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# Franco's Children: Representations of Franco-Era Childhood in Contemporary Spanish Literature and Cinema

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Franco's Children:  
Representations of Franco-Era Childhood in Contemporary Spanish Literature and  
Cinema

by

Miaowei Weng

A dissertation presented to the  
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences  
of Washington University in  
partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree  
of Doctor of Philosophy

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## Table of Contents

|  | <b>Page</b> |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Acknowledgements</b>  | <b>ii</b>   |
| <b>Introduction:</b> Franco's Children: Representations of Franco-Era Childhood in Contemporary Spanish Literature and Cinema              | <b>1</b>    |
| <b>Chapter 1:</b> Allegory, Mourning, and Memories of Childhood: Adelaida García Morales's (1981) and Víctor Erice's <i>El sur</i> (1983)  | <b>18</b>   |
| <b>Chapter 2:</b> Parody, Nostalgia, and Memory of a National-Catholic Childhood: Andrés Sopeña Monsalve's <i>El florido pensil</i> (1994) | <b>55</b>   |
| <b>Chapter 3:</b> Ironic Reflections on the Winning of the War: Esther Tusquets's <i>Hab úmos ganado la guerra</i> (2007)                  | <b>92</b>   |
| <b>Chapter 4:</b> Intertextual Encounters: Luis Mateo Díez's <i>La gloria de los niños</i> (2007)  | <b>137</b>  |
| <b>Conclusion</b>  | <b>174</b>  |
| <b>Works Cited</b>   | <b>183</b>  |

## Introduction

### Franco's Children: Representations of Franco-Era Childhood in Contemporary Spanish Literature and Cinema

*“The witnesses of the mid-century generation, to whom we owe much more than we can image, look back without anger.”<sup>1</sup>*

-Santos Juliá

Sociologists consider the twentieth century to be the “century of the child” (James and Prout 1); American politicians assert that “the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a century of conflict between forces of totalitarianism and dictatorship and forces of democracy and freedom” (Congress 5065). My dissertation is concerned with “Franco’s children,” the generation of Spaniards who lived through Franco’s early dictatorship as children and have reconstructed Franco-era childhood to fight for more freedom and democracy decades later as adults. Since the late Francoism of the 1970s, Spanish novelists and filmmakers have continuously reconstructed childhood under the dictatorship.<sup>2</sup> In the new millennium, representations of Franco-era childhood have come into increasing prominence. This subject has recurred in literature, cinema, television, Internet, exhibitions, and symposia.<sup>3</sup>

In 2007, childhood under Francoism became a crucial and unavoidable part of historical consciousness for Spaniards. During that year, Baltasar Garzón, then magistrate of the Central Court of Criminal Proceedings, charged the Francoist regime with kidnapping of children, spotlighting this long hidden crime of the regime. Later on, the release of Carlos Iglesias’ *Ispansi* (“Spaniards” in Russian) in 2011 has brought into public view the existence of the “children in Russia” and, by extension, “children in

exile” under Franco.<sup>4</sup> The boom of Franco-era child images in contemporary Spain draws attention to itself, provoking a series of questions: In what way did the Spanish Civil War and the subsequent dictatorship affect children? What kind of Franco-era childhood stories have Spaniards recounted in the post-Franco epoch? How and when do these storytellers use their narratives to articulate their identities and lay claim to the future? These are the fundamental questions underlying my exploration of “Franco’s children” in contemporary Spain.

The present research links studies of memory and childhood studies, pointing to the double meaning of the title: on the one hand, the phrase “Franco’s children” implies the status of the authors and filmmakers as those who survived the early Franco regime as children and recall their childhood as adults; on the other hand, it refers to the child protagonists in the selected works that are set in wartime and the post-War period. Samuel Steinberg uses the phrase “Franco’s kids” to narrowly refer to “the allegorical chaotic masses of the *destape*” of the post-Franco era (32); film scholar Marsha Kinder applies the notion “children of Franco” to directors who were born between 1939 and 1975, as well as to child characters in the films that are set in the same epoch of the dictatorship (*The Children* 59). However, Franco’s early regime from the end of 1936 to the early ’50s, with its austere restrictions and large-scale political violence, needs to be treated differently from the late dictatorship, especially the late 1960s and early ’70s when the death of Franco was expected. I choose the early dictatorship as the time period to be covered in my research, focusing on the effects that the war and the harshest years of the dictatorship have had over Franco’s children in the past as well as in the present. Sociologist Nickolas Rose argues that “childhood is the most intensively governed sector



of personal experience. In different ways, at different times, and by different routes... the health, welfare, and education of children have been linked to the destiny of the nation” (121). In this sense, childhood serves as a contested site in which different powers, whether national or familial, compete for interpretation. Under Franco’s dictatorship when parents were reticent to speak about national history and politics, the state took up the dominant role in childhood education in the “New State.” Thus, to reconstruct Franco-era childhood is to reflect on the Francoist intervention in children’s lives and, by extension, on Francoism in general.

Characterizing the “children of Franco” in film mainly from the psychoanalytic perspective, Kinder points to these filmmakers’ obsession with the past (58);<sup>5</sup> juxtaposing works produced by the directors including V ́ctor Erice and Carlos Saura, Kinder argues that these films share a common murderous tendency directly toward the patriarch, a symbol of Franco. I agree with Kinder in her observation of the haunting past in the works of these artists, yet the means by which Franco’s children express their reflections on the past are more complicated than the patricidal or matricidal impulses. Unlike Kinder, I explore this complexity mostly from a political approach, responding to Jo Labanyi’s appeal. Discussing historical memory in contemporary Spain, Jo Labanyi argues “against the applicability of trauma theory to an understanding of the effects of the Francoist repression” (“The Language” 23). After observing and examining detailed descriptions in oral testimonies of sufferings under Francoism, Labanyi considers victims’ previous refusal to speak about the past to be a political strategy; therefore, she suggests a political, rather than psychological, perspective on the study of Spanish historical memory (23-28). In this study, I explore different strategies – both rhetorical

and political – Franco’s Children use at various key historical and political moments in contemporary Spain. In so doing, I engage in dialogue with current debates about the politics of Spanish historical memory and about the politicization of childhood as well.

Before further exploring Spanish historical memory, I need to explain the generational issue, which is crucial to this study. Critics have extensively analyzed memories of the first generation and postmemories mostly of the third generation in the Spanish context; in 2009, Labanyi calls for “urgent” attention on “the second generation, which has received practically no attention and for which documentation remains largely unavailable” (“The Language” 25). By the “second generation,” Labanyi refers to the children of those who fought in the war. This group of Spaniards suffered and survived the war and the early post-War period when they lacked adult understanding. The status of this group echoes the term “1.5 generation,” coined by Holocaust scholar Susan Suleiman. She applies this phrase to “child survivors of the Holocaust, too young to have an adult understanding of what was happening to them, and sometimes too young to have any memory of it at all, but old enough to have been there during the Nazi persecution of Jews” (*Crises of Memory* 179). This “having been there” as children can also describe the status of Franco’s children, yet it is problematic to take this notion out of its immediate context and to apply it directly to Spain, because the Spanish context is distinct from the Holocaust addressed by Suleiman. While Suleiman’s “1.5 generation” refers to those who experienced the Holocaust as children, I argue that the “Franco’s children” or the “1.5 generation” discussed in the Spanish context should not be limited to those who experienced the Civil War as children, but also include those who spent their childhood during the immediate post-War period of the 1940s and early ’50s. I do so, given that

Francoist persecution, the alleged “Crusade,” did not cease with the end of formal hostilities on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1939; rather, it led to institutionalized and harsher repression under the dictatorship, especially in the post-War period of the 1940s and early ’50s.

The consideration of the generational issue is important not only because two to three generations lived through the nearly four decades of Franco’s dictatorship, but also because the Spanish “1.5 generation” shares some common features. Given their young age, the child characters could not explain bomb attacks or radical family changes as children. Therefore, when the adult narrators recount their childhood experiences, their narratives always carry an explanatory mission. Ana María Moix made a precise remark about the works produced by her recently passed friend Esther Tusquets by asserting: “Es una escritora proustiana que utiliza la memoria como arma de conocimiento” (Geli). Like Tusquets, “Franco’s children” tend to trace the origins of their traumatic childhood experiences in order to find a way to come to terms with the past. This is a pronounced feature shared by all works I examine in this dissertation. The narrators seek to interpret their repressed childhood experiences from various perspectives, including primary school education, radical family changes, ideological and political confusion, and the loss of siblings. These interpretations, in turn, have enriched our understanding of the Spanish society under Francoism. These childhood stories go beyond personal memories or moral condemnations. Instead, they demonstrate broader social and historical situations which shaped childhood of the generation.

This study includes stories not only of the defeated side but also of the winning side. In so doing, I do not intend to depoliticize childhood memories by justifying a homogenously victimized childhood; rather, I aim to create a space in which critical

reflections from distinct positions on the political spectrum in post-War society can coexist and dialogue with each other. In the anthology *Hijos de la guerra*, Jorge Martínez Reverte and Socorro Thomás combine testimonies of people who lived through the Spanish Civil War as children on both sides. The anthologists argue that “da lo mismo en qué bando militaran sus padres, los niños sufrieron la Guerra de la misma forma desgarradora, y por mucho que la derrota o la diáspora afectaran más a una parte de ellos, el miedo y los malos sueños perviven en todos” (13). I do not agree with Martínez Reverte and Thomás in their opinion that the children on both sides suffered the war and its aftermath to the same extent and in the same way. This myth of equal suffering, in fact, depoliticizes the past and tends to shift historical responsibilities. Therefore, although like *Hijos de la guerra*, this study comprises narratives portraying children who grew up in both pro- and anti-Francoist families, a common feature running through all of the works included in my study is the harsh critique of Francoism.

The commonality of anti-Francoist accounts on both sides echoes a unique political milieu created by Franco’s children in the 20<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish history. In April 2009 when commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Spanish Civil War, Santos Juliá writes a column paying homage to the generation of Spaniards who lived their childhood in wartime and the early post-War period, or in the phrase I use in this study, to “Franco’s children.” Juliá recalls that in the late 1950s, children originating from families of the defeated and those from families of the victors fought side by side, opening the prelude to the anti-Franco resistance movement in Spain during late Francoism:

No habrán sido capaces de contarse al pasado si no hubieran  
construido un nuevo sujeto político al que, en alguno de los manifiestos  
distribuidos aquellos días, identificaron con el nombre de “hijos de los  
vencedores y de los vencidos,” borrando de un plumazo la escisión a la  
que los vencedores de la guerra y sus sagrados mentores los habían  
condenado para siempre. (Juliá)

Through student movements in 1956 and 1957, Franco’s children initiated the opposition  
against the official remembrance of the war. The student movements of the late 1950s,  
triggering the earliest anti-Franco waves in public, have conferred a significant historical  
status on Franco’s children as fearless pioneers; an acknowledgement of this status, in  
turn, helps us to better historicize memories produced by this group.

Recognizing the foundational significance of Franco’s children to anti-Franco  
resistance movements, I do not mean that all Franco’s children rebelled against the  
official government. Instead, the rebellious children took up only a very small part of this  
generation.<sup>6</sup> This small group pioneered a new epoch in the late 1950s and the ‘60s, in  
which Spaniards broke down political and ideological barriers, “Catholics speaking with  
communists, Christians with Marxists” (Juliá). This particular historical scene responds  
to Bonnie Honig’s definition of democracy. According to this American feminist lawyer,  
democracy means not just to “live with people with whom we have a great deal in  
common” but also “to work and live and share with somebody who could possibly kill  
you” (117-18). In today’s democratic Spain, in which social divisions and xenophobia  
still predominate in the media and in people’s daily lives, it is especially significant to  
*recover* the historical legacy of the Franco’s children who gave the first cry for

democracy and freedom in Spain in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This study examines how, decades later, Franco's children continue the unfinished reckoning with the past, fighting for a more democratic future. This time, they do so by reconstructing Franco-era childhood and thus tracing the social and familial origins of their sufferings and the later rebellion against Francoism.

I examine the selected works not only in the context of historical memory but also within the framework of burgeoning childhood studies. Since two decades ago, childhood studies have taken on a central position in the social sciences as well as in the humanities, as proposed by childhood researchers Allison James, Chris Jenks and Alan Prout as early as in 1998:

Once childhood was a feature of parental (or maybe just maternal) discourse, the currency of educators and the sole theoretical property of developmental psychology. Now, with an intensity perhaps unprecedented, childhood has become popularized, politicized, scrutinized and analyzed in a series of interlocking spaces in which the traditional confidence and certainty about childhood and children's social status are being radically undermined. (*Theorizing* 3)

However, the emergence of childhood studies does not mean that childhood had never been the focus of researchers and scholars focus in the past; in fact, childhood historian Philippe Ariès's 1962 groundbreaking work *Centuries of Childhood* marked the turning point of studies of childhood by conceiving it as a social and cultural construction. What is new, in addition to the establishment of childhood studies as an academic discipline, is a clear tendency toward interdisciplinarity, integrating disciplines as diverse as

psychology, sociology, literature, philosophy, law, politics, and so on.<sup>7</sup> This study draws on the constructionist view of childhood and also responds to this multidisciplinary trend by incorporating the political perspective into literary and cinematographic analyses.

Ariès's consideration of childhood as a construction has become the basic premise in childhood studies (James and Prout 1-7, Mary Jane Kehily 1-17, Jean and Richard Mills 3-8); the emergent approaches and paradigms all depart from this foundation. According to Ariès, the idea of childhood evolves gradually: it came into being in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in upper-class families, developed in the eighteenth century and finally entered both the upper and lower classes in the twentieth century. What is at stake in his theory is that childhood is constructed historically and culturally, and that the construction of childhood changes over time and space. Here, Ariès's argument about childhood shares the same constructionist approach with Maurice Halbwachs's view of memory. Halbwachs conceives of memory as a socially constructed representation of the past (40). The constructionist perspectives on memory as well as on childhood stress the need to contextualize the discussion of the works under analysis.

While Ariès's argument highlights the importance of the context in which childhood has been shaped, Halbwachs's conception of memory connects the past to the present. According to Halbwachs, memory is a process of reconstructing the past; according to him, this construction is informed by the present: "Even at the moment of reproducing the past our imagination remains under the influence of the present social milieu" (49). This study examines not only the past – in which the texts are set – but also the present – in which the authors and the filmmakers express their opinions regarding the past. Childhood, in my view, thus becomes a nexus between the past and the present.

The relevance of the past to the present is significant in thought and practice in contemporary Spain, because the recuperation of historical memory is still on-going and victims' pain has not been fully recognized in the public space.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, memories of the past are always filtered by the present, by the desire of the present. The influence of the present is even more pronounced in memories of childhood, when the youth lacks an adult understanding of the world.

Exploring the past, I am concerned with how the Franco regime used children for its propagandistic purpose; analyzing the present, I examine how Franco's children have reconstructed this exploited childhood in contemporary Spain. In so doing, I seek to contribute to the current discussions on the "politicizing of childhood" (Leira and Saraceno 1), a term elaborated by childhood scholars Arnlaug Leira and Chiara Saraceno in 2008. From the sociological perspective, Leira and Saraceno use the expression of the "politicizing of childhood" to refer to the means by which "childhood is conceptualized not only as a primary family or parental responsibility, but, in addition, as a matter of public importance and concern, something for state intervention" (1). According to them, "children and childhood are increasingly the subject of public debate and enter the political agenda ... we are presently witnessing an instance in history in which the issue of children, and concern over childhood change, is explicitly entering the public and political discourse" (2). By arguing so, the two sociologists rightly point out the central position of children in political discourses and practices.

Leira and Saraceno's assertion regarding politicized childhood is particularly relevant to my exploration of Franco's children, who, as the future generation, were the chief preoccupation for the government of Franco's New Spain. Some of these children



experienced the trauma and displacement of the war, yet the Francoists, aided by the Church, couched their experiences in the victors' triumphalist rhetoric and thus camouflaged their suffering. Others, born in the immediate post-War period of the 1940s, were indoctrinated into the authoritarian discourse of Francoist "National-Catholic" education. I include child protagonists who are portrayed to suffer typical "politicization of childhood" during the postwar period. The child protagonists in Chapter 1 live under the shadow of the allegedly "immoral" lives of their Republican fathers in the novella and film *El sur*; the children in Chapter 2 suffer the nonsensical religious and nationalist indoctrination in Andrés Sopeña Monsalve's *El florido pensil*. The younger self of the author Esther Tusquets in *Hab úmos ganado la guerra* and her contemporaries in Chapter 3 are confronted with the huge gap between Franco's propagandistic images and the miserable social reality of ordinary people; and the eight-year-old boy in Chapter 4 loses his siblings in wartime, as rendered by Luis Mateo Díez in *La gloria de los niños*. It is evident that the childhoods of these young protagonists have been shaped by the particular circumstances of the dictatorship. The dictatorship, in fact, has marked the lives of Franco's children not only in the past but also in the present. However, the Spanish 1.5 generation has never been passively shaped by their circumstances; rather, they have been social actors who actively shaped social situations by articulating their own voices.

Conventional approaches to childhood consider children as the "passive objects of structural determination," yet a "new and not yet completed paradigm," as proposed by James and Prout in 2008, aims to reorient childhood studies by stressing children's own voices and subjectivities (*Constructing and Reconstructing* 1-7). In James and Prout's

words, “childhood and children’s social relationships and cultures are worthy of study in their own right, and not just in respect to their social construction by others, especially adults” (4). In fact, Charlotte Hardman compared childhood studies with gender studies as early as the 1970s by arguing that “both women and children might perhaps be called ‘muted groups,’ i.e. unperceived or elusive groups (in terms of anyone studying a society)” (85). Four decades later, women have found their voices in most Western societies, yet children’s voices still need more attention. Responding to this need, this study aims to highlight the voices of Franco’s children. Although they did not produce these works at an early stage of their lives, the adult story tellers do weave their personal experiences into their childhood accounts. Portraying the power of the dictatorship to shape their early lives, their narratives demonstrate how the war and the subsequent Franco dictatorship have negatively influenced lives of Franco’s children.

Reconstructing the childhood they experienced, these authors not only criticize Francoism but also rewrite the past. According to Jos é Piquer y Jover, in the early 1940s 72 percent of children in Barcelona “disapproved of the immoral lives” of the Republicans (76). These children’s disapproval could be due to fear or the involuntary internalization of Francoist political indoctrination. No matter what the hidden reasons were, their declarations have been recorded in the history. In the twenty-first century, however, Spanish historian Ángela Cenarro interviewed children who were institutionalized in the Auxilio Social in the post-War period. Based on the oral testimonies she collected, Cenarro points out: “The narratives of those youngsters institutionalized by Auxilio Social show how they attempted to construct an alternative identity to that promoted by the regime as children” (53). The testimonies also show that

children, especially those of pro-Republican parents, “recognized their strong awareness of their family identity, even if they had not been allowed to express it publicly” under Francoism (54). It is not fair to say that in the twenty-first century, these former Franco’s children lied about their political awareness during childhood, yet it is also naïve to take these statements at face value. Obviously, these statements are the interviewees’ interpretations from the vantage point of the present. Children’s identification with their Republican parents, as recorded by Cenarro in the present, stands in sharp contrast to the youth’s negative attitudes toward the Republicans, as shown by Piquer y Jover in the 1940s. This contrast bespeaks the present desire of Franco’s children to rewrite the past, a past imposed on them by the victors of the war.

In my examination of the reconstructed past, historical context is a crucial issue. I explore childhood stories published at three key moments of contemporary Spanish history. These include: 1) the transition to democracy in the early 1980s, when the majority of the former “Franco’s children” endorsed the so-called “Pact of Oblivion;” 2) the mid and later 1990s, which marked the revival and boom of nostalgic memoirs of the Francoist National-Catholic childhood; and 3) the period following the Law of Historical Memory [October 31, 2007], a landmark law publicly condemning the Francoist dictatorship as well as recognizing its victims on both sides. In 2000, Joan Ramon Resina, discussing the politics of memory, proposed: “The current dispute (on historical memory in Spain) is really over which fragments of the past are being refloated and which are allowed to sink” (86). This assertion points to the contestation of Spanish historical memories; Canadian political scientist Nergis Canefe’s definition of “chronopolitics” helps me to go in depth into Resina’s assertion. According to Canefe, “chronopolitics

refers to elements of choice, negotiation and contestation that come into play for the ultimate determination of what is remembered” (81). The socio-political context of the time determines the parts of history which are allowed to enter the public view. Discussing memories of “comfort women” in Japan, historian Carol Gluck asserts that “every country had its own ‘chronopolitics’ of memory, in which changes in domestic and international politics over time created the conditions for changes in the memroyscape” (61). In other words, in addition to historical memory, I am also concerned with a history of memory, or more specifically, a history of childhood memory.

The chronopolitical perspective, in fact, becomes the nexus between my consideration of historical memory and my concern with childhood studies. The boom of Franco-era childhood stories in the new millennium is timely from the chronopolitical viewpoint. When ideological debates on the war have reached a point of saturation,<sup>9</sup> it is time for the inclusion of previously neglected targets of Francoist repression in order to attract the audience’s attention. In 2007, the Forum for Memory of the Madrid Community [*Foro por la memoria de la comunidad de Madrid*] presented the symposium, titled “the ‘other’ victims of the dictatorship [*las ‘otras’ víctimas de la dictadura*],” in which the first topic was dedicated to “Childhood under Francoist Repression [*La infancia bajo la represión franquista*].

The four individual chapters respond to three consecutive key historical and political moments, showing the chronopolitical evolution of repressive childhood memory in post-Franco literature and cinema. To this end, “individuals always use social frameworks when they remember,” as argues by Halbwachs (40). The indirect or allegorical means the author and the filmmaker of *El sur* use for stories of pro-

Republican families fit into the socio-political context of the early 1980s, when the government, the media, and the majority of Spaniards focused on economic growth and tended to gloss over contentions of the past. Andrés Sopeña questioned the primary school textbooks in a parodic way in the middle of the 1990s, when facsimile editions of Franco-era school textbooks were revived in the market. Esther Tusquets portrayed her younger self as a rebellious child against her pro-Francoist family of origin in the 2000s, when members of the *gauche divine* made efforts to establish their collective identity;<sup>10</sup> the Madrid government also contributed to the reappearance of the *gauche divine* in public.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, the transnational intertextuality Luis Mateo Díez employed in his novel, *La gloria de los niños*, in the first decade of the new millennium suggests the evident trend of cultural integrations under globalization.

These childhood stories are about Franco's children and by Franco's children. They have been shaped by the past and now they are shaping the past retrospectively from the standpoint of the present. Juxtaposing discourses on model children under Francoism and representations of Franco-era childhood in the present, I demonstrate the complexity of the constant process of construction and reconstruction of children and childhood. Linking individual childhood memories to public debates in contemporary Spain, these recollections gain political importance as social catalysts: they arouse people's historical awareness, prevent indulgence in uncritical nostalgia for a romanticized past, construct a collective identity, and relate the local and the national to the global. Santos Juliá believes we owe much to Franco's children, and this study recognizes the great contribution this group has made to the Spanish history in the past as well as in the present.

Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> It is my translation of the sentence: “Los testigos de aquella generación del medio siglo, a la que debemos mucho más de lo que somos capaces de imaginar, miran hacia atrás sin ira” (Julià).

<sup>2</sup> The best known examples include Víctor Erice’s *El espíritu de la colmena* (1973), Carlos Saura’s *Cría Cuervos* (1976), Carmen Martín Gaité’s *El cuarto de atrás* (1977), and so forth.

<sup>3</sup> One of the most – if not the most – popular television series in the new millennium is *Cuéntame cómo pasó*, broadcast by TVE1 since 2001; the series recounts the experiences of a middle-class family in the 1970s through a child’s perspective.

The internet has become one of the most important channels through which Spaniards recall and represent Franco-era childhood experiences, search for their lost siblings and announce large-scale gatherings. Facebook plays a crucial role in the last two functions. See: <<http://www.facebook.com/events/395828383791644/permalink/395831557124660/>> and <<http://www.facebook.com/pages/PLATAFORMA-AFECTADOS-CLINICAS-DE-TODA-ESPA%C3%91A-CAUSA-NI%C3%91OS-ROBADOS/173164369461093>>.

The Library of Andalucía, for instance, hosted the exhibition “Memorias de la escuela (1940-1975)” between January 1 and January 29, 2011. Similar exhibitions have been shown in Malaga (Oct.19-Nov.20, 2007), in Salamanca (Mar. 30-May 16, 2010), in Leon (Feb. 23-Mar.14, 2010), and so forth.

The Forum for the Memory of the Madrid Community [*Foro por la memoria de la comunidad de Madrid*] presented the symposium, titled “the ‘other’ victims of the dictatorship [*las ‘otras’ víctimas de la dictadura*],” in which the first topic was dedicated to “Childhood under the Francoist Repression [*La infancia bajo la represión franquista*].”

<sup>4</sup> The “children of Russia” refers to those 3000 Spanish youngsters who were sent to Russia to avoid the rigor of the war in 1937 and 1938; see Couto for the reference. There are also “Children of Morelia” in Mexico; see the film, *Children of Morelia*. In addition to them, there are the “Basque children in exile;” see Fyrth 221-42 and Hawkins 96-118.

<sup>5</sup> Kinder points out that “this generation of filmmakers was forced always to define themselves and their films in opposition to Franco, both before and after his death in 1975... because of the oppressive domination of the previous generation, they were obsessed with the past and might never be ready to take responsibility for changing the future” (58).

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<sup>6</sup> According to José María Maravall, “la política estudiantil era el producto de no más de 200 personas” (161).

<sup>7</sup> In 1991, Gertrud Lenzer founded a Children’s Studies Program and Children’s Studies Center at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York. The Northumbria University Joint Honours Degree started offered a degree in Childhood Studies in UK in 1992. York University in Canada established a new degree program in Children Studies in 2001. Since 2007, Rutgers University has awarded Ph.D. degrees in Childhood studies, the first doctoral degree-granting program in this new discipline in the United States.

<sup>8</sup> This is evidenced by the active operation of the ARMH (the Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory) in Spain.

<sup>9</sup> The title of the novel *One More Damned Novel about the Civil War* [*Otra maldita novela sobre la guerra civil*] illustrates the saturation of the market with books about the war.

<sup>10</sup> The *gauche divine* refers to a group of dissident children from Barcelonese bourgeois families in the 1960s and the early 1970s.

<sup>11</sup> In 2000, in order to win over the Barcelonese elite class, Mariano Rajoy, now president of Spain and then minister of Education and Culture, officially sponsored an exhibition of the photographic works of the Barcelonese *gauche divine* in Madrid. Esther Tusquets, as a representative member of this group, published her childhood memoir in this context, ironizing the winners’ decadent lives in the post-War period and contributing to the *gauche divine*’s identity construction project.

## Chapter 1

### **Allegory, Mourning, and Memories of Childhood: Adelaida García Morales's (1981) and Víctor Erice's *El sur* (1983)**

In his analysis of Argentine writer Tununa Mercado's *En estado de memoria*, Idelber Avelar proposes that "The labor of mourning has much to do with the erection of an *exterior* tomb where the brutal literalization of the internal tomb can be metaphorized" (9). By "exterior tombs," Avelar refers to dead objects left by the past; having lost their original utility and become spectrally charged, these objects described by Mercado in her novel become the mask for the unrepresentable "past traumatic kernel" (Avelar 228). Thus, the metaphorization of the internal content by an exterior deadly disguise results in double meanings of the narrative, while at the same time channeling the mourning for the dead. The link between mourning and doubleness proposed by Avelar, in fact, characterizes Adelaida García Morales's reconstruction of a childhood during the early Franco dictatorship in the novella *El sur*. The narrative begins with the adult narrator's promise to visit her father's deserted tomb at dawn; then it proceeds with a recollection of her repressed childhood and her pro-Republican father's suicide during the postwar period of 1940s and '50s; and it ends with a description in the narrator's indifferent tone of a ruin left over from her past life. Specifically, while the father's tomb is similar to the exterior one described by Avelar, the hidden meanings communicated through the father's death are the objects of my exploration in this chapter.

Scholars of both the written and visual form of *El sur* have focused on the themes of the child protagonists' *buildungs* (Ballesteros, Mart ín-M árquez, Morris, Tsuchiya), the mythification of the father (Evans), the daughter-father relationship (Mart ínez-Carazo, Nimmo, Evans and Robin), and the gothic vision (Ord óñez, Glenn, Six). None of them



has approached the aspect that the writer and the director have constructed their works as memories or more specifically, memories of traumatic childhood in the postwar period. Additionally, in spite of the fact that critics have examined both works from the psychoanalytic perspective, the whole complex that links psychoanalysis to memory, mourning, and allegory is still virtually unexplored. Exploring this complex in the novella and the film *El sur*, I aim to discover how the narrators channel the mourning for the dead fathers and how the writer and the director allegorically render their political reflections into artistic forms.

Angus Fletcher's discussions of allegory inform my reading of double meanings in the novella and the film *El sur*. Etymologically, *allos* means "other" while *agoreueim* means "speak openly, speak in the assembly or market." In his now classic book *Allegory: the Theory of a Symbolic Mode*, Angus Fletcher argues that "*Agoreuim* connotes public, open, declarative speech. This sense is inverted by the prefix *allos*. Thus allegory is often called 'inversion'" (2). More specifically, Fletcher's allegory means something other than public, or something secret, concerning veiled meanings behind public discourses. However, I argue that the relationship between the prefix of the word allegory and its root sense can also be complementary; thus "allegory" can also mean a making-public of something which otherwise would remain secret. In other words, the something other [*allos*] can only be made visible and audible in the root sense of being open to the public [*allegoreuim*], by this means. While Fletcher's interpretation of allegory calls attention to what the something other may be, I emphasize the means of making the other public. Both connotations of allegory concern me in the exploration of *El sur*, in the written form as well as the visual form. Specifically, I explore what the

allegorical meanings behind mourning may be and how mourning becomes an entrance through which the novella *El sur* and its cinematographic adaption allegorically render these meanings.

Allegory is, by nature, related to psychoanalysis. Fletcher argues that “the various analogies that can be drawn between literary and psychoanalytically observed phenomena all point to the oldest idea about allegory, that it is a human reconstitution of divinely inspired messages” (21). By examining various elements in allegorical narratives, especially the agency, Fletcher concludes that allegorical forms bear a similarity to the Freudian compulsive syndrome in psychoanalysis (286-301). According to this scholar, the typical agent in an allegorical fiction behaves in the same manner as the subject of compulsive syndrome: both lack freedom of choice and are observed that “(their) minds are obsessed by an idea” (286). Similarly, Akiko Tsuchiya proposes that the protagonist Adriana in Garc ía Morales’ narrative is possessed by the family secret, “(which) is really someone else’s secret, unwittingly transmitted to her by another generation” (94). Like the protagonist Adriana in the novel, the child heroine Estrella in Víctor Erice’s film similarly shows evidence of being possessed. In the first scene that presents Estrella’s reaction to the news of her father’s death, the dog named Sinbad keeps barking somewhere yet the protagonist is reluctant to open her eyes. A few seconds later, a shaft of weak light is projected on Estrella lying in bed. In this close-up view, Estrella, with the eyes widely open, keeps motionless and deadly silent as if she were controlled by someone or something else and lost her own ability to think and to move.

The children’s status of being controlled or manipulated in artistic representations echoes the constructionist perspective of childhood. According to childhood historian

Philippe Ariés, in the end, childhood is a construction, determined by the constructor's concerns in the present. The constructionist point of view reveals not only the degree to which representations of childhood are socially and culturally conditioned but also how they in turn shape socio-cultural conceptions of childhood. Specifically, while they are set in the early Franco dictatorship, representations of childhood experiences in *El sur* reflect current political concerns of García Morales and Víctor Erice in the early 1980s. In addition, in the novella as well as the film, there is an adult narrator who recalls her childhood experiences during the postwar period. Again, applying the constructionist view to these particular narrative frames, I argue that the experiences are, above all, the narrator's reconstructions. The constructor's reliability is explicitly questioned in Erice's film. At the beginning of the film, when the camera shoots the father with the pendulum predicting the unborn baby's sex, the narrator, who exists as the voiceover, confesses that this intense image coming to her mind is a mere invention. As suggested by Martín-Márquez, "we might of course ask how we can know which of the other 'intense images' we will absorb from this film is also invented" ("Desire" 133). In other words, just as childhood is a construction, so too is the narrators' recollection. Thus, to explore constructions of childhood memories is, actually, to explore the complex interplay of psychological and political concerns emerging from behind traumatic childhood experiences in the novella as well as in the film.

The novella, written in 1981, and the film, shot in 1983, should be examined in the contexts of the Transition to Democracy and the ensuing democracy. The period known in contemporary Spanish history as "the Transition to Democracy" is generally seen as lasting from Franco's death in 1975 to the election of the Socialist government of

PSOE (*el Partido Socialista Obrero Español* [the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party]) in 1982. This period was characterized by most Spaniards' desire to establish democracy (Molinero 33-52). Historian Charles Powell shows the result of a poll conducted in 1979 concerning Spaniards' political tendencies: 77% of those polled Spaniards agreed on a definite reconciliation, and only 6.4% opposed the reconciliation without discussing the past (42). In addition, given that neither the Francoist power nor the anti-Francoist one was strong enough to solely control the dynamic domestic situations after Franco's death, both parties had to concede and reach a "consensus." The result was the 1977 Amnesty Law which granted immunity from prosecution for all political crimes (including those of the Nationalist forces in the war and those of the ensuing dictatorship) and the release of all anti-Francoist political prisoners. Under the temporary official and popular consensus, silence over the past predominated in public at that time. However, scholars including Rafael Abella, Francisco Alburquerque and Paul Preston observe that, since Franco's death of 1975, there have appeared a large amount of historiographies documenting the retaliations in the Civil War and the ensuing Franco dictatorship, in the period of 1939-51 in particular (Abella 29; Alburquerque 430-31; Preston, *The Spanish Civil War* 9-12). In other words, historiographies did reveal "the wartime reprisals and its follow-up during the Franco dictatorship" but these studies lacked the audience during the Transition (Labanyi, "Memory and Modernity" 93-94).

Silence lasted beyond the Transition. After Spain established democracy in 1982, public discussions about the past were still officially untimely under the PSOE government. Felipe González Márquez, Prime Minister of Spain from 1982 to 1996, addressed in public to all Spaniards in 2001 that "Me siento, como decía, responsable de

no haber suscitado un debate sobre nuestro pasado histórico, el franquismo y la guerra civil, en el momento en que probablemente era más oportuno [...] No hubo exaltación, ni siquiera reconocimiento, de las víctimas del franquismo” (González y Cebirán 35-36). González’s confession may have seemed opportunistic before the general election, but these words did confirm the official tendency to discourage debates over the Civil War and the ensuing Franco dictatorship during PSOE’s first term of 1982-1996. The ex-Premier’s address also illustrates historian Carme Molinero’s recent argument that “Los valores éticos de la democracia no deberán condicionar el análisis histórico sobre la Transición [...] Fue el Estado democrático el que comportó que, todavía hoy, la memoria de la dictadura sea objeto de conflicto” (49). In the late 1970s and the early 1980s, the governments officially recognized military service provided by the pro-Republican forces and legislated pensions for the families of the deceased in the war and veterans maimed in the Republican zone (*Ley 5/1979, Ley 35/1980, Ley 6/1982, Ley 37/1984*). However, the public debate over the past was still officially discouraged in the early 1980s.

While under the official policy of glossing over the past, explicit reference to the war and the postwar period, especially that of the defeated Republicans, did not call attention to itself, artistic representations may have attracted an audience. According to Labanyi, “(after the lifting of the censorship) the first novels to engage with the forcibly silenced memory of Republican victimization in and after the war appeared nearly fifty years after the civil war (in the mid-1980s)” (99). The novels she refers to are Julio Llamazares’ *Luna de Lobos* [Wolf Moon], published in 1985, and Antonio Muñoz Molina’s *Beatus Ille*, published in 1986; however, the novella *El sur* was finished in 1981, much earlier than either of these novels. The film *El sur*, shot and released in 1983, is one

of the earliest films that referred to the defeated Republicans after Franco's death. The value of the novella and the film *El sur* lies not only in the unforgettable images of childhood they created but also in the reflections they rendered on the past as well as on the relevance of the past to the present.

In *The Origin of German Tragedy*, when analyzing German poets' allegorical use of the skull or "death's head" as an emblem of history, Walter Benjamin writes that "everything about history that from the very beginning has been untimely, sorrowful and unsuccessful is expressed in a face or rather in a death's face" (166). This argument describes the case of *El sur*: both versions were produced in the early 1980s when reflections on the past, especially on the defeated Republican's past, appeared to be untimely. These reflections were untimely not because Spaniards did not need them at that time but because the official policy did not encourage them and the media did not welcome them. Thus, these untimely discussions needed a mask, behind which they could appear in public. Apparently, the novella and the film are developed around a childhood marked by the death of the father, who commits suicide for mysterious reasons. Analyses of these two works focusing on the Oedipus complex or incestuous desire (Martín-Márquez) or the Lacanian Law of the Father (Morris) make perfect sense. However, the combination of the allegorical and psychoanalytic perspectives will reveal hidden political reflections behind the public face of the father's death: those are officially untimely reflections on the past as well as on the relevance of the past to the present.

Near the end of *The Origin of German Tragedy*, Benjamin links mourning to allegory by arguing that "mourning is at once the mother of allegories and their content"

(230). Analyzing allegorical baroque plays, he notices that meanings are usually condensed in the final scene where the characters die. Based on his observations, he proposes that

The allegorization of the physis can only be carried through in all its vigor in respect of the corpse. And the characters of the *Trauerspiel* [tragic drama, literally, “mourning play”] die, because it is only thus, as corpses, that they can enter the homeland of allegory. It is not for the sake of immortality that they meet their end, but for the sake of the corpse. (217)

By highlighting corpse, Benjamin’s allegory connotes fragments and fragmentation as well as the loss. The corpse and *Golgotha* (the place of the skull) are important for his discussions of allegory, because these images imply a loss, irrevocable and irremediable. In the textual version of *El sur*, the father’s tomb becomes the public face of the narrator’s repressed feelings and, by extension, the author’s political reflections; however, in the film, the father’s corpse is directly exposed to the audience. The camera, from a very high angle, slowly pans over the house and its surrounding. Then it goes on with a close shot showing a bike abandoned on the ground, a trench coat, a shoe, and ends with the father’s corpse lying on his face with a rifle aside. The posture of the corpse suggests the Republicans who were executed in the mountains during the early dictatorship, shown in films about the postwar period, for example, in *Silencio roto* directed by Montxo Armendáriz, where the Republican guerrillas are usually shot in the mountains or valleys and die face down and rifle in hand. The father’s corpse in Erice’s *El sur* evokes the irrevocable loss of the father while at the same time drawing attention to the director’s political reflections.

Losing a parent during the war or the postwar period, actually, scarred a large number of Spanish children of the time. According to the data of historian Michael Richards, “It has been plausibly calculated that some 350,000 Spaniards met an untimely death during the period 1936-1939 [...] In excess of a further 200,000 Spaniards died in the period 1940-42, as a result of hunger, and of hunger-related diseases, political repression and imprisonment” (“From War Culture” 116). While many parents died due to the war and the ensuing political persecution, leaving their children orphaned, many children, especially of the defeated, were forcibly taken from their parents and shuffled between families sympathetic to the new regime during the postwar period (Armengou and Bellis). Thus, for children of pro-Republican parents, coming to terms with the past requires, first of all, confrontation with the loss of the parent, or in other words, the completion of mourning for the dead parent.

Benjamin’s and Freud’s discussions about mourning inform my analysis of the novella and the film *El sur*. Mourning for the loss of the object, according to Benjamin, is “the state of mind in which feeling revives the empty world in the form of a mask, and derives an enigmatic satisfaction in contemplating it” (*The Origin* 139). “The empty world” can result from the loss of an object or the death of a person. The act of “contemplation” alludes to the distance between the subject and the object. To this extent, there is no conflict between Benjamin’s conception of mourning and Freud’s. For Freud, “in mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself” (243). Furthermore, Freud proposes his solution to mourning. According to him, mourning comprises a process of working through during which the mourner gets to distance himself/herself from the lost object and severs emotional ties – or the libido, in



Freud's word – attached to the lost object; the mourner's means of the detachment is through a reinvestment of the libido to a new object: a substitute ("Mourning and Melancholia" 250-54). In so doing, the mourner recognizes and confronts the loss of the object from certain distance. In other words, the completion of mourning depends on whether the subject can finally find a substitute to discharge the libido.

According to Freud, mourning requires consoling substitution, because the loss can only be overcome by the occupation of new objects as substitutes (253). Freud focuses primarily on searching for human replacement, yet neither Adriana nor Estrella is able to find a person as the substitute for the dead father. The mothers could have been persons in whom children reinvested the libido otherwise attached to the fathers, but this process happens neither in the novella nor in the film. In the novella, we find that Adriana excludes her mother from the possibility of being such a substitute. When the mother cries for the father Rafael's death, Adriana tries to share her mother's sorrow, only to find that she is not able to: "Deseé acercarme a ella, pero me sentí paralizada. Un peso brutal iba cayendo sobre mí y yo no podía sostenerlo" (39). The emotional distance between Adriana and her mother is too great to enable the mother to become the girl's consoling substitute. Adriana comes to realize that the mother-daughter relationship cannot replace the father-daughter one.

In the film, the relationship between Estrella and her mother is closer than in the novella. However, the mother is not able to release Estrella from the extreme pain caused by her father's death. After her father Agustín dies, Estrella first insists on staying on her late father's bed in the attic, turning down her mother's suggestion of going back to her own bed. She curls down on her father's bed, turning toward the walls of the dark room.

When her mother comes in and opens the window to let sunlight in, Estrella moves her body to immerse herself in the shadow again. In so doing, she shuns her mother's attempts to console her. In the next scene, while Estrella is shown sick, her mother does not show up but leaves the daughter to face the mourning of the lost father, alone. This scene alludes to the vocation of children orphaned by Republican parents: these children have to confront the death of their parents by themselves and manage to come to terms with the painful past.

Childhood memories emerge from behind the impossibility of finding human replacements to which the children could transfer the libido. Literary critics working on English elegies have used the Freudian model of overcoming mourning through substitutive operations to evaluate narrative representations of death, loss and bereavement. Peter Sacks draws an analogy between the aim of Freudian mourning and that of the elegy from Spenser to Yeats, claiming that the traditional elegist, like the Freudian mourner, overcomes grief by deriving solace from a substitute for the lost object (1-38). The consoling substitute to which he refers is the production of the elegy. In fact, reconstructions of childhood experiences serve the same substitutive function. By exploring and representing the loss of the father, the narrators not only transfer the libido to this exploratory mission but also establish a distance between the fathers as the original objects of loss and the verbal signs that convey this loss. This distance is essential to the work of mourning, because it helps the grieving narrators understand the difference between the dead and the living and accept the fact that the fathers' deaths are eternal and irretrievable. In other words, aiming to overcome mourning for the fathers' deaths, the narrators begin to recall the loss of the father during their childhoods. The recollections

of the childhood experiences, in turn, help them to complete mourning. This hermeneutic circle explains the circular structures of the novella and the film: both begin with the loss of the father and ends with it too.

These children need not only to overcome mourning for the dead fathers but also to understand their childhood in the postwar period. Being children, the protagonist in the novella, Adriana, and the protagonist in the film, Estrella, “were too young to have an adult understanding of what was happening” to them as well as to their families (Suleiman 179). They carry the mission of reaching an understanding of their childhoods once they are adults. The double vocation of overcoming mourning and understanding the past propel the protagonists to explore their childhood and the loss of their fathers. Living their childhoods during the postwar period as children of defeated Republicans, their personal memories are inevitably reflective of the past; produced in the early 1980s when discussions about the past were officially untimely, these reflections on the past were made public in an allegorical way. Specifically, I explore how the author and the director, through representations of postwar childhood memories, reflect on the early Franco dictatorship and the silence regarding the dictatorship in the early 1980s.

While the narrators in the novella and in the film carry the same mission of understanding their postwar childhoods, their past experiences differ from each other. Analyzing memories of children of the Holocaust, scholar Marianne Hirsch proposes the term “postmemory.” According to Hirsch, this notion characterizes “the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of the previous generation shaped by traumatic events that can be neither understood nor recreated” (*Family Frames* 22). Erice’s film bears

more similarity to Hirsch's postmemory than does Garc ía Morales' narrative, in the sense that stories about her father dominate Estrella's childhood memories. In the film, all the unhappiness and repression the protagonist Estrella experiences during her childhood comes from her father's extreme pain. In the shot where Estrella hides herself under the bed in order to attract attention, especially from her father, the camera takes her view from under the bed and shows the father's crutch tip hitting the ground, slowly and heavily. The empty walls in the small room throw these repressed echoes back to the little girl. Confronting the persistent bumps, Estrella begins sobbing out of sympathy for her father while at the same time the narrator confesses that the girl's recent discontentment with insufficient attention from her parents cannot be compared to her father's enormous pain.

Evans has argued that "the film pivots on the identity of the father rather than Estrella ... Estrella's role is confined, in this truncated version, to that of observer" (149). I agree with Evans in his opinion that the father's stories dominate Estrella's childhood, but I would describe Estrella's role as an active explorer rather than a simple observer. In other words, she is equipped with her agency in the film. Specifically, Estrella's childhood memories are concerned with her exploration of the father's experiences. Estrella lives a happy life before her father begins distancing himself from her mother and her because of his ex-lover. The use of light in the film illustrates a change in Estrella's mood. Alain Philippon in his article "Enfance à contre-jour" considers childhood to be a "terra incognita," on which memory probes into darkness never elucidated (177). A further examination of the lighting in *El sur*, however, reveals the complexity of Estrella's childhood memories: not all memories of Estrella's childhood

are equally dark. Many fragments of childhood memories are shot in light. Specifically, the darkest part – or the repressed part – is the father’s death, a fact that has been repressed for a long time in Estrella’s consciousness. The closer the scene is associated with this fact, the darker it is on screen. The opening credits sequence lasts 59 seconds, all in deadly silence against a completely dark background. This complete darkness foretells that the film aims to dig up the protagonist’s repressed memory, which is dominated by the father’s tragic life and his suicide. In other words, in the film the child’s task of understanding her childhood is replaced by her exploration and reconstruction of the father’s tragic life; from a possessed object shown at the beginning of the film, Estrella gradually grows into an active constructor, recounting her father’s past.

Estrella is burdened by her father’s secret past. The scene of her initiation into the magic world of the pendulum foretells her responsibility to publicize her father’s past in order to unburden herself. When asked to empty the mind [*vaciar la mente*] and follow the pendulum, Estrella slowly enters into darkness behind her father and does not come out until she exclaims in delight that “*Está girando. Está girando.*” The representation of this scene, aided by the lighting, is symbolic: Only when she masters the pendulum, assuming the responsibility required by it, can Estrella leave behind the repression (or psychological burden) represented as the darkness in the film. Specifically, the psychological burden comes from the overwhelming trauma of the father’s suicide.

Before exploring the origin of the father’s tragic life, Estrella needs to confront her father’s death. It is not easy for her to recognize the cruel fact of her father’s abnormal death. She has carried the burden of guilt for the father’s death. In the film, the narrator confesses that “*Le dejé allí, sentado junto a la ventana escuchando el viejo*

pasodoble, solo y abandonado a su suerte. Pude hacer por él más de lo que en ese momento hice. Es lo que siempre me he preguntado.” Thus, she avoids or defers the difficult confrontation with the irrevocable fact of her father’s death. The temporal distance between the first-person narrator’s standpoint and that of the protagonist illustrates her reluctance to face her loss. The narrator’s adult and mature voice reveals that many years have passed since her father died when she was fifteen years old. In the sequence of the child Estrella’s reaction to the father’s death, the long duration of the repressive darkness before she opens her eyes to face the cruel reality of her father’s absence reveals the extreme pain the protagonist experiences when she realizes her father will not be back anymore. Only at the very end of the film, we are informed that the father commits suicide by shooting himself on the mountain. The father’s suicide is the traumatic event that Estrella has made efforts to face, while at the same time all other fragmented memories she retains from her childhood both hide and reveal this fact which has been suppressed in her consciousness.

While Estrella’s childhood stories are dominated by her exploration of her father’s sufferings and suicide, Adriana, like many children of Republican parents, experienced childhood as shadowed by the tragic life of the previous generation and as directly repressed by the Franco regime. Unlike Estrella, Adriana has very few happy memories of her childhood. Due to her rebellious character, she is considered to be monstrous even by her mother. She experiences vilification by society since she has an atheist father. She receives forcible indoctrination from being subjected to a rigid religious education. Through reflective recollections the narrator aims to understand what was happening to her childhood; and by adopting some connotative words the author

exposes and criticizes the repression many children of Republican parents suffered during the postwar period.

In the narrative, Adriana's first encounter with her little companion Mari-Nieves evokes the Francoist official discourse that being a Republican or a Republican's child is *un mal* [a disease]. After Mari-Nieves turns down her proposal to play the role of Juana de Arc, Adriana furiously takes revenge by pushing her little companion into a fire and her violent act is punished by the mother and the maid Josefa. The mother and Josefa's punishment propels Adriana closer to her father and enables her to identify herself with her father, who was considered to be "monstrous" by other family members and visitors:

Me sent á contigo... en aquello otro que teníamos en común: *el mal*. Porque tú, para los ojos de aquellas otras personas de la casa y sus visitantes, eras un ser extraño, diferente, al que se le sab á condenado, y por eso hab á que rezar para tratar de salvar al menos su alma. Y yo, de alguna manera, tambi én pertenec á a esa clase de seres. En la voz de mamá me oí llamar "monstruo" y percibí el temor con que ella contemplaba lo que, seg ún dec á, yo iba a llegar a ser. (16-17)

Adriana's sad story with her playmate allegorically points to the political ploys the Franco regime used to humiliate and persecute its enemies. Francoist psychiatrists, led by Antonio Vallejo-Nágera, used the word "*el mal*" to describe the pro-Republicans and their children; moreover, the Francoists fabricated the crime of arson to denigrate the Republicans (Vinyes 49). Such denigrating propaganda dominated children's reading materials of the postwar period, aiming to brainwash school children and make them identify themselves with the new regime (Ab ós 348). According to Francoist psychiatrists,

to treat those “sick” pro-Republicans, the most effective “psychotherapy,” in addition to the crude application of violence, “existed in official exhortations to redemption and consolation through prayer and moral rectitude”(Richards 66). In *El sur*, Josefa diagnoses the father’s “sickness,” claiming that “la falta de fe es todo lo que le ocurre. As ís do podrá ser un desgraciado” (9); Josefa’s conclusion echoes the Francoist propaganda that the origin of the Republicans’ “moral disease” is the lack of faith (Richards, *A Time* 68).

While her first encounter with Mari-Nieves makes Adriana feel like she is as monstrous as her father, her second encounter with the same companion even more explicitly confirms this feeling. This time, when Mari-Nieves humiliates Adriana’s father by calling him “ateo y malo” and pointing out that “(Tu padre) nunca a la iglesia! Se va a condenar” (23), as a result, she is pushed by Adriana into the cactus cluster. Mari-Nieves’ words confirms Adriana’s status as a *niña de rojo*, which was described to be “evil and monstrous” in the Francoist propaganda (Vinyes 79). Thus, Adriana talks to herself, “yo, de alguna manera, también pertenec á a esa clase de seres... de monstruo” (17). The girl realizes that both she and her father belong to a place different from the rest of the world: “Ante ella (la madre) me encontr é sola, a tu lado, pero casi frente al mundo entero, al que yo imaginaba idéntico a mamá a Josefa y a las visitas que de vez en cuando llegaban hasta casa, sin que tú salieras nunca a saludarlas” (23). The existence of the two distinct worlds Adriana describes evokes Franco’s separatist policy of isolating the pro-Republicans and their children from the rest of the Spaniards in order to avoid the contagion of the leftist “disease” (Richards 98).

Adriana, being a child, is unable to escape the rigid religious education imposed by the Regime during the postwar period. In some novels referring to the postwar



childhood, including *Nada*, *Duelo en el paraíso* and *Primera memoria*, an old woman assumes the role of the patriarch, instilling the official and most conservative values into the girls of the family. Like the conservative female figures in these novels, the maid Josefa in Garc ía Morales' text initiates Adriana into the painful process of catechism. Josefa's discipline and accusation seem unfair in Adriana's eyes, as she recalls that "(Josefa) insist ía en recordarme los pecados que yo tendr ía que confesar antes de comulgar por primera vez ... siempre buceando entre mis actos y pensamientos para buscar pecados... sus preguntas me herían y me hacía sentirme injustamente acusada" (20). Adriana's experience with Josefa was shared by many children, especially by those who had a Republican parent in the postwar period. In the documentary *Los niños perdidos del Franquismo*, Francisca Aguirre, who was daughter of a Republican couple, angrily recalls the unfair treatment she received in the *Auxilio Social* in the 1940s by denouncing: "Las monjas nos juntaron a todas las niñas y nos explicaron claramente que éramos escoria, que éramos hijas de horrible rojos, asesinos, ateos, criminals, que no merec íamos nada y que est ábamos ah ípor pura caridad pública. No entend íamos bien de qué éramos culpables." Both Adriana and Aguirre's feelings illustrate the typical childhood experience of "having been there but too young to understand" what was happening to them as well as to their families (Suleiman 179). It is the need for an understanding of the past that forces these children to confront their own difficult histories when they are adults. Doing so, they may be able to unburden themselves from the repressive past and "look forward to the possibility of rebirth and regeneration" (Tsuchiya 97).

The narrator's recollections of her childhood stories do not only help her understand what was happening to her as a child but also remind those previous children of Republican parents of the unfair treatment they received. From the narrator's confrontation with her traumatic memories emerges the author's critique of the persecution the Franco regime imposed on the Republicans and their families during the postwar period. While the narrator Adriana breaks the silence in the family by communicating her childhood experiences, the author breaks the silence in society by evoking the traumatic past that many children of Republican parents suffered but has gone unrecognized.

The attempt to understand postwar childhood masks the author's critique of the Francoist repression during the postwar period in the early 1980s when most of the Spaniards, especially those who experienced the war or the early postwar period as children, chose to keep silent about the past. Interestingly enough, according to the result of Powell's survey, the group who experienced the war and the postwar period as children most favored reconciliation without discussing the past in the early 1980s (42-43). Garca Morales and Vctor Erice belong to this generation yet unlike their contemporaries, both chose to break the silence regarding the past. Through the reconstruction of Adriana's traumatic childhood experiences, Garca Morales allegorically expresses her critique of the political repression the Franco regime imposed on children of Republican parents. Through Estrella's reluctance to begin narrating her childhood memories shadowed by her father's stories, Erice emphasizes the overwhelming impact the pain of the previous generation has had on their childhood.

While it is still possible for the child protagonists to narrate their own traumatic childhood stories, it is even harder for them to explore the experiences of their fathers, who have kept silent about their own past. Being the first generation that experienced the war and the postwar period as adults, the fathers do not disclose their stories to their daughters. In the novella, the narrator complains that: “Nunca hablabas de ti mismo ni de los tuyos” (6); in the film, the narrator gives the same comment by explaining that “los orígenes de mi padre fueron para mí un auténtico misterio.” Both fathers have melancholically immersed themselves in the past. In the novella, when asked by Adriana for the reasons of his suffering, the father Rafael confesses that “Mira, el sufrimiento peor es el que no tiene un motivo determinado. Viene de todas partes y de nada en particular. Es como si no tuviera rostro” (37). Her father’s syndrome is typically Freudian melancholia, because “the melancholic subject is not clearly what has been lost because the identification has involved unconscious components” (240). It is also what Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok call the melancholic “incorporation”: the lost object remains in the ego, “invisible yet omnipresent” (21). The silence of Adriana’s father even survives his existence. At the end of the narrative, Adriana recognizes that “en este escenario fantasmal de nuestra vida en común, ha sobrevivido tu silencio” (52).

Both father figures are passive and their passivity is revealed through the use of the pendulum. Examining the mystification and mythification of the father in the film *El sur*, Jo Evans concludes: “The pendulum represents the myth of the father as all-powerful. It is the tool he used to divine water and is therefore an index of his supernatural skills” (148). Evans may also apply his conclusion to the father figure in the novella. However, rather than attributing the power to the father, I believe that the power originates from the

pendulum, because to make the pendulum work one has to “vaciar la mente” (25): the object guides its holder and endows him/her with a supernatural power. The pendulum can be used to guess the sex of the unborn baby as well as to locate the subterranean water under an arid land: the baby and the water are all hidden. Discovering the hidden truth is not only a magic power the pendulum possesses but also a responsibility for its possessor. Taking this responsibility requires not only an empty mind but also the courage to confront the unearthed truth. The fathers lack enough courage to uncover and communicate causes of their tragic lives.

Agustín ends his repressed life by committing suicide. From behind Agustín’s suicide emerges the director’s deep sympathy for the defeated Republicans who endured the repressions during the postwar period. John Pym describes Omero Antonutti’s role as Agustín by writing that “He bears it all with silent, melancholy fortitude: Omero Antonutti, sad-eyed, grizzled, passive, has, it seems, absorbed the character into his bones” (309). Agustín intends to escape from the responsibility assigned by the pendulum for discovering and confronting the origin of his tragic life, yet he has no refuge to hide in. During the postwar period of the 1940s and ‘50s, being a Republican, Agustín’s agency was greatly limited by the authoritarianism of the Franco regime. The seagull, located on the roof of the house in the remote northern village where the family lived, can symbolize the father’s image: year by year, it is frozen by ice and fettered by the iron stand. Agustín names the dog Sinbad, alluding to Sinbad the sailor, who has fantastic adventures at sea; ironically, however, the camera lingers on a small river in front of his house. The contrast between the dreamt sea and the actual river reflects the reality many Republicans, including Agustín, had to face after losing the war: there existed a yawning gap between

their political aspirations and the current situations they needed to face. Agustín also tries to take refuge in the cinema for nostalgic relief in a film featuring his ex-lover of the south, only to find that the protagonist is killed on screen. Although he understands that “las cosas que ocurren en las películas son mentiras,” he still feels sorrowful for the protagonist’s death and by extension, for his ex-lover’s unhappiness which is projected on screen through the rhyme of “Blue Moon.” The next long shot places Agustín under the high arch of the cinema, and a high-angle shot accentuates his loneliness and impotence when he steps out of the cinema. The sad love story accompanied by the slow and sorrowful melody of “Blue Moon” reveals not only his emotional, but also political, disillusion in an allegorical way.

Finally, Agustín gives up his goals in his personal life, as well as in politics. Against the background voice of his wife, who, being alone at home, worriedly calls “Agustínnnnnnn,” he lies in bed in a hotel, smoking. A train whistles outside the hotel. He does not leave by train as he planned to do. By cancelling his travel plan for the south, he becomes even more silent. At the same time, at night, Estrella sneaks into the father’s study and takes his pendulum out of the drawer. The girl slowly opens the case of the pendulum while at the same time the background music performed on the piano and interlude by the violin sounds like those used in the thriller to anticipate the exposure of some hidden tragedy. The narrator comments that “a partir de ese día, mi padre ya nunca utilizó el péndulo.” Agustín abandons the pendulum. His action could symbolize his complete withdrawal from the responsibility of confronting the traumatic past; at the same time, the child’s retaking of the pendulum foretells that she will assume the responsibility of revealing her father’s past. Agustín chooses to commit suicide by

shooting himself in the mountains, where some other Republicans guerrillas [*maquis*] fought against the regime in the 1940s. The posture of Agustín's corpse alludes to the death of the guerrillas who were executed in the mountains during the early dictatorship. This shot, the posture of the corpse in particular, betrays the director's critique of Agustín's passive death: while the guerrillas lost their lives by fighting against the regime, he ended his life by passively killing himself.

Facing their fathers' death, both narrators choose to fill in the empty world, left by the dead fathers, through reconstructions of the father's past – the cause of the fathers' deaths. In other words, they take the explorations of their fathers' pasts to be the substitutes to which they transfer their libido. Aiming at the same substitutive missions, Adriana and Estrella encounter different situations and thus offer different solutions. More specifically, silence about the past predominates in Adriana's family and thus she has to travel to her father's hometown to find out what happened to him; unlike Adriana, Estrella collects fragmentary information about her father's past from people around her and she is able to complete the story through her imagination.

In Adriana's family, the father is not the only one who chooses to conceal the past from the child; in fact, her mother Teresa and the maid Josefa also take part in covering up the past. When mentioning the father, Teresa and Josefa resort to religious salvation without any further explanation. Adriana recalls the afternoons when Teresa and Josefa have coffee and talk about the father without even noticing the child's presence, let alone explaining anything about her father:

Recuerdo las tertulias que hacían las dos en la sobremesa, mientras cosían y tomaban café Yo solía estar presente y tenía la impresión de que ellas

no me veían... Era algo impreciso que se desprendía de sus palabras, de cuanto ellas conocían y yo no... Josefa concluía diciendo: ‘la falta de fe es todo lo que le ocurre. Así sólo podrá ser un desgraciado’. (9)

While Teresa and Josefa allude to the father Rafael as a bitter existence, they never let Adriana know the real reason why the father suffers so much except the religious excuse, which does not sound convincing for the child. Adriana feels her father’s pain by recalling that “Es que tú aparecías allí, entre ellas, como alguien que padecía un sufrimiento sobrehumano e incomprensible. Y en aquella imagen tuya que, en tu ausencia, también yo llegué a percibir una extremada amargura” (9). From the trip to the south together with the father, the mother discovers a big secret regarding the father’s past but she never really utters what it is:

Mamá no se quejaba ya de mí sino de otra cosa que yo no lograba descifrar. Supe que en tu vida había existido otra mujer. Pero eso no me parecía a mí que tuviera tanta importancia como para provocar el cataclismo que se había declarado en casa. Poco a poco descubrí que la causa era otra, algo que nunca nombrabais y a lo que, sin embargo, os referíais en vuestras discusiones. Y ese algo se había convertido en un tema inagotable y secreto. (25)

The mother not only withholds the secret from Adriana, but also helps to invent a fantasy, mystifying the father’s silence and melancholia. Adriana is prohibited access to the father’s study and is told by the mother that it is because the father is gathering a magic power in the room and it will leak out if the door is opened: “Tu estudio era un lugar prohibido para todos... Mamá me explicaba que aquella habitación secreta no se

podía abrir, pues en ella se iba acumulando la fuerza mágica que tú poseías. Si alguien entraba, podía destruirla” (9). In fact, the father is used to enclosing himself in the study, where his mute and melancholic stare upon his pendulum detaches him from all connections with the outside world. The child Adriana peeps through the keyhole and sees that “Tú practicabas con tu péndulo durante horas que a mí se me hacían interminables. El silencio era perfecto. Jamás llegué a escuchar ni el más leve rumor” (9). By interpreting the father’s invisible pain for his unnamed loss in the past as an invisible magic power, the mother unconsciously hides the father’s secret from Adriana: “Una vez le pregunté a mamá si aquella fuerza podía verse. Ella me respondió que tenía que ser siempre invisible, pues era un misterio y, si se llegaba a ver, dejaría de serlo” (10). Her father’s unfathomable pain makes a great impact on Adriana’s childhood. The narrator recalls that “Es curioso cómo aquello no visible, aquello que no existía realmente, me hizo vivir los momentos más intensos de mi infancia” (10).

While the father Rafael’s past is an allegory of the national past, the silence that predominates in Adriana’s family alludes to the silence that predominated in Spanish society during the early 1980s, evoking critics’ explanations for the hush of that time. Teresa Vilarós analyzes reticence regarding the war and the postwar period from a psychoanalytic perspective, comparing the reticence to the mechanism of repression of consciousness (Vilarós 70-72). According to her, a period of latency is necessary before the subject is able to figure out the trauma s/he suffered. Rafael’s silence, though as early as in the 1940s and ‘50s, illustrates this argument. According to Adriana’s recollection, her father confesses that “Mira, el sufrimiento peor es el que no tiene un motivo determinado. Viene de todas partes y de nada en particular. Es como si no tuviera rostro”



(37). However, Rafael is not patient enough to wait for his trauma to be resolved. Suffering the repressed life during the postwar period, Rafael ends up killing himself. When he is alive, Rafael not only keeps quiet about his own past, but he also imposes silence on the other members of the family.

Analyzing Garc ía Morales' *El sur* from the feminist perspective, Tsuchiya also identifies the family secret with paternal prohibition (92-97). Under the father's patriarchal authority, the mother takes part in concealing the secret from the child. The mother's submission evokes Carmen Moreno-Nuño's analysis of possible reasons for the Spaniards' silence under democratic governments. According to her, one of the possible reasons for silence can be the consequence of the Franco dictatorship (43-58): Spaniards were used to keeping silent under the regime and this custom survived the dictator. In addition to *El sur*, Erice's another famous film *El espíritu de la colmena* is a powerful representation of this kind of depressing silence. In the film, the whole family is caught in the gloomy atmosphere and pervasive silence of postwar Spain. Moreno-Nuño's argument of silence is also illustrated in several other works of Garc ía Morales, such as in *Bene*, where the protagonist Bene is a silent and mysterious being, or in *La lógica del vampiro*, where the character Alfonso keeps silent about himself and always appears in an ambiguous aura. Like Alfonso, the parents in the novella *El sur* avoid talking about the past.

In contrast to her parents who experienced the repression of the war and the postwar period and chose to cover up the past, Adriana, who experienced an unhappy childhood without understanding what was happening to her, finally takes responsibility for the past. To understand her father's melancholia and to complete her own mourning,

Adriana traces the origin of her father's sufferings by travelling to the south – the father's hometown – to uncover his past: “Entonces decidí salir a tu encuentro y buscarte entre las huellas que habías dejado en otra ciudad: Sevilla” (39). In Seville, the mournful Adriana becomes sensitive to old furniture, clothing, utensils, and ruins of former possessions that the dead father left behind:

En su interior encontré unos zapatos deformes y gastados por ti, unas zapatillas rotas, un reloj despertador que ya no funcionaba y una careta arrugada que dejaba entrever, entre las dobleces del cartón, un rostro hermoso con mirada de diablo. Aquellos insignificantes objetos cobraron a mis ojos una extraña elocuencia. Emanaban algo de ti que escapaba a las palabras. (43)

Ruins are significant for Adriana's journey to the south, because the ruins left over by the father suggest his past life, while at the same time reminding Adriana of the absence/death of their previous owner.

In the south, Adriana learns about the father's childhood, adolescence, and youth from the old female servant Emilia who took care of him when he was a child. Being an informant about the father's past, Emilia keeps remnants of the father's past life. The remnants she keeps are not only physical – the old house Agustín once lived in – but also mental – fragmentary memories the old maid retains from the old days when she served Agustín. Adriana describes: “Y, como una auténtica vidente, (Emilia) lograba entrar en otro espacio, sin tiempo, donde aún permanecía tu infancia, tu adolescencia, tu juventud” (45). Adriana's dead father still lives in Emilia's mind and this old maid's memories articulate her desire to make the dead immortal. Led by Emilia, Adriana confronts her

father's past. In contrast to Emilia, however, Adriana aims to complete mourning for her father's death and free herself from his influence on her present life by visiting his past. Feeling the passage of time through Emilia's memories of the father, Adriana recognizes the fact that the father is dead: "Un mundo completo y tan inalcanzable como el de los muertos cabía en ella" (45).

In spite of the fact that Emilia recalls the father's life in the south for Adriana, she refuses to unravel the mystery of his tragic love: "Entonces también yo fui directa: '¿Quién es Gloria Valle?' 'Una loca', me respondió, mostrando en su sonrisa una gran ternura hacia aquella mujer que tú ahora estoy segura, tanto habías amado. 'Por qué', le dije. Pero ella ya no me escuchaba. Bajaba la escalera con su paso ágil y silencioso" (44). When discussing the memories of the Transition, Joan Ramón Resina focuses on the politics of memory arguing that "the current dispute is really over which fragments of the past are being refloated and which are allowed to sink" (86). Rafael's old servant Emilia's memory illustrates this politics. Emilia recalls details of Rafael's childhood, adolescence and youth while at the same time excluding the crucial figure Gloria Valle from his past life in the south. Gloria Valle is crucial not only because the story of Rafael's past remains incomplete without her but also because to visit her is Rafael's unfulfilled desire. In front of Gloria Valle's house, Adriana feels that she is visiting her father's ex-lover at his behest, "todo aquello adivinando tu sombra por aquel museo de ruinas y abandono, donde no había más adorno que el trazado de las grietas que amenazaban desde el techo y los huecos polvorientos de cuadros desaparecidos. Tu mirada me acompañaba a lo largo de aquellos inmensos salones vacíos, convertidos ahora

en lugares de paso” (46). Accomplishing the visit her father did not collect enough courage to realize, Adriana believes she has satisfied her father’s unfulfilled desire.

While visiting the south is a substitutive journey for Adriana’s mourning for the dead, the visit to Gloria Valle brings about a further replacement to which Adriana transfers her libido. From Gloria Valle’s letters to her former lover, Adriana locates and visits her house, where she not only meets with her father’s once beloved woman but also with a boy named Miguel – presumably, Adriana’s half brother. Without knowing Adriana’s real identity, Miguel writes about his love for her in the diary. As a response, the girl leaves him a note where she writes: “También te amo” (52). Then she leaves the south without letting out her father’s past to her bother, who seems not interested in the story of his previous generation. By showing her affection for Miguel, Adriana emotionally ties herself up with this boy; and by leaving the south she takes control of this relationship into her own hand and will not repeat her childhood story, where she was emotionally controlled by her beloved father. Just as argued by Clare Nimmo, the protagonist “rechanneled the desire she felt for her father into her relationship with his half-brother, but in this second relationship she is the partner who wields the power” (46). In so doing, Adriana ends her journey in the south.

Adriana’s journey begins with ruins and also ends with ruins. In contrast to the objects she sensitively finds and cherishes in her father’s room when she newly arrives at Seville, when returning again to the northern house, the objects that belong to the common life shared by her father and herself can no longer trigger any remembrance of their past. At the end of the narrative, the narrator describes the ruins of their house in the north in a calm tone: “Un tablero de ajedrez, sillones de terciopelo, rincones vacíos,

cuadros, lámparas apagadas, postigos cerrados, desconchados en las paredes ... Son objetos indiferentes que ya no pertenecen a ninguna vida. Toda la casa aparece envuelta en el mismo aliento de muerte que tú dejaste” (52). Facing the ruins with indifference, Adriana confirms that “... aquella separación última entre tú y yo que, con tu muerte, se ha hecho insalvable y eternal” (52). Thus, by recognizing the fact of the father’s death and overcoming the loss by separating her ego from the dead father, Adriana completes mourning for the loss of her father.

Ruins are, by nature, related to allegory. Benjamin offers an illuminating argument by writing that “Allegories are, in the realm of thoughts, what ruins are in the realm of things” (*The Origin* 177-78). Specifically, searching among the ruins, Adriana aims to find the hidden truth of her father’s death; similarly, examining memories of postwar childhood in an allegorical way, I focus on revealing the veiled political reflections on the past and the present. Both activities share the same purpose of dragging the content out of the veiling masks. The adult narrator Adriana understands her childhood and completes mourning for the dead father; I recognize the author’s position as a postwar child: she is in favor of digging up the painful past not to dwell in it but with the goal of coming to terms with it and not letting it affect current life. This position is illustrated by the narrator’s attitude toward the past. Specifically, the narrator Adriana needs to confront the past – her own and her father’s – because she has been possessed by her father’s ghost yet she conceals the secret from Miguel, who seems unaffected by any past.

Adriana completes mourning by going to her father’s birth place, living in the old house he lived in, searching among the former possessions he left behind, and talking to

the aged servant who served him. Unlike Adriana, Estrella overcomes the loss of the father not through an actual journey but an imaginative one. She gains bits and pieces of information about her father's past life from her mother and Milagros – the maid who took care of her father in the South. Departing from the available information, she employs her imagination to complete her father's past life. Comparing the viewpoints of the novella and the film, Nimmo argues that "In the novella, all information is filtered through the daughter's eyes, and at no point in the narrative does Adriana give an account of anything outside her experience. In the screen adaptation, this coherence in the narration is broken in two key scenes" (43). The two scenes to which Nimmo refers are the visit of the father to the cinema to see *Flor en la sombra* and the letter he writes in the Café Oriental to Laura/Irene Rós. The author concludes that the explanation of the incoherence "is to be found in the premature completion of the film" (44). Nimmo refers to the fact that for reasons never sufficiently explained or openly discussed, the producer Elías Querejeta called a halt to the shooting of *El sur* after the first part was complete. By juxtaposing the novella and the film, however, I argue that the switch in the camera's viewpoint is not defective but meaningful and significant. Specifically, these scenes beyond the protagonist's view, through the intrusions of symbolic mirrors or glass, reflect her imagination. Through her imagination Estrella completes the story of her father's past. Furthermore, I propose that the alleged incomplete second part is unnecessary since *El sur*, edited by the director out of available materials, is coherent and successful as a childhood story.

Her mother's explanation for her father's origin triggers Estrella's imagination, through which she recreates a paradise lost to her father. "En el sur, casi nunca nieva."

The mother begins describing the father's hometown as if she were telling a fairy tale. The mother's slow and calm voice is accompanied by the blowing wind and heavy snow outside the glass window. The contrast between the south portrayed by the mother and the actual world in which they live in the north accentuates the fancifulness of the remote south and the harshness of the reality in the north. Her mother continues with the reason why her father leaves and will never return. The shot-reverse-shot allows Estrella and her mother to alternate between speaking and listening. This technique is usually used to observe how a speaker's words affect the listener. To accomplish this, when the speaker communicates a statement, the camera turns to frame the listener for his/her reaction. However, in the conversation scene between Estrella and her mother, the camera always focuses on the speaker, emphasizing the way in which information is transmitted between generations. When the mother says "(Tu padre) nunca se llevó bien con tu abuelo. A mi me han contado que los dos andaban siempre con un perro y un gato," she inclines forward as if she were letting out a top secret. The mother fires Estrella's imagination with her description of the south and the mysterious air the mother creates around her father's past. After hearing her mother's narration, Estrella becomes nostalgic for the south where she has never been. In her imagination, in contrast to the arid and cold north, the south should be green and warm. She collects postcards of the south to fill in her imaginative world. The south that exists in her imagination evokes the official image of the folkloric south propagated by the Franco regime during the postwar period. That is an exotic place filled with fountains, flamenco, countrymen, poets, and dancing women in regional costumes. Propagating the folkloric south, the regime appropriated southern lyric and epic for legitimizing and extolling the Francoist political figures (Ortiz 479-80). In

addition, the regime also idealized images of pristine countrymen as the very representation of the essence of people and nation in order to disguise and conceal class and regional contradictions (Ortiz 481). Ironically, while the regime promoted a peaceful image of the south in order to legitimize the dictatorship after the war, the director Erice contrasts this image with harsh reality during the postwar period to undermine Francoist propaganda. In the film, Estrella gazes at these beautiful pictures while at the same time the camera shows images outside her window: in contrast to the vivid exuberance in the imagined south, the backyard in their northern house is covered by snow and the water fountain is frozen.

The images of the south are enriched by Milagros' information. In Milagros' description, the south is unbearably hot and there people fought and died for ideas. While in the novella the unfair treatment Adriana receives as a child reveals the author's strong critique of society and the Franco regime, the film demonstrates a more conciliatory approach. This approach is illustrated by Milagros' comments on the repression during the war and postwar period. According to her, there was no right and wrong in the war and people were fighting for mere words; in addition, the political repression imposed by the regime during the postwar period was a normal thing all war winners would do. Then, in a close-up view, Milagros laments that "Los dos (Agustín y su padre) se han metido en un túnel que no tiene salida, y allí siguen, encerrados." She makes the comment facing the camera lens as if she were directly speaking to the spectators off screen. The following reverse-shot shows Estrella's bewilderment as reaction to Milagros' laments. In spite of her incomprehension, Estrella seems to accept Milagros' view of the war and the postwar period, because when her grandmother and Milagros leave for the south, the



narrator says “Desde ese día, cuando se me envoca el sur, las imágenes de las dos mujeres acudirían siempre a mi memoria.” If the south symbolizes the father’s past before and during the war, then Milagros’ conciliatory opinion on the war is successfully transmitted to Estrella as well as to the spectators – through cinematographic language. When Estrella thinks of the father’s past, she brings to mind the south. When she imagines the south, Milagros’ comments come to her mind.

By combining the information she collects and her imagination based on this information Estrella completes an image of the south. She takes the same approach to reconstructing the father’s emotional attachment to his ex-lover. The camera takes Estrella’s point of view and shows not only what she sees but also what she thinks or what she imagines. At the beginning of the film, when the camera shows the father predicting the unborn Estrella’s sex, the narrator confesses that this image is invented by her. In other words, the narrator’s confession undermines the reliability of her recollections, foretelling the presence of invented or imagined scenes in the later part of the film. All these scenes beyond Estrella’s view share the same element: every one of these scenes uses a form of mirror to reflect the protagonist’s psychological condition. Malcolm Compitello also observes that “*El sur* makes abundant use of mirrors and windows” and he argues that the director uses the mirrors to “frame acts of reduplication” (76). Unlike Compitello, I perceive the scenes reflected by the mirrors to be imaginative.

Paralleling the concern expressed in Laura’s letter and Estrella’s anxieties, Peter Evans and Robin Fiddian points out that “Estrella projects her fantasies, her guilt, her whole psychological drama on to the figure of Irene Ríos/Laura” (132). I agree with their argument and would explore how Estrella’s imagination is visually represented, or more

specifically, through the use of mirror. Estrella's first encounter with the image of her father's ex-lover Irene Ríos happens in a cinema, a place full of fantasy and imagination. Before stepping into the cinema, Estrella looks at the posters hanging inside through a glass door. The door in front of her is decorated by little metal stars, which coincides with the meaning of her name. More coincidentally, the father's ex-lover Irene Ríos is also a film star. In addition, Irene Ríos is first shown on the screen within the film, seated in front of a mirror, so the spectator sees her face reflected in the mirror. Just as the image of the south she recreates is based on the information provided by her mother and Milagros, so too is the scene of her father's encounter with Irene Ríos. Estrella imagines how her father is seated in the cinema, watching her ex-lover and identifying himself with the male character on the screen.

The content of the letter her father writes to his ex-lover could also be Estrella's invention. Through the glass window, Estrella sees her father writing a letter. When he realizes that his daughter is looking at him outside the window, Agustín becomes nervous and stands up to talk to his daughter. Looking into the letter through the glass window, the camera shows what Estrella imagines: after watching the film, the father is eager to reestablish contact with her ex-lover named Laura. To prove her conjecture, the last time when she meets with her father in the Gran Hotel, she asks her father: "Who is Irene Ríos?" She raises this question based on the actual information she collects: she found a piece of paper where her father wrote the name of Irene Ríos many times. Just as the real image of the south is pending in the film, so too is Irene Ríos's actual identity.

While Adriana chooses to travel to her father's origin to confront his past, Estrella reconstructs her father's past by combining real information and her imagination.

Through different means, both narrators complete mourning for the dead fathers. Adriana recognizes the irrevocable fact that her father is dead and promises to visit his tomb. After transferring the libido otherwise attached to her father to the journey in the south, Adriana comes to terms with the past she shared with her father and also breaks the silence left over by her father regarding the pasts – her father’s past as well as her own past. Similarly, Estrella recognizes the father’s death by ultimately confronting the father’s corpse at the end of the film. In other words, through imaginatively reconstructing a childhood dominated by her father’s tragic stories, Estrella gains calmness, which is revealed by the narrator’s voice.

Rendering different means of dealing with the past, the author and the director express the same attitude toward the past in the early 1980s: there is a need to confront the past in order to leave it behind in the future. In his recent articles about Felipe González’s administration, ambassador of Spain in Vietnam Josep Pons Irazazábal writes that “Aprendí que en política es muy importante tener razón en el momento preciso, ni antes ni después. Con Felipe González lo aprendí todo y también que no basta con tener razón, es preciso que los demás te la reconozcan” (Irazazábal). After exploring how the novella and the film *El sur* render officially untimely reflections in the early 1980s, I would add to the ambassador’s political lesson by arguing that while the timing of a statement is undoubtedly important, the means of stating the opinion is no less crucial. Specifically, in both works, the narrators’ understanding of childhood and completion of mourning for their dead fathers mask the otherwise silent *allos* – reflections on the past of 1940s and ’50s as well as the relevance of the past to the present of the early 1980s.

Under the mask of childhood memories, the author and the director made their untimely reflections public.

## Chapter 2

### **Parody, Nostalgia, and Memory of a National-Catholic Childhood: Andrés Sopeña Monsalve's *El florido pensil* (1994)**

I came to discover the book *El florido pensil: memorias de la escuela nacionalcatólica* (1994) through its theatrical representation. The famous Basque Tanttaka Teatroa staged the popular play *El florido pensil* in Madrid in the summer of 2007 and I was fortunate enough to purchase a ticket for the last performance. Before I left the theater, I asked a group of Spanish spectators next to me: “Well, do you like it?” One of them responded: “Oh, yes, very much! This is the third time we have watched this play. We have had a lot of fun and the show reminds us of our own childhoods.” “The Francoist childhood?” I asked. “No, our childhoods ... well, yes ... and no.” They tried to distinguish the childhood they experienced during the postwar period from the childhood imposed by the Franco regime. Then, one of them recommended that I read Andrés Sopeña Monsalve’s memoir, from which the play was adapted. At that time, my interlocutors were in their sixties. I did not know about their political views, but they seemed to be nostalgic after reading the book and watching the play, although this work is indeed parodic and critical of the National-Catholic childhood.

Childhood nostalgia, in fact, has fueled the popularity of *El florido pensil* in the mid-1990s. According to major Spanish newspapers, including *ABC*, *La Vanguardia*, *El mundo*, and *Ideal*,<sup>1</sup> this book was ranked as the No. 1 best-seller several times in 1994 and 1995. A second edition came out seven months after its publication; between 1995 and 1997 there were four reprints. Since 1996 millions of theatergoers have seen the Basque group Tanttaka Teatroa’s staging; the film version, directed by Juan José Porto, was released in March 2002, and “sold a quarter of a million tickets in the first month”

(Martin- Márquez, *Spanish Lit* 739). Examining reviews and critiques published in the media in the mid-1990s, we can see that the audience was dominated by Spaniards in their forties and fifties who received the same National-Catholic education in the postwar period.<sup>2</sup> As my interlocutors in the theater pointed out, they enjoyed this memoir and its theatrical adaptation because, by recognizing the same materials they read as children, they remembered their own childhood. Cánara Villar, in the prologue of *El florido pensil*, also reminds these informed readers that “Este libro nos va presentando con certera secuencia y selección, a muchos de los lectores nos son tan abrumadoramente familiares como nuestra propia señora e hijos, y aparecen entreveradas con aquellos primeros sueños, juegos, alegrías, éxitos y fracasos, penas, gozos, sombras y tristezas (por tanto, cuidado con la melancolía!)” (15).

Being one of the few critics who have discussed *El florido pensil*, Jessamy Harvey contrasts *El florido pensil* and facsimile reproductions of school texts published in the late 1990s, calling the former “critical” and the latter, “nostalgic” (“The Value” 117). Based on this contrast, Harvey expresses her concern about “a transition from critical reader (of *El florido pensil*) to nostalgic subject (of reprinted textbooks)” in revived memoirs of the Francoist National-Catholic childhood in the mid and late 1990s. Harvey’s argument does not reflect my observation in the theater nor the reception of *El florido pensil* in Spain. Reviewing critics’ responses to this book through major Spanish newspapers, both of the left and of the right, we see abundant comments on its appeal for nostalgia like “el recuerdo nostálgico” (Cánara), “el (registro) de la nostalgia” (Torres), “me he visto reflejado en el espejo” (Kortazar), “un libro ideal para los cuarentones nostálgicos” (Tapia), “un libro encantador para [...] quienes que ya no somos jóvenes”

(Torres), and so on. The relationship between nostalgia and critique (or parody) is not by definition a simple opposition. I argue that these two seemingly contradictory tendencies are compatible; Sopena's work illustrates the compatibility. I also suggest that both parody and nostalgia in *El florido pensil* respond to the past as well as the present. This memoir criticizes Francoist education – and by extension, postwar dictatorship – as well as Spanish market-driven policy of the mid-'90s when the author published the book. This work evokes nostalgic memories of childhood, and this nostalgic past is mediated by present concerns. The sense of the present that emerges from Sopena's reconstruction of the past concerns me in this chapter. The chapter begins by discussing the concepts of “nostalgia” and “parody” and how these two notions intertwine and link the past to the present; then it goes on to examine how this memoir, from an adult's perspective and through a child's voice, parodically and nostalgically explores the nature of the National-Catholic childhood of the 1940s and '50s and how a sense of the present emerges from the representation of the past.

Cultural critics have often dismissed nostalgia as idealistic and regressive in its emphasis on a secure and stable past, one that deflects people from contemporary problems as well as historical conflicts. Considering the connection of nostalgia with the “inauthentic” past, Fredric Jameson takes nostalgia as “regressive,” arguing that films like *Body Heat* or *Star Wars* are products of an anti-historical postmodern culture, encouraging an idealized past and preventing the audience from confronting the present (117). Although Harvey does not define what she means by nostalgia, she shares Jameson's negative attitude towards this concept. I agree that the nostalgic looks back but

I argue that it can be more complicated than a passive backward vision. It is not always cowardly and escapist, especially when nostalgia intertwines with critique.

The etymology of the word nostalgia helps to clarify its nature. This word has two Greek roots – *nostos* and *algos*. *Nostos* means “return home” and *algia*, “pain.” The unfulfilled or sometimes unfulfillable desire to return home is painful. Thus, nostalgia has at least two types of connotations, depending on the root of the word. The first one is associated with the referent of the past – home. The second – and the more important – implication of nostalgia emphasizes emotional impact and appeal and refers to desire rather than to the referent itself. Desire results from distance, both temporal and spatial, because when one is home, s/he does not feel nostalgia for the home. The nostalgic home is thus an imagined one, mediated by desire and distance. This kind of nostalgia can be paradoxical.

Looking back from a distance, one can be homesick and sick of home at the same time; a “reflective nostalgia” results from this paradoxical feeling (Boym 50). Analyzing the nature of nostalgia, cultural historian Svetlana Boym in *The Future of Nostalgia* establishes a contrast between a “restorative nostalgia” and a “reflective nostalgia.” According to her, the former aims to “return to the original stasis, to the prelapsarian moment” while the latter emphasizes more the “duration and irrevocability of the past” (49). The reflective nostalgia Boym emphasizes informs my reading of *El florido pensil*. Specifically, Sopeña’s work does not aim at restoring the National-Catholic childhood designed by the Franco regime; but rather, on the one hand, it evokes readers’ longing for the lost or lacking childhood and on the other hand, leads readers to reflect on the education many of them received during the postwar period. Boym uses reflective



nostalgia to analyze artistic creations of Soviet exiles including Vladimir Nabokov, Joseph Brodsky, and Ilya Kabakov, arguing that “longing and critical thinking are not opposed to one another, as affective memories do not absolve one from compassion, judgment or critical reflection” (259-327, 50). These exiles left the country with memory of communist repression and then they reconstructed homes or childhood in exile. From a distance in exile, they sharpened their critiques of totalitarianism in the Soviet Union while at the same time longing for a lost home there. Their reconstructed images of home, according to Boym, are often “ironic, fragmentary [...] and humorous” (Boym 49-50).

Boym’s concept “reflective nostalgia” describes Sopeña Monsalve’s means of recalling his childhood. Distance is crucial for the Soviet exiles, who have reconstructed homes for the sake of nostalgia and criticized the homeland due to the repression they had suffered. Distance is also important for Sopeña, who, as an adult, has reconstructed a National-Catholic childhood. If we say reconstructions of the Russian exiles’ nostalgic homes are mostly based on a spatial distance – a distance from the homeland they left behind – which cannot be overcome for political reasons, Sopeña’s representation of a nostalgic childhood is more based on a temporal distance which he cannot eliminate. More specifically, the exiles cannot go back to their homeland and Sopeña cannot return to his childhood. Like the exiles, Sopeña has also had memories of repression regarding his past – a National-Catholic childhood under the Franco dictatorship. Franco’s children were indoctrinated with National-Catholicism and forced to submit to its discipline. Yet, by finding light relief as a resistance against the political and ideological control, the child Sopeña and many of his contemporaries survived the postwar hardship. Forty years later when the dictator has already died and these children have been in their forties or

fifties, one of them – Andr s Sope a Monsalve – represents that childhood experience through a child narrator, whom the author names after himself. Through the child surrogate, the author conveys a paradoxical feeling of reflective nostalgia toward the past: evoking nostalgia’s affective power while acknowledging the final impossibility of indulging in nostalgia.

Sope a’s parody of the Francoist school education of the 1940s and ‘50s, being his major means to reflect on the childhood during Francoism, prevents indulgence in nostalgia for a romanticized childhood. Parody, in fact, determines the hybrid genre of *El florido pensil*: this is a mixture composed of existing texts, the author’s commentaries on these texts, and the author’s personal experiences as well. This hybridity can also be called pastiche, but it is the postmodern pastiche in Hutcheon’s rather than Jameson’s sense. Jameson describes the postmodern parodic practices of intertextuality as “blank parody, a status with blind eyeballs” (*Postmodernism* 17). He sees parodic art as simply narcissistic, as “a terrible indictment of consumer capitalism itself – or at the very least, an alarming and pathological symptom of a society that has become incapable of dealing with time and history” (*The Cultural Turn* 10). Unlike Jameson, Hutcheon argues that “through a double process of installing and ironizing, parody signals how present representations come from past ones and what ideological consequences derive from both continuity and difference” (*Politics* 93). Like the reflective nostalgia proposed by Boym, Hutcheon’s parody also emphasizes the continuity of history, the duration of the past as well as the significance of the past for the present. In *El florido pensil*, Sope a Monsalve quotes and reproduces graphic materials mostly from official textbooks of the ‘40s and ‘50s and demonstrates the teaching methods postwar primary schools adopted

especially for religious indoctrination. Through the childish dialogues among the child narrator and his schoolmates, however, the author exposes the absurd manner in which children of the time were taught to understand the world and Spain of “*glorias florido pensil*,” as it was sung in one of the national anthems of those years. In so doing, the author rejects the revival of Francoism in the mid-1990s when the policy of the PSOE government, driven by the market, was reluctant to disinter the past.

The parodic reflections on the National-Catholic childhood are not of the protagonist as a child from the ‘40s and ‘50s but of the author as an adult from the mid-’90s. In other words, to analyze the narrator’s parodic voice is, in fact, to explore the desires and concerns transmitted by the text. This approach fits the parodistic text like *El florido pensil*. When examining the evolution of parody as a literary mode, Elzbieta Sklodowska argues that “La reivindicación de la parodia en cuanto artificio retórico empezó [...] a la par con el ocaso de la estética romántica y el creciente interés por el aspecto intencional de la creación artística” (6). In the “introduction” of *El florido pensil*, the author confesses that “Testigo privilegiado, pienso contarlo [...] Mejor dicho, yo no. Al efecto, he exhumado las memorias del niño que fui” (31). The author, as an adult, represents the childhood he experienced through the child narrator’s voice. When talking about the language and the expressions he used in *El florido pensil*, the author said he deliberately chose “el vocabulario y la sintaxis que utilizaría un niño de los años cuarenta y cincuenta y con las lógicas referencias a la sociedad, cultura y sistema político del momento” (Sopeña Monsalve). This declaration clearly reveals the author’s control of his child protagonist, confirming that the parody is his parody as an adult. The confirmation leads to a need to explore the sense of the present in Sopeña’s reconstruction of the past.

From the standpoint of the present, Sopeña calls up a National-Catholic childhood while at the same time parodying it from a distance. In so doing, he leads his contemporaries to adopt a critical attitude toward the childhood during the postwar period when the same education was imposed on them.

The intentional exploration does not only fit the parodistic nature of this text, but also corresponds to my constructionist approach of childhood. I believe that, in the end, childhood is a construction, determined by the constructor's concerns in the present. The constructionist point of view is especially enlightening when we analyze representations of childhood memories in the arts, for it reveals not only the degree to which those depictions are socially and culturally conditioned but also how they in turn shape socio-cultural conceptions of childhood, especially of postwar childhood. Childhood historian Philippe Aries observes that since the seventeenth century the idea of childhood innocence has emerged, "resulting from two kinds of attitude and behavior towards children: firstly, safeguarding them against pollution by life ... and secondly, strengthening them by developing their character and reason" (119). In some cultures and societies children have been constructed as pure – not involved in adults' world – and carefree – not understanding the adult's world. Specifically, in *El florido pensil* the author plays with readers' assumption about children's innocence and then subverts it through his reconstruction of Franco's children, who are equipped with the capacity to question the school education imposed on them. In other words, children are constructed to be active agents, resisting the Francoist imposition on their thoughts and practices.

By questioning the Francoist school education, Sopeña, through his child character, intends to denounce the Francoist regime. Education played a crucial political

role in the regime's reconstruction of the nation. Nothing is more illustrative of this point than the preface of Luis Ortiz Muñoz's *Glorias Imperiales* – a postwar official propagandist story intended for school children – in which the author writes that “No triunfará España si no conquista la escuela”(7). This declaration echoes the goal of the national educational system of the time. At the end of 1939, José Ibáñez Martín pronounced through the national radio to the whole country that “La política inexcusable, la gran política de nuestro Movimiento está vinculada a la acción educadora, que de acuerdo con los principios sustanciales de la enseñanza, se ejerza en el corazón de la niñez y de la juventud. Sin esto carecerá de sentido el Movimiento y será imposible la permanencia del Régimen” (Beltrán Llavador 95). In other words, the control of school education became the central preoccupation of the Franco regime during the postwar period.

In order to take control of school education and ensure its service to the new regime, the Francoist government purged [*“depurar”*] everything and everybody related to the Second Republic. The Law of September 4, 1936 dictated a thorough search in all libraries and schools for materials that disseminated socialism or communism (Beltrán Llavador 59). The regime not only destroyed the allegedly harmful sources but also abolished secular education and coeducation. School teachers, especially in the primary sector, were purged as well. According to Javier Tusell, the regime expelled between 15,000 and 16,000 primary school teachers, which was a quarter of the total number at work, and of those teachers, 6,000 were entirely banned from practicing the profession (25). Ortiz Muñoz in the preface of the same *Glorias Imperiales* provides the official reason for the purging of school teachers, arguing that “toda una generación de maestros,

contaminada del espíritu institucionalista, ha pretendido prescindir de la emoción de la historia y ha esquivado en la enseñanza el sentido ferviente con que un español honrado ha de acercarse a contemplar y examinar los hechos de su patria” (7). After eliminating the influence of the Second Republic from the schools, the Francoist school applied a teaching methodology characterized by excluding “the others”: these included the “other” political theories, the “other” philosophies, the “other” religions and especially, the “other” interpretations of Spanish history. In so doing, the Franco regime promoted an education autarchy, which reinforced the national policy of the time – an autarchy in economy and politics.

Exclusionism does not necessarily guarantee coherence among different doctrines. National-Catholicism is, in fact, a constellation of ideas and concepts, which originate from internal political fractions. It is worth quoting a long argument of Benjamin Oltra and Amando De Miguel in order to explain the make-up of this ideological hodgepodge:

Los tradicionalistas e integristas aportan los elementos contrarrevolucionarios y agresivos, las ideologías rurales anticidad, antiliberales y exaltadoras del militarismo nacionalista, notablemente belicistas. La línea regeneracionista aportará la idea del estatismo integrador, del “cirujano de hierro”, la eficacia “pretecnocrática”, el capitalismo estatista y ciertos elementos populistas de “despensa y escuela”. Católicos, monárquicos y tradicionalistas acopiaron su fervoroso españolismo, su mística del imperio, y sus tesis de la Anti-España (comunismo-masonería-separatismo). Falangistas y fascistas aportan la idea del partido único, jerarquía, corporativismo fascista, democracia

orgánica, caudillismo, sindicato vertical y tercerismo utópico (ni capitalismo ni comunismo). Finalmente, los partidos y grupos católicos aportan los elementos religiosos, las tesis de la armonía social y el equilibrio de clases y su corporativismo católico en el que juega un papel decisivo la concepción de la familia. (68)

The various and differing contributions constitute the theoretical base of National-Catholicism and also explains the existence of doctrinal contradictions, which were manifested through school books.

National-Catholicism was composed of various political and social theories, among which two forces actually stand out: these were fascism of the Falange and Catholicism of the Church. According to Stanley G. Payne, the most widely read book of political doctrine published in the Nationalist zone during the Civil War was *¿Qué es lo nuevo?* (1938) by José Permartín, who declared that “fascism is, in brief, the Hegelian fusion of state and nation. Consequently, if Spain is to be national, and is to be fascist, the Spanish state must necessarily be Catholic” (8). A Falangist priest from Navarre, Fermín de Yzardiaga, served as the national chief of press and propaganda of the FET (*Falange Española Tradicionalista*) in 1937, endeavoring to popularize the nationalist-Catholic slogan “Por el imperio hacia Dios” (G. Payne 206).

The ascending role of the Church in the educational system was accompanied by the decadence of the initial Falangist enthusiasm [*desfalangistización*]. The year 1945 witnesses not only the complete defeat of the fascists in the world but also the Falange losing its influence in the Spanish education. This is illustrated by the fact that in the

same year the Franco regime promoted the new Law of Primary Education [*la nueva Ley de Educación Primaria*] on July 17 and confirmed the leading role of the church in the national education system. According to this new law, “La enseñanza de la religión en la escuela, la necesaria formación religiosa del maestro, el espíritu cristiano inspirando todas las disciplinas, la Iglesia vigilando e inspeccionando toda la función docente, de todos los centros públicos y privados.” Although the content about the Falange was still intact in school books, everything related to its fascist origin and those fascist countries was deleted. Sopeña Monsalve describes this change through child Sopeña’s recital in class. The child narrator reads a paragraph from the old version of a history textbook entitled *España es así* published in 1942: “Que si las grandes naciones que han dirigido esta lucha son nuestras amigas Alemania, Italia, Japón...” (206). Before the child Sopeña finishes his reading, the priest shouts at him, grabbing the book out of his hand and having him read the same paragraph from an update edition of the same book. Then the child realizes that the sentence about those friendly countries disappear from the new edition, which was published in 1948.

In the National-Catholic school, Catechism was mandatory for all schoolchildren; religious festivals marked the calendar. Cámara Villar recalls his daily school life of the 1940s:

Al entrar en clase saludaban con el “Ave María”, entonaban cánticos religiosos y, al mediodía, rezaban el “Angelus”... algunas tardes, e ineludiblemente los sábados, asistían a la lectura de los Evangelios y, en ocasiones, a las prácticas catequísticas o apostólicas de la Santa Infancia o del Apostolado de la Oración, Escolanías o Acolitados, además de realizar



el estudio de la historia sagrada y del catecismo, así como el rezo del santo Rosario. (18)

Patriotism, always complemented by Catholicism, was fundamental to the Franco regime, because the New State required that the Spaniards identify with it as well as dedicate themselves to it. The end of the Civil War suspended the public rivalry between the left and the right: the leftists were repressed during the postwar period and the winning rightists reconstructed the nation based on their will. The new government arising from the wreckage of the war endeavored to legitimize itself by creating a glorious past for the country and posing itself as the natural successor or defender of that remote glory. Therefore, the teaching of history – a history fabricated based on the triumphalist rhetoric – became an important instrument that served this particular purpose of the regime. In the chapter “Historia de España” in *Enciclopedia Álvarez: tercer grado* (1952), right after the initial chapter “La época prehistórica,” pupils were instructed that “España es una de las naciones que más han contribuido a la civilización del mundo y que mayor influencia han tendido en la Historia Universal” (401). Furthermore, it is affirmed that “Historia de España es la narración verídica de los hechos realizados por los españoles desde los tiempos más remotos hasta nuestro día” (402). Based on these patriotic discourses, Romualdo de Toledo, director of National Service of Primary Education [*el Jefe del Servicio Nacional de Enseñanza Primaria*] issued a circular on March 5, 1939, proudly declaring that “Se acabó el desdén por nuestra historia” (Beltrán Llavador 60). Through school education, the regime imposed the ideology on children, who were expected to be blindly obedient.

By citing paragraphs from school texts of the 1940s and '50s, Sopeña evokes his childhood during the postwar years while at the same time denouncing the deception of Francoist education he received as a child. On almost every page of *El florido pensil*, the author copies paragraphs or sentences from the readings of the time, which in turn serve as the targets of the author's parody. Hutcheon at one point likens such an ironic position to the convention of the inverted comma by arguing that "It is rather like saying something whilst at the same time putting inverted commas around what is being said. The effect is to highlight, or 'highlight,' and to subvert, or 'subvert,' and the mode is therefore a 'knowing' and an ironic – or even 'ironic' – one" (*Politics* 1-2). In the same way, Sopeña cites fragments from the original school texts, intending to deconstruct Francoism emerging from these paragraphs. Thus, returning these fragments to their original context of the time helps to clarify how the Franco regime constructed a National-Catholic childhood through school education. Then, comparing Sopeña's citations in his memoir and the child narrator/the author's comments regarding these citations leads to a better understanding of how the author as a former Franco's child, in turn, has reconstructed his National-Catholic childhood and, by extension, that of his contemporaries who received the same education.

In every postwar classroom, in the central part above the blackboard there was a Crucifix hanging on the wall. To its right hung a picture of the Virgin Mary and to its left, a portrait of Francisco Franco. The Francoist national flag flew above the playground, reminding pupils of the love of their fatherland [*Patria*]. A central preoccupation of postwar education was to convey the pride in and the love of the Fatherland. In one of the children's readings, entitled *Rayas*, children read that "Nuestra patria es España. Hemos

nacido en la hermosa y grande nación española; de sus productos se alimenta nuestro cuerpo; de su fe, de su amor, de sus enseñanzas, de sus ejemplos, se alimenta nuestra alma. Somos hijos de España. España es nuestra Madre. ¡Somos españoles!”(159)

Children’s reading suggests that the Spaniards loved their country and God blessed Spain.

The country’s supposedly central geographic location illustrates God’s supposed favor for Spain: “Nuestra patria está colocada providencialmente por Dios en el centro del mundo” (Menéndez-Reigada, 4). The love of the country was compared to the love of mother in order that school children could easily understand and imagine the abstract sentiment of patriotism. The connection between the nation and gender is highlighted through this comparison. In *Enciclopedia práctica*, students were instructed that:

La Patria es como nuestra madre, y por eso tenemos el deber de amarla con cariño de hijos. España fue siempre una nación heroica; pero aunque no hubiese sido así tendríamos el deber de amarla también, como se ama a la madre sin pensar si es o no hermosa. A la Patria hemos de engrandecerla con nuestro trabajo, siendo niños aplicados y buenos, y defendiéndola de mayores hasta perder la vida, si la suya peligra. (35)

In this way, the National-Catholic education tended to make patriotism as natural and spontaneous as love of the mother. Children were told that “Un ciudadano que se avergüenza de su patria es como un hijo que se avergonzara de su madre” (Santiago Rodríguez, *As í*12).

Francoist ideology transformed patriotism from an abstract concept into an intimate and easily accepted emotion for children, and embodied the *patria* through the

following symbols: a yoke and arrows, the national flag and national anthems. The instructions in *As íquiero ser* explain that:

El Yugo y las Flechas son el s ímbolo hist órico de la Espa ña imperial. El Yugo es la coyunda, la uni ón de todos para el bien general. Hemos de considerar al yugo [...] como un lazo fraternal que nos une a todos los espa ñoles, en la alegr ía y en el dolor, en la prosperidad y en la adversidad. La flecha es el emblema del ideal. Nuestras ilusiones, sue ños y anhelos, son flechas disparadas hacia todos los vientos. As íEspa ña se dispers ó por el Norte, el Sur, el Este y el Oeste, y en nuestros dominios alumbraba el sol constantemente. (303)

There were several national anthems in post-War Spain. The one which schoolchildren sung every day and also gave the name to this memoir is “¡Patria mía!” which portrayed Spain as a glorious, prosperous and Christian garden. Thus, through its comparison to an intimate sentiment and incarnation in symbols, patriotism became the primary value that schools imposed on children and forced them to accept and internalize. Children were instructed that those who doubted the patriotic imposition would be traitors to the fatherland [*traidor a la Patria*].

In *El florido pensil*, instead of showing respect for the yoke and arrows as he was taught to do, the child Sope ña makes fun of them by imagining a humorous scene. In the book, according to the young narrator’s logic, if a person were to point at those symbols and ask someone else “what do these symbols mean?”, surely the answer would be “they are a distorted stick and some dispersed arrows” (213). Then the younger narrator

imagines Franco thinks to himself for a while, sees through these objects, and then invents that the yoke represents absolute control and the arrows, imperial dreams (214). This laughable scene imagined by the child undermines the seriousness of national symbols and deconstructs the myth of the naturalness of patriotism as the regime claimed. Children who received the Francoist education are so familiar with these symbols and their official interpretations that they have never seriously reconsidered them. The child narrator's imagination regarding Franco's invention, however, leads readers to reflect on the nature of patriotic education they received, distancing readers from the already close past brought back by familiar citations. Through reflective nostalgia, the author does not only resist the present official tendency of burying the past by calling back the past but also takes a distance from the nostalgic past without dwelling on it.

Reinterpreting the past, Sopeña criticizes the Franco regime as well as the PSOE government. His critique of the past and the present emerges from the child narrator's confession that he does not understand the patriotic interpretation of postwar national symbols. The author has his child character think of the imposed meaning of the national symbols and laments through the child that "lo que no veo por ninguna parte, por más que miro, es lo de la inmortalidad de nuestra raza y la promesa cierta del glorioso porvenir de nuestro Imperio" (214). The author's failure to see a glorious future of the country from these symbols has three implications. On the most superficial level, it means that the child character cannot establish a relationship between what he was taught to believe and what he has seen. On the second level, it is a negation of the ideological propaganda and specifically, of the immortality of the dictatorship, which was obsessed with the concepts of "raza" and "Imperio" and dreamed of recovering the past glory of

the Spanish Empire. Behind the propaganda of the immortality of the race and the empire is the regime's intention of maintaining the dictatorship forever. Francoist dream of a renewed Spanish empire brought Spaniards nothing but poverty and isolation, especially in the 1940s and '50s. Readers of this memoir, like Cámara Villar, recall the difficult time in the postwar period, writing that:

Unos niños, ateridos de frío, miraban con envidia a los compañeros que habían tenido la precaución de llevarse bajo el duro banco escolar las brasas recogidas en lo que antes habían sido grandes latas de conserva [...] Niños que de cuando en vez esperaban con ansiedad el trozo de queso amarillo y cremoso «de los americanos» repartido algunas tardes en la escuela. (“Prólogo” 19)

On the third and most hidden level, the author's doubt about a promising future for the country might echo contemporary readers' concerns about the present. Since the death of Franco, catching up with the future [*porvenir*] has become the major national goal, both in politics and in economy. Looking toward the future, the PSOE government was reluctant to exhume the past. Joan Ramon Resina argues that the PSOE government finally mutated into “positions bordering on and finally indiscernible from their conservative antagonists” (91). This argument is well illustrated by the novel *Galíndez* (1992) by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán. Referring to the past, the young PSOE politician in the novel declares that “Estoy tranquilo sin memoria o con muy poca memoria histórica” (12). Promising people a glorious future in the early dictatorship, the Franco regime ultimately impoverished the Spaniards; promising people a better future again in the post-Franco era, the PSOE government tended to silence public memory of the past.

Additionally, under the European-wide recession in the early 1990s, the Spanish economy slowed down and in 1993 – the year before *El florido pensil* was published – Spain experienced a severe decline in GDP (Scobie 2). Thus, the expression of “el glorioso porvenir de nuestro Imperio” can elicit complex feelings toward the past and the present as well. In this sense, Sopeña Monsalve successfully reconnects the reader to the past and also by ironizing the past, he alludes to the present.

The author demonstrates the Franco regime’s deception of the Spanish people concerning not only the future of Spain but also the past and present situations of the country. As a means to impose patriotism, the regime determined how children should think of their country. School texts described that Spain was “Una, Grande y Libre.” In *As íquero ser*, children read that

España es UNA: porque no admite desgarraduras geográficas ni morales que destruyan su único cuerpo y su única alma.

Es GRANDE: porque se ha impuesto al mundo por el sacrificio heroico de sus hijos, que han demostrado que la dignidad es superior a la vida.

Es LIBRE: porque se ha sacudido la servidumbre de los pueblos extraños que quisieron arrebatarle las esencias de su personalidad histórica. (6-7)

The children of the postwar period had to mechanically repeat the slogan of “España, UNA, GRANDE y LIBRE” every day in chorus before class.

In *El florido pensil*, the child narrator does not understand why Spain is not four but one [UNA], since, according to children’s reading, “En España hay una voluntad, una

doctrina, una obediencia y un Caudillo” and it should be four in total (214). The child’s doubt concerns a mathematical question; however, the issue of the unity of Spain can remind readers of the centralism the Franco regime adopted. Catalan and Basque were prohibited and independent tendency of regions like Barcelona and the Basque country were repressed during the dictatorship. Backed up by force, the regime demanded that Spain be *UNA*.

By proposing the issue of unity [*UNA*] of Spain the author refers to the regime’s domestic policy of centralism; at the same time, by making fun of greatness [*GRANDE*] of the country the author alludes to the regime’s foreign policy of expansionism. The regime explained that Spain was great because “*vamos a extender nuestro imperio espiritual por todos los pueblos hispánicos y por África, donde está nuestra natural expansión*” (Sopeña 214). By emphasizing the soft power of spirit, the regime strived to camouflage Franco’s real intention of imperialist expansion by force. Responding to this official explanation of Spain’s greatness, the child is concerned with what would be the appropriate means of transportation for Spaniards to reach foreign countries. He wonders if it might be by fleet. Through this seemingly naive concern, the author raises the issue of Franco’s expansionism. According to Martin-Márquez, “after the end of the Civil War [...] Franco and his supporters had begun to conceptualize an ambitious expansionist program, particularly in Africa” (*Disorientations* 249). In other words, Franco meant to boost the greatness of his “New Spain” through the military conquest of Africa; the natural or spiritual expansion is another myth that his regime created to fool Spaniards. The child Sopeña’s seemingly innocent question demythifies the spiritual greatness



propagated by the regime, revealing Franco's colonialist ambition especially in North Africa.

When commenting on *FREE [LIBRE]*, the author expresses his irony from the standpoint of the present (the 1990s) when the PSOE government continued the free-market policy of the late dictatorship. The author quotes the official justification of the Francoists for the existence of freedom in Spain: "Porque España no está esclavizada a los estados capitalistas judaicos" (215). This quotation elicits laughter from contemporary readers because capitalism, which they were instructed to detest during the postwar period of 1940s and '50s, turns out to be the principal aspiration of the Spanish government from the late dictatorship to the present. Since the late 1980s, the PSOE government adopted monetary policies, focusing on the market. While Spanish economy boomed from 1986 to 1990, the rapid introduction of consumer capitalism had its disorienting effects on Spaniards' consciousness. The speed and the complexity of the changes transformed Spanish society. When analyzing Spanish economy and politics in the 1990s, Graham and Sánchez have commented on this phenomenon by writing that "It is scarcely surprising, then, that Spain's most recent history and contemporary national identity are defined as the products of hugely accelerated development"(407). Economic reformers of the early 1990s too quickly reduced a broad democratic and social agenda to the economy, putting blind faith into the salvatory mission of the free market. Instead of improving social conditions for the population, Spanish reformers to a large degree embraced economic determinism, viewing it as a sole panacea for the country. In the postwar period, Spaniards, enslaved by Francoist ideology, had no freedom of speech or

even of thought; in the 1990s, however, Spaniards, driven by the market, are still haunted by the past.

After questioning the daily slogan –“España: UNA, GRANDE, LIBRE,” the child narrator interprets the supposedly unquestionable obedience to Franco as an agreement between Franco and Spaniards for mutual benefit: “Franco nos ha devuelto la Patria y un montón de cosas más: un destino, una fe, una conducta, una voluntad nacional y una sed de imperio. A cambio, le hemos aclamado como Caudillo de España y así no debe su posición altísima a los votos ni a la voluntad complaciente de nadie” (213-14). First of all, according to the child’s voice, obedience is not as natural and spontaneous as children’s readings suggest, but rather, a result of the exchange between Franco and the Spaniards. The fairness of this exchange depends on how the reader interprets Franco’s promise of “la Patria... un destino, una fe, una conducta, una voluntad nacional y una sed de imperio” (213). Specifically, for those who have had resentment against the regime, this could be an unfair exchange: Spaniards elevated Franco to such a high position, only to find that they lived in a country where Franco dictated what to do, what to believe, and what to say. Furthermore, this childlike understanding of compromise between the dictator and his subjects can also be interpreted as a critique of all Spaniards who chose to keep silent and cooperate with the dictatorship. Collaboration of its subjects is a necessary condition for the existence and maintenance of a dictatorship. In other words, if most Spaniards had resisted, Franco would not have been able to keep his highest position without needing to worry about “los votos ni la voluntad complaciente de nadie” (Sopeña Monsalve 214). The desire to have resisted the dictator remains unfulfillable due

to the irreversibility of time; what can be done in the present is to avoid the revival of Francoism.

Franco, together with some other historical figures, was portrayed to personify the nation. Franco represented all good qualities the human being had ever had: “Es un jefe carismático, el hombre señalado por el dedo de la Providencia, que escapa de los límites de la ciencia política para entrar en el del ‘héroe sobrenatural’ o en el de superhombre” (Moret Messerli 49). Children’s readings juxtaposed Franco with other historical figures in the Middle Ages and Golden Ages. These persons included the Catholic kings Isabel and Fernando, Carlos I, and Felipe II. Queen Isabel was portrayed to be beautiful, generous and religious and Fernando was described as brave, wise and prudent. Both of them united the country and restored peace, in addition to establishing the great Inquisition to punish the heresies of the time (Álvarez 443-44). Then, Carlos I or Carlos V and Felipe II won several wars against other European countries in order to defend Catholicism. Both of them were devoted and brilliant national leaders. Finally, Franco, allegedly being their successor, followed them in leading the country (Álvarez 480, 491).

The Catholic couple Isabel and Fernando, being the greatest monarchs in Spanish history according to the regime, does not escape the author’s parody. According to the narrator, this humble and holy queen and his no less humble husband were busy annihilating the Jews: “Los Reyes Católicos los enfilaron. Y cuando los Reyes Católicos enfilaban a alguien [...]” (173). The child quotes from his school text a paragraph which describes the notorious Inquisition established by these two monarchs: “[...] que muchos procesados por otros delitos fingían ser herejes para que los sacaran de las otras prisiones y los llevaran a las de la Inquisición, en las que hasta se les daba permiso para salir de

baños [...]” (156). This paragraph regarding the Inquisition can be understood in two ways: it can mean that the Catholic couple were so ruthless that the Inquisition, known to be cruel, was better than other prisons of the time; or this could also be understood as the deceptive propaganda of the regime, which intended to gloss over the cruelty of these two monarchs by describing the Inquisition as a place bearable for prisoners. Either way, the acclaim of the notorious religious tribunal fully reveals the deception of the Francoist education, which falsified history solely based on the regime’s need of propaganda.

To meet its propagandistic needs, the regime also mismatched historical figures in an anachronistic way. The child discovers that in the school texts, Napoleon enters Spain following freemasonry, Martin Luther gets to Spain together with liberals of the 20th century, and the Turkish of Constantinople show up next to Russian bolshevists (201). Following the same logic, Franco becomes Cid Campeador and the Civil War, a Crusade (202). The author further ironizes the deceptive nature of the official propaganda through the parody of an illustration. The drawing shows a scene of a battle: on the left side there is a tank with its cannon aiming at its enemy and on the right side, there are two fighter aircrafts howling at the opposite side. A banner, announcing “18 Julio 1936” – the starting date of the Civil War –, flies in the middle. The author appropriates this illustration, adding his humorous interpretation: “Si en vez de una Cruzada ves una guerra civil, es que necesitas gafas” (202). This ironic explanation responds to the official propaganda that “Sabor de Cruzada y decisiva trascendencia universal adquiri óenseguida la contienda que los miopes juzgaban la guerra civil” (201). The humor originates from the child’s (mis)understanding of the word *miope*, which means both nearsighted and shortsighted. The Francoist ideological propaganda meant the first and the child interprets

it based on the second. While readers laugh at the child's innocent logic, they laugh at the regime's ideological manipulation as well.

The regime falsified history, glorifying Christian figures while at the same time denigrating the Jews, who were portrayed as anti-Spain. Children's readings described the Jews as those who, on the one hand, undermined the foundations of Catholicism and on the other hand, always intended to subvert Spanish unity. Therefore, in children's textbooks the image of the Jews was associated with freemasonry, socialism and communism:

El judío, como bien notan los especialistas en cuestiones judías, lleva en su alma impreso el odio a la Iglesia Católica [...] su espíritu intranquilo, esencialmente revolucionario, les arrastra a derrocar las instituciones fundamentales existentes, siempre en espera de un mundo mejor [...] Según ha demostrado hasta la Sociedad Poncins, en los tiempos actuales masonería, judaísmo, socialismo y comunismo son hijos de la misma madre. (Herrera Oria 245-46)

This paragraph echoes the myth of Jewish-Bolshevik-Masonic conspiracy. In Nazi Germany in the early 1920s, German journalist Dietrich Eckhart popularized the term "Jewish Bolshevism" to express the perception that Jews inspired and led Communism for world domination. Then, in his 1939 book, *The Apocalypse of Our Times: the Hidden Side of German Propaganda According to Unpublished Documents*, Henri Rollin stressed that "Hitlerism" represented a form of "anti-Soviet counter-revolution which employed the myth of a mysterious Jewish-Masonic – Bolshevism plot" (Kellogg 7).

According to Paul Preston, from the very first days of the Spanish Second Republic, “right-wing extremists disseminated the idea that an alliance of Jews, Freemasons and Bolsheviks was conspiring to destroy Christian Europe, with Spain as a principal target” (*Spain* 49). Based on this alleged plot, the Franco regime put under surveillance the Jews in domestic Spain as well as Spanish Morocco, especially after the end of 1942 when the Allied occupied French Morocco (Rohr 123-156).

While the Jews were supposedly as revolutionary and dangerous as Freemasons and Bolcheviks, the Moors experienced a transition from bad to good under the influence of Spanish civilization. In *Guirnaldas de la Historia*, it was written that “Aunque los árabes, al venir a España eran simples y feroces guerreros del desierto, el contacto con los españoles, con las flores y nuestro suelo y las claras luces de nuestro sol, despertó en ellos ilusiones de arte y de saber” (51). The Moors had been evil because, like the Jews, they believed in a different god and were considered by the Church to be threatening to Catholicism; however, many of them participated in the Franco’s troop in Morocco and fought for the Nationalists in the Spanish Civil War against the Republicans. Thus, the child narrator is confused about whether the Arabic are good or bad, because in the school text, the child is told that “En general, los árabes fueron tolerantes con los cristianos, pues colaboraron en muchas ocasiones con ellos en obras culturales y se respetaron mutuamente” (170). Then, he remembers readings also suggest that “Almanzor nos derrotó en cincuenta y dos ocasiones, por poner un ejemplo” (170). Finally, the child thinks of a method to resolve this contradiction: “Hab á que llamarles moros cuando hac á n la bestia, y árabes cuando se portaban como si fuesen personas” (171).

By exposing the contradictory statements in the official materials, the author of *El florido pensil* actually reveals the contradiction in the National-Catholic propaganda concerning the Moors. On the one hand, in the imperial age, the Moors were denigrated and persecuted due to their religion, and postwar children's readings, especially religious ones, drew heavily on materials from that time. On the other hand, the Franco regime needed to employ strategies in order not to offend the loyal Moroccan "brothers" who had fought for the Nationalist cause and also to win the support of the Arab World for Spain's admission into the United Nations (Martín-Marquez 252). Franco's expansionist plan in North Africa determined all his maneuverings regarding Spanish policy toward Morocco during the 1940s and early '50s. Therefore, "the idea of blood brotherhood" was heavily mobilized during the Franco regime in the construction of a colonial philosophy that literalized the common European metaphor of the fraternally benevolent colonizer, "with Spain imagined as playing the role of older and wiser brother to the developmentally delayed younger African siblings" (Martín-Marquez 222). Children's readings often suggested that the Moors were transformed from bad to good under the influence of the Spaniards. This kind of readings illustrates the idea of blood brotherhood between the Moors and the Spaniards.

While the author unmasks the deception of the patriotic education mostly through the child's direct questioning, he exposes the absurdity of the National-Catholic education through the child's experience. Sopeña recalls these childhood experiences not without tenderness: "Con el 436, el de las gallinas, lo pasamos estupendamente" (41), yet this nostalgia is also reflective: even when describing nostalgic experiences the author does not stop reflecting on the education he received. Question 436 that the children

encounter in their math text concerns a free hen's capability to catch insects (44). The child Sopeña and his classmates decide to search for free hens (43). The author describes a happy afternoon for children, when they visit a poor area to see hens walking around outside. These boys nearly get caught by the hens' owner. From this experience, the children learn that these seemingly free hens are not free but belong to an owner; then, they agree that there is no such thing as a free hen. Therefore, the question referring to free hens' capability to catch insects makes no sense; additionally, the author points out that there are lots of math questions like this, which are misleading and far from reality. Sopeña gives a nostalgic account of the enjoyable afternoon in childhood not to lament over "the good old days" but to attest to the nonsense of the questions children of the time were asked. According to the author, it was a time without TV and no other information sources were available to children (31); as a result, lack of information made it difficult for them to discern the absurdity of the Francoist education.

The regime dictated what children should think of the country and the world, yet children, as active agents, found a mental space for freedom in comic books [*los tebeos*]. Antonio Lara, when referring to the comic book series entitled *Roberto Alcázar y Pedrín*, has argued

Los especialistas en psicología social encontrarán en estas historias amplios elementos para descubrir la necesidad de evasión de unos niños y adultos disconformes oscuramente con el entorno que les tocó vivir y escapados de él por la única salida posible: la imaginación desbordada hacia un mundo fantástico donde los buenos eran premiados tras escapar



de las infinitas asechanzas de los malos que siempre, indefectiblemente, acababan siendo castigados. (*El País*)

In Carmen Martín Gaité's childhood memoir *El cuarto de atrás*, the protagonist C. survives a childhood in the harsh postwar period by taking refuge in the imaginative world of popular novels. Like some popular songs and films that opened a space of imagination for the child C., the popular comic book series, specifically *Roberto Alcázar y Pedrín*, leads the child Sopeña to a fantastic world, distinct from autarkic and isolated Spain of the time. The child Sopeña rents his favorite book *Roberto Alcázar y Pedrín* every Friday afternoon: "El alquiler costaba una perra gorda y los jueves se ponía aquello de bote en bote, que ni sitio quedaba en el banquillo" (113). Even though this comic book series, published during the dictatorship, inevitably upholds Francoist ideology, such as Catholicism and nationalism, the author recognizes that the comic form opens a door to a different world, especially when Franco cut off all information sources other than the official propaganda: "A lo mejor, alguno, en su ignorancia, va y te dice que qué época fuste tienen estos tebeos, cuatro golpes y ale [...] Que les tienes que explicar la de cosas que se aprenden; que son muy instructivos. De qué iba yo a saber dónde está Cantón, o que los chinos ya no llevan coleta, o que yes es inglés [...]" (127). The gratitude the author expresses to *Roberto Alcázar y Pedrín* mirrors the scarcity of information and knowledge available to children under Franco's control. With the comic and its fantastic world, the child narrator enjoys a temporary relief from patriotic slogans and nonsensical questions in school texts.

The regime put into practice the National-Catholic educational plan not only through patriotic slogans and nonsensical questions but also through its corresponding

pedagogy. As the regime purged everything related to the Second Republic, it also abolished the pedagogy advocated by the Free Institution of Education [*la Institución Libre de Enseñanza*]. This was a methodology influenced by Krausism, which emphasized the development of students' intellectual and professional competence (Boyd 133). The *cuestionarios* of 1938 demanded that teachers practice the “traditional Spanish pedagogy” suggested by Father Manjón, who encouraged teachers to follow the “classic” system of repetition and memorization (Boyd 258). As a way of internalizing Spanish virtues, students memorized patriotic sayings and even anecdotes drawn mainly from the imperial age. Through rote teaching methods, the Franco regime aimed to instill a blind obedience in schoolchildren. The anti-intellectual nature of this pedagogy has outlived Franco; even twenty years after his death some ultra-conservative Spaniards are still defending it. Antonio Álvarez – the author of *Enciclopedia Álvarez* – has insisted on the effectiveness of memorization applied to the primary school. In an interview conducted by Elena Pita for *El mundo* at the end of 1997, when asked “¿Cómo se aprende más, memorizando o leyendo y analizando?” Álvarez confirmed that “Sólo se sabe lo que se recuerda, y para recordar hay que aprender de memoria” (Pita). The Francoist textbook writer also added that children in the ‘90s received excessive information that they could not digest (Pita). In contrast to Álvarez, Sopeña argues in *El florido pensil* that lack of information is one of the major problems of postwar education (13-32).

When referring to patriotic education, Sopeña focuses on the materials with which the children were indoctrinated; however, when referring to religious education, Sopeña emphasizes the way in which these children were indoctrinated. Catechism was mandatory for all schoolchildren of the time, and enforced through memorization and

physical punishment. Through the child narrator's confusion, the author humorously reveals the real effect of this mechanical pedagogy. When asked how many Gods there are, the child Sopeña thinks to himself that "el Padre es Dios, el Hijo es Dios, y el Espíritu es Dios" (58). Then, in total there should be three Gods. Being confident of his calculating ability, the child answers "Tres, exactamente" (58). To his surprise, what he receives for this answer is not the priest's affirmation but rather a bang on his head. When asked again why God is both human and divine at the same time, the child expresses the desire to see God for himself before answering the question. This time the irritated priest gives this daring child a slap over his neck (57).

The National-Catholic school imposed religious education through physical punishment. The author concludes with irony that "Después de contemplar el guantazo que me hab á llevado, el S áncchez Peinado cre á ya hasta en que las vacas volaran, si menester fuera" (58). Reproducing the illustration of the Trinity from a religious reading, the author adds a line below the drawing: "Las tres personas, no digo más" (59). Catholic trinity was marked by the bang and slap the child received in the primary school classroom. The author appropriates another illustration where a priest with the Cross in his hand is preaching to a child, and adds his explanation for the use of the Cross by writing that "[...] y si no quiere convertirse, se le pega con el crucifijo en la cabeza" (79). Through humor, Sopeña de Monsalve reveals the predominant use of physical punishment in religious education of the time; the Cross, being a religious symbol of Christianity, becomes the instrument with which the priest enforces the conversion. The Francoist regime, holding up the Cross, demanded that children – as well as adults – submit to the discipline. The author's satirical portrayal of the Cross suggests that the

Church was complicit in repressing not only religious heresy but also political dissidence, because according to the regime, “Servir a la Patria es servir a Dios” (Álvarez 78).

The author denounces the use of physical punishment and mechanical indoctrination to form ignorant and obedient future generations. In *El florido pensil*, the priest asks the child character Fernandito how often God reveals himself in church, and Fernandito answers that “Eso no me lo preguntéis a mí, que soy ignorante; doctores tienen la Santa Madre Iglesia que lo sabrán responder” (63). Instead of punishing the child for his ignorance, the priest praises Fernandito for his trust in official religious propaganda. The regime neither expected nor wanted future generations to be equipped with the capacity to think critically, because through the official education the regime sought to intellectually enslave the people in order to maintain “la inmortalidad de la raza” and by extension, of the regime itself.

The priests taught Catholicism not only through physical punishment but also through emotional manipulation. According to historian Kira Mahamud, some Francoist scholars and ministers of education advocated appealing to children’s sentiment as a strategy for postwar religious education (170). Mahamud notices an abundance of allusions and references to emotions in school textbooks. She argues that one of the possible reasons for this great amount of emotional references is the “general belief (and pride) at the time in the emotional and sentimental quality of the Spanish people” (172). Serrano de Haro, being Chief Inspector of Primary Education in Granada, is one of these advocates of emotional education. In the preface of *Yo soy español*, he reminds the educator that “Queremos que empiecen a oír los nombres ejemplares y las gestas heroicas; que las cosas de Dios y de España entren, como sal de bendición en la levadura germinal

de su conciencia. Mas no precisamente para que ‘sepan’. ¡También tiene su importancia el sentir!” (6)

The educator, the reading material and the illustrations accompanying the reading were three major channels through which the regime imposed emotional education on school children. The priests at school, being mediators between official propaganda and pupils, made an efforts to provoke fear in the children by telling them horrifying stories which had supposedly happened somewhere in Spain. All of these stories conveyed the same information: children who do not believe in God are bad and bad children end up with a miserable fate. Religious readings described how horrible hell is and how severe the punishment will be for heresy and blasphemy. In *El florido pensil*, according to the author, school children did not need to remember exactly what caused the young characters’ unexpected deaths but only needed to attribute all miserable deaths to blasphemy or heresy. A child, when crossing the railroad, is crushed by a train; two girls are burned alive at home and their mother dies right after; a boy called Ramón dies in bed, and so on. All these deaths were considered to be related to blasphemy in some way (75). Many illustrations of the religious readings reflected a sharp contrast between a horrified child and an ugly and diabolic persecutor. It was easy for schoolchildren to identify themselves with the young victim portrayed in the drawing and internalize his fear. The internalization of the fear is reflected in children’s daily life. When a child who lived in the protagonist’s neighborhood was burned while at play, the child Sopeña automatically believed it was a punishment for blasphemy although witnesses confirmed that it was actually an accident (76). By showing the internalization of the religious doctrines

imposed at school, the author attests to the effectiveness of emotional education advocated by many Francoists of the time.

Children managed to escape from the fear of instructors' intimidation by taking refuge in a small theater where local radio station programmed "Radio Alegría" during the weekend. The author nostalgically describes childhood experiences with the local radio program and recalls how children made noise, ate snacks and jumped from seat to seat in the small theater (106). This small space becomes a children's paradise, where adults lose their control. Sopeña recalls with a sense of *schadenfreude* that "El locutor gritaba mucho y estaba como de los nervios; ¡a de veces que repetía que cómo había que decirnos que no comiéramos pipas! [...] Al finalizar el programa, el locutor nos decía aquello de que vamos todos a salir educadamente, en perfecto orden, y sin saltar de butaca en butaca; pero no" (107-108). This "Radio Alegría" was designed to be a channel for transmitting the official ideology to children, who, under the adult presenter's guidance, were supposed to show the happiness of the National-Catholic childhood by singing a patriotic song or reciting a patriotic poem. But instead of submitting to adults' will, children enjoyed a certain autonomy. When asked what their names were, instead of directly answering the question, children often started greeting their parents, relatives and friends. The unwanted answers irritated the presenter while eliciting laughter among the children (107). The small theater became a refuge where children enjoyed temporary freedom and disorder, helping them to survive the hardship of the postwar period. The author writes that "Yo fui un montón de veces y lo pasé un rato bien con tanto jaleo" (107). Carmen Martín Gaité argues that in the postwar period happiness in official propaganda was fake, imposed by the regime and represented by the phony smile of

Queen Isabel and Francoist politicians (45). In the small local theater, however, the child Sopeña and his schoolmates experienced real happiness, which in turn became a resistance against the regime's imposed emotional control.

While children of the postwar period had to find relief from the discipline of the Francoist regime for survival, adults who survived the postwar period have expressed a need to come to terms with the past. Cámara Villar, being one of these survivors, has argued that through *El florido pensil* Sopeña searches for a “rito liberador que es exigencia de su vida y de la de muchos de nosotros,” because those who experienced the postwar period as children need a way to “echar de dentro lo que les quedan de los viejos demonios, que no es poco” (Cámara Villar, “El prólogo,” 15, 14). The National-Catholic education provides an entrance into memories of the past. The Franco regime constructed a model of National-Catholic childhood focusing on patriotism and religion and also imposed the model through the postwar school education. As an adult, however, Andrés Sopeña Monsalve, who experienced the National-Catholic education, strategically reconstructs his childhood through nostalgia and parody. Sopeña's representation of childhood is paradoxical and complicated. On the one hand, it is nostalgic – a desire to return to the lost childhood – and on the other hand, it is reflective and resistant – a desire to say no to the National-Catholicism imposed on children by the regime. While the familiar materials and scenes reproduced in *El florido pensil* evoke nostalgic memories of innocent happiness of childhood, the author's critique of the Francoist ideology through a postwar child narrator has the effect of relieving readers from the unfulfillable desire to have resisted ideological imposition when they were children. These readers suffered the repression in the postwar period of the '40s and '50s when they were children and may

need a means to unburden themselves from the past. Following the child narrator in *El florido pensil*, these readers have revisited their own childhoods, deconstructing the model of the National-Catholic childhood imposed by the Franco regime. Thus, *El florido pensil* channels their mourning for a lost childhood while at the same time unburdening them from the past, a past repressed by the Franco regime of the 1940s and '50s and glossed over by the PSOE government of the mid-'90s.



Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> See “Libros más vendidos de la semana.” *ABC* 10 Mar. 1995: 2.

“Los más vendidos en castellano.” *La Vanguardia* 10 Mar.1995: 2.

“Los libros más vendidos.” *El Mundo* 11 Mar.1995:2.

Manuel Vital. “Los libros más vendidos en Andalucía Oriental.” *Ideal* 19 Nov. 1994: 30.

<sup>2</sup> Most of the critics of this memoir were children who received the same education. When they talked about the reception of this memoir, they mostly referred to its reception among those who had lived the same period as children. Therefore, we see abundant expressions like “quienes nos educamos (o deseducamos) en la misma época” (Cámara), “el niño martirizado, engañado y dolorido que se le quedó dentro, como a todos nosotros” (Torres), “el libro que ha sido leído por la mayoría de los españoles que en él pueden verse reflejados” (Miñambres), and so forth.

### Chapter 3

#### **Ironic Reflections on the Winning of the War: Esther Tusquets's *Hab úmos ganado la guerra* (2007)**

In 1938, not long before the seizure of Barcelona by Franco's forces, the Spanish left-wing poet Antonio Machado told the Soviet journalist Ilya Ehrenburg that: "Esto es final; cualquier día caerá Barcelona. Para los estrategas, para los políticos, para los historiadores, todo está claro: hemos perdido la guerra. Pero humanamente, no estoy tan seguro [...] Quizá la hemos ganado" (Ehrenburg 295). This statement complicates the identification of the victors and the defeated in the Spanish Civil War. Belonging to the defeated Republican side, Antonio Machado considers himself as having triumphed for defending humanity. More than sixty years later, the Spanish writer Esther Tusquets published her autobiography, titled *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, in which she provides a detailed account of her childhood experiences in a Francoist upper-class family. Though born into a victors' family, the autobiographer identifies with the defeated.

While Andrés Trapiello and Javier Cercas wrote that many Francoist writers "habían ganado la guerra y perdido los manuales de literatura" (Trapiello, 475; Cercas 22), Catalan writer Marta Pessarrodona commented during a conversation with Tusquets that "La guerra civil española la perdimos todos" (Balbona). Pessarrodona's powerful comment provoked Tusquets's deep reflections on her own childhood during the postwar period in a family of victors. These reflections ultimately led to the publication of her childhood memoir *Hab úmos ganado la guerra* (2007). In this book, Tusquets refutes Pessarrodona's conclusion by writing that this statement "no es verdad" (9). According to the autobiographer, there existed a clear distinction between the winners and the losers after the war and although the previous generation in her family has been

affiliated with the winning side, she belongs to the defeated (9, 220). In so doing, Tusquets first establishes the dichotomy between the winners and the losers and then complicates the dualism through the perspectives of generation, class, and family.

The tension between the beginning and the ending of the autobiography best illustrates this dualism. The title of the book seems to be an unequivocal and provocative affirmation: *We Had Won the War* [*Hab úmos ganado la guerra*]. The author opens the work with the same assertion, refuting Pesarrodoná's conciliatory viewpoint while emphasizing her younger self's initial belonging to the winner's side: "Y yo, con mis tres añitos, pertenecía al bando de los vencedores" (9). Paralleling the syntactic structure of this statement, however, the author ends the book with a radical change in her political identification by concluding that "yo, hija de los vencedores, a pesar de haber gozado de todos sus privilegios y todas sus ventajas, pertenec á al bando de los vencidos"(220). Between the beginning and the ending, the body of the text is dedicated to the child Esther's account of the bourgeois winners' lives and the child's rejection of her family origin.

The past perfect tense of the title, denoting consequences of winning the war, divides the timeline of this text into three parts: the Spanish Civil War as the period before the addressed past, the postwar period as the past, and the epoch following the Law of Historical Memory as the present – the time when the author published the book. Backing Franco's military rebellion in the war, the financial and industrial haute bourgeoisie with which Tusquets's family has been affiliated became victors in 1939 when the Francoists seized power. Tusquets's childhood memoir *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, narrated through the child Esther's voice, comprises the author's reflections on

the winner's lives in the 1940s and '50s. These reflections call the readers' attention to the issues of generation, class, and family in postwar Spain. These overlapping discussions all revolve around the war and the winning or losing of the war. I explore the author's depictions of the winners' lives and expose the ironic tone lurking behind these descriptions.

Irony has long been associated with Socrates, who dissimulated his real intent in order to induce reflections and discussions from students. Irony, in its classic sense, refers to "saying something but meaning quite another" (Colebrook 2). However, later investigations of irony – Romantic and postmodern irony in particular – have broadened the discussion and assumed that irony is "a mode of discourse" or "a discursive strategy" characterized by a conflict of meaning (Friedrich Schlegel, Paul de Man, Linda Hutcheon). This conflict can be understood in terms of antagonism, paradox, or ambiguity. The classical sense of irony implies an opposition between a said and an unsaid meaning, assigning a priority to the latter. Through this kind of irony, the ironist can question certain ideological or discursive systems, such as Francoism, or historical revisionism. These systems frequently manifest themselves in the form of sociopolitical context. In *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, specifically, as a witness to the bourgeois winners' privileges during the postwar period, Tusquets ironically questions revisionist historians' claim to the victimhood of the Francoists; portraying the bankrupt families of the haute bourgeoisie, the autobiographer subverts the ultraconservative family model promoted by the Franco regime.

Unlike classical irony, Romantic irony does not necessarily comprise an unsaid meaning. This kind of irony can happen within the text: the ironist can say something

while opposing it by asserting another, allowing and showing both sides of the conflict. In other words, the ironist, as suggested by Friedrich Schlegel, does not intend to convey another problem-solving idea that might “resolve the dialectic,” but rather to expose the coexistence of two conflicting meanings (13). In *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, the author tactically shows the complex relationship between adult winners and rebellious children who choose to identify with the losing side: the child is described to rebel against the adult members in her family while at the same time showing a strong emotional attachment to these adults. By exposing the generational conflict, the author aims to uncover its origin and eventually reach an understanding of what happened to her as a child.

In her autobiography Tusquets adopts both types of irony – classical and romantic irony. I slightly adapt the model of Pere Ballart for my analysis of these two ironic modes in *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*. Ballart studies ironical representations on three levels: the textual, metatextual and intertextual level (346-350). I distinguish the two ironic modes in Tusquets’s work on two levels: the contextual and textual level. Specifically, classical irony operates on the contextual level, resulting from a sharp tension between the text and the social and political context in which the text is situated. From behind the classical conflict emerges the author’s outright critique and denial of the family model under Francoism as well as of current historical revisionism. Unlike classical irony, romantic irony manifests itself more on the textual level. By the textual level Ballart refers to the irony that is found “between different parts (sentences, paragraphs, chapters, sections) of a text” (348). In Tusquets’s autobiography, romantic irony demonstrates itself through the author’s depiction of the two generations in the text. In other words, it

results from the tension between the child and the previous generation in her family. This text does not aim to resolve this antagonism by denying any side – in fact, some parts of the text betray the author’s confusing attitude toward the generational tension – but rather to find a way of understanding her conflicting past.

While Romantic irony, as suggested by Schlegel, emphasizes the coexistence of two sides of antagonism, Linda Hutcheon’s postmodern irony foregrounds its reflective nature, pointing to differences between the two dialectic sides of the ironic construct. In her theoretical and political exploration of irony, Hutcheon mentions that “the most distinguished remark about irony” is about its “intellectual detachment” (*Irony’s Edge* 14). In this sense, irony is, by definition, reflective. In the chapter about *El sur*, I have explored the inherent reflectiveness of allegory. In fact, in his famous essay titled “The Rhetoric of Temporality,” Paul de Man regards allegory together with irony as the two key rhetorical tropes of memory. He argues that “the two modes (allegory and irony), for all their profound distinctions in mood and structure, are the two faces of the same fundamental experience of time” (226). De Man does not clearly explain how he distinguishes allegory from irony in his essay. Linda Hutcheon, however, articulates a distinction between these two modes. According to Hutcheon, “the major distinction to be made ... is that allegory relies on an aptly suggestive resemblance between the said and the unsaid, while irony is always structured on a relation of *difference* ... ironic meanings are formed through additive oscillations between different meanings” (*Irony’s Edge* 65-66).

Hutcheon’s conclusion informs my exploration of *El sur* as allegory and *Hab úmos ganado la guerra* as irony. Specifically, in the textual and visual forms of *El*

*sur*, the authors' reflections on the past can be allegorically rendered through the protagonists' mourning for their dead fathers, because both the author and the director share their protagonists' attitude toward the past: the children must confront the traumatic past experienced both by them and their previous generation in order to come to terms with it. Unlike *El sur*, Tusquets's autobiography, while rendering childhood experiences of a young protagonist from the winning side, points to differences in values and beliefs between adult winners as "we" and their rebellious child as "I." In addition, the two generations, on either side of the antagonism, do not merely differ from each other: the two sides are also ironically intertwined, because postmodern irony, in Hutcheon's terms, can only "complexify" and never "disambiguate" (*Irony's Edge* 12). Both sides of the tension can only make sense in relation to the other; together they literally interact to create ironic meanings. If romantic irony highlights the coexistence of two sides of a tension, then postmodern irony – or the postmodern variant of romantic irony – emphasizes the antagonistic yet intertwined relationship between the two sides.

Tusquets's use of the "we" and the "I" in her memoir best illustrates the antagonistic and interdependent relationship of two generations. Tusquets uses the plural form "we" in the title, ultimately generating a childhood story of a singular "I." Coincidentally, the literature of memory in post-Franco Spain, according to José F. Colmeiro, began with a work portraying childhood in nationalist families, *Memorias de un niño de derechas*, published by Francisco Umbral in 1972 (105). Critics have pointed out the discrepancy between the title of Umbral's autobiography and its content: the title suggests the memory of *an individual* boy's personal experience, yet in the text the author keeps on referring to the *collective* experience of "los niños de derechas" and "los

niños de la guerra” (Colmeiro 107, Sordo 1060, Villanueva 26). Tusquets’ *Hab úmos ganado la guerra* shares this discrepancy. However, unlike Umbral’s work from which the singular form “I” is missing, Tusquets’ autobiography does render a tension between the “I” and the “we”: the “I” belongs to the group of “we” while at the same time resisting this group. In addition, the use of “we” rather than “I” in the title suggests the autobiographer’s ontological status. Born in 1936, she was incapable of participating in the war, let alone winning the war. Using the “we” as the subject of the book title, Tusquets avoids potential questioning regarding the authenticity of her autobiographical writing. The autobiographer provides an ironic account of the winners’ lives through the child “I”’s eyes. In other words, the adult autobiographer acts as a ventriloquist assuming the child Esther’s voice while at the same time including her ironic commentary on the group of the bourgeois victors.

Further interpreting Baudelaire’s discussion of the divided or self-reflective subject, De Man considers irony to be a *d ádoublement*. De Man’s consideration informs my exploration of the autobiographical “I”s. While de Man’s distinction between allegory and irony seems ambiguous, his definition of irony as a *d ádoublement* helps to clarify the tension between the author’s “I” and the protagonist’s “I.” De Man considers irony to be “a relationship, within consciousness, between two selves” (212): the two selves include “an empirical self, immersed in the world, or in a state of inauthenticity” and “a textual self that exists only in the form of a language that asserts the knowledge of this inauthenticity”(214). Specifically, in *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, the empirical self is Tusquets as the adult author/ narrator and the textual self is the child Esther as the protagonist “I” within the text. The relationship between these two bespeaks the subject’s



self-consciousness and self-reflectiveness. De Man's ironic *d'édoulement* implies a capacity to observe the self, looking the self as if it were an other. He argues that "the *d'édoulement* thus designates the activity of a consciousness by which a man differentiates himself from the non-human world. The capacity for such duplication is rare ... but belongs specifically to those who, like artists or philosophers, deal in language" (213). To the list of artists and philosophers who have capacity for *d'édoulement*, I would add autobiographers, like Tusquets. De Man's argument reminds us of Hutcheon's postmodern irony: both underline a capacity for self-reflection. Tusquets's autobiography exemplifies this capacity: the adult author "I" reflects on her own past in the distance and then constructs her younger self through language.

The ironic self-reflectiveness that De Man and Hutcheon stress fits perfectly in the constructionist frame I have set for my analyses of children and childhood. Specifically, using the verb "construct" to refer to the relation between the two selves, I suggest a constructionist approach to the analysis of identity in Tusquets's autobiography. Discussing identities in autobiographical writings, Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson argue that "identities are constructed. They are in language. They are not essential – born, inherited, or natural – though much in social organization leads us to regard identity as given and fixed" (33). In other words, to discuss identity in autobiography is to explore how identity is discursively constructed. As discursive constructions, identities matter less as something that one *is* and more as something that one *demonstrates* through language. This linguistic demonstration is mostly one's experiences in the past. Discussing the relationship between experience and identity, historian Joan Scott writes that: "it is not individuals who have experience, but subjects who are constructed through

experience” (779). Identity matters as something that one transmits to an audience through his/her expression of what one has experienced. Specifically, in *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, the protagonist “I” is constructed through her childhood experiences living the aftermath of the war in a victorious upper-class family. In other words, the construction of the “I” as the child relies on the antagonistic yet intertwined relationship between the child and the adult victors close to her.

In de Man’s words, the constructed “I” is “a self that exists only in the form of a language that asserts the knowledge of this inauthenticity” (214). By “inauthenticity,” the critic refers to the state of the constructor “I,” who is “an empirical self, immersed in the world” (214). For de Man, the reflective disjunction of irony transfers the self out of the empirical world into a world constituted out of language. This is the only means by which the self can escape from the state of inauthenticity – according to de Man, the authenticity of our being-in-the-world has always been questionable. In this way, de Man creates a hierarchical relationship between the two “I”s, obviously giving priority to the textual “I.” I would stress the narrated “I” as well, but unlike de Man, I also take into consideration the author/narrator Tusquets, taking her real life as a reference. Specifically, I pinpoint the autobiographical text within Tusquets’s previous writings and the epoch in which she has lived. I explore how this text plays with the sociopolitical context and its manifold assumptions in an ironic way – this irony works in its classic sense on a contextual level, completely rejecting ultraconservative or revisionist version of the national history.

An ideological exploration of the autobiographical selves effectively connects *Hab úmos ganado la guerra* to the wider historical and political context. Paul Smith, in

his illuminating work *Discerning the Subject*, suggests the notion of an ideological “I” (105). According to this critic, the ideological “I” is “the concept of personhood culturally available to the narrator when he tells his story” (105). In other words, he calls for an analysis of the narrator as an identity situated in a particular cultural and social context. Following this suggestion, Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson propose that “we need, then, to situate the narrator in the historical notion of personhood and the meaning of lives at the time of writing” (62). While the critics stress the importance of socio-cultural background of the narrator/author, I would like to apply this ideological preoccupation also to the narrated “I.” This means not only that the construction of the child Esther is limited by the historical period in which she lived but also that her childhood story needs to be contextualized within the collective experience of her generation. This is because “discourse is by definition shared, (and) experience is collective as well as individual. Experience can both confirm what is already known and upset what has been taken for granted” (Scott 793). The narrator has constructed a child protagonist, whose story is enabled not only by the mediation of the narrator’s language but also by the collective experiences to which the story itself contributes. In other words, autobiography is meaningful and comprehensible only when it moves within broader and known thematic domains.

Individual experience can always be examined through multiple collective discourses. An examination of Tusquets’s memoir through the collective experience of the *gauche divine* demonstrates the author/narrator’s ideological and socioeconomic background. Esther Tusquets and her brother Óscar Tusquets have been considered representatives of this group (Moix 77, 95). The *gauche divine*, as a heterogeneous group

composed of young progressive intellectuals, emerged spontaneously in Barcelona in the early 1960s; it was not until 1969 that the Barcelonese journalist Joan de Sagarra referred to this group in the local daily newspaper *Tele/eXpres*, using the ironic name the *gauche divine* [divine left] for the first time. Manuel Vázquez Montalbán's two questions reveal the ironic sense implied in this name: "¿Cómo puede ser divina la izquierda? ¿Acaso el Vaticano ha cambiado de actitud con respecto al marxismo?" (Montalbán). The members of this group include poets, novelists, film directors, architects, models, actors, and artists. All of them, with the exception of Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, come from *haute* bourgeois families in Barcelona. Originating from the winners' families, these children identify with anti-Francoist dissidents. One of the most – if not the most – frequent strategies that this group adopts to criticize the regime is irony; Tusquets's autobiography is an excellent example of this collective feature.

In 1971, when the name of this group was widely known among the Barcelonese intelligentsia, Esther Tusquets decided to publish a book on this anti-Francoist group with which she herself was affiliated. She planned to include articles and stories by Ana María Moix, Vázquez Montalbán, José María Carandell, and Juan Marsé (Villamandos 466), but at this point in the early 1970s with censorship still imposed on publications, she was not able to accomplish her project. According to Alberto Villamandos, however, Tusquets's project "refleja el esfuerzo de construir una identidad colectiva frente a otros grupos disidentes y el discurso franquista" (466). Tusquets's efforts to construct a collective identity for the *gauche divine*, as observed by Villamandos, have persisted in spite of her frustrated attempt in 1971. Thirty years later, in 2001, she resumed the

unfinished task, publishing a major part of her thwarted project and titling the new book *24 horas con Gauche Divine*.

Claiming a collective identity for the *gauche divine* requires collaborative effort. Esther Tusquets is not the only one who has contributed to this project. Since the end of the last century, there has had a boom of autobiographical texts produced by some veteran members of this group: these autobiographers include Román Gubern (1997), Xavier Miserachs (1998), Óscar Tusquets (2003), Eugenio Trías (2003), and Esther Tusquets (2007). In spite of the vast differences in their ways of approaching lives under Francoism, all of these memoirs demonstrate their strong anti-Francoist tendencies of the 1950s and '60s. The vitality of anti-Francoist culture in those years emerged from behind the continuous reconstructions of the past by the dissidents, including the *gauche divine*. Interestingly enough, it was the right-wing People's Party government that sponsored in Madrid in 2000 the first exhibition of this group, entitled "*Gauche divine*," showing the photography of Colita, Maspons and Miserachs in Madrid. In the prologue to the exhibition catalog, Mariano Rajoy, then minister of Education and Culture and current president, writes that "con sus imágenes (los miembros del *gauche divine*) rescatan un fenómeno cultural y una época en la que lo lúdico estaba fuertemente unido a lo creativo, al tiempo que recuperan la memoria de un espacio de la libertad en una España culturalmente empobrecida" (Ministerio 11). One could argue that in supporting this exhibition, Rajoy had a political agenda – probably to win over the upper class of Barcelona. However, as a result of his public support, the Madrid government has officially recognized the collective identity of this Barcelonese dissident group,

emphasizing their cultural – rather than political — contributions to the country during a dark moment in its history.

Critics have generated different theoretical models and terms to explain the emergence of dissident groups – including but not limited to the *gauche divine* – in the 1950s and '60s. José María Castellet, another active member of the *gauche divine*, calls them “la generación del medio siglo,” referring to Juan Goytisolo, Ana María Matute, Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio, and Carlos Barrel, to name but a few (51). According to Castellet, this generation, born between 1922 and 1936, was too young to fight in the Civil War yet did not escape the traumatic impact of sufferings brought about by the war (50). He argues that these intellectuals share the same resentment toward the older generation for starting the war, as well as the repressive environment during the postwar period (51-54). Castellet’s argument echoes Susan Suleiman’s discussion about the 1.5 generation, who were too young to understand what has happened to them as well as to their family members but old enough to be there. Suleiman’s “there” refers to the Holocaust while these dissidents’ “there” is the Spanish Civil War. In other words, like Andrés Bello, García Morales and Víctor Erice, Tusquets also carries the mission of understanding her own childhood: she grew up in a family of winners yet she also suffered frustration, like her contemporaries from the defeated side. Her work demonstrates an effort to discover the origins of her frustration and rebellion in order to come to terms with her own past, as well as that of her generation.

Barry Jordan, disagreeing with Castellet’s explanation of the generation gap, proposes “class guilt” as the reason for the generational rebellion in the postwar period (246). He observes that the majority of dissident intellectuals of the 1960s were from

families of the winning side. These privileged youth were shocked by the corruption and decadence of the haute bourgeoisie during the postwar period (246). Jordan believes that this group has expressed “an anxiety for responsibility in order to correct the errors of the older generation” (246). The class guilt is illustrated by the opening section of Juan Goytisolo’s memoir *Coto Vedado* (1985), in which he confesses that, “El proceso revolucionario cubano, iniciado unos años más tarde, se á vivido as í íntimamente, como una estricta sanción hist órica a los pasados cr ímenes de mi linaje, una experiencia libertadora que me ayudar á a desprenderme, con la entusiasta inserción en él, del pesado fardo que llevaba encima” (11).

While Goytisolo’s “pesado fardo” is due to his grandfather’s exploitation of Cuban workers, Tusquets’s class guilt is closely related to the Spanish Civil War. In *Hab ámos ganado la guerra*, in which the author, through the child Esther’s voice, laments over and over again the social and economic injustice in the 1940s and ’50s in particular (28, 45, 98, 124). The author fully recognizes the material benefits the child Esther and her family received after the war. When the narrator enumerates the many privileges the child enjoyed, she does not forget to show a strong awareness of many other Spaniards’ miserable situations: while her family and the people of her social class celebrated their victory by having parties, going on vacations, and enjoying themselves, the majority of the Barceloneses were experiencing extreme poverty, political repression, and even loss of family members. The author writes that “los nuestros trataban de enriquecerse y de divertirse a toda costa ... aunque fuera entre las ruinas, aunque fuera sobre un millón de muertos ... Recuerdo tambi én haber tenido desde muy peque ña la sensación de que algo iba mal” (20-22). Similar descriptions in the text show that early

social consciousness contributes to the protagonist Esther's ultimate conversion from the pro-Francoist stance to its opposite side, to identify with the defeated.

In addition to Jordan and Castellet's theoretical discussions of the *gauche divine*, around the new millennium veteran members of this group strived to make their voices heard by attempting to explain the existence of this group in the 1960s. In *24 horas con gauche divine*, when asked to define the group, the majority of its members mentioned "liberal," "left-wing," and some refer to moralists' accusation of their libertinism (65, 68, 73, 76, 88). In March 18, 2011, when a notorious member of this group, Oriol Regàs, passed away, the Spanish mass media resumed the discussion of this left-wing community. When asked to explain the significance of the *gauche divine*, Rosa Regàs – sister of Oriol Regàs – talked about her transformation by stating that "No sé lo que era (la *gauche divine*), pero está relacionada con mi propio despertar, con mi propio descubrimiento, con mi propia transformación y la de muchos de nosotros. Era una manera de entender la vida distinta de la que nos habían enseñado" (López 235). Tusquets shares Regàs's experience of ideological conversion. Through *Habíamos ganado la guerra*, the author represents the process of her development in the broad context of postwar Spain. In so doing, she not only contributes to the construction of the collective identity of the *gauche divine*, but also completes a mission of the 1.5 generation: through writing, she strives to reach an understanding of what happened to her as well as to her family members during the postwar period. Through the little girl Esther's eyes and voice, the author provides an account of bourgeois families' lamentable situation. Her disappointment with the Francoist family institution, coupled with the class



guilt and the generation gap, contribute to young Esther's ultimate dissidence in Spain in the 1950s.

Historicizing Tusquets's ironic discourse, I contextualize not only the constructed "I" but also the constructing "I." Specifically, Tusquets's publication of *Hab úmos ganado la guerra* needs to be explored in the historical and political context during the period following the Law of Historical Memory. Tusquets published this autobiography at the end of 2007, when the Spanish parliament passed the Law of Historical Memory condemning General Franco's regime and the atrocities his government had committed during the war and the postwar period. At the same time, Tusquets exposes in public her past as a daughter of the Franco camp and describes in detail the privileges her family and people of her social class enjoyed during the postwar period. Her attitude is clear – she belonged to the victorious side as a child. Recognizing her origin, Tusquets titles her autobiography with the striking statement, *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, and reiterates this statement at the beginning of her work. By describing the upper-class Francoists' lives, the author seeks to redress the balance in literature, which has been dominated by stories of the defeated side. She observes that "sobre esta etapa, la más dura de la postguerra, se ha escrito mucho desde el punto de vista de quienes la perdieron [...] pero me pareció que disponíamos de menos material precedente de los vencedores" (7). Lamenting a deficiency of winners' stories, Tusquets calls for more reflective writings about their lives.

Considering her lifetime devotion to anti-Francoism and her harsh critique of the *haute* bourgeoisie in Barcelona, one has enough reason to argue that her statements about identifying with the winning side sound ironic. However, the essence of irony, according

to Schlegel and Hutcheon, lies in its capacity to show both sides of the tension. In other words, in order to criticize the social class with which she was affiliated as a child, the author should first of all show as an insider how these people lived their lives in the 1940s and '50s. Hutcheon expressed one of her major concerns about interpreting ironic works after she visited a Canadian museum that presented its archives of colonialism from the ironic point of view. Particularly referring to an image that showed a white woman instructing the indigenous population in hygiene, Hutcheon writes that “One speaks the language of colonialism and reason ironically in order to display its violence, force and delimited view point. However, this critical repetition risks being unnoticed or misunderstood” (*The Politics* 159). Indeed, the Canadian exhibitors aimed to present the colonizing gaze ironically, yet many viewers considered the image to be a presentation of the white Western viewpoint of its others. Lamenting the exhibitors’ frustrated attempt, Hutcheon reminds us of the risk that some readers may take the text at face value. My purpose in this chapter is to uncover and expose the irony hidden behind Tusquets’s detailed account of the winners’ lives.

Describing the victors’ lives as an insider, the autobiographer shows her responsibility for history. Looking back to her past in the twilight of her life, Tusquets has no means to correct the errors of the previous generation; what she could do is to reflectively write about their lives as well as her own childhood experiences. In other words, the author constructs an identity not only as a member of a dissident group converted from the winning side but also as a responsible autobiographer writing about history and her self-conversion. Scott reminds us that experience should not be taken as the “origin of knowledge” (790), but undoubtedly personal experience still has its

testimonial power due to the author's ontological status of "having been there." On the one hand, the reader may feel attracted to respond to the reliability of the author's experiences since the book draws upon the author's own childhood, and on the other hand, seeing the world through the child protagonist's eyes, the reader could be drawn into sympathy or even identify with her. However, the task of the critic is to understand the work by taking a certain distance from it, to uncover how the author uses the child witness's account of "having been there" within the overall scheme of her book in conveying her own commentary on history.

For a responsible autobiographer like Tusquets, representing her younger self's "having been there" becomes political. Regarding Spanish autobiographical writings, critic Angel G. Loureiro has lamented that "Spanish autobiographers [...] rarely acknowledge the other's silent request for acknowledgement [...] Spanish autobiography is infrequently conceived as responsibility" (185). Furthermore, Loureiro criticizes the historical escapism of Spanish autobiographers by writing that: "Refusal to take responsibility entails the predominance of formulaic autobiographical narrative in which history is simply a background that at most must be retouched and protagonized by a self that refuses to explore what it has of uncertainty and debt, by a self that does not take risks, that does not expose itself" (185). If Loureiro's observation on Spanish autobiographers' irresponsibility is applicable in most cases, Tusquets writes against this grain. In the prologue to her work, the narrator/author demonstrates her sense of responsibility by stating: "me pareció que disponíamos de menos material procedente de los vencedores ... Creí que mi experiencia personal podría aportar algo" (7). She depicts in detail that: "Cómo era la burguesía franquista en la Barcelona de los años cuarenta y

cincuenta, a los ojos infantiles y luego adolescentes de uno de sus hijos” (7). Moreover, she offers these descriptions with an ironic undertone in order to arouse critical reflections among her readers. In other words, for Tusquets, choosing what to write and how to write is political.

The political sense of Tusquets’s irony becomes more pointed when one considers the fierce competition for public opinion between the leftists and the rightists since 2003. Jo Labanyi has observed a “memory war,” where left-wing historians and journalists have reacted by “unearthing further dimensions of the Francoist repression” (“Memory and Modernity” 97). According to Labanyi, “The vituperative rhetoric of the historical revisionists threatens to turn this ‘memory war’ into a competition to establish which political side has the greater claim to victimhood” (“Memory and Modernity” 97). In 2003, the rightist People’s Party government in Spain adopted a hostile attitude toward the work of the ARMH (*Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica*). Taking advantage of this opportunity, some popular historians, including César Vidal and Pío Moa, started publishing their revisionist historical views. Pío Moa makes a claim to the Francoists’ victimhood during the war and the postwar period (1937-98). However, in *Habíamos ganado la guerra*, Tusquets establishes a sharp contrast in the quality of life of the winning side and that of the losing side. She relates that,

En aquella Barcelona miserable, sucia, rota, chata, mal alumbrada, de una monotonía terrible, la Barcelona de las restricciones eléctricas, de las libretas de racionamiento, de más de media población aterrorizada y hambrienta... los nuestros trataban de enriquecerse y de divertirse a toda

costa... las fiestas, los bailes, los disfraces, los asaltos, los fines de semana de esquí y las noches de ópera. (20)

This description, buttressed by her personal experience, renders ironic the victimhood that revisionist historians have claimed for the victorious Francoists.

A juxtaposition of Tusquets's and García Morales's descriptions of experience during the postwar period further undermines historical revisionism, intensifying the irony implied in Tusquets's autobiography. Having grown up in a Francoist upper-class family and narrating her experience, Tusquets exposes the corruption of the victors' lives. The material benefits granted by the Franco regime divide postwar Spain into two distinct worlds: if the Francoist "New" Spain means a paradise for the winners, then it is hell for the losers. The narrator recalls how the people around her embrace the end of 1939: "Yo tenía tres años y sólo sabía que había ocurrido algo muy bueno, y que la calle se había llenado de gente, y que todos estaban contentos y gritaban mucho, y que mi madre gritaba más que nadie" (10). The bright scene Tusquets provides in her autobiography contrasts the extremely bleak sight represented in *El sur*, stressing the division of two worlds during the postwar period. In Adriana's and Estrella's memories, the end of war brings about exile and isolation for them as well as for their pro-Republican parents. In Esther's recollection, in contrast, the end of war means liberation and excitement for her family members: "Mi padre, que no había pisado la calle desde hacía casi dos años, me sostenía en alto para que viera desfilar a la tropa. Mi madre gritaba el nombre de Franco con entusiasmo... sin dejar de vitorear y de aplaudir" (9). If Tusquets's autobiographical writing cannot be considered to back the left-wing opinions, at least it challenges the rightists' historical revisionism.

The more emphasis Tusquets places on the Francoists' uncontrolled hedonism during the postwar period, the stronger the author's irony is rendered in her text. Hutcheon argues that irony itself is "transideological" and can "undermine" or "undercut" a wide variety of interests (28). If we agree with Hutcheon in her argument of irony's "transideological nature" (*Irony's Edge* 28), then we should say Tusquets uses irony to undermine the revisionist political position. Likewise, childhood constructions is also, in Hutcheon's words, transideological, because the Franco regime could use it for political propaganda; yet, "Franco's children" could also reconstruct it to challenge Francoism. In *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, Tusquets's reflective account of her childhood life, in an ironic tone, carries a mission of criticizing Francoism as well as the later Francoist historical revisionism. In this way, irony's reflectiveness can have its political power in the present. In the prologue of her autobiography, Tusquets calls for more reflective memoirs of the winning side (7). The contested memory of the Civil War serves as a context in which I examine Tusquets's ironic text, which, in turn, presents the instability of its context. Specifically, production of more reflective writings about the victors' lives would further affect the balance of power in the memory war. In other words, contexts are never passive background to the text, but rather are also constructed by texts. Context depends on the text itself. This dependence then generates the power of the writing while at the same time requiring the writer's responsibility for history. In this sense, Esther Tusquets is a responsible storyteller, who provides an ironic account of the Francoists' lives by taking a distance from her family origin.

Providing detailed descriptions of upper-class Francoists' lives, Tusquets's overtone hidden behind these descriptions reveals her critique of the class origin. This critical attitude is best illustrated by her portrayal of her uncle Víctor. She recalls that,

Tío Víctor era una caricatura de nazi, ya había reunido a su alrededor a otros tipos tan exaltados como él... Lo suyo era salir de madrugada dando tumbos, cogidos del brazo y aullando un destemplado y atronador *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*, en el que intercalaban un *Heil, Hitler!* Estentóreo que hacía temblar los cristales de las ventanas y despertaba a los vecinos... En los años cuarenta, mi tío, y la gente como mi tío, como nosotros, la gente que había ganado la guerra, se podía permitir esto y más. (52)

Uncle Víctor shouts in the early morning bothering neighbors, who dare not show their anger because the *haute* bourgeoisie is privileged and permitted to celebrate their winning of the war by their own means. The winning of the war has made them masters of the country; however, the sense of ownership does not arouse their responsibility for constructing a better country, but rather unbridled freedom of hedonism. The narrator's critical tone sounds stronger when one considers pervasive prudence [*prudencia*] as the code of conduct in the 1940s and '50s. Under Franco, the Spaniards learned to hide their attitudes not only toward politics but also toward nonpolitical issues. Deciding what was safe and what could not be done became part of everyday existence. Uncle Víctor's and his people's outrageous loudness breaks in upon the deadly silence, imposed by the regime and interiorized by most Spaniards during the postwar period. The imprudence Tusquets describes shows a blatant example of upper-class bourgeois' privilege, because

“no temen. Las leyes del reino no rigen para ellos” (52), as ironically defended by the autobiographer.

Tusquets’s critique of the Barcelonese bourgeoisie has appeared over and over again in her previous writings. In other words, Tusquets establishes a clear intertextual relationship between her autobiography and her early novels. In *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, she even directly cites paragraphs from the latter (159). If the intertextuality provides a pool of raw materials that the author can reinterpret, reconstruct, and even manipulate, then a consideration of intertextuality should not only focus on the reincorporated text but also on the process by which the author transforms the original text into a new production. Specifically, in her early works, including *El mismo mar de todos los veranos* (1978), *El amor es un juego solitario* (1979), *Para no volver* (1985), Tusquets views bourgeois decadence in democratic Spain with critical eyes. In *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, however, the author traces the origins of their decadence back to the postwar period and ultimately to the war: the winning of the war becomes the most influential factor in defining bourgeois lives. This influence has lasted through the postwar period until the present time – this is the reason why the author uses the past perfect tense in the title to imply the relevance of winning the war to the postwar period and, by extension, to the present.

The triumphalist laughter of the victors echoes throughout Tusquets’s autobiography, stressing the consequences of winning the war: “¡La calle era nuestra, la ciudad era nuestra, el país era nuestro!” (52) A juxtaposition of Uncle Víctor in Tusquets autobiography and Uncle Ignacio in her previous autobiographical novel *Siete miradas en un mismo paisaje* (1981) further demonstrates the author’s focus on the war and its



aftermath in *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*. Uncle Ignacio in *Siete miradas en un mismo paisaje*, being the persona of Uncle Víctor, shares the same vices with the latter in the autobiographical writing: both treat the horse in a cruel way by hardly digging in spurs and both have been harshly criticized by women to be “no un caballero, ni siguiera un hombre” (*Siete* 52-54; *Hab úmos* 51-52). The similarities between Jorge and Víctor confirm the intertextual relationship between the two works; however, this intertextuality also foregrounds the difference between the texts: in the autobiography Uncle Víctor is characterized by a strong sense of ownership as exhibited by the winners, a trait that Uncle Ignacio does not have. In other words, through her autobiographical writing the author demonstrates that some of the bourgeois winners’ foolish behavior is due to their status of having won the war.

The author explores the winners’ psyche, attributing their uncontrolled imprudence to grievances they may have felt in the 1936-39 war. The author writes that “Los míos habían ganado la guerra [...] trataban de restañar sus heridas [...]. y se proponían también recuperar el tiempo perdido, compensar de algún modo el sufrimiento y las penurias” (17). Driven by thirst for compensation, many of the winners choose hedonism as their means of getting compensated. This alleged justification for foolish behaviors sounds ironic when one considers the other side of the story. Suffering from extreme hunger and political repression for almost four decades, the pro-Republicans and their family members had been seeking justice for three decades until the passage of the Historical Memory Law in 2007, only to hear that “Spain had a civil war in which everyone was a victim,” as declared by Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero (Bond). The families of the pro-Republicans have persistently manifested their desire for

justice and truth because their family members were executed by Franco's death squads during the war and the postwar period. If the Francoists, according to Tusquets, received compensation for their grievance during the Franco's dictatorship, anti-Francoists should also make a claim to their deserved reparation. Tusquets's irony of the victors demonstrates an unequivocal political attitude: she creates an antagonism – between her depiction of the upper-class Francoists' lives and the historical revisionists' claim to the Francoists' victimhood – in order to expose and reject the latter's absurdity. The clear superiority of one side of the tension echoes the nature of classical irony, revealing historical revisionism as a fallacy.

Classical irony manifests itself not only in Tusquets's account of her uncles' imprudent actions but also in her portrayal of the families around her. A juxtaposition of the child Esther's family and the family model promoted by Francoism generates a strong ironic sense, undermining the Francoist propaganda. The position of the family in the Francoist ideology is substantial: the family is symbolic of society, representing stability and peace of the nation. Franco's preoccupation with the family is evident in the film, *Raza*, from its semi-autobiographical screenplay written by the dictator under the pseudonym, Jaime de Andrade. Catherine O'Leary argues that "*Raza* can be read as a guide to Francoist ideology. It presents the values he sought to propagate and the alternative ideology he despised" (29). The film portrays an exemplary family: a mostly absent father fights abroad to protect the family and the nation, a gentle and strong mother takes care of the children while waiting for her husband at home, and the children's joyful laughter echoes in the backyard. The families portrayed by Tusquets, however, contradict Franco's version of the model family during the postwar period.

The husband and father figure in Tusquets's autobiography completely subverts the model father figure constructed by Francoism, rendering the latter ironic and even ridiculous. The father Pedro in *Raza* is mostly absent, because he always travels fighting to protect his country and his family. The child Esther's uncle, Javier, is also absent. His absence, however, is due to his extramarital love affairs with different women. In *Raza* Pedro's wife, Isabel, worries about her husband's safety: at the beginning of the film, a close-up shows Isabel gazing to the sky and praying her husband's return in safety. In contrast, Esther's aunt, Blanca, is happy to see her husband's absence. Tusquets describes that,

Antes de que t ó Javier hiciera en un sill ón una siesta de diez minutos y se fuera, con el pretexto de que iba a la iglesia a rezar una novena, a ver a su querida. Mi tía se reía y me hacía un gesto cómplice... me llevó más tiempo descubrir que cada aventura de su marido supon ía para mi t ía el regalo compensatorio de una joya y adem ás la libraba, al menos en parte y temporalmente, de sus obligaciones matrimoniales, o sea de verse obligada a hacer el amor con un hombre que le desagradaba profundamente. (34)

The propagandist film *Raza* mythifies the figure of Franco, setting up this benevolent and protective male hero as the prototypical father figure in New Spain. Tusquets's autobiography, however, radically demythifies the adult male characters, exposing the corruption of the Francoist victors' lives and the deceptiveness of Francoist propaganda.

Tusquets's mother figure in her autobiography also contrasts with the model mother figure portrayed in *Raza*. The mother Isabel in the film is showed as tender and strong: she takes good care of children at home, while at the same time, assuming responsibility for the family in the domestic space in her husband's absence. In contrast, the child Esther's mother is portrayed as cold-blooded and uncaring. The child's conflict with her mother recurs in Tusquets's writings: the cold-blooded mother appears in her two autobiographical fictions – *El mismo mar de todos los veranos* and *Siete miradas en un mismo paisaje*. In the autobiography, the author also confesses that “he escrito mucho sobre mi madre, a veces me parece que sólo he escrito sobre mi madre, o contra mi madre, sin lograr nunca cancelar el conflicto, pasar página, quedar en paz” (64). Her mother's lack of appetite and refusal to eat is associated with her neglect of the child, who is exposed to the maltreatment of irresponsible maids and nannies. The narrator recalls the extreme loneliness the child Esther suffers when her mother leaves home without her:

La tragedia era que (mi madre) sólo salía a fijo, y desde luego sin mí todas las tardes, y yo le daba un beso de despedida en el recibidor, ya con las lágrimas rodándome por las mejillas, y me quedaba largo rato sentada allí debajo de la fotografía de Franco, llorando sin ruido [...] mi soledad consistía puramente en estar sin mamá la soledad consiste siempre en la ausencia de la persona amada. (31)

This long quotation fully demonstrates the child's extreme disappointment at her mother's lack of attention, which has hurt the child so deeply that the latter clearly recalls every detail as an aged adult. The emotional gap left by her mother leads to the result that the adult narrator, when asked to use a word to describe her mother, thinks of “desamor”

(65). The mother figure described in Tusquets's autobiography can serve as a counterexample of the model mother propagated by the regime during the postwar period.

The stable and harmonious model family promoted by Franco does not exist in Tusquets's autobiography. The most frequent words the autobiographer uses to describe her mother and the two aunts are "tres mal casadas" (34, 58, and 96). In other words, the three sisters have married out of convenience instead of love. The lack of love and communication leads to an unhappy and repressed marriage. If the family is symbolic of the nation, then the repressiveness and malfunction of the families described in Tusquets's work reflects the same social conditions during the postwar period. Tusquets's exposure of bankrupt families reminds us of the Panero family portrayed in the Jaime Chávarri's documentary *El desencanto*. In the film, the well-known Francoist poet Leopoldo Panero's widow and their three sons recount their life experiences, revealing a dysfunctional familial environment. The Panero family members' account transmits a strong sense of bitterness and disenchantment, which is shared by Tusquets's account of her uncaring mother. Hidden behind the bitterness and disappointment emerges the autobiographer and the filmmaker's critique of Francoist propaganda. In this sense, the deep disappointment at the family institution becomes an irony of the Francoist propaganda, undermining Franco's attempt at maintaining a happy facade for the family and, by extension, for the whole nation. In other words, Tusquets uses irony in the contextual level: the irony results from the tension between the author's account and the historical and political context in which the account is situated. The author, however, resolves the antagonism by rendering an unequivocal anti-Francoist political attitude.

While the author's anti-Francoist position, regarding Francoist ideological propaganda in particular, is unequivocal, the adult's attitude toward the generation issue is ambivalent. Specifically, the autobiographer creates an antagonism between the victorious adult Francoists and their rebellious offspring; yet, her memory occasionally betrays an emotional attachment to the previous generation in her family. This dilemma results from the tension between her status as child in the victorious Francoists' families and her later identification with the anti-Francoist position. Castellet points out the dissident intellectuals' resentment toward the previous generation for the war and its aftermath (51-54), yet he seems to neglect the affectional bond between generations. Tusquets's autobiography best illustrates this complexity implied in the generation issue. On the one hand, the author portrays a child protagonist who desperately resists the values and ideologies imposed by the adults around her; and, on the other hand, the adult autobiographer nostalgically recalls many sweet moments the child spent with her family members. Hidden behind the author's seemingly contradictory efforts emerges her attempt to reach an understanding of the previous generation, her mother in particular. Only when she understands her mother and the origin of her childhood trauma can she come to terms with the past.

Regarding the generation issue, the author's irony manifests itself mostly in the textual level. The child Esther and the previous generation in her family compose the two sides of the conflict. Specifically, the child Esther's attitude toward winning the war frequently conflicts with that of the adults around her, as described in the text. The year 1939 has a different impact on adult winners and their rebellious children, widening the generation gap. Right after the war, when the pro-Francoists were still immersed in the

joy brought about by the victory “que llevaban esperando ansiosos desde hacía meses” (9), the child Esther feels disappointed. The author recalls that “Los míos habían ganado la guerra, pero yo había perdido – los descubrí en cuanto volvimos a la casa oscura – mi pequeña parcela de paraíso” (18-19). After the war, Esther is left to the care of maids and servants by her parents: “Pasé de convivir el día entero con mis padres a no verles apenas; de estar siempre acompañada por gente que me quería a permanecer horas y horas en manos de personas del servicio” (20). The deep disappointment the child feels right after the war can be considered as the first signal of the distance and conflict between the child protagonist “I” and the adults around her.

Further exploring the child’s frustration, the author makes the private political. Tusquets repeats in the autobiography that the child Esther is timorous (24-26, 43-44, 46, 80), relating the child’s fear to the war. In her home, a long and dark corridor repeatedly frightens the little girl. When asked to pass the corridor from one extreme to the other, she runs through the darkness as fast as possible (26). The frightened and vulnerable child is in need of parental warmth and protection. However, she has never received any comfort from her parents: her mother laughs at her daughter’s cowardice, as do other adults; meanwhile her father is too busy to pay attention to what has happened to the child in the dark house (26). Tusquets offers a detailed description of this dark house in *Siete miradas en un mismo paisaje* (191-93), in which the child named Clara, persona of Esther (Perez 47), experiences similar fear when passing the corridor. A comparison of the autobiography and *Siete miradas* helps to reveal the author’s emphasis on her autobiography: this is to trace back her fear to the war, or more specifically, to the adults’ victory in the war. Specifically, the account in the autobiography differs from that of

*Siete miradas* regarding the child's reaction to Franco's photography. In *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, Tusquets recalls that "¡En el recibidor de mi casa plantificaron una foto del General ímo!... En aquel pasillo oscuro y largu ímo, donde acechaban mis miedos infantiles, ¿do me hubiera faltado tener que detenerme a medio camino para saludar al Caudillo" (21). The adults in the family hang Franco's huge portrait, worshipping the general who has led them to a victory; ironically, however, this black and white portrait arouses nothing but dread in the child Esther.

The shadow of the war scares the child not only at home but also in school. While the child Andr s Sope a does not understand the signification of the symbols in the national flag, the child Esther is afraid of the bloody scenes in the war propagated by the regime. A school Tusquets attended periodically distributed long lists of dead soldiers who were alumni. The school meant to instill the students' pride in the nation, yet the child Esther feels frightened: "yo pensaba en las im genes del NO-DO y en la lista de ex alumnus muertos, y se me encog a el coraz n" (60). In the 1940s when Esther attended primary school, male education in school still emphasized bodily strength, reminding people not only of competition in the recent war in Spain but also of Hitler Youth's strict physical training in Germany. Hitler's regime channeled the youth's energy into nationalism, demanding that "There must be no weakness or tenderness in it [...] I will have them fully trained in all physical exercises. I intend to have an athletic youth – this is the first and chief thing" (Alryyes 70). Watching the schoolboys' gymnastics exhibition, the parents, including Esther's mother and Uncle V ctor, feel excited and proud of the paramilitary performance, which, according to them, are supposed to appear only in powerful Germany. V ctor comments that "muchos de estos muchachos ir n



desde aquí directamente a la primera línea del frente [...] los mejores soldados del mundo” (60). In contrast to the adults’ excitement, Uncle Víctor’s words remind Esther of the dead alumni she has seen on the propagandist materials. In other words, war becomes a synonym of death in little Esther’s mind. The child Tusquets’s poor performance in gymnastics, according to the author, is due to her weak multilimb coordination (58); however, considering her dread brought about by the boys’ paramilitary gymnastics show, one has enough reason to argue that the child unconsciously connects gymnastics to war and death. To resist the physical exercises promoted by the regime is to resist the Francoist ideology shared by the adult winners around her. In so doing, the child Esther further distances herself from the winners of the previous generation.

The author’s desire to differentiate the child from the adult winners in the political position is so radical that she even questions the only scene in which the child Esther celebrates the Francoists’ victory together with adults. This occurs on the day when the Nationalist army enters Barcelona, receiving a warm welcome from the pro-Francoists. The author recalls that “todos estaban contentos y gritaban mucho [...] los soldados sonreían y nos saludaban, y uno de ellos me dio al pasar una banderita de papel, roja y amarilla, roja y gualda. Y ni siquiera tengo la certeza de que sea un recuerdo real y no un mero producto de mi imaginación, o un recuerdo basado en un hecho cierto pero modificado por mis fantasías” (10). If the passing of the national banner from an adult soldier down to a child can signify the passing down of the victory, the ideology, and the country, then the author’s questioning of her own memory of this particular scene undermines this inheritance: some children of the winning side, like the author Tusquets,

are resistant to the triumphalist beliefs that their previous generation hands down.

Regarding the legacy of the war, Michael Richards states that “The Spanish inhabitant acquired a subtle perception of the reality and refined his/her sense of this to adapt to the rules of the game of the existing sociopolitical context” (“From War Culture” 110). The adult’s adaptability is not applicable to children, who were too young to hold a pre-existing perception of reality. However, the precocious child Esther demonstrates another problem: she is incompatible with the Francoist winners’ world around her.

Being incompatible with the world around her, the child strives to resist the bourgeoisie and construct her own identity. In *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, Esther’s question runs through the whole book: she keeps asking “Los nuestros no eran los míos, pero ¿qui énes eran los m ós entonces? Y ¿dónde demonios estaba mi lugar?” (22, 56, 82, 167). The child is not able to identify with anyone around her; in addition, the adults in her social class have difficulty finding their own place in society. Laura Lonsdale has argued that “Space in Tusquets’s fictional narratives is the source of consciousness... the narrator knows her society by the places it values (such as the *Liceo* theater, bastion, and temple of Barcelona’s bourgeoisie)” (248). In the adult narrator’s eyes, the theater becomes one of the last resorts to which Barcelonese bourgeoisie could find identification and unity for their social class,

Ese teatro es una parodia con aspectos lamentable [...] es el templo m ás aut éntico de mi raza, de una burgues á mediocre y decadente que acude aqu í para sentirse unida, para saberse clan, para inventarnos quiz ás – ayudados por la hostilidad que se manifiesta en la calle contra nosotros –

que somos todavía fuertes e importantes, una burguesía que construyó este templo. (158)

The narrator's ironic tone shows the bourgeoisie's desperation to find a sense of belonging. These people could imagine their community only by visiting certain physical spaces. This is the case not only because the bourgeoisie has a different ideology but also because many of them are opportunists lacking in consistent principles and values (Tusquets 204).

While the author ironically reveals the bourgeoisie's lamentable situations through the *Liceo* Theater, she also projects her nostalgia into the same locale. She recalls that “por muy crítica y negativa que fuera mi imagen de la burguesía que lo construyó o que lo regenta, reconozco que el Liceo ha sido una constante en mi vida, que ha estado presente en casi todas sus etapas, que he vivido en él momentos memorables” (159). In the following part, the author provides a detailed description, full of tenderness, of those beautiful nights her younger self spent in the *Liceo* Theater with her parents' generation in her social class. Her critique intertwines with her nostalgic recollection of the Theater, generating the complexity of the generation issue. When referring to adult winners, the author many times uses “we” and “our” without excluding herself from the group: “La calle era nuestra, la ciudad era nuestra, el país era nuestro” (52). Her exposure of these people's infamous actions reflects her detachment from them yet the familiar affection she feels for them is no less evident in the text. Recalling the hours the child Esther passes with her uncle Víctor, she reflects nostalgically: “Lo recuerdo como si fuera ayer: Víctor llevándome en volandas, a un ritmo cada vez más vertiginoso, y tarareando cada vez más alto, pero sin romper la solemnidad del encuentro, de un extremo al otro de la

sala y el comedor [...] yo era feliz” (50). Vacillating between the familiar affection and the rational disapproval, the narrator renders a child protagonist who struggles to find her own identity: this vacillation generates the tension between the “I” of the child and the “we” of the previous generation.

The narrator’s constant shift – whether intentional or otherwise – in the subject of the sentence corresponds to the young protagonist’s confusion over her own identity, as rendered by Tusquets in her autobiography. The same shift of subject also appears in Juan Goytisolo’s *Coto Vedado*, in which the narrator alternates between the “I,” the “you,” and the impersonal “one”, especially the last two, in the italicized sections of his memoir. In comparison to the constant use of the “I” in the Roman-type sections, Goytisolo’s slippage between the second and third person in the italicized sections presents a self yet to be realized by the child. However, the alternation of subjects in Tusquets’s autobiography conveys a more ambiguous feeling than that in Goytisolo’s memoir. In the title and opening sentence of the work, Tusquets attributes her younger self to the *haute* bourgeoisie who had won the war. She chooses “we” as the subject of her statement while at the same time confirming that “yo, con mis tres años, pertenecía al bando de los vencidos” (9). A later section entitled “Regreso a la ciudad” begins with the same pattern of statement but with a different subject – “Los míos hab ían ganado la guerra” (17). It is interesting that the subject becomes “my people [*los míos*],” yet the verbal form demonstrates that the narrator employs a plural form of the third person, excluding her younger self from the winning side. The narrator replaces the “we” that includes her with the “my people” that excludes her. Explaining this replacement, the narrator writes that “Los míos habían ganado la guerra, pero yo había perdido [...] mi

pequeña parcela de paraíso” (18-19). Soon afterward, the narrator distinguishes “we” from “my people” by writing that “los nuestros no eran los míos” (22). In the following part of the text, however, she constantly alternates between “we” and “my people” without explaining to whom she refers by these two subjects and what is the relationship between the “I” and these two.

The narrator’s confusing alternation of the three subjects throughout the text reflects the complexity of the generational issue: the child disapproves of the adult winners’ absurd actions yet she cannot sever her emotional ties with them. In other words, the child’s observations of the older generation in her family expose the latter’s absurdity and irresponsibility, making the Francoist propaganda ironic. However, the nostalgic scenes she provides reflect the child’s unseverable tie with the previous generation. This complex feeling toward the adult winners recalls Boym’s notion of reflective nostalgia that I explored in chapter 2. In my analysis of Monsalve’s memoir of National-Catholic education, I have concluded that affective memories are compatible with critical reflection. This conclusion is also applicable to Tusquets’s memory of adult winners in her family. Monsalve and Tusquets’s works share the setting of childhood in the war and the immediate postwar period: both authors combine nostalgia for childhood with a critique of Francoism. While Monsalve emphasizes school education, Tusquets projects the combination of nostalgia and critique into the generation issue.

Exploring the generational tension, the author aims to uncover its origin. In other words, Tusquets’s autobiography demonstrates an effort to expose the reasons for the children’s resentment toward the previous generation during the postwar period. This effort is best illustrated by the author’s exploration of the mother-daughter relationship.

On the one hand, the author explores the social and political context in which her mother lived, aiming to discover the origin of her mother's repressed life; and on the other, the author's account reflects that the child Esther unfairly makes her uncaring mother a scapegoat for all of her grievance. The author's effort to understand her mother demonstrates in her description of milk in the book. It is ironic that milk, generally associated with motherhood, represents a mother's victimhood in the autobiography. Her mother drinks up an entire bottle of milk for the first time right after the war in order to show her grievances against the war; and then, her mother's preparation of milk in her later life during the postwar period becomes a way of venting her sorrow and despair for life. The author laments with great sympathy for her mother by recalling that,

Creo que pocas personas se han aburrido tanto como (mi madre) se aburrí ó durante largas etapas de su vida, tal vez durante su vida entera, mi pobre madre, tan capacitada para múltiples empeños, tan creativa y llena de talento, y condenada, como las restantes mujeres de su clase social y de su generación, a limitarse a la casa, a cuidar de los hijos, del marido, de su propio aspecto, a participar en actos sociales, a colaborar en obras benéficas ... y si nada de esto le interesaba, como era el caso de mamá y supongo que de muchas otras, a la pura inanidad. (18)

The nearly sacred culinary preparation seems to endow her mother with power, helping this lamentable woman to endure her repressed life: her mother is in a marriage of convenience to a man she has never loved, she has to stay home without being allowed entry into the public space to demonstrate her versatile talents, and she suffers from the ultraconservative social and moral environment under the Franco regime.

It is precisely this damaging social structure that Tusquets explores in her autobiography. She expands her mother's case to that of all women of her social class, describing that "mujeres, incapaces de valerse por sí mismas, mujeres que [...] no se habrían planteado siquiera la posibilidad de trabajar en otra cosa que no fuera el gobierno de la casa y el cuidado de los hijos, o la mera supervisión del cuidado de los hijos" (11). During the postwar period, one of the major aims of the *Falange* was to keep women away from the work force. Discussing the situation of women's employment under Franco, Martín Gaité writes that,

Ya antes de que se acabara la guerra, en una orden ministerial de 1938, se daba a entender que el programa de la recuperación de la familia estaba principalmente basado en una renuncia por parte de las jóvenes españolas a sus veleidades de emancipación, anunciando "la tendencia del nuevo Estado a que la mujer dedique su atención al hogar y se separe de los puestos de trabajo. (52)

At that time, even those very few female professionals advocated the role of Spanish women as homemakers in official newspapers and magazines (Gaité 49). In other words, social pressures played a significant role in keeping women at home, especially women of the upper classes. If the Franco regime sets up these "*ángeles del hogar*" as examples for the Spanish women during the postwar period, then Tusquets's depiction of women's pitiful situations ironizes and subverts the alleged ideal for Spanish women.

Criticizing the women's role imposed by the regime, the narrator intends to construct a self that avoids similar tragedies. The tragedy that the narrator strives to avoid

refers to women's dependence. This dependence could be economic or psychological. The narrator's reiteration of women's lamentable situation during the postwar period reveals a strong desire for a life different from her previous generation. Driven by the anxiety to detach the child from her mother's generation in this respect, the narrator dedicates much textual space to clarifying the expectations society placed on the girl and the latter's struggle for autonomy. The schools provided the necessary support for the imposition of traditional values by the Franco regime on girls, yet the rebellious Esther strives to escape confinement through higher education, which is principally available to boys.

Compared to Andrés Sopeña's recollection of National-Catholic education, Tusquets's memory of primary school emphasizes the gender issue. Unlike Sopeña's public school, which is dominated by the priests, the German schools where Esther receives education are mostly secular. However, according to the narrator, these private schools also adopt a conservative attitude toward women's education: "Las chicas hacíamos, casi todas, 'enseñanzas del hogar.' Ni siquiera unos padres como los m íos se plantearon la posibilidad de que yo, aunque pareciera dotada para el estudio, pudiera ir a la universidad [...] Y cursé durante tres años 'enseñanzas del hogar'" (88). Women's education like this evidently aims to form obedient and hardworking housewives, serving husbands and taking care of children. The only professions available for women were secretaries, stenographers, and accountants (89). Being rebellious, however, the protagonist resists following the path defined by the Franco regime: she takes the courses designed for male students and enrolls herself in the university, avoiding the repetition of



her mother's life as a bored housewife, who can display her talents only within the domestic space.

Confined by social and moral rules imposed by the regime on the youth, rebellious children need a channel through which they can give vent to their discontentment. The child Esther vents her resentment toward her mother and thus begins to irritate her mother by deliberating some actions against her will. In *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, the daughter-mother conflict or, more exactly, the daughter's deliberate provocation reveals this discontentment and even indignation that dissident children experienced in the late '50s. Through a description of lack of affection, hypocrisy, and physical abstinence, the narrator creates an image of an uncaring and cold-blooded mother. Uncontrolled appetites become the daughter's weapon to disappoint her mother, who like all women in her class, values one's images. Discussing the relationship between eating disorder and dominant cultures, feminist Susan Bordo observes that "images speak to young people not just about how to be beautiful but also about how to become what the dominant culture admires, values, and rewards" (Bordo). By intentionally making herself fat, the young Esther challenges her mother as well as the bourgeois culture that values women's slimness. But finally, the daughter's revenge backfires. While the women that Bordo analyzes stop eating and become anorexic in order to be accepted as "beautiful" by their dominant cultures, the child Esther does the opposite. Her uncontrolled appetites turn out to be uncontrollable: "De golpe empecé a comer con la misma voracidad, con la misma ferocidad, con que me hab á arrancado las pesta ñas [...] estaba dispuesta a hacer cualquier cosa para conseguir el objeto de mi adicción" (173). The young Esther makes herself dingy, ugly, and puffy (173). In other

words, Esther's desire to resist the dominant values in postwar Spain is as strong as those anorexic girls' desire to cater to their dominant culture: while the girls discussed by Bordo lose their appetite, our young protagonist cannot stop eating. In so doing, the young Esther resists her mother and, by extension, the culture and values that her mother represents as a bourgeois woman.

A linguistic analysis of the narrator's depiction of the daughter-mother conflict reflects the adult narrator's hidden psyche: her younger self's resentment and frustration ultimately point to the Spanish Civil War, a traumatic event that affects her during her lifetime. In the late 1950s, the younger generation's rebellious spirit rose to an unprecedented height and threatened to explode. The narrator recalls that in the university, students started organizing political debates and even strikes, demonstrating their discontent with the repressive social environment (201). While her peers demonstrate a militant spirit in the university, the young Tusquets lights the flames of war at home. The young protagonist's war with her mother best illustrates how the narrator makes the private political. A linguistic examination of the relevant narration helps to clarify the illustration. The narrator compares the daughter-mother conflict – triggered by her intimate relation with Jos é a bisexual man from the lower class – to war. In this war, she and her mother stand on opposite sides, fighting each other. She describes her mother's reaction to her secret love as an act of “digging up the hatchet” [*desenterrar el hacha de guerra*] (181, 182, 183, 184) and stresses this phrase by repeating it over and over again.

The antagonistic atmosphere rendered by the autobiographer exemplifies the spirit of the era, especially on the university campus. The narrator depicts her rebellious spirit to be “un ardor militante y subversivo” (180). The reiterative association with war and

belligerent spirit reveals that by rebelling against her mother the young Esther actually resists the ultraconservative value and culture brought by the war or, more exactly, by the Francoists' victory in the war. In other words, the child makes the mother a scapegoat for the frustrating social and political situation under Franco. Furthermore, one can also interpret that the narrator's constant reference to the war – the ultimate origin of Esther's dissatisfaction – reflects her effort to understand her mother: both her mother's tragic life and her own repressed childhood/adolescence are products of the war and the subsequent dictatorship. Belonging to the victorious Francoist side, the child and her mother still suffered ultraconservative restrictions imposed by the Franco regime. In this sense, the author actually questions the strict dualism between the winners and the losers, as established by herself at the beginning of the autobiography. Understanding her mother's life, the autobiographer ultimately weakens the generational conflict by blaming it on the war and the dictatorship.

In addition to an effort to understand her mother, the belligerent reference could also be interpreted as an obsession of the 1.5 generation with the Civil War. These rebellious children were too young to participate in this decisive war to have changed the historical trajectory of their country. While the actual Civil War and its aftermath were imposed on the children, the war between the young Tusquets and her mother is provoked by the child as revenge. The child's revenge is seemingly against her mother but actually against the repressive social environment during the postwar period. The narrator recalls that “por fin estalló la bomba que yo sab í enterrada debajo de nuestros pies” (183). But, finally, the young protagonist lost the war. The liberation to which she looks forward does not arrive. Hidden behind the young protagonist's deep frustration is

the narrator's sense of powerlessness against history. In the same manner, her progressive peers revolting against Francoism did not see the liberation they had expected come true: the revolutionary mood turned into the disenchantment [*desencanto*] when the Moncloa Pacts signed in 1977 dashed the revolutionary hopes accumulated since the late 1950s. This is the disenchantment suggested by Teresa M. Milarós in *El mono del desencanto*,

Parec í que la muerte del dictador en 1975 deber í de haber dejado en principio v á libre a una pr áctica de realizaci ón de signo m ás o menos marxista pero, como bien sabemos, no ocurri óas í[...] Santiago Carrillo en el IX Congreso del PCE celebrado en 1978 anuncia el abandono del leninismo, mientras que el partido socialista renuncia al marxismo en el XXVIII Congreso del PSOE en el a ño siguiente. (89)

Aiming to break free, the young Esther in the late '50s struggles for love and for a political doctrine in which she could trust. Introduced by the female director of the rest home where she works as a volunteer, the protagonist embraces Catholicism for love as propagated by the religion: "Dios era amor y todo se basaba en el amor: amarle a Él sobre todas las cosas y amarnos los unos a los otros como Él nos hab ía amado. Amar y entregarse generosamente a los dem ás" (194). Irritating her atheist mother, she devotes herself to God and to religious rituals day and night (194), hoping to find emotional comfort through her religious dedication. Her attachment to Catholicism is doomed to fail, since the church, empowered by the Franco regime, imposed a series of restrictions on Spaniards, and on women in particular. Impatient with any restriction, the youth finally escapes the religious "prison" (196).

In order to rebel against the degenerate bourgeois world, she strives to resist the Franco regime, which endowed the winning side with privileges and thus brought about social injustice. The rebellious atmosphere of the university in the mid-50s deeply influenced the protagonist's political stance. By opposing Francoism, she politically betrays her family and her social class – the winning side to which the author refers in the title as “we.” Her betrayal is not an isolated case, but rather, “un fenómeno generalizado: para desesperación de sus padres, los hijos de las familias burguesas se hacían de izquierdas en la universidad” (201). Juan Goytisolo also provides a similar experience in his memoir. In other words, the young Tusquets participates in a collective betrayal, rebelling against the regime and her class origin. However, Esther's rebellion leads to nothing but ideological disorientation and disillusionment. Resisting the establishment, the youth does not know where to channel her beliefs. In desperation, she finds her hope in the anti-Francoist faction of Falangism for a radical social change, for the abolition of inequality in society (203). Ultimately, the deceptive and nonsensical Falangist program frustrates the young Esther's hope for social transformation.

The book ends with the protagonist's detachment from a clear political doctrine: “Supe que nunca volvería a afiliarme a un partido, a tener un carné, que reivindicaba mi derecho, como intelectual, a tomar ante cada situación, ante cada conflicto, la conclusión que me pareciera acertada, sin someterme a la política de grupo” (220). This detachment is not only of the protagonist but also of the adult narrator, who unequivocally refused to involve herself in endless ideological battles. Analyzing Raymond Federman as a 1.5 generation Holocaust writer, Suleiman believes that “the more complex the system of distancing the closer Federman gets to his biography” (119). Similarly, Tusquets

distances and differentiates herself from the past only to draw it closer and to trace its origin.

Detaching herself from the bourgeoisie with which her younger self was affiliated, the autobiographer portrays the corruption of bourgeois life. Her vivid portrayal of winners' lives from the perspective of an insider makes ironic the historical revisionists' claim to Francoist victimhood. Meanwhile, the child Esther's frustration and disappointment at the Francoist upper-class family ridicules the family ideal propagated by the Franco regime. Tusquets' use of classical irony, in the contextual level, demonstrates the author's strong commitment to historical and social reality, undermining Francoist discourses on the war. In so doing, she constructs a new self by choosing a political path distinct from that of the previous generation in the victorious upper-class family. Demonstrating an unequivocal political stance and criticizing Francoist ideologies, Tusquets aims to reach an understanding of what happened to her as a child. Rendering a complex relationship between generations, between daughter and mother in particular, the author traces back to the war or the Francoists' victory and uncovers this ultimate origin of all conflicts. Through her explorative writing, she understands her uncaring mother and finds a means of coming to terms with the previous generation as well as with her past. Tusquets's autobiography renders the author's attitude toward the past: she identifies with the defeated for condemning the triumphalist Francoist discourse; however, at the same time she demonstrates an effort to reach reconciliation with the victorious Francoists through exploring and understanding their unhappy lives.

## Chapter 4

### **Intertextual Encounters: Luis Mateo Díez's *La gloria de los niños* (2007)**

The legendary story of Tom Thumb came down the ages and across the nations, from 17<sup>th</sup>-century French writer Charles Perrault's fairy tale, *Le Petit Poucet*, to Mexican filmmaker René Cardona's 1957 fantasy movie, *Pulgarcito*. Little Tom Thumb, lost with his brothers in the depths of the gloomy woods, outwits the cannibalistic ogre and rescues his siblings from tragic destinies. A similar child hero reappears in Luis Mateo Díez's 2007 novel, titled *La gloria de los niños*. In this Spanish novel, the child protagonist, named Pulgar ("thumb" in Spanish), entrusted by his dying father, treks through ruins to find his siblings lost in the Spanish Civil War. Named after Tom Thumb, Pulgar in *La gloria* bears evident similarities to the child protagonist in Perrault's story. In other words, while the French fairy tale is an intertext of Mateo Díez's novel, Tom Thumb, extricated from its original text and inserted into a new one, becomes an intertextual figural reference for the child protagonist in *La gloria*.

Intertextuality points to similarities, while at the same time implying inevitable transformations. Jorge Luis Borges illustrates the transformative nature of the intertextual relationship through an extreme example in his short story, "Pierre Menard, autor del *Quijote*," in which Pierre Menard reproduces the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 38<sup>th</sup> chapters of the first part of *Don Quijote* word for word. Critics have explored this short story from various perspectives, among which the most relevant to my study is intertextuality. Theorists Michael Worton and Judith Still consider this story to be "the most influential intertextual story" (13). For Gérard Genette, Menard's fragment of *Don Quijote* is not a copy but a "maximal imitation" or a "minimal transformation" of an intertext (445). Menard's

inscription, according to the narrator, results in a text distinct from the original. Menard, as a twentieth-century French writer, incorporates his knowledge of all historical events since Cervantes' epoch into his word-for-word rewriting. In so doing, Menard recreates a distant past of the seventeenth century in Spain from the vantage point of the twentieth century. Juxtaposing two apparently identical fragmentary texts produced correspondingly by Menard and Cervantes, Borges draws an insightful conclusion: "Menard (acaso sin quererlo) ha enriquecido mediante una técnica nueva el arte detenido y rudimentario de la lectura" (54). The transformative nature of intertextuality can lead to an enrichment of the original text, while it can also generate subversive effects on the pre-text concerned.

Julia Kristeva's concept of "intertextuality" emphasizes the doubleness of language; the dialogical feature of poetic language has been a major concern in my exploration of the image of the politicized child throughout this study. Kristeva coined the term intertextuality in 1966 when introducing the then relatively unknown literary theory of Mikhail Bakhtin to Western Europe (Irwin 227). According to Kristeva, "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of intertextuality replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read at least double" (66). She asserts, "the dialogical word or utterance is double-voiced, heteroglot, and possesses a meaning (A) at the same time that it possesses an alternative meaning or meanings (not-A)" (43). I have explored various manifestations of the discussed A-and-Not-A ambivalence in the previous chapters. In Chapter 1, the author Adelaida García Morales and the filmmaker V ́ctor Erice convey this ambivalence through allegory, which enables the coexistence of the protagonists'



childhood memories as a mask and the artists' political attitudes as hidden meanings. In the second chapter, Sopeña Monsalve's hybrid text illustrates reflective nostalgia, rendering at the same time harsh critique of and deep nostalgia for Franco-era childhood shared by his generation. In the third chapter, Tusquets speaks the winners' language ironically in order to display their corruption and decadence, thus claiming for herself an identity that is distinct from her origin. In this chapter, Luis Mateo Díez appropriates the Francoist propagandistic phrase of the "glory of children" and redefines this concept, endowing it with new meanings through intertextual connections. The act of interpreting the reconstructed glorious child and childhood, then, becomes a process of tracing its links with other related texts and figures.

The process of constructing an intertextual network could be infinite. Kristeva's interpretation of intertextuality borrows not only from Bakhtin's dialogical doubleness but also from Saussure's theory of the systematic sign (Irwin 228). Kristeva breaks the Saussurian stable correspondence between the signifier and its signified by interpreting the signifier only through its relationship with other signifiers. As William Irwin summarizes Kristeva's point: "We are left, as Kristeva sees it, with the free play of signifiers" (37). Thus, a text is no longer a final product but an open-ended process of production or, in Kristeva's word, a "productivity": "the text is a permutation of texts, an intertextuality, in the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another" (Kristeva 36). In addition, literary writers create intertextual links by various means. Some writers insert into new texts "plots, generic features, images, ways of narrating, or phrases and sentences from previous literary texts and the literary tradition" (Allen 11); some quote existing names from previous works

(Müller 103; Plett 26); others could borrow literary figures in a changed form (Müller 103), and so forth.

While entangled literary associations are complex, the involvement of social and political contexts adds more complexity to the intertextual tapestry. Kristeva proposes that “the intertextual procedure would... consider it as such within the text of society and history” (36-37). In other words, all contexts, whether social, historical, political, or theological, are texts and can become intertexts. Given the endless possibilities of literary associations, my study of *La gloria* does not aim at the impossible mission of exhausting its intertextual connections, but attempts to explore the author’s construction of a redemptive child, a child who finds his lost siblings while also helping other people out in the ruined world after the war. Tracking back to concerned pre-texts and existing figures, this chapter has a two-fold objective: one is a contextual exploration, as the author, borrowing the subversive effect of intertextuality, expresses his resistance to official or alleged authoritative narratives of “Franco’s children” in the past as well as the present; the other is to uncover hidden intertextual links, because the interplay between the pre-texts and a new setting of Spain in the 1940s leads to the emergence of the powerful child in *La gloria de los niños*.

Kristeva’s interpretation lends theoretical support to my exploration of intertextual dialogism in *La gloria*. Kristeva originally conceived the concept “intertextuality” as a politically charged term, which she used as a weapon to confront “society’s desire to impose monologism or repress plurality” in the late 1960s in France (Allen 43). Considering intertextual connections to be a never-ending process and thus opening dialogical possibilities among the intertexts, Kristeva challenges “notions of

unity,” “authoritativeness,” and the alleged existence of an “unquestionable truth” (Allen 43). In other words, the concept of intertextuality, from its beginning, is designed to resist “monologism” (Allen 45). The notion of intertextuality as resistance to a single and unquestionable voice or truth informs my reading of *La gloria*. My contextual exploration of the work, thus, becomes a political and ideological one: I explore how the author, through his intertextual dialogue with the propagandistic materials of the 1940s and ’50s, undermines Franco’s official discourse on the “glory of childhood.”

An examination of the Francoist version of the “glory of children” serves as the point of departure for my discussion of Mateo Díez’s reconstruction of the same concept. The intertextual juxtaposition of “la gloria de los niños” under Francoism and in our novel, on the one hand, reveals the regime’s manipulation of the child image for its own political purpose and, on the other hand, demonstrates Mateo Díez’s resistance to the Francoist narrative. The Francoist triumphalist discourse constructed the official version of “la gloria de los niños” and made it a model of childhood for children of the time. This constructed glory is associated with children’s redemptive power. In other words, the Francoist account of glorious childhood has a religious origin. Concerning the Spanish situation, Pope Pío XI delivered the encyclical *Divini Redemptoris* on March 19, 1937, supporting the nationalist rebels and condemning the Republicans. The Pope declared that the Francoists’ “proper and social mission is to defend truth, justice and all those eternal values which Communism attacks,” considering Franco’s rebellion to be “a crusade for the progress of humanity” (Pope Pío XI). The Franco regime adopted as the official version Pope Pío XI’s description of the Spanish Civil War, portraying the nation

as an innocent victim of atheist sinners, the Civil War as the Crusade, and the nationalists as the fearless defenders of the nation.

The Franco regime conferred the capacity to redeem on some children and made them the “glorious children” of New Spain. Under Francoism, seven children were canonized: these children included Faustino Perez-Manglano, Ramon Montero Navarro, Santos Franco Sanchez, Josephina Vilaseca, Mari Carmen Gonzalez-Valerio, Maria a Columna Cimadevilla and Montserrat Grases. The regime officially extolled their virtues and considered their deeds to be “la gloria de los niños” in the postwar period (Cejas 28). All of them suffered and finally died of physical diseases and extreme pain; while they lived, they devoted themselves to daily prayer for their family members and the Spanish people in general. Their sainthood manifests itself in extraordinary endurance for suffering and self-denial, as well as religious piety (Cruz 81-88, 123-24, 136-42, 148-53, 171-73, 187-92). In other words, the Francoist education valued endurance of pain and obedience to order: everybody was expected to withstand his/her suffering and to pray to be saved by God. The more enduring and submissive the children were the more saintly and glorious they became.

Social models, including glorious children, are made, not born. In other words, they are historical and political constructions. To examine how they have been made and elevated above the others is to explore social and political values of the time in which these models have been made. In other words, for Mateo D éz, to resist master narratives and the models the Francoists have constructed is to undermine the model-constructing process and to denounce the political aims of the morals under Francoism. Presenting a distinct image of the glorious child, Mateo D éz effectively deconstructs the Francoist

manipulation of the child image. The canonization of young saints in Franco's Spain best illustrates the politicization of the child image during the time. Medieval historian Michael Goodich, when studying models of sainthood of the Middle Ages, points out that the canonization of saints embodies "the church's desire to reward a faithful clan rather than an outstanding individual" (289). In Franco's Spain where religion and politics merged, "the church's desire" also reflected that of the Franco government. In an exploration of the case of the young saint Mari Carmen under Francoism, Jessamy Harvey uncovers the kinship between the child's clan and the Franco family, confirming Goodich's above mentioned argument on the canonization of saints ("Good Girls" 119-20). However, an in-depth exploration of the saintly youth's lives shows the complexity of the recognition, which goes beyond mere family issues.

Reviewing the bibliographies of all seven child saints of the Franco era, one can easily find that the canonization of young saints was actually a strategy of the Francoists to repay supporters for their firm loyalty. In other words, "la gloria de los niños" under Francoism could mean the allegiance of their families to the nationalist forces. As expected, all these children were born into families that Franco's triumphalist discourse elevated. One of the most promoted child saints, Ramón Montero Navarro (1931-45), was born into a very devout Catholic family that protected priests and continued all spiritual activities during the Second Republican period (Cruz 187-92). Examined in the context of the political persecution and ideological imposition in the early postwar period, the public recognition of the child Ramon's spiritual devotion in 1945 is actually an acknowledgement of his family's faithfulness to the church and, by extension, to the Franco forces allied with the church. In other words, political faithfulness was one of the

major concerns of the new regime in the postwar period; the construction of the saintly child models exactly reflects this political desire.

While, in the pre-text of the official narrative, “la gloria de los niños” refers to devotion to Francoism, in Mateo Díez’s novel the same term points to humanism, which goes beyond ideological confrontations. Faced with ruin left by the war, the narrator calls for humanism: “Los buenos siempre acaban siendo los dueños del mundo, porque las razones de la bondad son las que corresponden al corazón humano. Es la confianza en el humanismo la que hace mejor al mundo” (55). It is clear that, according to the narrator, redemptive power should derive from humanism, a belief in human kindness beyond any particular party or religion. This conclusion and belief, in turn, trivializes and undermines the Francoists’ efforts at ideological and religious indoctrination.

Resisting the Francoist propaganda of model childhood, Mateo Díez’s work does not generate a replacing master narrative but establishes intertextual dialogues with representations of child images across the nations. Examining Mateo Díez’s novel from the dialogical perspective, I aim to consolidate the argument I have presented in the previous chapters. There is neither one group called “Franco’s children” nor one version of “Franco-era childhood.” Implicit in the selection of my target works is the recognition that the category “children under Francoism” is a diverse social, cultural and political one. Exploring the intertextual relationships established through *La gloria*, I argue that the Spanish writer looks beyond one single nation state in his construction of postwar children and childhood. Specifically, by suggesting Benjamin’s angel of history, Mateo Díez discusses the issue of Spanish historical memory in an international context of war memories; and by linking his child protagonist to Tom Thumb of a French origin and

Bruno of postwar Italy, the author establishes a transcultural dialogue on children's agency. Hidden behind his approach to the reconstruction of the "glorious children" under Franco emerges, on the one hand, his explicit resistance to any authoritative version of Franco-era children and, on the other, his broader vision and desire to examine Spain and Spanish historical memory in a global context.

In the new millennium, reconstructions of Franco-era children have a clear tendency toward plurality and dialogism. The issues involved in the heated discussions include not only political ideology, social class, gender, but also nation and culture. In *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, Esther Tusquets calls for more critical voices from the Francoist side, because she believes that "se ha escrito mucho mucho desde el punto de vista de quienes la perdieron, en libros de memorias y en literatura de ficción" (7). Considering the abundance of voices from the Republican side, Tusquets reconstructs her own childhood experiences in a Francoist haute bourgeois family to redress the imbalance of writings from both sides. In addition to the plurality in terms of political ideology, Tusquets' autobiography also refers to the issue of nation and social class, or more specifically, to the particularity of the Barcelonese bourgeoisie in the postwar period. Actually, as early as in 2003, another Barcelonese writer, Emili Teixidor, published in Catalan her fiction, *Pa negre*, depicting Franco-era childhood in a proletarian family in the rural area of Catalonia. In 2010, the novel was adapted into a homonymous drama film, which highlights the destructive effects of the war and the subsequent dictatorship on children. The issue of social class also stands out in Juan José Millás' autobiographical novel, entitled *El mundo*, published in 2007. In the novel, the protagonist Juan José recalls hunger, poverty and extreme coldness his younger self lived

in the postwar period in a lower-class family. Mateo Díez's novel participates in this colorful scenery of Franco-era childhood representations, responding to the general tendency toward discursive plurality.

Compared to these works, *La gloria* goes even further, moving in a transcultural domain. In an interview conducted in 1997, titled "Luis Mateo Díez: establecer una relación verbal con el mundo," the Spanish writer explicitly recognizes the influence of Italian neorealism on his works and his own tendency to connect his narratives to the world (Diakow 318). The cover image of *La gloria* shows a mark of Italian neorealism. The impressive scene, in which a little boy looks toward the future with firm determination, is directly drawn from the widely known Italian neorealist film, *Ladri di biciclette* (1948), directed by Vittorio de Sica. The image of the little boy is Bruno in de Sica's movie, where the father and the son have tried out all means of recovering the stolen bicycle before the father intends to steal one behind the young boy's back. Featuring on the cover of *La gloria*, Bruno, like Tom Thumb, becomes one more intertextual figural reference of Pulgar in *La gloria*.

The author's transnational vision is rooted in the national context of the postwar period in Franco's Spain. In other words, the author's vision goes beyond a single nation, yet his major preoccupation is still with Spanish contemporary historical issues. To illustrate the author's global vision and national focus, I explore how the child protagonist, Pulgar, in *La gloria*, evokes Benjamin's angel of history in the sense that both figures embody the intricate dialectics of historical ruin and recovery of history. I also analyze how our little hero bears Tom Thumb's and Bruno's marks of adult-like supportive power. Furthermore, I examine how Pulgar's innocence as a child subverts the



Francoist triumphalist discourse and manipulation of the term “innocence” in the project of national identity construction. These three intertextual layers relate to each other, contributing to a multi-faceted image of a redemptive child who emerges out of the debris of the early postwar period. The reconstructed child, in turn, becomes Mateo D éz’s glorious child, who undermines the Francoist model of redemptive children.

The author’s resistance to any coherent official narrative of Franco-era childhood and, by extension, of Franco-era lives, manifests itself not only in the intertextual dialogues but also in the prevailing existence of fragments in the novel: these include broken families, scattered ruins of towns and countries, burning remains of corpses, injured and disabled persons, and fragmentary life stories as well. The novel concerns an eight-year-old boy’s journey to a distant city, where his father on his deathbed told him that he could find his lost siblings; at the same time, however, the author decentralizes the position of the child hero by weaving fragments of life stories of many lower-class Spaniards into the child’s odyssey. In addition, all these ordinary lives share the same characteristic of certain incompleteness: some of them, including the vagabond Rovira, the three bakers, and the fugitive Enero, are physically disabled; and the others, including the desperate old woman, the welcoming mid-aged woman, the single country girl, the child’s godmother, and the child hero himself, suffer the loss of family members. By incorporating multiple stories of ordinary people into the child protagonist’s trek, the author exposes the effect of national politics – the war – on Spaniards’ personal lives. The author’s means of telling multi-layered stories, combined with the intertextual network he establishes, contributes to the complexity of *La gloria*. Implied in this multi-

faceted complexity is the author's disenchantment with master epics, which have been invented and imposed by the victors.

Resisting master narratives of history, the author by no means intends to forget the past, but rather, he appeals to historical memory. His desire is expressed in the novel through the combination of historical ruins and a strong evocation of the traumatic past arising from the debris. Benjamin's interpretation of Paul Klee's painting "Angelus Novus" informs my exploration of this dialectical combination in *La gloria*. As I will show, there exists an intertextual tension between Mateo Díez's Pulgar and Benjamin's angel of history. This intertextuality is established through their narrators' similar ways of reflecting on historical memories through the major figures in the texts. More specifically, both figures – the Angel of History and Pulgar – transmit their authors' desire to recover historical memory through the preservation of wreckage. In 1940 when Walter Benjamin witnessed the rise of fascism in Germany, this Jewish philosopher wrote his now famous *Theses on the Philosophy of History*. In the ninth thesis, he comments on Paul Klee's painting "Angelus Novus" by describing that,

His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe that keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress. (257-58)

Through the angel's gaze, we see Benjamin's deep concern about ruins of the past, which "keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage" (*Theses* 257). The angel intends to stay behind, to restore the dead to life, and to repair the destroyed world, but blown by the storm from Paradise, he is unable to do so.

The wreckage of the past generates an evocative power, evoking retrospective visions: the angel of history cannot turn his gaze away from "debris" that "grows skyward." Looking back, one is required to recover the past. At the core of recovering the past is Benjamin's obsession with redemption. Benjaminian scholar Richard Wolin captures Benjamin's point: "Benjamin's past carries with it a temporal index by which it is referred to redemption. This is the reason why he insisted on the methodological primacy of remembrance, as opposed to a concept of progress that would be superficially future-oriented" (xlvi). In other words, Benjamin's redemption points to the past, aiming to recover historical memory. By this means, through the angel's perspective, Benjamin renders his dialectic of debris and recuperation of the past. In a similar way, Mateo D'éz expresses his concern about historical memory through his obsessive descriptions of fragments. On the one hand, those ordinary people's micro-stories characterized by a certain degree of incompleteness compose postwar daily life memories; on the other hand, at the end of the novel, the protagonist, once an adult, strives to distinguish the traces left of the past when revisiting the now completely renovated towns that his younger self witnessed as ruins:

El niño que se despistó entre los solares, las casas derruidas y los escombros podía vislumbrar al hombre que volvía para también despistarse en el orden y la limpieza del Barrio reconstruido. Lo que ese

hombre vio, en la arquitectura de aquel inmueble que apenas conservaba el hierro de los balcones y el dintel numerado del portal, fue la línea de los visillos blancos en los cristales del cuarto piso, y pudo contar los balcones hasta quedarse con los tres que correspondían a lo que buscaba. (222)

It is evident here that the author demonstrates his deep concern about debris and recovery of the past through the gaze of the adult protagonist.

With “wreckage upon wreckage” in front of the angel’s feet, Benjamin calls on “collectors,” and the child protagonist Pulgar is exactly one of these Benjaminian collectors. In the essay “Edward Fuchs, the Historian and Collector,” Benjamin argues that “it was the collector who found his way into grey areas (of history) ... through fragments and photography” (*One-Way* 361). In other words, Benjamin believes that Fuchs, as a collector, explores “living historical process” by collecting the traces of the past, “whose pulse can still be felt in the present” (*One-Way* 62). The importance of collectors, for Benjamin, lies in their access through ruins to the past. The angel of history does not have this access: gazing at the ruins upon ruins at his feet, the angel does not have the capacity to touch them or to mend the disastrous world. On the one hand, the Klee painting shows a storm from Paradise drawing the angel away from the piling wreckage of the past, preventing his wings from closing up; on the other hand, according to Gershom Scholem, angels are only messengers who have no salvation power, which is reserved only for the Messiah (53). Unlike the angel of history, Pulgar is endowed with messianic power. The little boy’s power is best illustrated by his occupation as a waste picker in *La gloria*:

Pulgar hab á salido muy temprano para dedicarse a la rebusca, en la que invertía el tiempo de acuerdo a la fortuna de los hallazgos... Lo que Pulgar hab á aumentado era la destreza para moverse entre los escombros y las basuras y el instinto para orientar la búsqueda, como si el valor de lo recuperable entre las ruinas y los desperdicios necesitase de una atención previsor. (13)

Rummaging through garbage, the child salvages and collects reusable materials thrown away by others for personal consumption. Later on, entrusted by his father with the task of finding the lost brothers and sister, the boy searches heaps of ruins left by the bomb attacks in the war. Furthermore, the boy's rummage around the historical debris leads the readers to the past under Francoism.

In *La gloria*, the child Pulgar faces the same scene as the piling of "wreckage upon wreckage... that grows skyward," as described by Benjamin in his discourse on the angel of history (*Theses* 257). Yet, unlike the angel, the child, as a collector, has direct access to the past. The descriptions of the shared apocalyptic scenes in both texts also accentuate the intertextual association between Mateo Díez's novel and Benjamin's discourse on the angel of history. While Benjamin depicts a shocking sight that "keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage," Mateo Díez also portrays a patio in which debris has accumulated unceasingly: "los escombros que se acumulaban en el patio interior iban creciendo como si alguien hiciese una recolección de lo destruido: la cosecha de la ruina que en el Barrio siempre hab á tenido un fértil resultado, ya que el abandono contribu á a ella" (90). While the literary connection between *La gloria* and Benjamin's description of the angel of history are similar, this intertextuality also generates transformations, as

pointed out by Borges in his short story on Menard. Specifically, contrary to the angel of history who is to be distanced from ruins by the storm, in *La gloria* Pulgar exerts redemptive power as a child, striving to restore broken families and mend broken hearts. In other words, “redemption,” in Mateo Díez’s novel, refers to recovery of the past while at the same time extending its meaning to the practical power of repairing the broken world in the past. Specifically, Mateo Díez’s protagonist accomplishes the angel’s unaccomplishable pursuit to travel back to the disastrous past, specifically to recover his lost siblings while at the same time helping others – at least temporarily – out of their miserable situations.

Analyzing Benjamin’s interpretation of the angel of history, Raymond Barglow relates the situation of the angel of history with that of Benjamin himself. Barglow argues that “the intensity of Benjamin’s description suggests that he experienced the condition from which the Angel of History cannot escape as a personal as well as a political impasse” (Barglow). In fact, this “impasse” can also describe the situation of many Franco-era Spaniards, who, like the angel of history, are caught by tangled history without being able to disengage themselves from the traumatic past. Mateo Díez’s child hero, however, contributes to these people’s liberation from the oppressive past by travelling back for them to alter the broken world. In his *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, Benjamin submits a philosophical statement by writing,

The past carries with it a temporal index by which it is referred to redemption. This is a secret agreement between past generations and the present one. Our coming was expected on earth. Like every generation that preceded us, we have been endowed with a weak Messianic power, a

power to which the past has a claim. That claim cannot be settled  
cheaply ... even the dead will not be safe from the enemy if he triumphs.

And this enemy has not ceased triumphing. (*The Arcade* 471)

Pulgar who travels back to the past can be considered to perform the agreement between generations to recover historical memory. Pulgar's liberating force bespeaks the power of literature, in which the fictional protagonist can generate a therapeutic effect to unburden readers from the entangling past under Francoism.

Unlike *El florido pensil* and *Hab úmos ganado la guerra* that are heavily imprinted with the authors' own lives and experiences, *La gloria* can more easily be categorized as fiction. In addition to the transnational vision demonstrated in the novel, Mateo D éz takes a more detached stance from the discussed events than the authors in previous chapters. The further distance from the past will also become inevitable as years go by: the first generation that fought in the war has mostly passed away, while at the same time the 1.5 generation has reached their twilight years. In fact, analyzing works produced by two 1.5 generation writers, Georges Perec and Raymond Federman, Holocaust scholar Susan Suleiman lays stress on the writers' distance or detachment from the traumatic past (199-200). Responding to the tendency toward detachment, Mateo D éz uses a fictional child figure Pulgar as protagonist, endowing him with the characteristics of several pre-existing intertextual figures.

Like his figural reference Tom Thumb, who reunites the whole family by taking home his lost brothers, the eight-year-old boy Pulgar in *La gloria* also assumes the responsibility of fixing the broken world. This is a task that adults are supposed to assume but, in fact, they lack this capability. Facing the broken families and broken

hearts of the unfortunate persons he meets on the journey, Pulgar strives to reunite people or to relieve people's pain. Entrusted by his father on his deathbed with locating the lost siblings, little Pulgar does not disappoint his father and restores the two brothers and the younger sister. Coming across a middle-aged lady whose son died in the war, Pulgar serves as a temporary surrogate son by talking to the woman and receiving her motherly care. Receiving help from the single rural girl Rita, the boy takes messages between her and the handicapped bakers who fall in love with her. These and other kind deeds of the child bear the same characteristic of piecing fragmentary parts together, of bringing people together. It is exactly the child's redemptive power for which the author calls in the novel. Stressing healing power for the divided society of the postwar period, the Spanish writer condemns the regime's division of the country.

Placing hope for redemption in a child figure, Mateo Díez depicts a world in which the child-adult relationship is inverted. The inverted roles of the child and the adult in *La gloria* evoke the father-son relationship in its pre-text: de Sica's film, *Ladri di biciclette*, from which the cover image of the novel is extricated. The image of Bruno on the novel's cover reminds us of the alleged "most celebrated and widely disseminated" cover art of *the Great Gatsby*, not only because of the impressive eyes shown in both illustrations, but also because of what Scott Fitzgerald told the publisher. The American writer said, "I had written it (the jacket art) into the novel" (Scribner 161). I cannot argue that Fitzgerald's statement is applicable to Mateo Díez's writing, because we don't know who decided on the cover image, yet it is fair to say that this jacket art of Bruno is perfect for the novel. An understanding of the figure Bruno in its original film helps to illuminate the exploration of Pulgar in the novel.



The author establishes the intertextuality between de Sica's film and *La gloria* not only through the cover image of the novel but also through the characteristics shared by both child protagonists. In *Ladri di biciclette*, de Sica portrays a child who behaves like a caring adult. This portrayal, just as the angel of history, describes a crucial quality of the child protagonist in *La gloria*, which, in turn, provides a logical and coherent sequel for de Sica's film. In other words, the intertextuality between these two child protagonists enriches each other. The interaction in the film between Bruno and his father demonstrates the father's irresponsibility. In contrast to the father's immaturity is the child's strong sense of responsibility and determination: the child becomes the father to the adult, and the child provides hope for the future. If Benjamin and Klee deposit hope for future in an angel because of their disillusionment with human beings, then one can argue that Mateo Díez endows the child with redemptive power because of his disappointment with the adult. An analysis of the child-adult relationship in *La gloria* through its intertextual film further clarifies Mateo Díez's disenchantment.

The beginning of the Italian film defines the relationship between the father and the son. The film opens with the father Ricci's immature actions: he is reclining at a small fountain, playing with streams of water like a child. His carelessness contrasts with the struggle and efforts of a group of unemployed workers close to him in the same plaza, where they fight for the scarcity of job opportunities. The next sequence turns to the domestic space of Ricci's home, where his eight-year-old son, Bruno, uses a rag to attentively circle the rims of the bicycle his parents recovered from the pawnshop. If the bicycle, with the two well-balanced wheels, symbolizes harmony and peace in life, then five-year-old Bruno, taking care of the bike, is portrayed as the guardian of peaceful life

of the family. The sun beams projected on the child's head from the windows in the morning create a halo above the boy's head, lending him a sacred and bright hue against the dark background of the room. When watching his father happily stepping into the room, the child criticizes Ricci for the latter's negligence of the bike, since the child finds a dent on the rim. Faced with the son's accusation and his serious expression, the father does not reply directly but rather carelessly jests with the little boy. The audience feels the child's sense of responsibility also through some easily neglected details. Before the father and the son leave the room for their jobs, it is the son who quietly closes the door in order not to disturb his sleeping baby brother in bed. In contrast to Bruno, the father seems still immersed in the joy brought about by his new job, without paying any attention to his surroundings. The father and the son's behaviors fully account for their inverted roles in life: the son is more like a father than his father, safeguarding peace and taking care of the younger member of the family.

Like Ricci, Pulgar's father does not fulfill his role as a responsible father. His irresponsibility is illustrated by his frequent absence from family life. The author accentuates his critique of the father's negligence through a representation of the mother's pain: "La madre atareada vivía una suerte de abandono, que los tiempos difíciles intensificaron, mientras el padre fue sumando las ausencias que, al fin, acabaron siendo como el resultado de una extraña conducta avalada por la incomprensión y la indolencia"(49). The malfunction of the father's role in *La gloria* goes beyond personal problems: it has social and political origins. After the war, depression prevailed in Spain, especially among those who had lost the war. After losing the war, the father in the novel falls into depression. The father confesses:

Eso tiene que ver con la voluntad, con la falta de la misma. No hay ambición sin voluntad. Y hasta las ganas de vivir se reducen cuando la falta de voluntad hace costoso levantarse por la mañana, engancharse a la vida. No es la pereza propiamente dicha, hay una indolencia del espíritu que tiene algo de dolor, otro sufrimiento ajeno al cuerpo. (80)

While the child's father cannot recover from defeat in the war, his mother always keeps silent under the unbearable weight of life: "La madre era una mujer silenciosa, y de la medida de ese silencio en seguida tuvo Pulgar la percepción de su dolor, no ya lo que proviniera de la enfermedad... sino del propio sufrimiento a que la vida la hubiese reconducido" (46). The mother's silence in *La gloria* evokes that of the parents in *El sur*, in which the repressive family environment marks the protagonist's childhood. In *La gloria*, the author's description of the depression exceeds the family and extends to postwar Spanish society.

The author's realistic depiction of the Spanish postwar society echoes Italian neorealism, a literary and cinematographic movement which de Sica's film best represents. On the back cover of *La gloria*, this novel is described as "una historia llena de resonancias neorealistas" (back cover). According to Lucia Re, the most prominent features of neorealism include the desire "to bear witness to history" and "to contribute to the narrative reconstruction of the recent past" (13). These two characteristics of the French artistic movement, in fact, also echo Benjamin's call for the need to remember and rewrite the past. In addition, neorealism requires the author's strong social commitment, which emerges in *La gloria* from the portrayal of ordinary people's miserable lives after the Civil War. When recounting fragments of these people's life

stories, the author's tone is sympathetic; his sympathy grows out of his witness of similar experiences as a child and his later understanding of them as an adult. Referring to his novels that concern lives in wartime and the postwar period, the author confesses that "la novela es un instrumento que necesita pasar por el espejo de la experiencia y de la memoria para dar una mirada compleja de la realidad vital" (Catalán).

Aesthetically, Mateo D éz combines neorealism with intertextuality harmoniously. According to Re, neorealist works always address to contemporary social issues in an explicit and unequivocal way; therefore, neorealist writers oppose experimentalism and intertextuality, because these two artistic forms "turn literature away from communicative and referential functions" (34). In other words, the endless *différance* of meanings implied in intertextuality seems incompatible with neorealist specific references to some contemporary issues. Interestingly enough, in *La gloria*, neorealism and intertextuality coexist. Their coexistence echoes my argument that Mateo D éz has a global vision, which is rooted in his domestic concerns. The author refers to related figures that exist in different cultures, yet all his intertextual references pivot around his realistic concern with a ruined world after war in Spain.

The author's realistic description of the depressing world gives us an impression that the country has lost hope for the future. In addition to the child's family members, the vagabond Rovira, whom the child meets on journey, indulges himself in drinking and stealing, the old lady who waits in vain for the return of her lost grandson becomes demented, another lady who lost her son in the war dwells on melancholia for her son's death, and a large number of people remain maimed after the war. The human psychological and physical conditions correspond to the bleak environment rendered in

the novel: the country has suffered serious devastation, leaving fragments and ruins everywhere. Mateo D éz describes Borenes:

Las familias deshechas y los hogares destruidos... en ese Borenes funerario... fue ese olor de brasas salpicadas que ardieron bajo la lluvia con la combustión de los cuerpos y los enseres: el humo de la niebla como el aliento funerario y las briznas que el viento sigui ó llevando igual que la m ácula de las esquelas que jam ás tendr án nombres. (23 - 24)

The adults living in the city, devastated by war or the loss of the war, have lost their way in life.

In sharp contrast to the sinking and hopeless adults, their children, like Pulgar, have risen up to cope with disastrous familiar and social situations left over by the parents. While in the three works discussed in my previous chapters, the authors and the filmmaker tell stories of the past and articulate their political attitudes toward the past from the vantage point of the present, *La gloria* looks more toward the future.

Specifically, Mateo D éz resorts to the pre-existing image of Bruno, drawing from this intertextual figure the child's agency and appropriating this power to transmit hope for a better future. Nowell-Smith's explanation of neorealism suggests this hope,

Neorealist stories and films tended to be about ordinary life, whether in extraordinary circumstances such as under the German occupation or ordinary ones such as the times of deprivation that followed. The neorealist writers and filmmakers had a vision of reconstruction that looked forward to a future radically different from the recent Fascist past. (425)

To some extent, Nowell-Smith's statement shares Benjamin's concern about remembrance. Responding to Max Horkheimer's comment on the incompleteness of history, Benjamin proposes that "history is not only a science but also and not least a form of remembrance. What science has 'determined,' remembrance can modify" (*The Arcades Project* 471). In other words, Benjamin endows memory with great power to reconstruct and change the past for the future generation. Benjamin's belief in the alterability of the past is exactly the core of the divergence between this German philosopher and Max Horkheimer, founder of the Frankfurt School. Benjamin believes in the power of memory while at the same time concerning himself with the means of exerting this power. According to Wolin, "Benjamin cautions that inherent in the act of remembrance is the core problem of how to construct and represent the past for subsequent generations" (260). In other words, Benjamin's tension between ruins and recovery reflects this German philosopher's concern with the means of reconstructing war memories.

Mateo D éz shares the same preoccupation with Benjamin as to how to reconstruct the traumatic past; in addition, this Spanish writer is concerned with the subject of historical reconstructions: who has the capacity to reconstruct a past for future generations? Responding to this question, *La gloria* transmits a clear message that the children of war, who confront the ruins of the postwar, have the competence or in Benjamin's words, a Messianic power, to reconstruct a different and better future. An intertextual examination of Perrault's *Tom Thumb* makes more pronounced the Spanish writer's optimistic attitude toward a better future. Abandoned by his parents in a dark wood due to economic reasons, little Tom Thumb defeats the gigantic ogre and finally

takes home his terrified siblings. Returning home together with the older brothers, the youngest son also brings back the ogre's possession. The apparently weak child ultimately becomes the key person who solves the crisis and reunites the whole family. Studying *La gloria* from the perspective of intertextuality, one can also argue that, named after Tom Thumb, Pulgar can inherit his pre-figure's capacity to promise a better future for the world around him.

While the juxtaposition of Pulgar and Tom Thumb highlights Mateo Diez's optimism about the future, an intertextual association between *La gloria* and *Ladri di la bicicletta* clarifies the means by which the child protagonist asserts his redemptive power. De Sica's film, its finale in particular, alludes to the messianic hope deposited on the child. In its last sequence, the father Ricci encounters physical violence which results from his ignominious theft. A long shot shows that he is pushed by a crowd to stagger to a crossroad and the following close-up shot fixes on his face, an adult's face marked by burning shame and deep bewilderment. At this moment, little Bruno pushes hard through the furious crowd, stretching out his arm in an attempt to hold his father, as if to keep him from falling down or sinking forever. The film closes with Bruno taking his father's hand and stumbling ahead. The camera pans from Ricci's perplexed look down to their holding hands and it is noteworthy that the father stands by the right hand of Bruno. The relative positions of the father and the son can be symbolic: in the Bible, to hold by the right hand is the symbol of protection and favor (Psalm 18.35). The expression of sitting "at the right hand of God," inscribed in Mark 16.19, conveys transference of divine power and authority to Christ. Based on this religious interpretation, one can consider the finale of

the film to be the climax of the inverted relationship between the father and the son, with supportive strength transferred from the son to the father through their holding hands.

*La gloria*, similar to its Italian film, is also filled with the author's descriptions of the child protagonist's hands, which symbolize power and strength. In the novel, giving his hands means showing the way, swearing friendship, and promising security as well. The section titled "La ausencia," portraying the father who is lost in his own melancholy, ends with the scene in which Pulgar takes hold of his father's hand in order to show him the way home: "Iba para casa. Vamos." – dijo Pulgar, tendiéndole (al padre) una mano, con esa confianza con que los niños valoran las necesidades y se saben dueños de sus poderes, según observaba la Madrina" (64). After finding his father, who has been missing for weeks, the child shows his father the way home and grants him warmth and support in the icy winter. In the section "La mano," the author describes the supportive power the child protagonist transfers to his father through his hand: "La mano de Pulgar era cálida y, al caminar, el padre balanceaba levemente el brazo llevándola y trayéndola como algo que le ayudaba en la divagación" (78). Sadly enough, the father who is expected to maintain the family has to rely on the support of the child who is supposed to be protected. In the novel, the war redefines the father-son relationship by inverting their conventional roles: the narrator's accounts demonstrate that the child is more of a father than his father, giving his small hands to prevent the latter from losing his way and sinking into depression.

The infantilized adults in *La gloria* include not only Pulgar's father but also the adult characters the child meets on the journey. Pulgar's encounter with the vagabond Rovira resembles the final sequence in de Sica's film, in which the scared little boy,



successfully arousing the onlookers' sympathy, saves the father from being severely punished for his theft. In the novel, Pulgar lends a hand to Rovira, a thief who has shared food with the little child, to swear his friendship in return. When Rovira is caught in the same situation as Bruno's father, Pulgar gets up in front of the furious public, coming to help. The child plays the role of a son in a crying need for food in order to help Rovira out: "el llanto de Pulgar parecía romperle la garganta... los que sujetaban a Rovira aflojaron la presa... la voz de Pulgar rompió por encima del llanto como una súplica que concentraba el eco de todas las desgracias... Rovira tomó la mano extendida de Pulgar, hizo un gesto de resignación y agradecimiento" (72). In so doing, the child relieves Rovira of the predicament. In addition, the author's description of the scene in which Pulgar leads Rovira by his hand and walks him to a safe hideout echoes the relationship between Pulgar and his father. The child protagonist can not repress "la sensación de que aquella mano que estrechaba lo hacía con la complacencia con que a su padre le llevó a casa aquella otra tarde, después de seguirle y acercarse a él en las escaleras de la Colegiata, donde liaba un cigarro" (73). Although the child Pulgar, like all the child protagonists discussed in my previous chapters, does not fully understand what has happened in the world around him, he is determined enough to assume the responsibility of helping others out and taking care of his brothers and sister.

Paradoxically, Pulgar's strong sense of responsibility does not result from life experiences, but rather from his innocence as a child. Pulgar's godmother describes him by asserting: "el niño es más poderoso que el hombre. Ni la experiencia ni la sabiduría son las armas del valor. La necesidad es una fuerza que hace especialmente valerosa la inocencia" (17). The word "inocencia," originating from the Latin *innocere*, is composed

by two roots, *in* and *nocere*. *In* means “not” and *nocere*, “to harm.” Together, “*inocencia*” means “to do no harm.” This word recurs to Mateo Díez’s novel, appearing twenty three times throughout the text. In a world filled with shocking ruins caused by the destructive force of the war, the prominence of a word like “innocence,” meaning “to do no harm,” could be interpreted as a hope for a better future: the survival or emergence of harmless beings in the destroyed world enables a vision of a better future.

An exploration of *La gloria* in its social and political context in which the novel is set sheds light on the Spanish author’s reflections on childhood innocence. I pinpoint *La gloria* in history through an intertextual reading of the novel in its context of the postwar period, focusing on the author’s and Franco’s distinct discourses on the same concept of “innocence.” Both official Francoist discourse and Mateo Díez’s novel contrast “the innocent” with “the harmful,” yet they define these two categories differently. Mateo Díez’s novel is set in the end of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s, right after the Civil War. In order to better understand its resistance to the master narrative of the Franco regime, it is necessary to trace its intertextual origin from the official Francoist definition of the concept innocence as well as its manipulation of this term.

The concept of innocence had a social and political function in the Franco regime. The child, embodying freedom from offense, was made to symbolize the blamelessness of the new regime and of the new nation. In other words, the child’s innocence played a crucial role in Francoist identity-constructing narratives. The Francoists seized power by overturning the legitimate government of the Second Republic; therefore, there was an urgent need to justify its seizure of power in and outside of Spain after the war. The concept of innocence served this need. Specifically, the construction of a harmless and

blameless image helped to wash away the Francoist “stain” of the past. In contrast to the regime’s harmless image was the evilness and violence of the national enemies – the pro-Republicans. The regime, thus, made children into the natural symbol of victims of violence; the atrocities, according to the official discourse, were committed by the pro-Republicans.

An exploration of children’s reading materials of the 1940s and 1950s illustrates this symbolic representation. In *El florido pensil*, Andrés Monsalve recalls that it was difficult for Franco-era children to relieve themselves of the dread caused by children’s reading materials of the postwar period (74). These books invented and vividly reproduced dangerous situations into which children can fall: these include Catholic children being kidnapped and burnt to death by evil Jews, impious children being severely punished by God, carefree children being abducted and cruelly killed by escaping Republican fugitives, and so on (Andrés Monsalve 72, 74, 75). Through these readings and other political propaganda, the Franco regime succeeded in denigrating the Republicans by describing them as offenders of children. As recalled by Andrés Sopena and Esther Tusquets, many children of their generation maintained the impression that in the Civil War the Spaniards defended themselves against the invasion of national enemies (Monsalve 38; Tusquets 29).

The official discourse of the postwar period portrayed the innocent children to live in an increasingly risky world, in which they were exposed to both visible and invisible dangers. This portrayal, in turn, demonstrates Franco’s fear of all kinds of potential threats. The national policy of autarky and isolationism in the 1940s and its

domestic politics of social division illustrate this fear. Historian Richard Herr exposes Franco's fear:

Beyond creating an authoritarian state and economic autarky, Franco's regime had followed no consistent policy... In the forties fear guided him and his advisers more than constructive thinking... Fear of the forces defeated in the war maintained Spain as a police state... Fear of being discredited and weakened prevented the regime from unmasking wrongdoers among its partisans. Fear of falling into the hands of any of the groups supporting him led Franco to favor first one and then another ... Fear that foreign powers would decide to reestablish the Republic went far to determine the evolving image Franco represented through the fundamental laws. (236)

In other words, Franco's fear played a fundamental role in the Spanish postwar politics. The government, on the one hand, cut off the country from the outside world and, on the other hand, divided the country into the victorious and the defeated. The official discourse considered the victorious or the pro-Francoists to be good and innocent, while at the same time labeling the defeated or the pro-Republicans as evil or harmful. In this way, the regime intended not only to glorify its seizure of power but also to arouse public hostility to the influence of leftist ideology in and outside Spain.

In *La gloria*, the author distinguishes the good/innocent from the culprits; furthermore, he redefines the evilness [*la maldad*], subverting the Francoist definition of "la maldad." Apparently, according to the narrator, children belong to the good. The

narrator comments, “Los niños buenos y los niños listos son los que más se parecen en la vida a esos otros niños buenos y listos que en los cuentos demuestran su bondad y su inteligencia... Los buenos siempre acaban siendo los dueños del mundo, porque las razones de la bondad son las que corresponden al corazón humano” (55). In contrast to the goodness of children is the guilt of adults. Distinguishing the youth from the adult, an anonymous character in the novel laments that “los hombres somos culpables” (37). By saying so, this character refers to the first generation’s guilt brought by the war. While the author evokes the adults’ depression in the postwar period, he also recognizes the fact that all Spaniards, no matter what political ideologies they held, should be guilty of the war because of the destruction they left for future generations.

A close reading of the text reveals the narrator’s critical attitude toward the Franco regime: “Es la confianza en la bondad la que hace mejor al hombre, por encima de tantas vicisitudes en las que ha ganado el mal” (55). It is evident that the narrator applies the word “el mal” to the Francoists who have won the war. Later on, he continues his comments on the evilness of the Franco regime by adding that “cuando los tiempos son tan malos se agranda la maldad de tal manera” (66). In other words, while the Franco regime used “la maldad” to describe the pro-Republicans, the Spanish writer redirects the same description back to the victorious Francoists, undermining the official division between the good and the bad in society of the 1940s and ‘50s.

While the child’s innocence is highlighted in the novel, the threat to childhood innocence is also prominent. The young protagonist, due to his ontological status of being a child, lacks the adult’s understanding of what has happened around him: he is unaware of the looming threatening forces. Specifically, the innocent child protagonist stands at

the verge of political persecution during the postwar period and the imposition of Francoist ultraconservative values. The author metaphorically describes the imminent peril and the child's lack of knowledge:

Ese Borenes funerario que Pulgar no percibía, ya que su olfato estaba acostumbrado a todas las variantes del hedor y el humo en la repetición diaria de sus rebuscas durante tantos meses, surgió ahora, en la mañana, como el mismo fantasma del pasado al que su memoria no logró distinguir, tal vez porque como le decía su Madrina, sois los niños quienes con más pureza miráis la vida, sin que los presentimientos y las malas fuerzas os la roben. (25)

The Spanish Civil War destroyed the country and left ruins everywhere right after the war. However, the threat that the author depicts does not refer to the visible debris but to the large-scale political persecution and purging. Children were expected to receive ideological and religious indoctrination mostly through schools. Such bleak environment permeates the entire novel, jeopardizing the child's purity without the latter's awareness. In this sense, the frequent appearance of the ominous Francoist forces in the novel parallels and undermines the constant descriptions of the anti-Francoist evils in children's reading materials.

The appearance of the word "purity" [*pureza*] over and over again in *La gloria* (28,49,70, 86) points to its high frequency in Francoist propagandistic materials. The word "purity," associated with childhood, recurs in the official discourses of Francoism, under the cover of bio-psychological research in particular. This type of research and its

consequences bespeak the regime's desire to purify the population from the corruption of the Second Republic. The notorious pro-Francoist psychiatrist, Antonio Vallejo-Nájera, studied the cases of female Spanish prisoners and International Brigades prisoners during the Spanish Civil War. Carrying out experiments in nationalist concentration camps, Vallejo-Nájera aimed to uncover the genetic root of ideological contamination, which, according to him, would threaten the purity of the Spanish race. In other words, the word "purity" directly connects Mateo D éz's novel to its pre-text, Vallejo-Nájera's eugenic theory and by extension, Franco's policy on the children from the Republican families.

The psychiatrist's research lends a perfect theoretical base for the regime's political project of denigrating the Republicans and eliminating the threatening opposing forces in New Spain after the war. Vallejo-Nájera's theory about purity and pollution ultimately resulted in the hidden national history about "the lost children of Francoism." Suggested by Vinyes, the Francoist regime transferred by law the custodial right of children, especially of the Republican children, to the government without receiving permission from parents or even notifying them; consequently, an estimated 30,000 children were separated from their biological parents between 1936 and 1950 (38). In other words, Franco's regime committed one more crime under the pretext of protecting children's innocence and purity. This long-hidden story forms a crucial part of Spanish national history, with which the nation is yet to come to terms.

In *La gloria*, the child protagonist takes on the responsibility of locating his lost siblings and ensuring their wellness. The mission entrusted by this child's father on his deathbed leads the child to leave home and thus temporarily relieves the little boy from the confinements of patriarchal family ties and, by extension, from the religious and

patriotic indoctrination imposed by the regime. While my previous chapters focus on explorations of various institutions – including families, schools, churches – through children’s eyes, this chapter extends the vision to a broader society. The child in exile completes his own mission of locating the lost family members while witnessing depression and desperation of the adults, of the lower-class people in particular, throughout his long journey. The little boy, undergoing all kinds of hardships, asserts his agency, which originates from his innocence, to solve practical problems.

At the same time, the narrator admits that the innocence of the child does not last long. The narrator confirms that, “la pureza del ánimo... parece indicar que el inocente se libra de cualquier conflicto... El niño que eres no te va a acompañar toda la vida, el poder de la inocencia se pierde, esa edad acaba, se cierra, se consume” (82, 158). Associating the transience of childhood innocence to historical oblivion, the narrator alludes to the fact that the oblivion imposed by the regime does not last long either: “La inocencia os inmuniza como el olvido purifica la memoria” (82). When childhood innocence becomes history and evokes nostalgia, memories naturally emerge. This could be one of the reasons why the child image recurs in contemporary Spanish literature and cinema, in works on history and memory in particular. *La gloria* attempts to recover the past out of Benjaminian historical debris through the redemptive power of the innocent child, or in the author’s words, through the redefined “gloria de los niños.”

Mateo Díez’s description of the term “innocence” subverts its pre-text of the official propaganda ironically. Specifically, through the interpretation of this concept, the novelist explicitly expresses his desire to shield children from ideological and political conflicts, concluding that “no hay mayor maldad que la que pervierte o maltrata a la



inocencia de la infancia” (82). This conclusion critically refers to the fact that the regime did not only involve children in the identity-constructing project but also made full use of children to create a deceptive humanistic image for the postwar fascist government. Children, as always, are positioned as the targets of the propagandists’ exploitation. Right after the war, the Franco regime sent out spies to Western Europe to search for and to bring back children who were expatriated during wartime. In the railway station in Madrid, the government arranged emotional reunions of family members, who shed tears in front of official propagandist cameras, as shown ironically in Basilio Martín Patino’s documentary film, *Canciones para después de una guerra*.

Publishing propagandistic photos and videos, the Franco regime aimed to create a protective and humanistic image before the world: new Spain [*Nueva España*] gave these exiled children a warm welcome and would protect them from suffering and wandering in strange lands. The orphaned child Pulgar in *La gloria* ironically undermines the false appearance the regime has created for the Western world. The novel is set in the late 1930s and the early 1940s when the regime made endeavors to promote its protective patriarchal image. Juxtaposing Pulgar’s inner exile and Francoist propaganda for the outside world, one can easily discover the political maneuver of the government in the postwar period: the central focus of the official performance was presumably for the innocent children’s welfare, yet the real effect had nothing to do with the children and a great deal to do with the armed usurpers’ desire to create a positive image before the world. *La gloria* not only concerns the orphanhood of Pulgar and his siblings, but also the broken families with the children lost in the war. While the expatriated children were instructed to show their joy when reuniting with their surviving family members – not to

mention the sufferings many of them experienced after returning to the country – eight-year-old Pulgar trudges over a long distance to look for his lost brothers and sister. The hunger, coldness and threats from adverse circumstances Pulgar experiences on his odyssey expose the deceptiveness of the regime’s performance before the world.

Children played two roles in Francoist propaganda: on the one hand, the regime portrayed them as victims of the evil Republicans, and on the other, the regime needed them to be redeemers of the Republican sinners. The widely disseminated legendary story of the canonized Mari Carmen best illustrates the government’s desire. According to her bibliography, born into a military and noble father, the little girl prayed for the Republican who had killed her father; her death due to scarlet fever was officially interpreted to be a sacrifice for the eternal salvation of the sinful enemies, especially that of the president of the second Republic, Manuel Azaña (González-Valerio 109-10). According to Cruz, “Mari Carmen’s prayers were apparently answered: Azaña had a profound religious conversion (before death) and he died during the child’s illness” (139).

These official materials, on the one hand, glorify these children’s generosity in forgiving the murderers of their family members, and on the other hand, brand the Republicans as sinners to be redeemed, criminals to be forgiven, and enemies to be eliminated. Hidden behind the Francoists’ efforts to denigrate the opposing forces emerges the government’s strong anxiety about justifying its political power seized by armed forces. The Francoists deployed the saintly children for their political purposes, using the youth’s great physical pains to amplify the horror. The horror, according to the propaganda, should certainly be attributed to the Republicans, for whose salvation these children suffered and offered up their short lives. In contrast to the Francoist “glory of

children” which reinforced the social division of the postwar period, Mateo Díez’s reconstructed “glorious children” aim to mend the world destroyed by the Spanish Civil War. Attributing Pulgar’s power to his status of freedom from any ideological conflict in the adult world, Mateo Díez criticizes the Francoist politicization of the child, while at the same time undermining the saintly child models constructed by the regime.

Evoking Benjamin’s “angel of history,” Mateo Díez reflects on the dialectics of ruin and recovery, stressing the need to recuperate historical memory out of debris from a global perspective. Extricating the child protagonists from Perrault’s fairy tale and de Sica’s film, the Spanish writer represents the inverted child-adult relationship in postwar Spain, rendering a Messianic child who rises up from the ruins left by the war.

Interpreting the child’s innocence as freedom from ideological confrontations ironically, the author undermines the Francoists’ manipulation of children’s innocence for the regime’s identity-constructing narratives. Through these intertextual encounters, the author pursues dialogue with the world, yet his central concern is with historical memory in Spain, because as Benjamin points out: “Remembrance can make the incomplete (happiness) into something complete, and that which is finished (suffering) into something incomplete” (*The Arcades Project* 471). All kinds of incompleteness, exposed in *La gloria* from the child’s perspective, reopen hidden wounds of the past under Francoism; the painful process of reopening can heal the wounds and thus generate a hope for a better future.

## Conclusion

In April 2012, José Manuel Atencia employed the image of Janus to criticize Mariano Rajoy for failing to keep his campaign promises: “one profile used to be opposition, and the other used to govern” (Atencia). Janus, the two-faced god of ancient Roman mythology, looks simultaneously in two opposite directions. While Atencia interprets Janus negatively to ironize Rajoy, I use a different connotation of this image to describe the current situation of accounts of “Franco’s children.” With his double face, Janus looks not only to the past but also toward the future; he looks not only at the local but also at the global. Janus stands in-between, in transition.

Now is the time to focus on these Janus-like accounts. Today’s grandparents were children, or in Suleiman’s term, the “1.5 generation,” in the Civil War and the immediate post-War period. This cohort is the last testimonial generation that lived through the early Francoist regime of the 1940s and ’50s. As children, they experienced the intense moment on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1939 – be it disappointing or joyful depending on their family origins – as well as the political indoctrination and repression of the post-War period. As this generation ages, there is an increasing urgency to document their stories.

In addition to the demographic factor, international media coverage on Franco-era children has generated pressure on Spaniards to confront this issue. Since the early 2000s, Spanish children in wartime and the post-War period have raised common concerns outside of Spain. Mexican filmmaker Guillermo del Toro has created images of victimized children of the war and the post-War period and made them popular among an international audience;<sup>1</sup> the exhibition of “They still draw pictures,” showing drawings produced by children in wartime, has been touring worldwide, including the United

States, Russia, Cuba and other countries; and the media in the English-speaking world have widely reported on one of the worst – if not the worst – situations suffered by “Franco’s children:” the kidnapping of children under Francoism.<sup>2</sup> These accounts relate the Spanish dictatorship to the worst cases of Latin America – of Chile and Argentina – as well as to the Holocaust.<sup>3</sup> Compared to the countries, including Argentina and Chile, where there are truth commissions investigating wartime crimes, Spain lags behind them in addressing the historical wrongs committed by the Franco regime, involving child victims in particular. In other words, Franco’s children are occupying a central place in discussions on historical memory in contemporary Spain.

These Franco-era child images exposed to the public demonstrate a common feature: they are not portrayed to be passive victims but to act with their own agency to survive in difficult situations. This quality is also shared by all child protagonists discussed in this study. Adriana and Estrella negotiate their own means in *El sur* to overcome the mourning for their dead fathers and to embrace new lives; Andrés Sopeña questions the Francoist ideological and religious indoctrination in *El florido pensil* through his seemingly innocent voice; and young Esther strives to find her own place in her pro-Francoist family of origin. The most pronounced example in this regard is *La gloria de los niños* discussed in the fourth chapter, in which the eight-year-old boy is cast as a redeemer engaged in mending the broken world after the war.

Viewing children as agents of change, I challenge the conventional view of children as in need of protection. Unlike the viewpoints that draw on children’s dependence on adults, my research highlights the child protagonists’ active engagement with their surroundings. Childhood scholars Jean and Richard Mills point out that

“perhaps in protecting children from adult secrets, we are in effect trying to protect ourselves also, to escape vicariously into a more secure world than the one we know we and they inhabit” (13). In a similar way, I argue that when adult authors and filmmakers confer transformative capabilities on the child characters, they transmit a strong desire to change or more exactly, to reconstruct the past. The reconstructed past, distinct from the one imposed by the victors, bespeak the power of memory.<sup>4</sup> To the end, the constantly changing past has to do with how the writers reflect on past experiences and recount them for subsequent generations.

By reconstructing a repressive childhood, the narrators of the works examined in this study nonetheless keep their distance from the past. The narrators’ serene tones contrast sharply with the turmoil emerging from the child protagonists’ experiences. In the novella *El sur*, for example, the little girl makes great efforts to confront and accept the death of her father; the adult narrator, however, begins the story by informing of a visit to her father’s grave in a calm tone. While the young protagonist in *El sur* suffers from radical family changes due to the loss of a parent, little Esther in *Hab úmos ganado la guerra* shows resentment toward the previous generation. This was a strong emotion shared by many “Franco’s children” in the middle of the 1950s: enduring restrictions and repressions, these children resented their parents for having started the Civil War and implicated the next generation in the consequences of the war.<sup>5</sup> Little Esther vents her anger on her uncaring mother, yet the adult narrator seeks to understand her mother by acknowledging the pathetic lives of women under Francoism. The narrator’s constant explanations in the present intertwines with the child protagonist’s anger in the past throughout the entire memoir, stressing the distance the adult narrator/author imposes

between her present and younger self. In fact, all narrators in the selected works share the same composure, as pointed out by Santos Juli á “The witnesses of the mid-century generation ... look back without anger” (Juli á).

The deliberate distance the narrators take from the young characters demonstrates that the authors’ choice of when and what to publish is more a political strategy than a psychological need, as argued by Jo Labanyi.<sup>6</sup> All the authors and filmmakers included in this study belong to the 1.5 generation of Francoism on the one hand; on the other hand, they are all influential intellectuals, or in Sebastiaan Faber’s words, “intellectuals in power” (209). Considering the writers’ ontological status as child witnesses of the past events, I, by no means, intend to endow them with any absolute historical authority. Instead, I aim to express not only my acknowledgement of the significance of their “having been there” but also my respect for their right to decide whether, when, and how to account for the difficult past they lived as children. Regarding the alleged “pact of oblivion” during the transition to democracy, Sebastiaan Faber laments: “The fact that historians study and identify or quantify certain acts of violence and repression does not give a voice to those who suffered it ... the decision (to “forget” the Francoist crimes or not) was made, pragmatically and paternalistically, by the politicians and intellectuals in power” (209). Having been cowed to receive Francoist triumphalist discourses as children, the chosen authors and filmmakers rewrite the past through childhood reconstructions; being influential intellectuals, their representations of Franco-era childhood become political statements in the present.

Specifically, these works played active roles in public debates at three discussed moments. The novella and the film *El sur*, examined in chapter 1, pioneered discussions

on defeated Republicans in the early 1980s, when the left-wing government and most Spaniards were reluctant to exhume the past and opted for historical amnesia. The hybrid text *El florido pensil* discussed in chapter 2, reflectively responded to the emerging boom of nostalgia for Franco-era childhood in the mid and later 1990s, reminding Franco's children not to indulge in uncritical reminiscence. *Hab úmos ganado la guerra*, explored in chapter 3, risked public condemnations in the period following the Law of Historical Memory by portraying childhood in a pro-Francoist family, albeit in an ironic tone. *La gloria de los niños* discussed in chapter 4 transforms the Franco-era child image from the passive victim of the war to an active redeemer of a ruined nation after the war. The author's highly skilled intertextual connections reveal a tendency to connect Franco's children to the global world in an era of increasing political and cultural interdependence across nations. Franco's children have played a leading role in the recuperation of historical memory not only in the present but also in the middle of the twentieth century in Spain. Considering the significant historical contribution of this generation to democracy and freedom in Spain, I agree with Santos Juliá's gratitude: "(To this generation) we owe much more than we can image" (Juli á).

While Santos Juli á acknowledges the contribution of this generation as young adults, the current research explores the historical commitment of Franco's children in the twilight of their lives. In the future, there remains a need to examine works produced by these children in the stages of their early life. As children in war, they drew pictures representing horrifying wartime scenes;<sup>7</sup> they also wrote diaries and letters to their family members describing their experiences and feelings in wartime and the early post-War period.<sup>8</sup> An examination of these pictures and writings will contribute to discussions of



the agency of Franco's children: they have not only been shaped by the past, but are also reshaping it.

By using the phrase "Franco's children," I do not mean to imply that this generation is a homogeneous group; instead, I fully recognize the plurality implied in reconstructions of Franco-era childhood. In the selected works, childhood experiences under the dictatorship vary depending on the young protagonist's family origin, social class and gender. The adult authors and filmmakers argue against a master narrative of model childhood that the victors imposed on the losers during the dictatorship. Two apparently paradoxical tendencies in childhood accounts by this generation have drawn my attention: one is a tendency toward a local focus, and the other, toward an international one. Recent years have witnessed an increasing number of childhood narratives that are concerned with issues of certain territories and/or written in the regional languages. My study reflects this trend toward regionalization. For instance, Tusquets's childhood memoir, *Hab úmos ganado la Guerra* (2007), is set in Barcelona and concerns bourgeois lives in this region. A more interesting case is *El florido pensil*. In 1997, Sope ña Monsalve published the book in Spanish; a few years later, when the theatrical version was performed on stage, the most popular performance was in the Basque language, produced by the Basque Tanttaka Teatroa. The popularity of *El florido pensil* in Basque bespeaks not only the audience's aversion to Francoism but also their acceptance of regional voices.<sup>9</sup>

The boom of the regionalization in childhood accounts accompanies the authors' desire to connect to the outside world. The portrayals of Franco-era children have been incorporating more and more transnational elements. *La gloria de los ni ños*, for example,

appropriates figures and plots across nations and cultures for his creation of a glorious child under Francoism. In addition, the author explicitly states his desire to establish dialogues with the world in an interview conducted by Anna Gabriela Diakow (Diakow 318). The integration of transnational elements is no less evident in film than in literature. Imanol Uribe's 2002 film, *Carol's Journey* [*El viaje de Carol*], is an excellent example in this respect. Showing the effect of the Spanish Civil War on a girl coming from New York, *Carol's Journey* is set in a devastated Spanish rural area and involves the International Brigades, volunteers from different countries who participated in the Spanish Civil War to defend the Second Republic. Films like *Carol's Journey*, as well as del Toro's *The Devil's Backbone* (2001) and *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), have been highly acclaimed in the international market; the popularity of these films shows the success in internationalizing representations of children under Franco and, by extension, contemporary Spanish literature and cinema. Based on the current trend toward localization as well as internationalization, I argue that contemporary Spanish literature and cinema are becoming more hybrid. Thus, if it is difficult for Spaniards to reach reconciliation through political channels, it is up to art to make this vital contribution.

Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> See *The Devil's Backbone* (2001) and *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006) for reference.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Woolls' report, "Spain urged to probe alleged baby trafficking," published by Associated Press; Burnett's report, "Families Search for Truth of Spain's 'Lost Children'," published in *The New York Times*; Mooney's report, "Spain's Stolen Babies: An Ugly Past on a Staggering Scale," published in *ABC news*; and so on.

See del Toro's two widely known films, *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006) and *The Devil's Backbone* (2001).

The past shows of "They still Draw Pictures" include, for example, October-December 2002, at University of California, San Diego; February-March 2004, at AXA Gallery, New York City; March-June 2006, at Cervantes Institute, Moscow, Russia; September, 2009, at Pablo de la Torriente Brau Cultural Center, Havana, Cuba; September 2009, at Alachua County Library, Gainesville, Florida; and so on.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Medina's report, "El robo de niños del franquismo fue peor que el de Argentina, según Garzón," published by Reuters.

See Duva's report, "El Holocausto pasó por España," published by *El país*. Also see Preston's most recent publication, *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-century Spain*, part 5 "Two Concepts of War. Defending the Republic from the Enemy Within; Franco's Slow War of Annihilation" in particular.

<sup>4</sup> Benjamin proposes: "history is not only a science but also and not least a form of remembrance. What science has 'determined,' remembrance can modify" (*The Arcades Project* 471). See also my discussion in this respect in Chapter 4.

<sup>5</sup> See Betriu, *Los que no hicimos la guerra*, for children's resentment.

<sup>6</sup> In other words, according to Jo Labanyi, trauma theory is not applicable to the Spanish context (23).

<sup>7</sup> See the exhibition "They still Draw Pictures" for reference.

<sup>8</sup> See Blas, *Palabras huérfanas. Los niños y la Guerra civil*.

<sup>9</sup> The tendency toward the localization is related to the long history of Spanish regional issues, which were aggravated by the authoritarian rule under the Franco regime. After the death of Franco, the 1978 Constitution established a system of autonomies in Spain, yet the introduction and development of the regional autonomies had been controversial until the beginning of the new millennium. In 2002, the Center of Sociological Investigation of Spain conducted a national poll, showing that "more than two-thirds of Spanish citizens thought that the introduction and development of the regional autonomies had been a positive development for Spain as a whole" (Schrijver 99). The

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general consensus on a decentralized administration parallels the development of regional awareness and also encourages accounts of regional experiences. Correspondingly, recent years have witnessed more and more childhood narratives that are based on certain territories and/or written in certain regional languages.

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