyer, 1979: 148-150) which brings about an identification with the character. Belén enjoyed playing Teresa because she released repressed parts of herself, therefore not discarding her own personality as some method actors often do to think their way into another psyche (161-162). Method acting is useful in the construction of a character like Teresa because it is employed especially to express the character's psychological make-up, emotion and repression. Character consequently achieves greater importance than plot in method acting, as the character of Teresa appears to do in La petición.

Despite evidence to support the actor's role as assistant author, the star is still only one of the contributing elements that make a film. The actor's performance partly results from his or her behaviour on screen (i.e. his or her creative input and effort) and equally from the effects of the cinematic apparatus itself, such as lighting and camera movements (Dyer, 1979: 172-180; King, 176). In this way, Rebeca /Kensit's strength is increased in Beltenebros because of the camera movements which keep her in the frame, although at varying distances, and reveal how she resists the power of an oppressive male gaze in her striptease act, especially Ugarte's, by moving more than the camera. Actors and critics alike recognize the role of the director and editor, whose decisions influence everything (Dyer, 1979: 146, 163, 172, 177; Kuleshov, 1974: 54; Robert De Niro, 1985: 10-11). Performance is what the actor does; what the director and editor do with performance is

something else. An interesting approach is to question whether what the actor does contributes to character construction or whether this is achieved by other means (Dyer, 1979: 165). Dyer disagrees with critics who give actors' performance little expressive importance in film, like Bettetini who argues that as a result of montage and visual signs in film, the performer is completely in the hands of the director (83). Once again, perhaps it is better to adopt a non-classificatory approach to such theories of authorship, like Miró's evasion of classification, since hers are the films to be analyzed with such theories.

### ACTIVE READER OR AUDIENCE.

Dyer's notion of the star as an intertextual construct demands that the viewers in the audience become active readers by bringing in their own knowledge of the star. The spectators can make the images subversive for themselves and this is a strategy viewers can adopt to read Miró's films against the grain (28, 59). For intellectual viewers, there is pleasure to be obtained from solving puzzles presented by the star intertext. In this respect, Miró's use of stars complements the need or scope for active, questioning reading in other areas of her cinema.

Stars provide pleasure for the viewers other than the gratification they obtain when they draw out hidden or contradictory star meanings. One of the reasons for the existence of the star system is the attraction of stars themselves (Powdermaker: 228-229). Dyer applies Max Weber's definition of charisma for the success of political leaders to stars (Dyer, 1979: 31; Gledhill, 1991: 57). Charisma - commonly defined as magic - is part of the workings of authority: if an individual possesses exceptional qualities valued by humans, he or she attracts and influences others. Dyer reminds us that a more common and simplified definition of charisma is magic. In some of Miró's films, the effects of the charisma of certain actors are highly self-reflexive. In La petición and Beltenebros, the *mise-en-abîme* setting of captive audiences reminds viewers of their own attraction to Belén, Kensit or the Polish dancer. Teresa submits the mute's will to her own using her charisma and he becomes the diegetically self-conscious reflection of the male spectator following the siren; Darman is similarly attracted by the charisma of the Polish dancer and

is pictured in reverse shots engrossed in Rebeca's striptease. Examining ambiguities in stars links the pleasures of viewing to the intellectual enjoyment of active reading. Independent female characters could overpower repressive and castigatory narrative resolutions provided that the actress possessed a strong star text (Dyer, 1989; 1991: 18, 64-65; Gledhill, 1991: xv; Haskell: 3-4, 8). Evidently, the endings of Miró's films are open and she resists classification, but nevertheless, strong, charismatic, contradictory female characters like those created by Miró using Belén and Kensit further deny classification. All of this was coupled with *mise-en-scène*, performance and emphasis or narrative pause. Many stars in the independent woman category revealed sexual ambiguity in their appearance and presentation such as Joan Crawford's broad shoulders and Bette Davis' strong walk (Dyer, 1991: 65). Jackie Stacey's research about the female spectator of mainstream, Hollywood films is of equal interest to the development of a character's strength through the star text. When recalling stars in films with castigatory narrative closures, female spectators did not write fan letters about the character's downfall or downgrading, but pleasurable remembered their strength (152). These female stars often offered women in the audience fantasies of experience they had not themselves undergone (151). Her ideas about stars in the 1930s and 1940s can be applied to Miró's early films - in particular La petición - because when they were made, Spain was a country still emerging from a highly masculinist dictatorship. According to Valerie Walkerdene, identifying with transgressive, independent female stars may arouse rebellious desires to fight the dominant system rather than reinforce it (Walkerdene cited in Stacey: 147), comments which have particularly rebellious significance for the subversive influence of La petición.

So charisma forms part of the star's function as defined by Morin as objects of desire, but there is also the pleasure gained from identifying with stars which is influenced very much by viewers' reactions to the actor. Andrew Tudor's work (1974) on the relationship between star and audience is crucial according to Stacey, especially for the effects of stars on female spectators. Tudor shows how the audience identifies with characters in varying degrees: if the viewers feel emotional affinity with the character, they

are loosely involved with him or her due to both the star and the narrative; self-identification -- which has radical potential if the star involved is subversive -- means that they situate themselves in the same place as the star and adopt identical moods (cited in Dyer, 1979: 28). Subversive female characters can defuse their potential traditionalisation as spectacles in these processes of transformative identification. Mulvey argues that because women are spectacles in narratives, there is a tension aroused between the viewer's desire to move forwards in the narrative yet pause to look at the glamorous female star, assuming that the viewer is male and heterosexual (Dyer, 1979: 59). However, given that women in the audience are also viewers, if the narrative pauses on transgressive female characters as spectacles, the narrative increases the potential for the viewers' transgressive identification or imitation. Stacey's research on the reception of female stars in patriarchal, Hollywood cinema by women demonstrated that female spectators are not passive: the reception of Miró's actresses is therefore more rebellious owing to the subversive thematics of her films. Female spectators incorporated at least part of their favorite star's identity into their lives or identified with them through pleasurable fantasies or play acting (154, 157, 160).

Belén is a spectacle in La petición, dressed and fabricated in the highly feminising nineteenth-century fashion, but her acts in bedroom scenes are highly subversive. Similarly, Kensit in Beltenebros is made into an archetypal form of woman as spectacle in her striptease, yet, as I have previously argued using Kotz's revisionist theories - based on empirical evidence from interviews and documentaries about women strippers in the sex industry - that particular scene demonstrates her empowerment. Other instances of female activity similarly act as potentially subversive influences upon the female viewer. This facet is not restricted to women characters. Poncela's soft star image and the narrative's pause on the latter also influences men in the audience, comparable to Stamp's portrayal of Darman replete with the tensions present in all branches of masculinist politics.

Many of the biographical sources on Belén and Kensit - popular, famous stars - were quite widely available in newspapers or magazines, although most viewers would not have had access to all of the sources. The readings I propose of Belén and Kensit may only

be available to more intellectual viewers as opposed to the general public, like a lot of Miró's scholarly references to literature and film.

### ANA BELEN.

Nunca una, siempre varias; como ella misma, que es capaz de desdibujarse, crecer y ser múltiple (Carel Peralta: 90).

One way to approach an actor's star intertext is through questioning whether there are any roles denied him or her. Critics have access to a lot of information about Belén, a celebrity in her own right, who is also married to the famous singer, Víctor Manuel. She has appeared in theatre, TV and films in addition to her involvement in the music industry. Her image has evolved from the political radicalism of her youth to a less anarchic stance during her mature years. Her comments on films or events in her personal life help us to re-read her star intertext in earlier films such as La petición. With the exception of the *marisolismo* of Zampo y yo, it seems that Belén has never played a totally submissive woman, although she comes across as a strong, progressive character in many of her films, even if she is not completely so within a particular narrative. Firstly, let us examine Belén's simultaneously angelic and monstrous features found in press interviews.

Belén values her career and assuming financial responsibility for herself from the age of 15 in the theatre made her independent (Montero: 1977; Villalonga: 1982; Navarrete: 81; Navarro: 96). Her independent attitude also extended to her private life. Critics have referred to her in terms such as 'la perfecta liberada, enterradora de la perfecta casada de antaño' (Montero, 1977: 5) and she herself discusses her original plans to avoid serious emotional ties "a toda costa", affirming her belief that "se puede ser libre formando

pareja" (ibid.). Indeed, when Belén met Víctor, she initially disliked the idea of marriage (Escario, 1987: 54-55). Commentators and biographers believe that even though Belén needs others, she will never depend on them (Navarro: 95). During her youth, she reacted against the norms of traditional, Spanish ideology in politics and family life (Escario: 54) which she attributes to her strong character (Gil de Biedma: 32). Remarks in the press cause critics to believe that this attitude is partly a result of her education and upbringing. Although her low-class family was neither right nor left-wing or religious, her education in a religious school was traditional, the sort of education against which, according to Montero, one has to rebel (Ruiz Merino, 1977: 4; Montero, 1977: 5). Belén herself used to pray and attend mass (Barbero: 10-11; Vilallonga) and suffered a guilt complex through attending a strict convent school (Ruiz Merino: 4). However, she never had to endure paternal oppression at home (Gil de Biedma: 32; Vallina: 63-64).

Izquierdo defines Belén -- born at a time when Francoism began to loose its hard edge (Ruiz Merino: 4) -- as the muse of democracy (Izquierdo: 45). Belén joined the Partido Comunista in 1974 owing to her preference for its progressive outlook (Pronto, 1987: 52; Ruiz Merino: 22), an affiliation for which she and Víctor were often victimized by conservative Spaniards (Peralta: 90; Rigalt, 1993: 22). Belén has since left the PCE because she felt that it no longer held true to its principles, but remains on the left of the political spectrum, supporting Izquierda Unida. Despite her involvement with the left while Franco was still alive, she felt afraid: she did not want to know certain facts about left-wing activity in case she was caught and tortured (Eduardo G.Rico, a).

Any examination of Belén's star persona would be incomplete without the inclusion of her sexual politics. Belén, who believes that conflict between men and women is a mistake, has never been a radical feminist (Navarro: 95-96). However, she does have

feminist sympathies, believing that "la mujer debe rebelarse contra algo que se le adjudica por el mero hecho de ser mujer" (96), suggesting that "el hombre también es una víctima y sería un error que la mujer le declarase la guerra" (Narros: 96) and that "se trata de caminar junto al hombre no contra él" (Rigalt: 39). On the radical issue, she has had this to say:

[...] aprecio la labor de los colectivos feministas más radicales. Sirven de concienciación. Hace falta que muchas mujeres sepan que están marginadas, que deberían exigir unos derechos de reconocimiento [...] (39-40).

She maintains that women have the right to independence and a career; in her opinion, few women dream about being housewives and having children, which ought not to be their only options (Navarro: 96; Rigalt: 40). Her comments defend women's rights, but do not correspond to her image as a man-hating murderess in La petición (Narros: 96; Rigalt: 39-40). In line with PCE, socialist and feminist ideology advocating equality, Belén believes that women should have access to contraception and abortions, which she feels ought to have been legalized incorporating such conditions before 1985. Although she has never undergone an abortion herself, she joined with many famous women in the 1970s in a campaign to raise awareness about restrictions placed on women in which they publicly declared that they had undergone abortions (Fotogramas, 1985; Martín Perpiñán: 118; Rigalt: 40; Ruiz Merino: 33). She disagrees with double standards vis-à-vis sex which she believes have survived in Spain and is aware of the consequences of the repression of sexual urges in Spain - namely an increase in violence and tension (Vallina: 64) - an important point seemingly raised by La petición. She also believes that passion in amorous relationships is of greater importance to women, who becoming daring in love (Cisquella, 1994: 133). Belén equally disagrees with patriarchalism in other spheres such as the workplace (Boyero: 33), and bearing in mind that both men and women suffer under

masculinist regimes, tries to deconstruct traditional stereotypes relating to strength and emotion:

Se han repartido unos papeles que no tienen razón de ser. El hombre tiene que ser fuerte, duro y no está bien visto que llore y la mujer debe de ser débil [...] (Vilallonga: 1982).

It is crucial to look at her relationship with Víctor since it tells us about Belén's attitudes towards love, marriage and children. These aspects of her persona both reinforce Miró's characterization of Teresa and refute it because of the presence of angelic and domesticated traits in the star's biography. In the press, Víctor and Belén seem to share an ideal relationship based on fidelity, joint decisions (except for Belén's career) and respect for one another's freedom (Blanco, 1987: 72; Escario: 54-55; Figueroa: 74; López del Moral). Belén enjoys sharing, even though at times she does not want to (Figueroa: 74). Although she fails to control her temper in arguments (Escario: 54-55), she is the first to apologize (Teixidó, 1986: 22-23). Víctor is an example of the new man in Spain - he cares for their children, cooks and shops in the local market (Izquierdo; Rodríguez Marchante: 64).

The couple became associated with subversion by cohabiting before their civil marriage (Barbero: 35; Escario: 54-55) which Belén described as a “boda a medias, un sí pero un no” because they married to please their families, who held more conservative beliefs (Rigalt: 39). Despite her own timidity, Belén mustered the courage to initiate their relationship with alcohol (Carmen Arroyo, 1986: 23; Barbero: 35; Blanco: 77), but enjoyed the challenge of pursuing Víctor, assuming the traditionally masculine role. Belén believes that she has masculine traits while Víctor possesses complementary feminine traits (Carmen Arroyo, 1986: 23) and she herself continues to favour role reversals within and outside of marriage:

Es importante que los hombres sean débiles en un momento dado y las mujeres fuertes [...]. Las mujeres no son [...] cuidadoras de la casa. Aquí la casa la cuidamos los dos y a ninguno se le caen los anillos por cocinar o atender a los niños (Escario: 23).

This emphasis on the strong woman is worth pausing on briefly: Pronto said that many Spanish women wanted to imitate Belén (1987: 52). Her status as ego ideal may have subversively influenced women to identify with her behaviour in La petición on the level of sado-masochistic fantasy. However, she greatly relies on Víctor's support and that places her within a more traditional, wifely frame. Víctor has to encourage her because she is afraid of singing in public (Blanco: 75; Teixido, 1987: 29). Maruja Torres believes that she is of the 'novia hermana' type, but Víctor Manuel once told her that she frightened men, although he was the only one to admit to this, a trait that Belén attributes to her active sexuality (Torres). However unlike Teresa, she does not like to seem dominating to men (Rodríguez Marchante: 49).

Víctor's musical recordings also provide clues to Belén's power. In 1974, he wrote 'Canción para Pilar' for Belén, whose real name is Pilar Cuesta, on the album Todos tenemos un precio. Ramón Rodríguez took photographs for the album cover, one of which pictures Belén seated in front of two mirrors so that there are four images of her from various angles. The use of this mise-en-scène makes Belén seem overpowering. In 'Canción para Pilar', Víctor Manuel refers to Belén's strength: '[...] es la mano que araña/mi voluntad'. She is 'el bien y el mal' and he compares her to nature - the sea, the wind, a bird that loves its freedom and a volcano - all powerful images. She is equally his object of desire: 'Serás el río para mi sed'. Belén's own songs, such as 'Agapimu' (Amor mío) on the album Ana (1979), have erotic overtones. In 'Los amores de Ana' (1979), she willingly

constructs herself as the object of the male gaze and enjoys attention. Male students mentioned in the song treat her as an object of desire.

When Bélen made La petición (1976), she was pregnant and gave birth to a son in the November of that year (Ruiz Merino: 51). Although she plays a murderous monster woman in the film who has a Sadeian interest in sexuality, in real life, Belén used her sexuality for procreation in marriage and her reports of the joys of motherhood (Blanco, 77) and constant worries about miscarrying a second time counteract her role as a murderous monster woman: the well-known fact that Belén suffered great distress when she lost her first child in a car accident while filming El amor del capitán Brando (1974) would have emphasized her maternal image. Since the conflict between Miró and the censors delayed La petición's release (Ruiz Merino: 49), its viewers had opportunities to read press reports about the birth of her son and further contrast her maternal image in real life with Teresa, thereby re-reading La petición with her maternity in mind, which gave her great fulfillment (Pronto, 1987: 62). In fact, her maternal feelings were so powerful that she preferred staying at home with her son to filming (Barbero: 48; Jaro; Montero: 1977). Belén would never give up her career, but neither would she, like Kensit, feel happy if acting were her only occupation in life (Semana, 1987: 116; Vallina: 64). Although Víctor helps with the chores, Belén greatly enjoys other traditionally feminine tasks, such as sewing (Escario: 55; Ferrando, 1985: 9; Rodríguez Marchante: 65).

In spite of her associations with the *destape* in La petición and other films, she limits her nudity, refusing to do nude scenes if they do not fit into the plot (Umbral, 1981: 39). Neither does she like to draw attention to herself with make-up and seductive clothes, but favours plain garments (Moriarty: 9). In many ways, Belén's insecurity -- which extends to a fear of being alone or darkness -- defuses the threat of the monstrous feminine

within her and the characters she plays (*Fotogramas*, 1979: 4; Izquierdo: 45-46; Eduardo G.Rico, a). In real life, Belén frequently cries (Villalonga), although she defines herself as generally unromantic: "... no soy cariñosa, me cuesta mucho serlo... Soy dura cuando he tomado una decisión" (Torres). She believes that she frees some of her hidden, nastier sides on stage (Alvarez). Such a mix of features must be of some relevance in Miró's intentional characterization of Teresa as a cold murderer in *La petición* (Hernández: 358), which may well have been a release for the uncivilized sides of Belén's personality.

The qualities of strength and assertive sexuality mentioned above suit Miró's construction of Teresa as transgressive, while Belén's angelic features counteract her performance as *femme castratrice*, reinforcing any reading of Teresa as victim. Her looks assisted Miró in the creation of character and this is one of the director's yardsticks for casting, 'el aspecto físico' to which she has referred in interview. However, other traits of Belén's physiognomy as well as critics' comments on her looks equally interfere with characterization. Gil de Biedma says her eyes have a tragic, orphaned look (32), whereas Moreno sees sparks in them, rather like Teresa's gaze of monstrous desire (1988). Some critics such as Figueroa believe that she is not only slim and child-like, but has a certain air of mystery: 'Parece una niña ... Está muy delgada, guapísima, con una sonrisa dulce y misteriosa a la vez [...]' (73). *Diario 16* reported that her smile was 'irresistible, nerviosa pero segura' (1990) and Vallina finds it magnetic (64); Umbral describes her as a mixture of angelic and monstrous characteristics, '... infantil, malvada y dulce' (1982). Both her eyes, full lips, large mouth and smile play suggestive roles in *La petición* as metaphors for the *vagina dentata* and Teresa's monstrous power.<sup>7</sup> Belén's eyes seem to attract particular attention (Ruiz Merino: 4) and references to their expressiveness reinforce her role as

assistant author of a hypnotic gaze in La petición: 'Ana habla casi tanto con los ojos, unos grandes y hermosos como con las palabras' (Alicia P....: 3).

Teresa is an object of desire as well as an active subject, analogous to Belén, herself an object of desire for many Spanish men and frequently voted the most desired woman in Spain (Barbero: 37; Roman). Teresa makes herself attractive and Belén similarly likes to gratify the (male) gaze: "Cuando hago un trabajo, lo hago para gustar, como todos los actores" (Izquierdo). Belén's comments on men's attraction to her are often ambiguous. On the one hand, she is highly embarrassed if a man falls in love with her and refrains from flirting (Rigalt: 40): on the other, the knowledge that a man looks at her admiringly pleases her (Rodríguez Marchante: 45). Not only does she delight men, but many Spanish women want to imitate her as an ego-ideal (Pronto, 1987: 52). As I have noted, ambiguity is an essential feature of Belén's image: Gabilondo relates her image to a fusion of binary stereotypes of women in Spain - mothers or whores (1983). He remarks that Belén - as a composite of wildness and vulnerability - must be in mortal sin, but she is what Spanish men needed women to be like so that they could be human as well (24). Belén describes herself as multifaceted and contradictory and dislikes being typecast - "... no me defino" (Boloix) - or classified (Montero: 1976).<sup>8</sup>

Gutiérrez Aragón wondered to what extent Teresa constituted a sort of exorcism for Belén (Pérez Millán: 11). Belén enjoyed playing Teresa and feels she and Miró collaborated well together as women: "... trabajé a las órdenes de Pilar Miró en La petición, [...] creí notar entre las dos una relación sin pudores" (Rodríguez Marchante: 89).<sup>9</sup> Belén believes that film in general is a team effort.<sup>10</sup> Like Teresa in her period attire, Belén dressed up and enjoyed it:

Me divierto en grandes dosis disfrazándome, todo lo que sea cambiar y enriquecerme, como una especie de camaleón (Panorama: 1989).

Perhaps Belén's reading of Teresa as "mala con una maldad inconsciente" (Ruiz Merino: 49) and "una persona encantadora y diabólica" (Alicia P : 3) influences viewers' possible interpretation of the character as a potential victim. Miró believes that Belén's presence in the film was vital, especially for the sex frenzy:

Ana [...] estuvo espléndida en esa escena. Le dio un tono muy salvaje. [...] la entendió muy bien y [...] en ese tipo de situaciones, Ana tiene unos recursos interpretativos absolutamente formidables. Creo que no habría sido posible rodarla con otra actriz (Pérez Millán: 110).

It is possible that method actors engage more deeply with their roles than those using Diderot and Coquetin's techniques. Belén was perhaps able to present her view of the character. Critics such as Meseguer believe that she enters deeply into the script and character (46). However, this does not mean that Belén rejects spontaneity: she uses the Stanislavski method along with her own intuition and that is partly how she releases her own instincts in and outside of films (Barbero: 47; Rodríguez Marchante: 67).

Although Belén argues that she has never played a part that was like herself in real life (Martorell) and that she need not have experienced situations to be able to understand them (Gil de Biedma: 32), Ruiz Merino sees acting as a liberation for Belén, a release of subconscious feelings (2). Belén herself has made contradictory comments on her roles when referring to method acting and the ways in which actors carry their characters with them:

Los sentimientos que aportas al personaje, cuando lo interpretas, están escondidos en algún lugar de uno mismo, y lo que haces es dejarlos aflorar de tal forma que, a veces, te sorprende el hecho de que seas poseedor de ellos [...] (Bertol).

### ANA BELÉN'S FILMS.

Belén's characters are always subversive in some way and normally a mixture of angel and monster woman types, just like the actress' biographical intertext. In Españolas en París (Roberto Bodegas, 1971), one of the films marking the beginning of the more liberal *tercera vía* cinema - a mixture of the 'sexy Spanish comedy' and more sober, critical films (like the works of Saura) but with a greater degree of openness in its treatment of socio-political and sexual themes (Hopewell: 82-83; Méndez: 302; Seguin: 63) - she played an initially conservative village girl, Isabel, who goes to Paris to work as a maid to pay for her brother's education. Although she is initially shy of men, Isabel falls in love with Manolo, another immigrant, and has an illegitimate son. She is shocked and feels guilty when she discovers that she is pregnant outside wedlock. Manolo encourages her to have an illegal abortion, but she refuses to go through with it in line with Catholic ideology. Isabel is pictured walking in the street and proudly holding her son at the end of the film. Moments after discovering that she had become pregnant, she walks on the metro accompanied by an extradiegetic wailing sound, rather like the siren music during the lake scene in La petición. The music and her resistance to the abortion possibly construct her as a powerful maternal figure, who men fear as much as the *femme castratrice*.<sup>11</sup>

In Aunque la hormona se vista de seda (Vicente Escriva, 1971), an *españolada* or Spanish sex comedy, her boss, Don Fermín the chemist, finds Paloma (Belén) attractive. He and the camera objectify her: when they go to the cinema, he also takes the opportunity to place his hand on her knee. Nevertheless, she eventually falls in love with Don Fermín after chastising him for his lurid intentions. She willingly objectifies herself for him, dressing in a red mini skirt to attract his attention and in their absurd marriage ceremony,

dons a hearing aid, his fetish object. However, she aims for marriage and her ambition ties in with the rest of her angelic traits in the film, such as looking after him when he falls ill.

In Morbo (Gonzalo Suárez, 1972), even though Belén is married to her fellow protagonist, Diego (Víctor Manuel), she is transgressive. The whole film, which has a very bare plot, centres around Belén as an object of the male gaze - which she seems to enjoy through her smiles at the camera and other characters - and corresponds to Mulvey's idea that, when the camera pauses on woman as object, the narrative also slows down (Mulvey: 1975/1992: 27-28). Just after the wedding, she strips from her bridal gown into a bikini in front of a petrol pump attendant and in Diego's point-of-view. She also remarks that women only think about sex soon after this scene, a bold comment for a film made in 1972. She is similarly objectified in scenes of foreplay in their caravan or while she sunbathes in swim wear. Unlike Teresa, Belén's character is only violent here for self-defense as she drowns one of their cannibalistic pet hamsters with suspected rabies when they realize that it has eaten its companion. Furthermore, she is not a sadist, but a victim of mysterious circumstances, hitting a strange man, who attacks her, on the head with an iron in self-defense. Interestingly in Morbo, Belén is pictured and therefore identified with a copy of the Mona Lisa in a shot/reverse-shot sequence, an important reference for the development of the mysterious and duplicitous woman (Praz: 253) in La petición.<sup>12</sup> In fact, Belén's own hairstyle and hair-colour resemble those of the Mona Lisa.

In El amor del capitán Brando (Jaime de Armiñán, 1974), a film cited by Kinder as one of the more daring works made just before Franco's death, Belén is associated with both political and sexual subversion (Kinder: 1993: 5; Seguin: 64). Indeed, Hopewell describes the film's themes as sexual initiation and political subversion in backward, conservative Spain (93-94). The narrative commences with a brief glimpse of Belén's

breasts in long-shot as some of her pupils watch her undress one night because she does not close her curtains (*ibid.*). Although Aurora (Belén) offers her pupil, Juan, the affection denied to him by his mother, she is accused of corrupting him and other pupils by provincial gossips, partly because she gave a class on sex education so that they would not be ashamed of nudity. In reality, Aurora takes care of Juan and is maternal throughout the entire film, tending to another pupil's playground wounds. However, she does maintain an amorous relationship with an older *rojo* (Fernando Fernán Gómez), who the villagers treat like a pariah. Despite scant experience in relationships, Aurora takes the initiative and kisses him. She confronts the mayor, who scolds her progressive ideas, because she feels that she has been unfairly dismissed. Not only is she rebellious in terms of the political affiliations of regime ideology: she is fiercely independent and consequently thwarts traditional sexual politics. *Juan has a romantic idea of supporting her, but she refuses* because she has her career; when the local butcher tries to rape her, she kicks him in the groin, attacking the phallus of Francoist male supremacy. Aurora is constructed as the object of desire of both Fernando Fernán Gómez and Juan, who writes erotic descriptions of her in his diary. Belén made another film with Armiñán, ¡Jo papá! (1975), in which she plays a girl breaking free of the constraints of her Francoist family background. During her father's tour of Civil War battlefields she meets Carlos, whom her father tells her not to see but whom she defiantly meets in secret. It is clear that she is Carlos' object of desire: when he first sees her, it is through the objectifying frame of his camera, rather like scenes in Españolas en París when Belén is depicted as the object of Manolo's camera/gaze as he photographs her in long-shot in front of naked, female statues. She admits to her mother (Amparo Soler Leal) that she would like to sleep with Carlos, but feels that she should not. When she is alone with Carlos during a secret encounter, she is embarrassed even to hold

his hand in public, blaming her conservative upbringing. They eventually make love, which she initiates with a kiss, and she subsequently decides to live with Carlos.

Belén is closely linked with literary adaptations for Spanish film and television. In Pedro Olea's period adaptation of Galdós' Tormento (1974), Belén took the part of Amparo, who refuses to enter a convent - the fate decided for her by relatives and a common role for unmarried women at the time - has an affair with a priest, Pedro (Higginbotham: 106-107; Hopewell: 96), who defines her as his torment, and eventually elopes with Don Augustin (Paco Rabal). Belén once again starred with Rabal in Emilia, parada y fonda (Angelino Fons, 1976), which, to some extent like La petición, is a film about a young girl's attempts to escape a constrictive, provincial world (Hopewell: 112). The young woman, Emilia (Belén), marries Joaquín (Rabal), an older widower, for convenience while she is really in love with a younger man, Jaime. Jaime reappears and Emilia commits adultery with him because her life with Joaquín is monotonous. During the narrative, Belén, who sleeps with Joaquín and a stranger before marriage, is objectified for both Rabal's and the male spectator's gaze, but not to the extent that she was objectified in Morbo. Her legs are particularly noticeable in one bedroom scene (Illustrations: 12-13). The male spectator gains a privileged voyeur's view of Belén in front of a bathroom mirror during which she tosses her hair in profile in a medium shot wearing only small briefs, titivating herself before sleeping with the stranger whom she had met on a train (Illustrations: 13).

In La oscura historia de la prima Montse (Jordi Cadena, 1977), Belén, a prison visitor, is both caring and transgressive in terms of regime ideology. She becomes amorously involved with a convict, to whom she falls pregnant on his release, alienating

her traditional father. Montse is repressed by extended patriarchal authority from her brothers who pay her subversive boyfriend to leave. She decides to have an abortion, but also rebels against Catholic and patriarchal authority through suicide. In La petición, Teresa is both victim and aggressor, but in La oscura historia de la prima Montse, Belén is a helpless victim, which reinforces the victimisation facet of Teresa. La criatura (Eloy de la Iglesia, 1977), a film in circulation just after the release of La petición, constructs Alicia (Belén) as the victim of masculinism and a repressive society married to a Don Juan figure more interested in his work and right wing politics in the Fuerza Nueva than in his wife (Hopewell: 112; Méndez: 279-280, 285-286). Attacked by a large dog, she miscarries, but later adopts another stray dog, Bruno, a comfort in a seemingly loveless marriage on whom she vents her maternal feelings. Her excessive behaviour is not only a result of De La Iglesia's tendency to exaggerate (Seguin: 69), but also a product of society's prioritization of the role of mother, making her character a victim of the system, as is Teresa to a certain extent. When Alicia's feelings for Bruno degenerate into bestiality, her husband rapes her. She later abandons him and the film ends with the subversive narrative closure of a pregnant Alicia with Bruno (Hopewell: 112). The film may seem to be merely a crude *españolada*, but it is interesting to look at the ways in which it identifies Belén with perversion, female strength and independence (Méndez: 285). As in Morbo, the absurd narrative takes every possible opportunity to display Belén as an object for the male spectator. For example, Bruno pulls the towel from her in the bathroom and Belén willingly displays herself for the dog (and the camera) on her bed in medium shot (Illustrations: 14).

Separación matrimonial (Angelino Fons, 1973) - one of the *tercera vía* films which angered Spanish censors (Hopewell: 80, 83) - examines the theme of adulterous, sexual

transgression. Isabel (Belén) becomes the Simón Andreu character, Juan's concubine. She seems to enjoy their love making, despite her initial shyness and the fear of losing her virginity. Later on, she is pictured on top of Juan kissing his chest, quite violently on one occasion. At first, she is upset when Juan buys a flat for her, but she accepts her role as concubine. She is very undomesticated because, at one point, she confesses that she has nothing in the house for Juan to eat. At the beginning of Vida conyugal sana (Roberto Bodegas, 1974), yet another *tercera vía* work with direct discussions of sex and repression (Hopewell: 82-83), Belén is once again objectified as she shaves her legs. Although cast as a moralizing angel woman from a strict background who chastises her husband Vázquez (José Sacristán) for his obsession with TV adverts, she is caring. However, once again, she demonstrates an active sexuality because she attempts to initiate sex when her husband refuses to sleep with her: under the influence of alcohol, she enters the bedroom wearing underwear to entice him and they make love. She becomes frustrated herself when a psychiatrist prescribes abstinence for her husband and imagines herself chasing José Sacristán, an actor who frequently played characters in the midst of a masculinity crisis (Méndez: 15). Once again, as in La petición, Belén is associated with the return of the repressed.

Viewers associate Belén with a multitude of traits - both subversive and conformist - and the examination of her angelic features and behaviour encourages viewers to dispute Teresa's status as a mere aggressor. Belén's star intertext widens the potential cracks in the representation of Teresa for the *lector cómplice*, causes him or her to question and helps to show that dominant, masculinist ideology and its denigration of transgressive women as exclusively monstrous is invalid. In Zampo y yo, Belén played the angelic child who healed the feud between her father and his brother (Fernando Rey). However, other

directors in addition to Miró have associated her with the murderous feminine. For example, Imanol Uribe in Adiós pequeña (1987) and Aranda in La pasión turca. In Adiós pequeña, Beatriz (Belén), a prison lawyer, shoots a gangster who murdered her lover - a drug trafficker and one of her clients - and subsequently raped her; viewers can clearly see the bullets and fire coming out of her gun poised in front of her face and her angry, vindictive expression (Illustrations: 14). It is highly suggestive for Teresa's attack on father figures in La petición that she shoots her own father for his involvement in her lover's murder in Adiós pequeña, although she cries while she squeezes the trigger, therefore becoming an ambiguous *femme fatale*. In La pasión turca, Desi (Belén) not only bites her conventional husband's pen (a well-tried metaphor for the penis) in an extreme close-up, but literally castrates her adulterous lover, Yamán (Georges Correface) with another pistol.

### PATSY KENSIT.

Miró and Iberoamericana Film's selection of Patsy Kensit for *Rebeca* also brings interesting resonances to *Beltenebros*. Kensit's persona highlights *Rebeca*'s imperfect fit into patriarchal dichotomies when she projects her image in addition to that of the character she portrays. Since the actor's physiognomy often defines his or her character's personality (Dyer, 1979: 122), Kensit's delicate physical appearance inevitably produced contradictions to her *femme fatale* role and iconography. Kensit's effect on *Beltenebros* is similar to that of the Audrey Hepburn persona on the character of Holly in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Blake Edwards, 1961), whose elfin, gamin image mean that Holly does not convey a threatening, *femme fatale* image (Cornut-Gentille, 1994).

Gilbert and Gubar indicate that the angel woman is a fragile, thin, non-person who undergoes voluntary starvation to remain semi-anorexic. In the nineteenth-century, methods of such self-torture extended to corsetry and drinking vinegar to maintain sliminess and a pallid complexion (25, 34). Thompson describes how Kensit takes great care of her physical appearance which he defines as 'muy delgada y fragil'. Before she arrived in Spain for the shoot of *Beltenebros*, Kensit had fallen ill and Stamp attributed her frequent ill-health to dieting: '[...] era una chica bastante fragil, de salud muy delicada, que no se alimentaba bien'. During a breakfast meeting with Miró, Kensit only drank coffee and orange juice (Thompson: 34). These seem to be cases of self-starvation for aesthetic purposes. In the 1980s and 1990s, a new phenomenon called 'bodyism' arose which originated from a fear and hatred of women deeply embedded in Western culture (Without Walls, 1994). Bodyism signifies an obsession with bodies or a denial of the body's natural processes: it makes women their own oppressors and can cause eating disorders since it requires that adherents punish their female form in particular to become small and thin

women who pose no threat. A recent journalistic article in Cambio 16 applied Naomi Wolf's theories on eating to Spain. Wolf discusses women's right to enjoy food, contravening repressive dieting fashions designed to keep women thin and powerless (1991). Remarks made by Spanish feminists help to contextualise the situation vis-à-vis gender and dieting in Spain and show the relevance of Kensit/Rebeca's slim appearance for a Spanish audience:

[los hombres] pueden disfrutar de los placeres de la vida con mucho más libertad que las mujeres y entre ellos está el poder de comer (12/1993: 20).

Kensit often seems too innocent and childish to pose a threat. Similarly, ambition, fantasy and individualism within the dumb blonde type are not ridiculed (Dyer, 1986: 35-36). Kensit is blonde underneath her wigs in Beltenebros, although Rebeca is astute. However, in Absolute Beginners (Julian Temple, 1986), her character, Suzette, who viewers could not distinguish from Kensit herself, is ambitious, although she does not constitute a threat because according to critics and Kensit herself, Suzette is dumb and frothy (Wavell, 1990).

Another of the conventional woman's traits which is present in the Kensit persona, especially since 1992, is that of maternity. Motherhood and the formation of a family had been some of her principal ambitions, along with aspirations to reach stardom. At the age of twenty-four, she admitted that she had been broody since she was fourteen (The Independent, 23/8/1992) and explained to Luisa Marcos: "No quería llegar a los treinta y cinco años y encontrarme que no tengo más que una gran carrera" (1991: 49). Images of Kensit hand-in-hand with son, James, in recent news reports and the press reinforce this image.<sup>13</sup> Even when she was eight months pregnant, Kensit remained tiny and in the light of feminist theories on gestation, Kensit's petite size during pregnancy meant that she did not become emphatic or threatening. Phallocentric cultures curse gestation and place

taboos on pregnant women, who become repulsive or abject to use Kristeva's term, because they are invested with power at the time. They not only double their market value, but increase their self-esteem and, according to various critics, such as Creed and Kristeva, men fear and envy women's ability to procreate (Creed, 1993: 12, 16, 24-27, 43; Kittay, 1983: 94-124; Kristeva, 1982: 77). Since Kensit was so small, she did not become self-assertively pregnant, remaining more anonymous in terms of size.<sup>14</sup>

Critics have noticed that Kensit is an unclassifiable fusion of the two female stereotypes: 'Tiene ... un inquietante aire entre virginal colegiala y desenvueleta mujer de mundo' (Marcos: 49). She is not chesty, unlike icons of Hollywood bustiness such as Jane Russell and Ava Gardner. Kensit does not correspond to the image of a seductive temptress, despite the potentially transgressive roles she has played recently, for example in Lethal Weapon II (Richard Donner, 1989), but even then one critic described her character as 'sweetly naive' (Marcos; The Sunday Times, 11/7/1993: 7-9). Her angelic star persona, partly determined by the implications of the roles she played in the past, especially during her childhood, and her physical image defuse potential transgressive threats and iconography. Voice is an important part of a star's image as speech indicates personality (Dyer, 1979: 126, 142). Since Beltenebros was originally filmed and released in English, Kensit's voice was dubbed for the Spanish version, except during her song and Miró herself prefers the original soundtrack. Kensit's voice is high, soft and sweet and these qualities were especially apparent when she sang with her brother's pop group, Eighth Wonder. In their chart hit I'm Not Scared (1988), Kensit's voice can only be described as kittenish.

Despite her angelic, frail image, Kensit is capable of playing the *femme fatale*, not only due to her talent but her extensive facial adaptability, as she comments: "[...] my face

is a canvas. They can do things to me to make me look different in everything I do" (Wavell). Miró and Aguirresarobe had to literally resort to the grammar of the camera in an extreme close-up at less than 5 cm distance to make Kensit's face seem grotesque when she drugs Darman in order to steal Andrade's passport (Thompson: 195). It is a distancing, dehumanising textual process which serves to reflect Darman's distorted and hallucinatory subjectivity.

Kensit always seems to carry with her a charge of innocence or infantile connotations because of the roles she played as a child actress in addition to the connotations of her physical appearance. Analogous to Belén, she began her career as a child star in advertisements and is perhaps most remembered for the Bird's Eye frozen peas advert.<sup>15</sup> She conveyed innocence in many of her television roles, for example as the blond adolescent in the future in Luna, an ITV children's programme in the 1980s, or in the BBC's adaptation of George Elliot's Silas Marner (1985) as Silas' devoted, adopted, blonde daughter, Eppie. It is essential to remember that fair hair and lightness indicate virtue and chastity according to Christianity (Dyer, 1986: 43-44) and in Beltenebros, Rebeca is blond under her wig. At 15, Kensit also played the conventional and innocent role of Cinderella in pantomime (Wavell).

In contrast to the self-assertion attributed to the *femme fatale* and her confident screen-acting, Kensit is shy and nervous, above all in sex scenes or those which involve nudity. She became terribly apprehensive and uncooperative towards Miró when they filmed the scene with Ugarte, refusing to expose her posterior and when they shot the striptease scene, she agreed to remove her costume only in front of the minimum number of technicians (Thompson: 34, 172, 174-175). According to Reid, her timidity vis-à-vis Beltenebros continued after the film shoot and her refusal to publicize Beltenebros seems

to be linked to this scene (48). She has even rejected offers of millions of dollars to pose nude for Playboy (Marcos: 49). However, her refusal to appear nude in Absolute Beginners was motivated by her aim to look attractive rather than modesty, but these narcissistic currents outlined below perhaps find an echo in Rebeca's pleasure in performance on stage:

I'm very sexually aware of myself and feel good about my body. I like to be admired and appreciated - who doesn't? But I didn't feel ready for nudity yet, and besides, I thought it would look much sexier [...] and romantic if I wore black, slinky underwear (BFI/News of the World).

In addition to all this, she has a playful personality, but her mischief never seems to pose a threat. For example, Kensit emphasized the potential for amusing rascality within Thompson's interpreting:

Con una sonrisa pícara y poniendo cara de niño travieso me pregunta: "¿A veces no te entra la tentación de decir todo lo contrario de lo que se está hablando, simplemente para [...] divertirte un poco?" (36).

In Twenty One (Don Boyd, 1991), her character, Katie, is promiscuous but somewhat of a paradoxical monster woman because childishly uninhibited to such an extent that she talks to the audience while positioned on the lavatory (Perry).

In some of her other roles prior to Beltenebros, Kensit is a fusion of convention and transgression. In Timebomb (Avi Nesher, 1990), her character enjoys professional and economic independence as the psychoanalyst, Dr. Ana Nolmar, who wears very little make-up and simple clothes. In a bedroom scene, she is the active, dominating 'woman on top' using Williams' terminology to describe women who move away from a passive sexual position (1990: 18). However, she helps the distressed protagonist, Eddie, the exploited victim of an intensive government 'hot housing' programme, in her professional capacity. She strokes and kisses Eddie's chest to banish his pain and has to follow him, as is the case

with Rebeca and Darman, but Kensit's character in Timebomb seems stronger than Rebeca. At the end of Timebomb, Eddie is left clinging onto the edge of a high building and she pulls him to safety. Apart from the sex scene in Timebomb, Kensit's characters in other films are transgressive due to their active sexuality. In Adam Bede (Giles Foster, 1991), the BBC's adaptation of George Elliot's novel, she played the dairymaid, Hetty Sorrel, led astray by the local squire and who betrays Adam, whom Nancy Balks describes as a woman child (26). If one examines George Elliot's own description of Hetty upon the publication of Adam Bede in 1859, Kensit has been aptly cast:

[...] there is one order of beauty which seems made to turn the heads not only of men, but of all intelligent mammals, even of women. It is a beauty like that of kittens, [...] a beauty with which you can never be angry (The Independent on Sunday, 5/1/1992: 19).

Her playful sexuality draws her out of the threatening category of the *femme fatale* in Beltenebros. Even if the character she portrays incorporates subversive traits or engages in threatening conduct, she is nevertheless desirable. In real life, Kensit possesses a magnetic and powerful desirability. In a study of male sexual attitudes in the 1990s, 21% of the participants voted her the most sexually appealing woman (Samson: 5, 15).

Kensit and, by extension, the characters she plays, derive pleasure and satisfaction from their own performances. In an interview, she admitted that she liked the role of Rebeca because it gave her the opportunity to dance and sing on stage (The Little Picture Show, 23/3/1994). The viewers have been made aware that Rebeca, owing to Kensit's own enjoyment of the role despite her timidity during the shoot, does not only have an independent existence through her job, but a certain degree of pleasure. The intertextual resonances of Absolute Beginners in which Kensit/Suzette thoroughly enjoyed making a spectacle of herself during Henley's fashion show, seem most relevant. She revealed in the

attention lavished upon her by the audience as she moved up and down the catwalk, and more so than the camera, while disrupting the traditional fashion parade through both her own iconoclastic designs and her primitive, Afro-Latin movements to pounding drums. As Dyer comments the fashion show is a 'slow and haughty parade' and one of the choreographic traditions by which woman as sex object is fixed in addition to her attire (1978/1989: 97). Suzette enters the frame accidentally and explosively through the curtains, like Rebeca. She spontaneously splashes paint on her dress, declaring war on Henley's traditional, restrictive designs. The narcissus myth in the dressing room scene during the fashion show is apparent since, while making chaotic additions to her costume, she gazes at herself in the mirror, analogous to Rebeca in Beltenebros, who looks at her reflection in her dressing room. Pleasure in being looked at is equally an important aspect of her dancing.

In real life, Kensit delights in her celebrity status and her desire for fame has been widely reported in interviews dating from her childhood roles; she seems too ambitious to correspond to the anonymity of the angelic woman. Kensit often seems very confident and attention seeking in public and enjoys wearing flamboyant clothes, although she frequently wears very ordinary garments such as jeans and T-shirts (Dannat: 38; Reid: 48; Kiz Smith). Paradoxically, she derives pleasure from her naked body in private. In 1992, she won a High Court ban on topless pictures of her obtained by The Sun without her consent, claiming that the photographs taken in 1987 were for personal use (The Times, 14/1/1992). At the age of fourteen, Kensit convinced her brother to let her sing in his pop group, Eighth Wonder, which subsequently had a tremendous impact on the London club scene; Kensit appeared on Top of the Pops (BBC1) in March 1988 performing their hit song 'I'm Not Scarred' as a soloist without the band to accompany her. Eighth Wonder thus became

concentrated around Kensit rather than an ensemble. In publicity photographs, Kensit's presence is very bold and noticeable in comparison to that of the other members of the group (Jenkins, 1991: 30, 33-34; The Sunday Express, 29/12/1985: 34).<sup>16</sup> She particularly enjoyed the attention given to her by male fans.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, Kensit did not restrict herself to performing with the group. She wrote songs for Eighth Wonder, such as 'Having It All' which her character performed in Absolute Beginners, and co-wrote the soundtrack of the film Having a Baby with Stuart Copeland. She even set up and ran her own management company called VIP Enterprises (Today, 14/5/1987: 14; BFI/News of the World). Viewers' knowledge of Kensit's delight in exhibitionism only serves to reinforce the implications that she derives narcissistic pleasure from the image of her own body and its exposé as Rebeca. Kensit's super-ego may instruct her to behave in a shy manner towards directors who want her to remove her clothes, but her pleasure in performance causes us to suspect otherwise and releases her instinct, regardless of her attempts at its suppression.

Sexual attraction is a component of her charisma. I have argued that Kensit is charismatic because she is infantile. Part of the appeal of Kensit's sexuality is its innocence and naturalness and it is interesting to implement theories employed to analyze Marylin Monroe's sex appeal to Kensit. Dyer applies Playboy's views on sex from the 1950s to Monroe's image in his Heavenly Bodies. In contrast to conservative members of society - represented by Bernal in Beltenebros - who saw the sex drive as destructive and in need of repression, above all in women, Playboy viewed sex as guiltless and natural: repression only vilifies the sex drive and results in harm for both individuals and society as a whole (Dyer, 1986: 31; Williams, 1990: 4). In order to convey its views of sex as inoffensive, Playboy turned to the image of naturalness. Although Kensit's image has been fabricated

in terms of sexuality in Beltenebros, she simultaneously personifies naturalness. Dyer explains that there is a marked difference between sexual innocence and sexual impact. In Kensit's case, because she conveys a 'purity of sexual delight' analogous to Monroe, sexuality appears as innocence. If sex is natural and harmless, two consequences result: firstly, the libido is not intimidating and secondly, actively sexual women do not pose a threat. Monroe's image as a playmate constituted an escape from the threat posed by female sexuality and Kensit is also a playful person (Dyer, 1986: 33). Hair and costume serve to reflect natural and artificial sexuality within both stars. Rebeca minus her wig in Darman's hotel room or on the train again presents a natural sexuality devoid of fabrication and objectification: her hair is somewhat disheveled and pieces fall out of her pony tail. Relaxed poses have the same effect as unfussy clothes to convey unconstructedness instead of artificiality, like that of Rebeca in between the sheets in the hotel scene. Undergarments sometimes fabricate artificiality. However, Rebeca is often pictured without a bra, except when she appears as Hayworth and her breasts - the signifiers of sexual difference - are pushed upwards by the tight bodice of her boned dress for emphasis. In the hotel room where her afterplay with Darman seems innocent and natural, she wears no article of corsetry.

Susan Brown Miller argues that helplessness in women is appealing and removes potential threats (1976 cited in Dyer, 1986: 46). Monroe and perhaps Kensit are overworked examples of the 'beautiful victim syndrome'. For example in Kensit's fearful gazes in Absolute Beginners or at the start of Beltenebros, which are somewhat exaggerated. If a woman hands herself over to a male character in a film, it implies that the male character becomes a surrogate for the audience, which gains control of the victim and derives pleasure from this mastery (Dyer, 1986: 46). Kensit's image in the media partly

reinforces any possible victimisation in the roles she plays because she suffered the traumas of bereavement with the loss of both parents to cancer and divorce from Dan Boyd in addition to her own health problems.<sup>18</sup> However, Kensit is more complex and plays victims, just as she partly is a victim. Kensit showed that she was capable of defending herself when she hit a man in Soho, who insulted her voice, and punched girls in the audience of a television show who had thrown cocktail sticks towards her while she performed (Dempster, 1988: 15; The Mirror, 18/12/1985: 13). She is possibly a parody of the damsel in distress, especially given that the setting of her abduction by Ugarte in Beltenebros is a disused film theatre in which José Luis Gómez uses a highly grotesque and theatrical acting style.<sup>19</sup>

Kensit has a well-documented, independent existence outside her role and therefore turns Rebeca into a paradoxical, pleasure-seeking character; she is not repressed, exploited or classifiable through the active reader and her own star text. Viewers cannot see her as completely transgressive due to her previous roles, although she conveys strength because of the resonances of pleasure in performance and exhibitionism. However, there are still currents of timidity in addition to vanity which devalue any attempt to classify her as an extreme narcissist and consequently an egotistical person.

Miró consciously or unconsciously manipulates and breaks conventions on femininity to activate the spectator's mind and seems to encourage intellectual viewers to assist in the creation of Rebeca's character with their knowledge of Kensit's star text. Her representation of Rebeca causes viewers to question systems of authority, in this case patriarchy's dichotomies. Critics such as Castro have failed to notice the relevance of Rebeca/Kensit to this part of the film's thematics.<sup>20</sup> Like Darman, who reacts against the power of the word to convey truth, institutionalized masculinism within the party and the

ideal of violence, Rebeca escapes what Cixous defines as the 'prison house of patriarchal language' because she fails to fit into either dichotomy. Although Kensit's performance and the resonances of her star text serve to reinforce Rebeca's iconoclasm, Miró did not necessarily intend viewers to read her character in this way. Miró democratically grants viewers the right to their own opinions on characters, although she is not always in agreement with their interpretations of her films (Appendix 1: 3).

<sup>1</sup> On the sentimental child-star musical in Spain, see Higginbotham, 32 and Seguin, 50.

<sup>2</sup> Fact sheet, Cines Renoir (Madrid, 1995).

<sup>3</sup> On Sampietro, see Casals and García Cortés, 1987, 3-8. Their article pictures Sampietro with her son.

<sup>4</sup> This trait is reinforced by the fact that Miró dislikes being categorized in terms of political allegiance or any other extreme system of belief, such as feminism (E. de Juan, 1977).

<sup>5</sup> On Belén's talent, see Cambio 16, 18 de octubre de 1976, p104.

<sup>6</sup> Barry King (174) reminds us that the star's intertext becomes his or her private property.

<sup>7</sup> ABC described her mouth as enormous (1991). Vicente Aranda curiously draws attention to her large, red mouth in an extreme close-up in La pasión turca (1994). While she is writing a letter to her husband, Ramiro, whom she is about to leave, she picks up the pen (a metaphorical penis) and bites it in the extreme close-up.

<sup>8</sup> See also Bonet Mojica, García Rayo (1988: 20), Ferrando (53), Navarrete (78) and Izquierdo (45).

<sup>9</sup> Belén also described Teresa as "[...]es un personaje bonito de interpretar porque tiene muchos matices en los que una actriz puede lucirse. Es un personaje que [...] te apasiona" (cited in Alicia P, 3). 9Author's name not given).

<sup>10</sup> 'Ana Belén: la respondona de Lorca también en el cine', Filmoteca's press file (Madrid).

Details of this piece have been lost.

<sup>11</sup> On the powerful mother, see Creed, 12, 16, 24-27, 43.

<sup>12</sup> See Illustrations, 11.

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<sup>13</sup> 'News at Ten', ITV (28/8/1996) and Carmen Reid, 48.

<sup>14</sup> It is possibly a well-known aspect of her image because, as Sarah Mower comments, the popular magazine Hello!, the British version of the Spanish Hola, ran a feature on the subject in 1992 complete with photographs (13).

<sup>15</sup> The Independent on Sunday, 24/4/1991, 18 and Marcos. The Press likened Kensit to the Hollywood icon of innocence, Shirley Temple, when Kensit took Temple's role in the remake of The Blue Bird (George Cukor, 1976). See Jarrow, 9/6/1976.

<sup>16</sup> Critics have compared Kensit to Madonna and Blondie. For example, see Reid and the BFI's Microjacket (1) (Library and Information Services) on Kensit, April 1986.

<sup>17</sup> "Hundreds of boys come to our gigs, stand in the front and try to pull me off the stage. I absolutely love it. What a thrill seeing 500 strong guys going absolutely potty for you, screaming their heads off" (cited in 'Beginner's Luck', Sunday Magazine, News of the World).

<sup>18</sup> See 'Beginner's Luck', Sunday Magazine, News of the World (BFI Microjacket). Her image as a beautiful victim continued in Angels and Insects (1995) when she was covered in 70 Hawk moths under a gauze (Reid, 50).

<sup>19</sup> José Luis Gómez is closely associated with the theatre in Spain. See Paul Julian Smith, 1994, 4.

<sup>20</sup> Castro's comments on Kensit are particularly negative: '[...] Pilar Miró se revela incapaz de dirigir actores - el excelente Terence Stamp parece un cyborg, el caso de Patsy Kensit es patético tanto cuando se supone que actúa como cuando trata de imitar a "Gilda" y José Luis Gómez hace literalmente lo que le de la gana' (1991: 33).

## CONCLUSION.

This thesis discusses an interpretation of the interrelationship between textual strategies and character portrayal - rebellion in terms of content and metafictional form - in the films of Miró. Miró herself may not agree with my views, but she democratically allows the spectator the right to his or her own opinion (Appendix 1: 3). However, her films demonstrate a keen awareness of the damaging effects of oppression on men, women and children in her own society which nevertheless gives her cinema a universal thematic relevance. La petición succinctly portrays repression within the family; masculinism features strongly in Hablamos, Werther and Beltenebros; Gary Cooper represents the difficulties of a woman living and working within a chauvinistic environment. Comparable to many other Spanish directors such as Saura, Miró herself grew up in a repressive climate - the period of the *posguerra* - and obtained first-hand knowledge of the effects of intolerant political systems on her father (Pérez Millán: 21, 29), which perhaps assisted in her depictions of various other sources of dogmatism in addition to the representation of the consequences of political oppression in El crimen. Her relevance to Spanish history is worth pausing on briefly. Miró is an interesting director for Hispanists to consider because her film works extend over the transition to post-transition period and consequently, they record many of the changes in Spanish society since the 1970s (Méndez: 257).

In addition to her awareness of repression and her cinema's specific relevance to Spain, Miró is a very cultured individual who possesses considerable knowledge of art, literature and cinema in particular which appears in her films in overt or unconscious forms. Consequently, she not only addresses key points in Spanish history and society, but also interesting and topical issues in cinema through the eclectic mix of the various

culturally-specific and wider genres and themes in her works. From La petición onwards, Miró has constantly abdicated from a position of authorial originality, authority and omniscience using borrowed material - such as literary texts, paintings and films - both in stylistic and thematic ways. El crimen and Beltenebros are the two films that are perhaps most thematically and stylistically indebted to artworks by Gutiérrez Solana and Hopper respectively, although Beltenebros also relies on the generic features of film noir and has its basis in a noir literary text. My thesis discusses only a few examples of intertextuality: it is possible that there are more intertextual sources of inspiration in the films that critics are yet to notice. However, further investigation of intertextuality in Miró's films is problematised because she does not always openly reveal her sources of inspiration (Appendix 1: 1-2). The fact that she did not mention the reference to Hitchcock's Rebecca at the end of Beltenebros in interview is perhaps one example of her reluctance to pinpoint sources. References to French literature appear in Hablamos and Gary Cooper, which I have tried to explore within the thematic contexts of these two films, but Miró's most overt use of literature occurs in her adaptations in La petición, Werther and Beltenebros. With the exception of El crimen and historiographic metafiction, this thesis does not take into account the adaptational features and their thematic effects on her films - her additions to texts and alterations, which make adaptation a creative art rather than the simple transfer of a literary text to cinema (Horton: 1-5). Star texts are another of the ingredients which Miró borrows for her films and actors thereby become assistant authors along with cinematographers and script-writers. I have restricted my research to Patsy Kensit, Ana Bélen, Rita Hayworth and Gary Cooper, but the image of other actors in Miró's films may also be of interest.

Through the laying bare of artistic processes, postmodernism and metafiction convert artistic production into a socio-ideological interrogation. This is not to suggest that Miró or any other metafictional director are unoriginal plagiarists: indeed, Miró's use of culture demonstrates her talents. If texts are not original, authoritative constructs, neither are society's constructed ideological assumptions. As I argued in chapter 7, Dina Sherzer links metafiction and feminism as part of a decanonization process of authoritative power structures and, like these two phenomena, Miró constantly strives to criticize repressive systems of order, although she may do so without using any specific theoretical framework, but rather through a general sympathy for those who suffer under dogmatic systems of order. As I have pointed out, it's difficult to pinpoint intertextual references to films or her exact intentions vis-à-vis intended or conscious postmodern, questioning textual strategies. Nevertheless, Miró's metafictional textual strategies and her gender representation - which is critical of masculinism - are coherently related and expose repressive patriarchal structures through form and content in the light of Gilbert and Gubar's 'metaphor of literary paternity' and her apparent abdication from the position of omniscient, original auteur.

The six films analyzed in this thesis are only a selection of Miró's pieces. Most of her work as a director listed by Pérez Millán has been for television (297-342) and she continues to direct plays in theatre.<sup>1</sup> For example, La verdad sospechosa in 1992 with Emilio Gutiérrez Caba (267-269) and her recent staging of Arthur Miller's Cristales rotos in the Teatro María Guerrero (Madrid, April, 1995). Her next film after Beltenebros, El pájaro, returns to a focus on a female protagonist, Carmen (Mercedes Sampietro), and she has made two adaptational films since the release of that film - a version of Lope de Vega's Golden Age play, El perro del hortelano (1995) and Mi nombre envenenará tus sueños

(1996), based on Joaquín Leguina's noir novel of the same name (Leguina: 1992; Segovia, 1993: 60). One of the first women directors to gain prominence in Spain, Miró's involvement in the artistic field continues.

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<sup>1</sup> Many of her adaptations for television catalogued by Rosa Alvares and Belén Frias (Pérez Millán: 63, 296-342) lie in the archives of RTVE, although several pieces were destroyed. The remaining works are generally unavailable to researchers in accordance with RTVE's policies.

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## APPENDIX 1.

### ENTREVISTA CON PILAR MIRÓ (LOGROÑO, MAY, 1995).

Jayne Hamilton - A la hora de adaptar una novela al cine, ¿por qué cambia el argumento, sobre todo en Beltenebros? Ha cambiado muchos detalles.

Pilar Miró - Porque una cosa es una novela y otra cosa es una película. Y entonces, yo entiendo que cuando se adapta una novela, hay que ser fiel al espíritu de esa novela, pero inmediatamente deja de ser novela para convertirse en película y ésa es otra obra. Está basada en la novela y yo creo que la historia que se cuenta es la misma historia, los personajes son los mismos personajes pero desde luego, no sólo en ésa, hay muchas licencias, hay muchas cosas que están cambiadas y en el caso de Beltenebros que además, que es una película que era una novela ... compleja que transcurre en la cabeza de una persona, que son recuerdos cercanos, lejanos .... mezclados y el final ... con un final que no se sabe hasta qué punto es real, soñado, deseado ... ficticio ... todo eso en el momento de trabajar en un guión hay que interpretar de una manera. Tiene que quedarse con algo concreto que puedes trasladar a imágenes. No es ... no puedes contar lo que piensa una persona o lo que siente literariamente. Tienes que hacerlo en imágenes y naturalmente, yo hice en Beltenebros una adaptación al cine.

JH - En el incendio en el Cine Universal, hay unas imágenes poderosas e impresionantes. ¿Significa o representa el escape de la tensión y la violencia reprimida tal como la explosión final en Ese oscuro objeto de deseo de Buñuel? ¿Le influyó el teatro español del siglo de oro y su barroquismo, por ejemplo el de A secreto agravio, secreta venganza, o no?

PM - Vamos a ver. Yo creo que en una persona influye todo. Todo. Toda su vida, todo lo que ha leído, todo lo que ha visto, todo lo que ha estudiado. Eso se va quedando, se va archivando, y es lo que, creo yo, que es la cultura de una persona. Entonces .... ésa es una

cosa, eso es un elemento es como tú ves eso en imágenes en una película. El incendio es un elemento dramático y es un ... es algo que también está en la novela. Está utilizado de otra manera. Pero realmente, es que un director de cine, o por lo menos yo, no nos planteamos las películas de esa forma tan complicada. Yo no puedo estar pensando al rodar un plano como se acabó una película de Buñuel, o es que sería una locura. No. Es imposible. Yo, por lo menos, hago mi película y utilizo el lenguaje cinematográfico como me parece mejor en ese momento. Pero no sé ni siquiera si lo pudiera rodar al día siguiente.

JH - ¿Pero le gusta el teatro del siglo de oro?

PM - Me gusta el teatro del siglo de oro, el contemporáneo, el del siglo diecinueve. Cuando interesa, me gusta el teatro pero me gustan más los autores que los teatros o que los siglos.

JH - En la película, La petición, Julián es mudo, pero en la novela no. ¿Por qué cambió ese detalle o fue Leo Anchoriz?

PM - No. Fui yo. Pues por que el protagonista de 'Por una noche de amor', que es el título original del cuento de Zola es casi de aspecto monstruoso. No es una persona agradable. Es una persona que se esconde, que rehúye que otras personas le vean ... es .. lo que le hace diferente al resto de los vecinos del lugar donde vive .... Entonces, entiendo que [...] pues que si vas a contar una historia de amor, se puede contar también adaptando ese cuento de muchas maneras y una de las maneras es hacer que ese personaje no sea desagradablemente antiestético. Por otra parte, como tenía que ... para contar la historia, no ser una persona absolutamente normal, pues hice que su aspecto fuera más atractivo pero que no pudiera hablar.

JH - He leído en otras entrevistas tuyas que ...

PM - Mala cosa (ríe).

JH - ... que quería representar la maldad de Teresa. ¿Pero también podríamos pensar en ella como víctima de un medio social.?

PM - Cada uno debe pensar lo que quiera ... Cada espectador recibe las películas de una manera distinta .... Teresa ... no es que sea víctima ... es la consecuencia de un tipo de educación determinada en una época determinada ... Víctima ... pues yo creo que no. Víctimas más bien son los que caen en sus redes ... pero no es un carácter, digamos que exacerbado porque si Teresa hubiera sido una persona más habitual, la historia no existiría.

JH - ¿Por qué metieron un poema de Verlaine en La petición?

PM - Pues porque me gustaba ... porque era francés, porque tenía que ver con lo que ocurría.

JH - ¿Estudió ballet clásico de niña?

PM - No estudié ballet. Es de las pocas cosas.

JH - ¿Pero le interesa la danza?

PM - Sí. Me interesa. Me gusta mucho el ballet. El ballet clásico y el ballet contemporáneo y entre el ballet contemporáneo sobre todo el americano.

JH - ¿De Martha Graham?

PM - [Merce] Cunningham.

JH - En La petición, El crimen de Cuenca y Beltenebros hay gatos. ¿Los gatos aparecen por casualidad o ...?

PM - No. Los pongo yo ... Los gatos y los perros ... Los pájaros también.

JH - ¿Le gustan o tienen un significado especial?

PM - Me gustan los animales de todos los géneros pero gatos dan un ambiente habitual y cuando voy a una casa, a veces hay un gato y a veces hay un perro. Quiero decir que si

fuerza otro tipo de bicho, a lo mejor fuera un poco más raro pero en este caso me parece que los que se ven son muy familiares. De todas maneras, siempre hay un animal. Depende de cómo se utiliza una película, ayuda a caracterizar a una persona ... o sea, el trato que un protagonista le da a un perro o a un gato, creo que es un dato para conocer a ese personaje. Nunca es gratuito.

JH - ¿Se preocupa por el medio ambiente?

PM - Me preocupa ahora más que antes porque creo que el medio ambiente cada vez está peor. Pero nadie me hace caso, por mucho que me preocupe.

JH - ¿Quiénes son sus directores preferidos y cuáles son los géneros que más le gustan?

PM - Cada día cambio de directores. Hay muchos directores que me gustan y sobre todo hay muchas películas que me gustan porque hay directores que tienen películas que me gustan mucho y otras que no me gustan tanto. Pero si tuviera que quedarme con uno sería John Ford. Si me quedo con más pues ya incluyo a Bergman, a Visconti, a Pollack ... [...].

JH - En Gary Cooper, ¿Andrea se identifica con la fuerza heroica de la persona de Gary Cooper porque ella es fuerte hasta cierto punto, o le mira como a una figura paternal que le puede ayudar?

PM - Hombre, desde luego, Andrea no se identifica con la fuerza de ésa o de nadie porque, aunque lo parezca, me parece que la historia cuenta más las debilidades de Andrea, las debilidades interiores que las fortalezas exteriores y su encuentro con Gary Cooper ... pues yo creo que es un encuentro con una persona, con un mito.

José María Bardavío - ¿Y las condecoraciones que hay en el baúl de recuerdos?

PM - Eran de mi padre.

JH - ¿La pluma que tiene significa su creatividad? Le tiene mucho cariño. Ella sonríe al verla y tocarla.

PM - Yo creo que significa la añoranza de un tiempo que no sabe si va a volver a tener ... pero yo creo que todas las personas tenemos amor por los objetos que significan algo, que los utilizan mucho, que los has utilizado que a lo mejor los ha regalado alguien, que forman parte de una historia de un momento determinado.

JH - ¿Aparte de la presencia del existencialismo en A puerta cerrada, le influyó Del sentimiento trágico de la vida de Unamuno?

PM - Yo no creo que me hayan influido ninguno de los dos así de una manera espectacular. Insisto en que estas obras son obras que te llevan a la reflexión. Si la influencia es la reflexión sí. Si la influencia es que te han cambiado la vida, no.

JH - ¿Por qué es abierto el final de Gary Cooper?

PM - El de Gary Cooper y el de todos los demás. Siempre dejo los finales abiertos porque creo que la vida es abierta.

JH - ¿Por qué rueda por los parabrisas de los coches en Hablamos y Gary Cooper ?

PM - Porque voy mucho en coche y uso los parabrisas. Creo que es una cosa habitual.

JMB - En Gary Cooper hay un momento en que Andrea está hablando por teléfono con Mario y Andrea toca la figurita de plomo y luego la cadena de oro que da a Bernardo y que él deja en la mesa.

PM - Esa cadena, se supone que es una cadena que se supone que ella tiene de siempre. Pero no me planteé cuál es la historia anterior. Lo que sí es lo único que tiene cuando va al quirófano, es lo único suyo que tiene que le da a Bernardo que es la única persona en que se supone que confía. En cuanto sale por la puerta, Bernardo coge la cadena y no quiere saber nada. [...] Hay muchas interpretaciones. Para mí es "adiós, buenas" ... [...]

JH - En Hablamos esta noche, oí un ruido silbante en la banda sonora. ¿Es el ruido de un contador Geiger?

PM - Sí, sí.

JH - ¿Y lo hizo a propósito en la banda sonora?

PM - Sí, en determinados momentos.

JH - Sí. Cuando hay discusiones entre Víctor y Luis María u otros. ¿En Werther, por qué escriben sus pensamientos íntimos Eusebio Poncela y el niño?

PM - No tengo una explicación lógica para darte. Es una manera de comunicarse que el profesor encuentra para sacar el niño de ese mutismo un poco enfermizo en que está metido. Él hace distintas pruebas y a la prueba de la escritura, del mensaje en papel el niño contesta y después se mantienen.

JH - ¿Por qué no empleó la voz 'en off' de Juan ya adolescente que está en el guión?

PM - El guión cambió bastante en el rodaje. Pues por que fue tomando más fuerza el amor de él por ella y entonces al final, lógicamente, repetí ese poema que me parece que no está en el guión que es el que ése comparte con ella cuando van al cementerio y entonces me pareció más adecuado para poner al final. El niño pierde bastante protagonismo en la película respecto al guión. Fue un montaje que duró dos horas y pico...

JH - ¿Por qué contrató a Eusebio Poncela?

PM - Porque pensaba que podía hacer ese personaje. A Eusebio Poncela y a todos los demás. No encuentro qué motivo puede haber para contratar a un actor.

JH - ¿Y su aspecto físico, intelectual ...?

PM - Hombre, el aspecto físico y la capacidad de interpretar y el que realmente sea capaz de dar el personaje que tú quieras pero no sólo en el caso de Eusebio Poncela ... Cuando haces un reparto, tratas de coger un actor que se aproxime lo más posible a lo que tú piensas. Unas veces es así; otras veces no ... no da el resultado que esperas. En ese caso es que no tenía William Hurt. Estaba rodando en Canadá.

JH - Como obra romántica ¿podemos pensar en Eusebio Poncela como un hombre ideal, una figura de fantasía femenina?

PM - Depende de quién ...

JH - Por el romanticismo y porque no es machista.

PM - No sé.

JH - Tales hombres no existen en la vida real.

PM - Ay sí. Yo creo que sí. Yo creo que hay hombres muy sensibles. Sí, sí, sí. Hay hombres muy sensibles. [...] Que no veo esas diferencias tan blanco y negro. Que hay muchas matices.

JH - En Beltenebros usted apareció en la foto de la Guerra Civil como miliciana. ¿Por qué?

PM - ¿Cómo lo has sabido?

JH - La vi en el libro de Juan Antonio.

PM - Porque era muy difícil sacarla. Pues ¿por qué?. Porque me hizo gracia. Esa foto está copiada de las fotos ... sacadas de un libro de Robert Capa, fotógrafo de la Segunda Guerra Mundial y de la Guerra Civil en España. Entonces, en casi todas las fotos de grupo en un momento en que no hay combate de Capa, que fue el fotógrafo más importante de esas guerras, siempre hay mujeres y en el caso de la Guerra Civil Española, siempre hay milicianas y entonces, pues ... la única posibilidad de que hubiera una miliciana era yo y fue divertido, pero no lo saca nadie. Me parece que la foto era muy bonita.

JH - ¿En El pájaro de la felicidad, usted metió la escena de La verdad sospechosa o ya estaba en el guión de Camus?

PM - Pues no me acuerdo de lo que estaba en el guión. Me parece que en el guión estaba una de teatro sin especificar cuál. La verdad sospechosa no. La verdad sospechosa la metí

porque era un montaje que yo había hecho y que todavía estaba en gira y entonces hice lo posible para que ellos pudieran rodar.

JH - ¿Quería que la puesta en escena, sobre todo en Almería, se pareciera a la pintura?

PM - Bueno. Es una película donde la plástica es muy importante, el color ... Hay un estudio de color desde que empieza la película hasta que acaba. La película empieza utilizando unos tonos beiges, marrones, verdes para terminar en rojos, azules y la plástica está muy relacionada con Madrid, con Cataluña y con Almería, deliberada y consciente. Es una película en que la escritura se para bastante en el color porque la película habla de la estética del cuadro, que por otra parte está conectado con la estética de la película. [...] Soy bastante escrupulosa con una determinada estética. Cada película tiene su estética que normalmente yo baso en un pintor casi siempre. Cuando yo preparo una película y hablo con el equipo, siempre hay un pintor de referencia. Y ese pintor suele darme una clave de color, de ambientes que luego, gradualmente se van perdiendo porque es como el guión, luego sale la película, pero como punto de partida para mí, es bueno.

JH - Entonces, en cada película que ha realizado, ¿quiénes han sido los pintores?

PM - De todos no me puedo acordar pero El pájaro sí porque era Munch, el de El grito, y en Beltenebros era ése que pinta las habitaciones de hoteles, Edward Hopper, y en ésta que estoy haciendo [El perro del hortelano] es pintura del siglo dieciocho francesa pero realizada en África, son rarísimos, que yo compré una vez, y eso no sé si fue en Marruecos o Argelia. Cuando estoy de viaje, siempre me gusta mirar las antigüedades, los libros ... y entonces los libros, es una cosa que detesto porque pesan. Pero esa vez, de repente fui a un sitio donde estaban libros de allí y me encontré con unas ediciones fantásticas francesas que habría podido comprar en París seguramente y eran fantásticas y entonces, pese a lo que son dos tomos, me los llevé y entonces los tengo allí, y de repente, sale la película y

digo, ya tengo la fotografía de esta película. Raro, como es Nápoles en 1700, tengo esas fotos, esos cuadros, pues digo muy bien. [...] el punto de partida, de color, de blancos, los contrastes, las sombras, la luz que es muy mediterránea posiblemente, pues está allí.

APPENDIX 2.STATISTICAL DATA ON WOMEN IN SPAIN.

% women in the work force	
Spain 1980	27
Spain 1991	35
European Union 1991 (average)	41

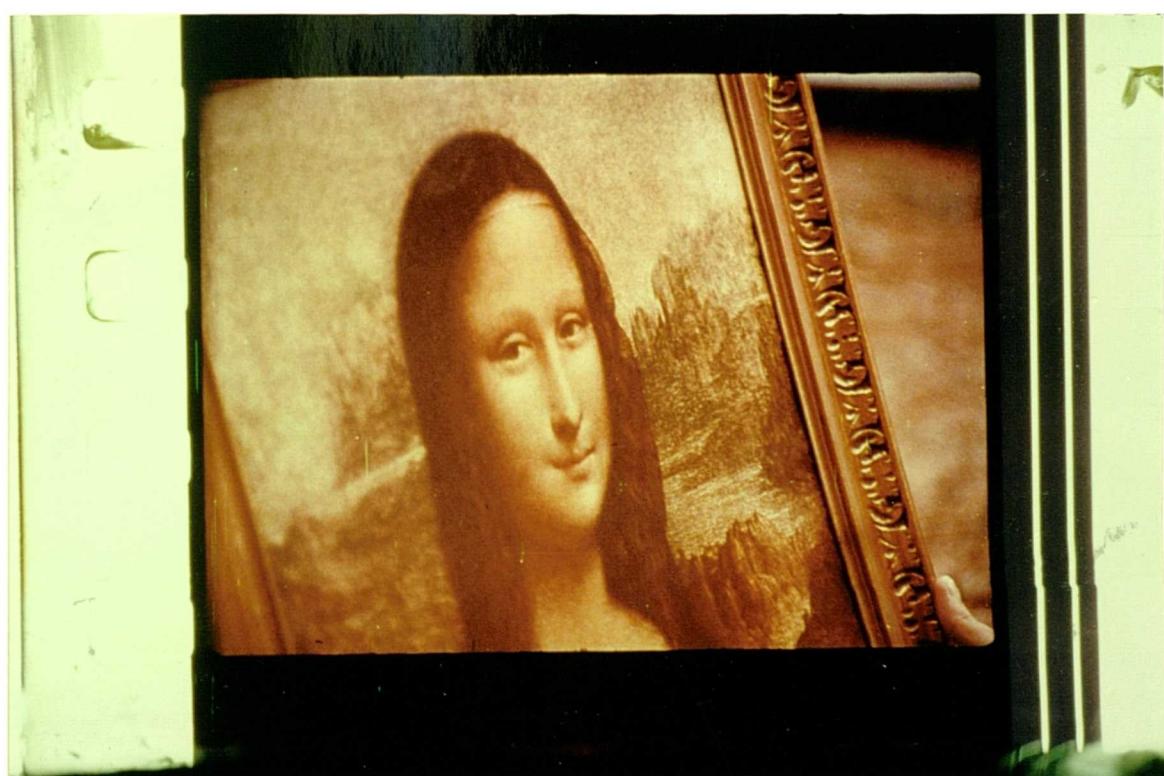
(Montero, 1995: 382).

% of women employed in certain professions		
Professional discipline	1988	1992
Architects and Engineers	5	9
Management Posts	8	13
Economists and Lawyers	20	30
Chemists and Physicists	26	38

(Montero, 1995: 385)

ILLUSTRATIONS.<sup>1</sup>

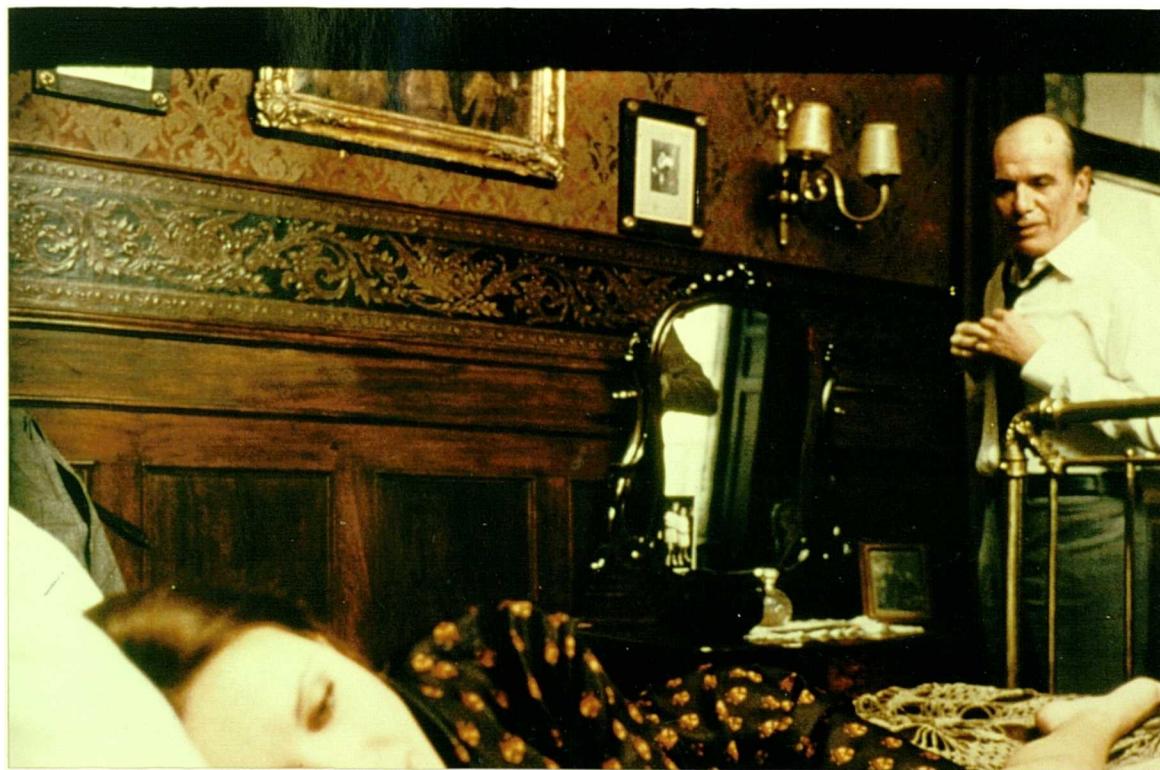
An interesting shot/reverse-shot sequence in Morbo (Gonzalo Suárez, 1972).



Below and on the next page, Ana Belén in Emilia, parada y fonda (Angelino Fons, 1976), erotically displayed for the diegetic spectator, Paco Rabal, and the audience.



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Ana Belén in Bruno's point-of-view in La criatura (Eloy de La Iglesia, 1977).



Ana Belén in Adiós pequeña (Inmanol Uribe, 1987).

Ana Belén in Bruno's point-of-view in La criatura (Eloy de La Iglesia, 1977).



Ana Belén in Adiós pequeña (Inmanol Uribe, 1987).

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<sup>1</sup> All stills in this section were reproduced by the Filmoteca Nacional in Madrid.