

**Taking the Bull by the Horns: Representing Gender through Animals in Franco's
Spain**

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“Escribir en España es practicar un arte parecido a la lidia: hay que capear al toro dentro de un campo fijo, conforme a ciertas reglas” (Juan Goytisolo, *El furgón de cola* 45)

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Abstract

This dissertation analyzes the (de)construction of gender and nation through animal symbols in Franco's Spain. The project explores, first, a web of miscellaneous discourses articulated around the official bestiary rhetoric that serve in the composition of uniform gender models tailor-made for the virile totalitarian state. The selection of texts presented is eclectic, both in its nature and form. It encompasses a wide repertoire of multi-media discourses (i.e., scientific, religious, legal, educational, political, commercial, humorous and popular) presented visually (movies, posters, comics, cartoons, flags, advertisements, logotypes), aurally (songs, harangues, sermons, speeches, radio programs) and in the written form (literary excerpts, newspapers, magazines, medical and religious treatises, conduct manuals, epistles), and whose aim is, ultimately, to illustrate the dissemination and scope of zoomorphic images in the representation of nation and gender during the Francoist dictatorship.

Apart from providing a panoramic view of the gendered fauna, these historical documents will also serve as the unifying thread to unravel the complexities of several censored artistic productions that cunningly resort to the prevailing bestial iconography to attack the androcentric state. By focusing on the animalized portrayals of the female characters of *la Gata* [the She-Cat] in Margarita Alexandre and Rafael María Torrecilla's movie *La gata* (1956), *la Loba* [the She-wolf] in Rafael de León, Andrés Moles and Manuel López Quiroga's *copla* "La Loba" (1960), and the surrealist centaur woman Albina in Ana María Moix's novel *Walter, ¿por qué te fuiste?* (1973), this work attempts to illustrate the co-existence of a counter discourse able to re-define the monolithic pillars of gender and nation upon which the Francoist regime was constructed.

Finally, to highlight the relevance of animal symbolism in the formation of concepts of gender and nation, this dissertation notes a similar deployment of the Francoist bestiary rhetoric in the nationalist discourse of the far-right Spanish political party VOX (2013-present).

Résumé

Cette thèse analyse la (dé)construction de la nation et du genre à travers les symboles animaux de l'Espagne sous Franco. En premier lieu, le projet explore une constellation de discours variés qui s'articulent autour de la rhétorique du bestiaire servant à la composition sur mesure de modes uniformes et genrés au service de l'État viril totalitaire. La sélection de textes présentés est éclectique de par sa nature et sa forme. Elle comprend un vaste répertoire de discours présentés sur de multiples médias (i.e. scientifiques, religieux, légaux, éducatifs, politiques, commerciaux, humoristiques et populaires) présentés visuellement (films, affiches, bandes dessinées, drapeaux, publicités, logotypes), oralement (chansons, harangues, sermons, discours, programmes radios), et sous forme écrite (extraits littéraires, journaux, magazines, traités médicaux et religieux, manuels de bonnes manières, épîtres), et dont le but ultimement est d'illustrer l'étendue des images zoomorphiques dans la représentation des notions de la nation et du genre pendant la dictature franquiste.

En plus d'offrir un panorama d'une faune genrée, ces documents historiques serviront également de fil conducteur qui servira à éclairer les complexités de plusieurs productions artistiques faisant sagement appel à l'iconographie animale prédominante pour s'attaquer à l'État androcentrique. En se penchant sur les représentations animalisées de *la Gata* (la Chatte) dans le film *La Gata* (1956) de Margarita Alexandre et Rafael María Torrecilla, *la Loba* (la Louve), dans *La loba, copla* de Rafael de León, Andrés Moles et Manuel López Quiroga (1960), et Albina, la femme centaure surréaliste dans *Walter, ¿por qué te fuiste?* (1973), roman d'Ana María Moix, ce travail tente d'illustrer la co-existence d'un contre-discours qui traverse la haute culture ainsi que la culture populaire, et qui fut capable de redéfinir les notions monolithiques du genre et de la nation construite sur la rhétorique du bestiaire au sein de la censure du régime franquiste.

Enfin, pour souligner la pertinence du symbolisme animal dans la formation des concepts de genre et de nation, cette thèse note un déploiement similaire de la rhétorique bestiaire franquiste dans le discours nationaliste du parti politique espagnol d'extrême droite récemment fondé VOX (2013-présent).

Resumen

La presente tesis doctoral analiza la (de)construcción de género y nación a través del simbolismo animal en la España de Franco. Primero, el proyecto explora una serie de discursos misceláneos que, articulados en torno a la retórica oficial del bestiario, sirvieron para la composición de un modelo único de género hecho a la medida del régimen totalitario. Los textos seleccionados en este trabajo son eclécticos, tanto en su forma como contenido. Se trata de un repertorio de discursos multimedia (científicos, religiosos, legales, educativos, políticos, comerciales, humorísticos y populares) presentados de manera visual (películas, pósters, cómics, dibujos, banderas, anuncios, logotipos), acústica (canciones, arengas, sermones, discursos, programas de radio) y escrita (extractos literarios, periódicos y revistas, tratados médicos y religiosos, manuales de conducta, epístolas) cuya finalidad es ilustrar la diseminación y alcance de las imágenes zoomórficas en la representación del género y la nación durante la dictadura franquista.

Además de ofrecer una visión panorámica del zoo humano que poblaba la Nueva España, estos documentos históricos sirven de hilo conductor para desenmarañar el complejo entramado de varias producciones artísticas que recurren a la iconografía oficial para atacar al estado patriarcal. Por medio del estudio del simbolismo animal que caracteriza a los personajes femeninos de la Gata, la Loba y la mujer centauro Albina en la película *La Gata* (Margarita Alexandre y Rafael María Torrecilla 1956), la copla “La Loba” (Rafael de León, Andrés Moles y Manuel López Quiroga 1960) y la novela *Walter, ¿por qué te fuiste?* (Ana María Moix 1973), respectivamente, este trabajo ilustra la coexistencia de un discurso subversivo capaz de redefinir los pilares monolíticos de género y nación sobre los que se cimentó el régimen franquista.

Por último, para recalcar la relevancia que el simbolismo animal tiene en la formación de los conceptos de género y nación de un país, este trabajo detecta un empleo similar del bestiario franquista en el discurso del partido español de ultraderecha VOX (2013-presente).

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Introduction

1. The Bestiary in Franco's Spain

Speaking of the bestiary in Franco's Spain (1939-1975) may seem, a priori, anachronistic. After all, this work filled with descriptions, stories, and drawings of real and legendary creatures has traditionally been associated with the Medieval imagination (5th-15th centuries), but not with contemporary Spanish history. In an age of obscurantism, superstition, warfare and illness, the book of beasts, with its colorful pictures appealing to the vast illiterate population of the Middle Ages, provided folks not only Christian teachings in an entertaining way, but also anchor points to navigate the trials and tribulations of their complex existence (Hassig; Baxter; Clark and McMunn). Conveying virtues and vices humans could relate to and learn from, the bestiary became so popular that its iconic animals started to illuminate life in the Dark Ages, as observed in zoomorphic motifs decorating churches, palaces, houses, coats of arms, and manuscripts, as well as in the countless animal metaphors permeating everyday speech (i.e., proverbial lore, idioms, etc.). In this way, individuals were able to construct a meaningful social existence through faunistic emblems.

Yet, despite the temporal lapse, images of animals also permeated people's minds during Francoism. The totalitarian regime, which always looked upon Medieval and Early Modern Spain with nostalgia (Casas; Moreno Martín; Peña), deployed the bestial iconography in the transmission of its National-Catholic doctrine. If the state's recovery of the eagle of Saint John, displayed in the national flag and in the names of newspapers, novels, comics, chants, beer brands, military squadrons, and men-only clubs, served as a constant reminder of Spain's glorious imperial past under the reign of the Catholic Monarchs—for this was the symbol of their heraldry—, other zoomorphic icons were similarly imbued with Franco's ideology.

The establishment of an analogy between the figurative fauna contained in the medieval book of beasts and in the Francoist imaginary, then, seems methodologically appropriate not only to comprehend the everlasting significance that the animal world holds for humans, but also to unveil the hidden agenda behind such representations. Hence, reminiscent of the power and popularity of its medieval predecessor, the term “bestiary” or “bestiary rhetoric” is used in this dissertation to refer to the animal tropes that, conveying Nationalist propaganda, articulated a series of official discourses for the foundation and consolidation of the totalitarian state.

In sum, the parallelism drawn between the book of beasts in the Middle Ages and the human zoo of the dictatorship is intended to guide the reader, who should approach the so-called “Francoist bestiary” as an encyclopedia of animals in the Medieval sense of the term. Each of the unique creatures covered in this research (e.g.: the bull, cow, ox, mule, rhinoceros, eagle, hawk, hen, rooster, chicken, dove, magpie, parrot, dog, bitch, cat, hyena, she-wolf, panther, tigress, rat, butterfly, bee, turtle, vermin, parasite, centaur), then, captures key aspects of the regime’s ideology and offers a window onto the (symbolic) making of Franco’s New Spain. Organized according to their meaning(s) and use(s) in the construction of manhood and womanhood, this figurative fauna, pervasive in a myriad of multi-media discourses, contributed to shaping the masculinist fatherland and the identity—whether political, social, religious, ethnic, gender or professional— of its citizenry.

2. Aims of the Dissertation, Corpus and Methodology

In his essay “Los escritores españoles frente al toro de la censura” (1967)

Spanish novelist Juan Goytisolo aptly compares Franco’s censorship with a bull, ready to charge violently at all those opposing the dictatorship.¹ Apart from highlighting the risks taken by Spanish authors writing within the constraints of censorship (i.e., banning of their works, exile, imprisonment, and even death), this analogy pertaining to the animal world also echoes the bestiary rhetoric used in the construction of the virile fascist state that controlled the Spaniards after the Civil War (1936-1939) (Campos-Pérez 1-12; González-Allende, “Masculinities” 193-198; Patten 12-54).² In fact, at a time when the spectacle of bullfighting flourished to extol the qualities of manhood (Gutiérrez Alarcón 12-96; Núñez Florencio, “Bullfights” 181-192), the *Caudillo* himself would invoke “el toro que todo hombre español lleva dentro” to refer to the ideal of masculinity as defined by National Catholicism (Vázquez Montalbán, *Crónica* 86), and visual representations of the nation as “a bull’s hide” became part and parcel of the official propaganda to reflect the virility of the New Spain (Schammah 237-238).³

¹ For a detailed analysis of the bull-censorship metaphor used by Goytisolo, see Derek Jones’ *Censorship: A World Encyclopedia* (977) and David Gies’ *The Cambridge History of Spanish Literature* (618). As Juan Eduardo Taborda points out, referring to the difficulties faced by authors writing in dictatorial states, Goytisolo takes this image of the bull from Michel Leiris, who expresses the novelist’s social commitment as: “introducir por lo menos la sombra de un cuerno de toro en una obra literaria” (133).

² Although in this project the term “fascist” will be used as practically synonymous with “authoritarian” or “totalitarian” to refer to Franco’s dictatorship, it is important to bear in mind that up to this date the topic of whether the Francoist regime can be regarded as fascist or not is still controversial (Moradiellos, Payne, Saz). For some historians there is little doubt that the political regime that followed the Spanish Civil War conforms to the fascist model (Brandes 795-815; Payne 247); others, however, prefer to speak of “fascistized dictatorship” (Saz Campos 90) or “semi-fascist regime” (Sánchez Recio 253).

³ Writers at the service of the Nationalist cause constantly projected the shape of the noble animal onto their country to highlight the heroic deeds of the Spanish males who contributed to the military triumph of the Francoist faction. José María Pemán’s *Poema de la Bestia y el Ángel* (1938), the quintessential epic poem of Falangist ideology (Penalva 180-189; Rodríguez-Puértolas, “Fascismo” 143-144), traced the contour of

The bull was a wild animal to be fearful of, just like the new totalitarian regime and its masculine archetype. If Goytisolo's "bull of censorship" symbolized the perils of living under the dictatorship, zoomorphic representations of men as bulls certainly aroused similar frightful sentiments. Relationships were often conceived in terms of bullfighting between women and the beast-like men, as outlined in manuals warning females of establishing relationships with the opposite sex: "eso de tener novio es como torear" (Martín Gaité, *Usos amorosos* 144). The same cautioning was given in folk songs, where falling in love with a man was equivalent to being charged by a bull: "Ganadera con divisa verde y oro, / ten cuidado, / que el amor no te sorprenda como un toro/ desmandado" (de León, "Con divisa verde y oro"). Literary texts also explained female's lovesickness because of the bull-like nature of man: "su sufrimiento se explicaba porque los hombres son como toros bravos" (Zovko 231-232).

Comics contributed to the dissemination of this zoomorphic image of manliness with characters named after the fierce beast. Such is the case of the world's weightlifting champion Toro [Bull], whose identity remarkably gets mistaken for a real bull in the highly successful graphic novel *Mortadelo y Filemón* (Sánchez and Sánchez 1-2). In like manner, the proverbial lore captured this synergy between manhood and the totemic animal by means of popular sayings that emphasized masculine violence and power: "Con el toro y el hombre, mucho cuidado," or "Al toro bravo y al hombre bravo,

Spain as a bull to recall the historical fortitude of a nation capable of defending itself against its sempiternal Jewish enemies: "Todo el oro judío/ no podrá con el brío/ y la entereza sana/ de esta tierra,/ y ello aunque/ sobre la piel de toro, cien narices ganchudas/como picos de cuervos, y cien barbas de chivo, / planean el reparto/ de la segunda túnica de Dios." A similar tribute to Nationalist men is paid in Luys Santa Marina's "Años después" (1955), with the transformation of the Spanish battlefield into the hide of a bull to exalt the bravery of all the young soldiers in the Francoist ranks that defeated the Republican army: "los niños hechos hombres de un estirón de pólvora, / los que con recias botas la vieja piel de toro/ trillaron, en los ojos quimeras y romances" (qtd. in Rodríguez-Puértolas, *Historia* 606).

siempre has de hacerles caso” (de la Fuente 139-160; Ugarte 10). The same threatening message was echoed in lullabies that equalled the paternal figure to a fearful bull in order to stop a child’s cry: “Lloraba el niño en su cuna/ y le decía su madre:/ no llores que viene el toro. / Y era que entraba su padre” (qtd. in Fernández Poncela 69). Even jokes exploited the equation bull-man to bring to the forefront a male’s sexual prowess (Cardona; “Los chistes verdes” 4; Núñez Florencio, “Reír bajo Franco” 4-19).⁴

Finally, national cinema produced a whole series of movies in which a man’s (sexual) force was inextricably linked to the state’s official animal in a calibrated propagandistic maneuver to forge the icon of the *macho ibérico* in the image and likeness of the potent bull (Crumbaugh 87-114; González Viñas 3-5). Catch-phrases such as “estoy hecho un toro” or “que me pongo como un toro” served simultaneously to entice and subdue females. Besides, the big screen constantly showcased the bull-like essence of the Spanish male as a hook to attract foreigners. Filmic productions dealing with the national phenomenon of the tourist boom (Purdy 1-8; Storm 510-557) were plagued with foreign women trying to fulfill their sexual fantasies with the average Spaniard to the cry of “tú, español; tú, toro” or “españolito, torito.” Furthermore, in several films Spain’s supremacy over other countries often boiled down to its hypermasculine bull-shaped archetype. For example, in *Vente a Alemania, Pepe* (Pedro Lazaga, 1971) and *Vente a ligar al Oeste* (Pedro Lazaga, 1974) their male protagonists

⁴ The blunt identification between the physique of the beast and the body parts of a male gave way to racy punch lines in which the tail of the animal usually stands for the penis: “Juan llega a la casa y le dice a su mujer, que está cocinando: María, deja la cazuela, que hoy tengo rabo de toro para la cena” or “Pepe y Manolo están hablando de sus parientas. Pepe le comenta a su amigo: ¿Y tú qué haces cuando tu mujer se queja de hacer las faenas en casa? A lo que Manolo le responde tajantemente: Yo no tengo ese problema, porque le digo: Hoy has tenido suerte con tu faena y te llevas el rabo de toro” (“Los chistes”).

were explicitly characterized as bulls when triumphing in the sexual arena over their German and US rivals, respectively.

Banner of Francoism, the bull and other animal metaphors ultimately convey the interplay of politics and gender that served to construct a new nation articulated around dichotomies in terms not only of the political factions of the Civil War (Nationalists vs. Republicans) but also of concepts of femininity and manhood (Blasco 51-55; Morcillo, *True Catholic* 10-24; Patten 1-29). As a matter of fact, animal metaphors played a pivotal role in the polarized construction of gender that contributed to buttressing the political and social structures of Franco's Spain. The patriarchal system reinforced by the dictatorship often represented women through these animalistic forms to justify their inferior position in society and their confinement to the domestic sphere (i.e., to their biological role of mother and wife). The formal education of women, entrusted to the *Sección Femenina* [Women's Section], further emphasized the connection women-animals through songs, speeches and even mandatory courses which explicitly underlined the subservient role of females by equating them to faithful pets (Primo de Rivera 98; Richmond 73-77).⁵ School textbooks, for instance, provided girls with lessons on housekeeping and personal grooming as a form of "concealment of women's animal instincts" (Richmond 75). Women's magazines equally underscored this image of the bestial feminine through their polarized portrayals of females either as domestic

⁵ Founded in 1934 and led by the sister of the Falangist leader José Antonio Primo de Rivera, the Falange's Women's Section was, in many respects, similar to other female branches created in European countries with totalitarian regimes, such as the Bund Deutscher Mädel in der Hitlerjugend (Germany), the Gioventù Italiana del Littorio (Italy) or the Mocidade Feminina Portuguesa (Portugal). Yet, none of these organizations had an existence as long and intense as the *Sección Femenina*, which remained active until 1977, that is, even after Franco's death (1975) (Martínez del Fresno 99-101).

animals, obedient to their husbands (Jurado 534), or as wild beasts (Rodríguez-López, “Mujeres” 177-182) that do not conform to the Francoist canon.

In parallel, religious texts continued disseminating the biblical image of the woman as an instinctual animal whose unstoppable carnal impulses are to be harnessed by Catholic principles (Santiago 37; Vallejo-Nájera, “Psiquismo” 9). Medical treatises constantly explained women’s lack of intellectual capacities by linking the female psyche with that of tiny insects (Echalecu 255; Vallejo-Nájera, “Psiquismo” 40). Even legal documents and newspapers rendered females as sexual beasts in need of taming to justify gender violence and abuse (Fandiño 116; Medina Doménech, *Ciencia* 35; Liranzo 45-79).

Other cultural artefacts that helped popularize the faunistic view of women included music, cinema, and comics (Ballesteros 48-49; Lucini 294; Martín-Márquez 260). The titles of songs and movies alike casted females in the guise of animals in accordance with patriarchal ideology, as seen in the melodies “La Ruiseñora” (1953) [The Nightingale], “Alondra del cielo” (1962) [Lark of the Sky], “Los loros de mis vecinas” (1947) [“My Female Neighbors are Parrots”], “La Loba” (1959) [The She-wolf], and in the films *La cigarra* (1948) [The Cicada], *La gata* (1956) [The Female Cat] or *La loba y la paloma* (1974) [The She-wolf and the Cat]. In addition, famous female singers and actresses were given the nicknames of wild creatures, such as “the tigress,” “the lioness,” or “the she-wolf,” as though implying a type of behavior and liberty that only had room within the show business, but not within the strict confines of the Francoist hypermasculine society (Gallego 2-3).

Finally, comics addressed to a very young audience caricatured models of femininity that deviated from the established order by means of animal symbolism.⁶ The character of Doña Urraca [Mrs. Magpie], the protagonist of the homonymous graphic story, was named after and sketched like a magpie (Martínez Peñaranda 16). Other fictional women were equally drawn with avian brushstrokes based on their constant chatter and annoying personality (*Diccionario de Mortadelo* 3-4). Additional female fauna in these publications included fierce beasts. For example, the pirate that attacked Captain Trueno on several voyages was described as “una fierecilla sin domar” [i.e., a small wild beast that has not been tamed] and the Moorish damsel that defied El guerrero del antifaz was similarly portrayed as “una pantera negra” [i. e., a black panther].⁷

Even though much scholarship has focused on notions of femininity and masculinity and their intersection with concepts of nationhood during Franco’s dictatorship (Blasco; Box; González-Allende; Morcillo; Moreno and Núñez, Patten), no study, to date, has paid attention to the pivotal role played by animal symbols in the foundation and consolidation of the totalitarian state. Hence, this dissertation attempts to fill that void by compiling and analyzing an authentic wealth of beastly representations used in the making of *la Nueva España*.

⁶ It is interesting to note the opposite trend in terms of the zoomorphic characterization of male protagonists in graphic novels during Francoism (Casas 285-289). Titles such as *El Cachorro* [The Cub] (Juan García Iranzo, 1951), *Capitán Pantera* [Captain Panther] (Antonio Pérez García, 1954), *El Jabato* [The Young Wild Boar] (Víctor Mora, 1958), *El Coyote* [The Coyote] (José Mallorquí, 1947) or *Pantera Negra* [Black Panther] (Quesada Cerdán, 1956) are illustrative of the positive connotations of animal names when applied to heroes.

⁷ Foreign origin obviously played a role in the representation of these female characters as wild beasts too, particularly considering the Francoist paranoia regarding the purity of the Hispanic race and the fear of contamination by other ethnic groups.

Drawing on Benedict Anderson's key notion of "nation as imagined community," this doctoral thesis aims to demonstrate how the instauration of the Francoist regime in the aftermath of the Civil War entailed not only the physical reconstruction of a country ravaged by the fraternal military conflict, but also the institution of a depository of animal symbols that captured the virile essence of the newly constructed fatherland. To this end, the project examines a wide repertoire of multi-media texts originating both in high and popular culture (e.g.: literary texts, scientific treatises, legal documents, educational works, newspaper and magazines, television and radio programs, songs, comics, movies). The goal is, ultimately, to prove the existence of an official discourse articulated around the Francoist bestiary rhetoric that served in the construction of gender and nation during the Spanish dictatorship.

At the same time, borrowing from Antonio Gramsci's theory of "cultural hegemony" (McNally 195-211), which states the twofold role of culture as an instrument of oppression by the ruling elite but also of social liberation when conceived to combat the *status quo*, this dissertation purports to show the co-existence of a counter-hegemonic discourse interwoven with the Francoist bestiary that aided in the deconstruction of the state's fixed notions of manhood and womanhood. Focusing on a corpus of filmic, musical, and literary creations produced and censored during the dictatorship, the study's objective is also to illustrate how the crafty manipulation of the institutionalized bestiary was carried out from all intellectual flanks. In this sense, an inquiry into the zoomorphic portrayals of the female characters of *la Gata* [the She-cat] in Margarita Alexandre and Rafael María Torrecilla's movie *La Gata* (1956), *la Loba* [the She-wolf] in Rafael de León, Andrés Moles and Manuel López Quiroga's *copla* "La Loba" (1960), and centaur woman Albina in Ana María Moix's novel *Walter, ¿por qué te fuiste?* (1973) is intended to exemplify the subversive intentions behind these

faunistic creations in works that condemn the politics, society, religion, and sexuality of Franco's masculinist regime.

To fully understand the calibrated reversal in the use of animal symbolism in the corpus of texts under study, the methodology of this project involves an interdisciplinary approach that combines Cultural Studies (CS), Cognitive Linguistics (CL), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Animal Studies (AS), Gender Studies (GS) as well as Film Studies (FS). This dissertation takes as a point of departure Benedict Anderson's concept of nation as an "imagined community" (6-7), which is largely brought into existence and held together by metaphors that help define its citizens in opposition to others (A. Smith 49; Mosse, *Nationalism* 16; Mussolf 23-98), along with analyses of the gendered dimension of nationalist discourses (Yuval-Davis, Mayer, Mosse, Enloe, Anthias, Nagel, Scott, and McClintock) applied to Franco's Spain. To this aim, the project will draw from the key contributions made by Roberta Johnson's *Gender and Nation in the Spanish Modernist Novel*, Iker González-Allende's *Líneas de fuego: género y nación en la narrativa española durante la Guerra Civil (1936-1939)*, Brian D. Bunk's *Ghosts of Passion: Martyrdom, Gender, and the Origins of the Spanish Civil War*, and Aurora Morcillo's *True Catholic Womanhood. Gender Ideology in Franco's Spain*.

CL, particularly the seminal works by Raymond Gibbs, George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, Mark Turner and Zoltán Kövecses, will provide the tools to analyze the cognitive, social, and cultural implications underlying the woman as animal metaphor. This animalistic discourse, in turn, will also be examined in the light of the power relations and gender ideology imbued in language, as analyzed by Critical Discourse Analysis (Van Dijk, Fairclough, Fowler, Wodak). The study of such bestiary representations will be enriched by the work of Greta Gaard, Marti Kheel, Carol Adams,

Josephine Donovan, Lori Gruen and Jason Wyckoff, *inter alia*, in the field of AS, with the parallelisms established between the exploitation of animals and women in patriarchal societies. As for GS, the studies of Anna Tripp, Mary Evans, Janet Holmes, Sara Mills, Muriel Schulz, Lauren Sutton, Robin Lakoff and Mary Vetterling-Braggin, among others, will aid in the understanding of the sexist assumptions ingrained in language. In terms of FS, this project resorts to key works devoted to Spanish cinema under Francoism. These include, but are not limited to, Tatiana Pavlović's *Despotic Bodies and Transgressive Bodies: Spanish Culture from Francisco Franco to Jesus Franco*, Peter Besas' *Behind the Spanish Lens: Spanish Cinema under Fascism and Democracy*, Barry Jordan and Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas' *Contemporary Spanish Cinema*, Justin Crumbaugh's *Destination, Dictatorship: The Spectacle of Spanish Tourist Boom and the Reinvention of Difference*, Barbara Zecchi's *Desenfocadas: Cineastas españolas y discursos de género*, Francisco Zurián's *Construyendo una mirada propia: mujeres directoras en el cine español*, and Santiago Fouz-Hernández's *Spanish Erotic Cinema*

Finally, cultural analyses of post-war Spain, such as Carmen Martín Gaité's *Usos amorosos de la posguerra española*, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán's *Crónica sentimental de España* and *Diccionario del Franquismo*, Rosa María Medina Doménech's *Ciencia y sabiduría del amor: una historia cultural del franquismo, (1940-1960)*, Rafael Torres' *La vida amorosa en tiempos de Franco*, Vicente Verdú's "El amor en los tiempos de Franco," and Óscar Caballero's *El sexo del franquismo*, among others, will offer the historical and social context to such animal representations.

3. A Bird's Eye View of the Chapters

This dissertation is organized into two distinct and complementary sections that illustrate the co-existence of a discourse and a counter-discourse articulated around the bestiary rhetoric used in the (de)construction of notions of nation and gender in Franco's Spain. Echoing the regime's National Catholic doctrine that defined strict parameters of manhood and womanhood, the first part (chapters 2, 3 and 4) explores a myriad of texts interwoven with animal symbols that bolster the hypermasculine state and its virile archetype while repressing and silencing other political and gender identities. The second part (chapter 5), on the other hand, examines the dissenting and marginalized voices in cultural productions that resorted to the official bestial iconography to subvert the foundations of the patriarchal regime. Finally, on noting a similar deployment of zoomorphic symbolism in the speeches of the Spanish far-right political party VOX (2013-present), chapter 6 creates a bridge between the dictatorial regime and present-day politics in Spain.

The title of this dissertation uses the expression "taking the bull by the horns" because of the relevance of zoomorphic symbolism in Francoist Spain and its calibrated reversal in artistic creations that attacked the totalitarian government. Denoting the brave and decisive treatment of a dangerous situation (*O.E.D.*), the idiom contains the most emblematic animal of the Francoist bestiary. The fierce creature, indeed, filled both the physical and mental spaces of people living under the dictatorship. In addition to its ubiquity in bullfighting spectacles (the so-called *fiesta nacional*), the state's propagandistic machinery turned the bovine into an icon of both the androcentric regime and its virile archetype. At the same time, in the cultural panorama, intellectuals against the dictatorship channeled their critical views through the metaphor of the bull, as illustrated in the foundation of the publishing company *Ruedo Ibérico* [The Iberian

Bullring] in Paris in 1961. Linked to the Spanish exile, this printing house became a platform for anti-Francoism, allowing free expression to remarkable writers such as Jorge Semprún, Max Aub or Juan Goytisolo. The last novelist's essay "Los escritores españoles frente al toro de la censura," comparing Franco's censorship with a bull, constitutes the bedrock for the play on words in the title of this project and the rationale for the analysis of the censored productions at the core of second part of the dissertation.

Except for the introduction, which outlines the corpus, historical framework and methodological tools, the title of each chapter puns on an animal name that connects with the content and purpose of that section. Chapter 1 ("The Rhetoric of Animality: The Bestial Masculine and Feminine") helps contextualize the Francoist fauna within the Western tradition that assigns zoomorphic figures patriotic and gendered values. Further elaborating on this dual significance of beasts, Chapter 2 ("Animal Metaphors: Shaping Nation and Gender in Franco's Spain") focuses on the deployment of animal metaphors in the making of Franco's New Spain. The study mainly draws on Benedict Anderson's key concept of nations as imagined communities that are largely brought into existence through symbolic practices to see the role played by figurative fauna in definitions of gender and nation during the Spanish dictatorship.

Chapters 3 ("Animals and Masculinities") and 4 ("Animals and Feminities") are symmetrical in content and form since they approach the forging of (non)-heteronormative masculinities and femininities, respectively, from the viewpoint of zoomorphic symbolism. The starting point of "Animals and Masculinities" is "The Bull of Francoism," given that in Franco's times to speak of the bull was tantamount to speaking of the dictatorial regime and its archetypal man. The synergy between the dictator and the bull is explored in the homonymous subsection (2.1. "The Dictator and the Bull") through a perusal of national and international journals (e.g.: the Spanish

L'Esquella de la Torratxa, *La Hora* or *El Mono Azul*, the Mexican *España Popular*, the French *Le Monde*, the US *Tampa Tribune*, or the German *Die Welt*), which amply document the identification of the military leader with the frightful bovine since the Civil War. The next section (3.1.2. "Bull-like Women and Oxen-like Men") delves into several literary, musical, and filmic productions that deliberately reverse the iconography of the bull in the characterization of non-archetypal females (e.g.: strong-willed, single, sexually, and economically independent women) and non-normative males (e.g.: homosexuals, effeminate, foreigners, and political opponents) as bulls and oxen, respectively. The chapter concludes (3.1.3) with an examination of blockbuster comedies (*Vente a Alemania*, *Pepe*, *Vente a ligar al Oeste* and *Celedonio y yo somos así*) that project the image of the sempiternal bull onto Spanish manhood to create the stereotype of the *macho ibérico* for both nationalistic and touristic purposes.

Based on the antithetical avian pair eagle-capon, "Eagles and Capons" (3.2) reflects upon the uses and functions of these and other animal metaphors recurrent in the codification of (non-)normative male desires. Considering Michel Foucault's ideas relating discourses of sexuality and the control of the (homosexual) body in state institutions, "The Predatory Bird and Its Domestic Prey" (3.2.1) and "On the Hunt for the Homosexual" (3.2.2) attempt to decipher the social, medical, religious, educational, and legal implications of the conceptual scenario that framed conflicting masculinities in terms of predator and prey. Centered on the allegorical manifestations of the state's powers, "The Predatory Bird and Its Domestic Prey" looks, first, into the Francoist eagle that embodied the regime's virile archetype. An examination of this avian icon in popular chants (e.g.: "Águilas de España" and "Águilas del Imperio") and publications (the comic *Aguilucho* and the missionary journal *Aguiluchos*) addressed to boys attests to its key function in the (in)formal instruction of young males. Next, the section

researches another set of avian metaphors branding homosexuals as domestic, peaceful, and castrated fowl (i.e., *capón*, *palomo*, *pichón* or *pavo*) that were commonplace in popular parlance, literature, music, and cinema. Along with the contemptuous, yet apparently innocuous depictions of homosexual males as domestic birds, “On the Hunt for the Homosexual” underscores the existence of other, more threatening, categorizations of non-heteronormative males as wild beasts and pernicious parasites in pseudo-scientific writings (e.g.: psychiatrists Antonio Vallejo-Nájera and Juan José López Ibor) and in legal documents (e.g.: Jurist Gómez Aranda de Serrano, Magistrate Antonio Sabater Tomás, Security Inspector Mauricio Carlavilla) that pathologize and criminalize this sexual orientation. The last section (3.2.3) investigates the animal symbols surrounding the stereotype of the homosexual male in the so-called “*comedia de mariquitas*” [sissy comedies] by analyzing the best exponent of this movie subgenre, *No desearás al vecino del quinto*. In line with Judith Butler’s concept of gender as performance, “A Dog’s Life: Animal Metaphors and Filmic Representations of Non-Heteronormative Masculinities in the *Comedia de Mariquitas*” addresses the caricature of Antón, a real womanizer who, accompanied by his inseparable poodle Fifí, pretends to be a homosexual tailor to thrive in his fashion business.

Chapter 4 (“Animals and Femininities”) chronicles the drastic historical changes in women’s lives—educational, professional, legal, political, and sexual—since the Nationalist military uprising until the demise of the Francoist regime through a scrutiny of the most commonplace animal images sketching different archetypes of femininity. “From Wild Beasts to Domestic Hens: Women’s Transition from the Second Republic to the Dictatorship” (4.1) explains the regime’s Manichean view of the female sex as either a fierce animal or a docile bird as part of its double manoeuvre to terminate the feminist accomplishments of the Second Republic and to relegate women to the

confines of the home. Through a perusal of Nationalist newspapers (*ABC*, *La Voz de Castilla*, *El Pueblo Gallego*), magazines (*Revista Y*, *Medina*, *El Ventanal*, *Teresa*, *Club Fémima*), radio and television programs (*NODO*, *Noticario español*, *Consultorio Gallina Blanca Avecrem*), this section observes the animalesque caricatures of national and international advocates of women's rights (Sylvia Pankhurst, Margarita Nelken, Federica Montseny, Clara Campoamor and Victoria Kent). Simultaneously, it identifies these animal tropes in legal, religious, educational, and artistic texts (e.g.: the comic *Doña Urraca* and the film *La loba y la paloma*) aimed at transmitting abhorrence and fear towards a type of femininity that deviated from the canon of domestic womanhood posited by National Catholicism. "Dissecting the Female Body: The Animal Nature of Women in Pseudo-Scientific Writings" (4.2.) describes the efforts of medical practitioners and scientists at the service of the regime to prove epistemologically the mental inferiority of the female sex and their solely reproductive function by drawing parallelisms between women and animals. The section inquires into the zoomorphic metaphors referring to the female's anatomy in the works of well-known psychiatrists Antonio Vallejo-Nájera and Eduardo Martínez, psychologist Misael Bañuelos García and gynecologist José Botellá Llusía, *inter alia*. Finally, "The Taming of Women: Animal Metaphors in The Discourse of Female Education" (4.3) expounds on the Francoist recovery of the folkloric motif of the taming of women in the discourse of female education to justify gender violence and to deter girls from any academic aspiration. A series of fictional works exploiting this classical theme during the dictatorship serves as a springboard for an evaluation of the main zoomorphic tropes used in the formal instruction of women. Along with an examination of these faunistic depictions in newspaper articles, movies, songs, and literary texts that supported domestic abuse, this chapter pays special attention to the bestiary rhetoric employed by

the *Sección Femenina* [Women's Section], since this was the official institution to which Franco entrusted the formal and mandatory education of females.

The second part of the dissertation begins with chapter 5. "Hitting the Bull's Eye: Deconstructing Gender and Nation through Animal Metaphors" purports to show the existence of a counter-discourse articulated around the official bestiary rhetoric aimed at the deconstruction of the fixed gender parameters that defined Francoist Spain. This chapter analyses three banned artistic productions, namely, Margarita Alexandre and Rafael María Torrecilla's movie *La Gata* (1956), Rafael de León, Andrés Moles and Manuel López Quiroga's *copla* "La Loba" (1960), and Ana María Moix's novel *Walter, ¿por qué te fuiste?* (1973). With a focus on the animalized portrayals of *la Gata* [the She-cat], *la Loba* [the She-wolf] and *la mujer centauro* [the centaur woman], the three sections try to demonstrate the critical intentions behind the forging of these female characters in texts that attack the patriarchal regime.

"Letting the Cat out of the Bag: Revealing a Woman's True Nature in *La Gata*" (5.1) examines the deconstruction of the masculine universe of bullfighting, epitome of Franco's virile Spain, through the animalized characterization of the female protagonist María, popularly known as "la Gata." The chapter's objective is to determine how the gender-laden animal pair bull/cat is instrumental in delineating María's transgressive personality and in generating the (sexual) tension of a dramatic film based on a woman's (sexual) desire to break free from the constraints of the male dominated world represented by the microcosm of her father's Andalusian *cortijo*.

"Keeping the Wolves at Bay. The Marginalized She-Wolf in the Song 'La Loba' (1960)" (5.2) tackles the controversial issue of single motherhood during Francoism—particularly of the so-called *madres rojas* [i.e., Republican mothers]—through an examination of the animalized female protagonist starring and naming the

highly successful *copla*. Records from females' penitentiaries, mental and ecclesiastical institutions, and *El Patronato de Protección de la Mujer*—the state's institution for the rehabilitation of “fallen women”—which register *loba* as a dehumanizing slur denoting single mothers, provide the historical background for the interpretation of this marginalized character, who voices the vulnerable situation of women like her.

“Horsing around in Francoist Times: A Centaur Woman in Ana María Moix's Novel *Walter, ¿por qué te fuiste?* (1973)” (5.3) intends to prove how the Catalanian-born writer Ana María Moix “horses around,” that is, plays with and laughs at the sexual mores and conventions prevailing in Franco's ultraconservative Spain with the creation of centaur woman Albina. The study contends that this fabulous creature from the circus world not only serves as the perfect counterpoint for the dark reality of Franco's oppressive Spain, but also helps illuminate and explore non-normative forms of sexualities and sexual taboos (i.e., masturbation, lesbianism, bisexuality, homosexuality, incest, and rape) by pushing the well-defined gender binary with her hybrid nature and fantastic provenance.

Knowledge of animal images in Franco's Spain is essential to understand not only the power of symbolic practices in the foundation and consolidation of the totalitarian state, but also the rise—and threat—of the far-right Spanish political party VOX. Hence, chapter 6 (“There is Something Fishy: The Resurgence of the Francoist Bestiary in Present-Day Politics in Spain”) makes the understanding of the Francoist bestiary rhetoric relevant today by comparing the zoomorphic tropes that articulate the nationalistic and gendered discourses of both Francisco Franco and Santiago Abascal, VOX's frontman. A review of the most recurring faunistic metaphors shaping the speeches of the Basque politician—obtained from a series of national and international newspapers (*El mundo*, *El país*, *La Razón*, *El español*, *OK Diario*, *Libertad digital*, *The*

Times, *The New York Times*, *International Affairs*), radio and television programs (*Es la mañana*, *El gato al agua*, *El programa de Ana Rosa*, *El Toro*, *El Hormiguero*), and social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube)—allows for the juxtaposition of their political agendas. The goal of this section is ultimately to disclose the ideology conveyed through the figurative fauna employed by the Nationalist faction and VOX, given that these groups, despite the temporal lapse, praise the national and the masculine while forging negative images of their political opponents (i.e., Republican, independentist, secular parties) and minority groups (i.e., women, non-Christian, immigrants, the LGBTQ+ community).

Finally, chapter 7 draws some conclusions regarding the uses and functions of animal symbols in the (de)construction of gender and nation in Franco's Spain. Apart from reflecting upon the real implications that this figurative fauna had in all aspects of people's lives—education, law, medicine, religion, profession, gender—during the dictatorship, this last section also proposes new avenues of research related to the significance of zoomorphic emblems in the shaping of identities.

Chapter 1. The Rhetoric of Animality: The Bestial Masculine and Feminine

So the father and ruler of the gods, who is armed with the three-forked lightning in his right hand, whose nod shakes the world, setting aside his royal sceptre, took on the shape of a bull... he offers his chest now for virgin hands to pat and now his horns to twine with fresh wreaths of flowers. The royal virgin even dares to sit on the bull's back, not realising whom she presses on, while the god, first from dry land and then from the shoreline, gradually slips his deceitful hooves into the waves. Then he goes further out and carries his prize over the mid-surface of the sea. She is terrified and looks back at the abandoned shore she has been stolen from and her right hand grips a horn, the other his back, her clothes fluttering, winding, behind her in the breeze. (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* II)

Latona's daughter, glutted with the woes inflicted on Parthaon's house, now gave two of the weeping sisters wide-spread wings, but Gorge and the spouse of Hercules not so were changed. Latona stretched long wings upon their arms, transformed their mouths to beaks, and sent them winging through the lucent air. (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* VIII)

Of all the animals into which Jupiter could have transformed to seduce and rape Europe, the king of all the gods opted for the sexually potent bull in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In the passage devoted to the mourning of Meleager's death the Greek poet recreates the physical transformation of her afflicted sisters into domestic hens. The transmutation of deities and mortals into different animal species not only shows the legendary figures that populated the Classical imagination, but also notions of manhood and womanhood articulated around the bestiary rhetoric since the Ancient World. In fact, in addition to the above stories, myths such as "The Minotaur," "Dionysus and the Bull," "Nike and Taurus," along with fables like Aesop's "Venus and the hen" or Aelian's "Hens in the temple of Hebe" resorted to images of bulls and hens to mirror canons of femininity and masculinity (Doherty 5-46; Gabriel 5-17; López-Rodríguez, "Reinforcing" 137-139; Segal 301-338).

Zoomorphic imagery has informed the rhetoric of gender since Antiquity (Aftandilian *et al.* 21-56; Bock and Burkley 264).⁸ Key reference points for the construction of socio-spatial difference and hierarchy (Bujok 32), animal metaphors have become commonplace in the categorization of sexual identities (R. Baker 45-52; Hines 9-21; Nilsen 257-270). Men and women alike tend to be conceptualized as some sort of beast. The former can be referred to as *studs*, *bucks*, *wolves*, *bulls* or *roosters*, the latter, on the other hand, as *kittens*, *bitches*, *vixens*, *hens*, and *cows*. In the encoding of such images the animal name selected, far from arbitrary, seems to reflect stereotypical views on manhood and womanhood which ultimately serve to define the roles and delineate the spaces assigned to men and women in society (López-Rodríguez, “Of Women” 82-83).

As discussed in Linguistics, Psychology and Philosophy, metaphors are not divorced from the world of our perceptions and conceptions, but rather, firmly rooted in it (Barcelona; Lakoff and Johnson). People can express a picture of reality or a world view using symbols. In fact, most figurative language is not neutral in its evaluative stance (Moon 4-19) but charged with an ideological component that reflects a bias on behalf of a speech community towards other groups of people, mores, situations, and events (Fernando 5-6). Hence, being channels of folk beliefs, metaphors are frequently used as arguments of authority to validate or sanction certain behaviors (Drew and Holt 495-498) for the benefit of the hegemonic collectivity (MacArthur 71-72).

Given that metaphors provide conceptual frameworks to understand people’s selves and experiences, zoomorphic images offer a window onto the construction of

⁸ Even though within Animal Studies and Ecofeminism there exists the distinction between non-human animals and human animals, in this project non-human animals will be referred to simply as “animals” and human animals simply as “humans.”

gender, even creating gender itself, for, as Rainer Hülse states, “[metaphors can] constitute the object they signify” (403). Certainly, as “iconographic references” (Martin *et al.* 37-38),⁹ faunistic representations may force individuals to see sexual identities through a specific lens, often leading to a distorted vision of reality which may make people believe in and commit to certain actions related to their understanding of different beasts:¹⁰ “[w]hen we see the world with a particular metaphor, it then forms basis of our action... our perception of the world and behaviour will change according to the use of a particular metaphor” (Fairclough 67):

In general terms, creatures of a considerable size and strength that inhabit the wilderness pertain to the zoomorphic domain of masculinity, so that lions, tigers, lynxes, or bulls can figuratively be used to describe males. Femininity, by contrast, is expressed in opposite terms, given that small, weak, or domestic animals, such as chickens, hens, kittens, fillies, mares, and cows tend to define the female nature (R. Baker 45-53; Nesi 272-275; Nilsen 257-270). Equated with wild beasts, men are conceptualized as menacing animals in need of freedom. Due to their link with domestic animals, women, however, are inevitably associated with the home ambience. Such

⁹ Hawkins speaks of “iconographic reference” to indicate those mental frameworks which help people to understand certain aspects of reality. According to him, this iconographic reference serves as a technique of manipulative categorization in the sense that the use of “simplistic images of our experiences” that are associated with “familiar values” can establish “a powerful conceptual link between the referent and a particular value judgment” (32).

¹⁰ Through their theory of metaphorical entailments George Lakoff and Mark Johnson explain how people can follow a certain course of action when presented with certain metaphors: “Metaphors have entailments through which they highlight and make coherent certain aspects of our experience. A given metaphor may be the only way to highlight and coherently organize exactly those aspects of our experience. Metaphors may create realities for us, especially social realities. A metaphor may thus be a guide for future action. Such actions will, of course, fit the metaphor. This will, in turn, reinforce the power of the metaphor to make experience coherent. In this sense metaphors can be self-fulfilling prophecies” (156).

different habitats seem to correspond with the social spaces traditionally assigned to each of the sexes, which circumscribe men to the public sphere and women to the private confines of the house. Besides, through these polarized zoomorphic constructions, the relationship of man to woman is often presented as predator to prey, with the implications of sexual abuse and violence derived from the active and passive role conferred to males and females in the metaphorical hunting scenario that frequently frames heterosexual interactions (Bock and Burkley 262-274; Robinson *et al.* 272-284).¹¹

The tendency to categorize males and females in the guise of untamed and tamed animals, respectively, sheds some light onto their social functions. Because fierce beasts pose a threat not only to other animal species, but also to humans, the identification of men with wild creatures is likely to convey positive evaluations, highlighting their strong and powerful position in the natural world, as attested, for instance, in the figurative senses of *lion* (i.e., a brave person, a person of outstanding interest or importance [*Webster*]), *stud* (i.e., a tough man [*Webster*]) or *bull* (i.e., a strong man; a

¹¹ A word of caution is required here regarding the use of English examples in this section to illustrate the gender bias usually conveyed through animal names, given that the Francoist bestiary analyzed in this dissertation is evidently in Spanish. In fact, although both languages exhibit a similar tendency in the zoomorphic categorization of males and females—with the former usually being attributed more positive evaluations than the latter—there is not a one-to-one correspondence in the faunistic metaphors coded by these speech communities, nor are the connotations of the same animal names identical, since there are stark cultural differences between the English- and Spanish-speaking worlds (Deignan 255-269; Fernández and Jiménez 771-795; López-Rodríguez, “Of Women” 77-97; Talebinejad and Dastjerdi 133-148). To illustrate, consider the largely taboo “bitch,” whose Spanish equivalent is “zorra” (literally “vixen”) or the English “dog,” whose exclusive masculine sense of “fellow or chap” has nothing to do with the idea of laziness conveyed through its literal translation “perro,” a zoomorphic metaphor often employed as an insult to denote a despicable individual. A more conspicuous example is “bull.” Here the meanings of “brave, violent and even sexually vigorous” transmitted in English do not do justice to the potency of the Spanish term “toro,” culturally loaded owing to the Spanish tradition of bullfighting (Bugnot 37-45; J. R. Calvo 367-376; de la Fuente 29-35).

sexually potent male [*Webster*]). On the opposite pole, the common conceptualization of women as pets and farmyard renders them as providers of company, nourishment, and work (R. Baker 45-48); in other words, as “an exploitable commodity for human economy” (L. Lovejoy 6). This inferior position in relation to people might certainly account for the negative import attached to these symbolic animal names (Leach 23-24), as illustrated, for example, in *hen* (i.e., a fussy middle-aged woman [*Webster*]) and in the largely taboo words *bitch* (i.e., a malicious, spiteful, or overbearing woman [*Webster*]) or *pussy* (i.e., the female partner in sexual intercourse [*Webster*]).

In the case of animal companions, besides connotations of unpleasantness (*bitchy*), traits of sexuality and promiscuity prevail in the coinage of the metaphors, presenting females as sexual playthings (*kitten*) and even as prostitutes (*cat*) (Hines 9-12; López-Rodríguez, “Of Women” 83-87). As for livestock, along with pejorative views regarding fatness (*cow, mare*), ugliness (*heifer*) and dirtiness (*pig, sow*), notions of edibility and servitude are at the core of such zoomorphic representations, since females are conceived as producers of food (*hen, cow*) or as products to be consumed (*chick, bunny, quail*)—with the erotic innuendoes derived from the figurative domain that associates sexual desire with eating and hunger (Baider and Gesuato 6-30; Chamizo and Sánchez 36-65; López Rodríguez, “Reinforcing” 159-162).

Unlike the almighty free beasts, which are the archetypes of masculinity, depictions of women as domestic animals seem to contribute to their oppression, objectification and commodification, given that females are symbolically subjugated for people’s advantage (Devlin 129; Dunayer 11; Tipler and Ruscher 109-111).¹²

¹² This notion of the woman-as-object has been central to second-wave feminist analyses that focus on the relationships between women and animality, the basis for Adams’ influential work *The Sexual Politics of the Meat*, which explores the nexus between meat consumption and sexism.

Ecofeminist scholars have drawn attention to the parallelisms between the exploitation of animals and women in modern societies, particularly regarding their functions in reproduction and nourishment (Adams 168; Coviello and Borgerson 2-4; Wyckoff 721-735). This (ab)use of both the bestial and the feminine equally transpires in language with their allegorical equivalence, as Gruen observes:

the categories “woman” and “animal” serve the same symbolic function in patriarchal society. Their construction as dominated, submissive “other” ... has sustained human male dominance. The role of women and animals in post-industrial society is to serve/be served up; women and animals are the used. (61)

The language of the species certainly constitutes a powerful coercive mechanism that aids in the (re)affirmation of male dominance. As Pierre Bourdieu has argued in *The Masculine Domination*, male control is, more often than not, invisible, mainly exerted through symbolic practices which occur within the daily social habits maintained over individuals that internalize and accept their given position in society (12-46). Evidently, through the strategy of zoosemy the hierarchical organization of the patriarchal world is extrapolated to the animal kingdom. Represented as predatory wild beasts, men are placed higher up in the pyramid of the species than women, who, in turn, are lowered down to the category of domestic creatures and preys, with the implications of power and dominance derived from such a “natural” order.¹³ It is precisely by embedding the view of the bestial feminine and masculine in the discourse of nature that zoomorphic imagery has become, using Roland Barthes’ terminology,

¹³ Reflecting upon modern forms of dominance, the French author brings to the forefront the issue of symbolic violence— what he terms “a soft form of violence” (10) — given that in modern societies abuse is not necessarily physical but can also be carried out through iconic representations.

“naturalized” (*Mythologies* 47); in other words, part and parcel of the discursive practices of power where the dominant ideology transmitted is “presented as God-given, natural... inevitable” (Van Dijk 25).

Reasoning along the lines of Critical Discourse Analysis, relationships of dominance, discrimination, power, and control are created, reproduced, and maintained through language (Wodak 11). Hence, the bestiary rhetoric used in the classification of gender contributes to reinforcing the hegemonic masculinity through the misrecognition of the power relations implicit under faunistic metaphors that equal men and women with wild and domestic animals. In fact, in *Gender and Power* Raewyn Connell affirms that the supremacy of the white heterosexual male—what Val Plumwood terms “the human ideal in the Western world” (25)—is constructed through a type of language which excludes not only the female sex, but also other forms of masculinities (Connell and Messerschmidt 832).¹⁴ Speciesism, indeed, has been linked to the marginalization of non-heteronormative males (Cordeiro-Rodrigues 12-26; Samardžić 8-10; Smorag 4-19). Crossing the marked lines that delimit the binary notions of heterosexual masculinity and femininity drawn in mainstream society, gay men are usually imagined as effeminate and, consequently, the zoomorphic metaphors used in their categorization often overlap with those defining the female sex (López- Rodríguez, “Of Women” 79-80), since both groups are mainly equated with domestic animals. Homophobia manifests in pet names such as *pup* (i.e., a gay adolescent [P. Baker 186]), *bitch* (i.e., a sexually active gay men [P. Baker 186]), *pussycat* (i.e., a sexually active young gay man

¹⁴ Connell first described “hegemonic masculinity” in *Gender and Power* as “constructed in relation to women and to subordinated masculinities” (186). This definition is later refined in *Masculinities* as “the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (77-78).

[P. Baker 189]) and *kitten* (i.e., an effeminate male [Smorag 3]) as well as livestock, for *chicken, capon, duck, bunny, lamb, pig* or *ponyboy*, among others, have been common epithets to disparage gay men (P. Baker 155-186; La Fountain-Stokes 192-226; Samardžić 8-13). Besides the presence of domestic species to underscore their similarities with females, and, thus, their implied lack of virility, so-called “liminal animals,” that is, those that live in human communities but are not domesticated (e.g.: rats and insects) also abound in the animalized depiction of non-heteronormative males (Cordeiro-Rodrigues 6-7). Consider, for instance, the figurative usages of *bug, frog*, or *ladybug* to negatively describe homosexual men (Nilsen 257).

The clear imbalance in terms of praise and abuse in the iconography of the bestial reflects the supremacy of the hegemonic masculinity at the expense of other sexual identities, which, seen through images of domestic creatures, insects, and reptiles, are conceived as either rendering service to or as pernicious to man. Yet, a reversal in zoomorphic imagery also goes hand in hand with semantic derogation, given that the classification of females and non-heteronormative males into wild beasts is equally tinged with pejorative connotations. Casting women in the guise of untamed animals, above all, highlights their menacing nature, since non-compliant females pose a threat to the patriarchy (Silaški 319-330). The woman-as-wild animal trope accentuates the classical connection of women with nature and baseness, ultimately conveying a sexual force that needs to be restrained (L. Lovejoy 6), as inferred from the non-literal meanings of *cougar* (i.e., a middle-aged woman seeking a romantic relationship with a younger man [Webster]), *vixen* (i.e., a sexually attractive woman [Webster]), *lioness* and *tigress* (i.e., sexually active women [R. Baker 50-54]). Aside from oozing sexuality, unfavorable physical qualities, such as fatness (i.e., *whale, seal*) and ugliness (i.e., *coyote, fox*), are also conveyed through these symbols (R. Baker 45-

52, Fernández and Jiménez 771-795). As for non-heteronormative masculinities, their portrayals as wild fauna exacerbates their stereotypical depraved sexual nature, judging from the senses of *chicken hawk* (i.e., older gay males that prefer young partners [Router 22]) or *wolf* (i.e., a promiscuous gay man [*Urban Dictionary*]). On the other hand, in addition to being less frequent, the identification of heterosexual males with domestic species does not necessarily entail strong contempt. *Rooster*, for example, means “a cocky or vain man” (*Webster*) and although the masculine *dog* can denote “a worthless person” (*Webster*), its exclusive application to males is synonymous with “fellow or chap” (*Webster*).

In sum, deeply rooted in Western culture, the rhetoric of the bestial used in the codification of gender contributes to the assertion of the hegemonic masculinity by excluding other forms of sexual identities. In fact, because in the oft-quoted words of Claude Lévi-Strauss, animals are chosen not because “they are good to eat,” but rather, “because they are good to think” (*Totetism* 89), the zoomorphic symbolism that interwove the (non-)official discourses during the Francoist regime may provide a good insight into how gender can be (de)constructed through faunistic imagery.¹⁵

¹⁵ As Lévi-Strauss asserts, animals have always been central to human culture due to the close relationship earlier societies had with the natural world. Because of the diversity of the animal kingdom, beasts offer people a way to mark distinctions and difference.

Chapter 2. Animal Metaphors: Shaping Nation and Gender in Franco's Spain

“El nuevo gobierno de España tiene la piel más gruesa que un rinoceronte” (Francisco Franco, 1939)

Immediately after his ascension to power, Franco's description of his new government by means of animal-like traits reflects the centrality of zoomorphic metaphors during the formation of the new nation. The thick-skinned rhinoceros conjures physical strength, aggressiveness and sexual vigour (Cirlot 160); in other words, qualities that would define the virile Francoist Spain. As a matter of fact, this image of the pachyderm had previously been used in Nationalist propaganda to explain national weakness as a deterioration of masculinity (Morcillo, *Seduction* 26).¹⁶ During the Spanish Civil War Antonio Vallejo-Nájera proclaimed Spain's political tribulations as a consequence of the decadence of the once “raza viril hispánica” [virile Hispanic race] (*Eugenesis* 7).¹⁷ According to the leading psychiatrist, prior to Franco's government, politicians' “concoctions had barely stung the pachyderm-like skin of the racial body” (8). Such a transformation of the body politic from human to animal illustrates the twofold purpose of animal imagery in the construction of nationhood (S. Baker 33-73) as well as gender (R. Baker 45-50; Fernández and Jiménez 771-795).

Animal emblems like the abovementioned rhinoceros not only became pervasive in the discourse of the nation, but they also endowed the nation with significance by

¹⁶ During the Second Republic, Republicans had often associated the Nationalists with wild beasts like rhinoceroses. In the article “¡Viva la República!” (1933), Ortega y Gasset refers to former politicians as rhinoceroses: “Tenemos, pues, la obligación de hacer esa gran experiencia, sépanlo, estamos resueltos a defender la República. Yo también. Sin desplantes y aspavientos que detesto. Pero conste: yo también. Yo, que apenas cruzo palabra con esos hombres que han gobernado estos años, algunos de los cuales me parecen no ya jabalíes, sino rinocerontes” (32).

¹⁷ Since the collapse of the Spanish empire after its defeat in the Spanish-American War (1898), the crisis undergone by the nation was often interpreted through gender imagery. Hence, the conception of the past masculine Spanish empire gave way to the image of an effeminate and weak country (Blasco 106-110).

providing its citizens with key reference points for the construction of their identities. After all, a country, at its foundation, is a metaphoric construct. Though defined by clear-cut boundaries and governed by distinct leaders, a state is a conceptual place largely brought into existence and held together by mental imagery.¹⁸ Nations, indeed, as “imagined communities” (Anderson 6-7) only achieve their reality with the aid of certain images, symbols and metaphors (Moreno and Núñez 1-7; Neocleous 11-27; Šarić 49; Smith 49).¹⁹ Transcending their physical geography, they are mental spaces, repository of symbols—flags, anthems, folk costumes and dances, rituals and festivities, culinary practises, etc.—shared by a community to nourish their sense of patriotism (Cohen 20-28). Certainly, zoomorphic metaphors are categories of a kinship system employed to claim distinctiveness as well as sovereignty. The iconography of the bestial used in Franco’s speech surely helped to paint a clear picture of the Spanish nation in people’s minds.

Images of animals—whether real or fantastic—have long been heralds of states, as seen in their omnipresence in coats of arms, flags, stories, legends, propaganda, and discourse (S. Baker 12-56; Sax 4-66). Apart from encapsulating national values, such zoomorphic representations also pertain to gender issues (Mayer, “Gender Ironies” 14).

¹⁸ There is abundant literature in the field of metaphors and the discourse of the national, see Lakoff; Moreno and Núñez; Mussolf, Šarić and Smith, among others.

¹⁹ As Anderson puts it, a nation “is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. Members of the community probably will never know each of the other members face to face; however, they may have similar interests or identity as part of the same nation. Members hold in their minds a mental image of their affinity” (6-7). In the same line, Smith discusses nation and nationalism in relation to symbolic language: “Metaphor—interacting with symbols at various levels—are pervasive in the discourse of the nation, they provide the category of the nation with significance and... they are important tools of nationalism as an ideology, as well as part of the images of the nations by their members and non-members. Nations as “imagined communities” (Anderson) achieve their reality with help of certain metaphors” (49).

Indeed, *el Caudillo*'s use of the rhinoceros does not constitute an isolated instance of a male beast employed to depict the Spanish government, for the oratory of the dictator also displays other creatures of the same sex—notably, eagles, hawks and, of course, the omni-present bulls—to signify the virility of his nation. As a matter of fact, given that nationalism is gendered so are its animal identifications, and the bestiary rhetoric used in the making of countries tends to reveal the deep link between manhood and nationhood (Banerjee 167; Nagel 242). Certainly, as society has mostly been governed by heterosexual males, not only have the patterns and norms been dictated by them, but the images projected of their countries also mirror their sex. The recurrence of lions (England, Belgium, Italy), tigers (Ireland, Bangladesh), foxes (Algeria), wolves (Serbia, Estonia), bulls (Spain), bears (Russia, Finland), eagles (Austria, Germany, Italy, U.S.A., Mexico), condors (Colombia) or roosters (France, Portugal) as icons of states seems to reveal the dominant position of heteronormative males in mainstream society.

Faunistic symbols contribute to shaping nations based on gender difference. By selecting a male animal as the representative of the country other sexual identities are excluded not only from the symbolic space, but also literally from society. This is particularly conspicuous in the case of totalitarian states which praise the masculine while relegating females to the domestic sphere and non-heteronormative males to the community's margins (Mosse, *The Fascist* 4-39), as Mora points out on describing gender constructs, spaces, and roles in Francoist Spain: “la esfera pública, representada en lo viril masculino, se contrapone a la privada, a la doméstica, espacio que ha de ocupar la mujer... Para definir esos espacios de lo público y lo privado se definirán los parámetros de masculinidad y feminidad” (*Margen* 35).

Nations and nationalism display a colorful array of symbolic animals that “flag” the country in the everyday life of its citizenry. Patriotism, indeed, is not just a mere set

of political ideologies instilled through discursive practices articulated around the bestial rhetoric or flags that often display zoomorphic emblems, but other artefacts constantly used by governments in the process of nation-building, such as music, cinema, literature together with maps, stamps, and advertisements of all sorts of products, equally show such bestial manifestations. These forms of “banal nationalism” (Billig 6-7) subliminally leave an imprint on people’s minds, serving to strengthen the connection between nation and gender underpinning the discourse of the bestial that feeds nationalism.²⁰

The codification of gender and nation through different animal species became one of the mechanisms utilized by the Francoist regime to exert power over its citizenry. In fact, if male beasts like the rhinoceros served to bolster the hypermasculinity of the New Spain, other gender constructs were equally subject to zoomorphic metaphorization, this time, however, in order to debase and marginalize them. Hence, because in Franco’s society women were assigned the role of mothers and wives within the confines of the home, the female sex was frequently described in terms of domestic animals, such as chickens and hens. The strong contempt and hate towards the figure of the homosexual, socially and legally prosecuted during the Spanish dictatorship, materialized in their zoomorphic characterization as castrated male animals (i.e., oxen and capons) and as rodents, insects, and parasites, clearly suggesting not only the uselessness of their bodies to the body politic, but also their pernicious effects on society.

²⁰ Billig defines “banal nationalism” as those everyday representations of the nation that build a shared sense of belonging amongst the members of a society while excluding non-members. By banal nationalism one needs to understand all those artefacts and symbolic practices used by governments to forge and reinforce the image of the nation and build national identity.

In this sense, it is pertinent to recall Louis Althusser's distinction between the repressive state apparatus (i.e., the government, administration, army, the police, the judicial and legal systems) and the ideological state apparatus (i.e., educational, religious, and familial institutions, high and popular culture) (150), for the Francoist zoological jargon interwove an entire web of discourses permeating all these social strata. Animal metaphors, indeed, served to sanction not only verbally, but also physically and legally, sexualities that did not conform to the monolithic definition of gender based on the dichotomous pair heterosexual/homosexual, male/female which the Regime obsessively sought to differentiate in order to carry out its ideological and political programs (Mora, *Margen* 180-20; Pérez-Sánchez, *Queer* 11-12).

Chapter 3. Animals and Masculinities in Franco's Spain

3.1. The Bull of Francoism

3.1.1. The Dictator and the Bull



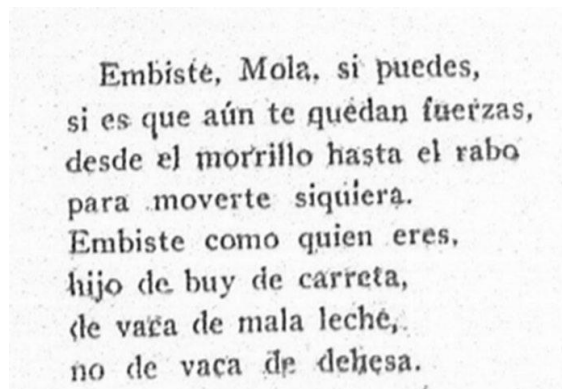
Image 1. "Let the bull come out" (*L'Esquella de la Torratxa*, January 1939)

On January 1939 the weekly Catalan magazine *L'Esquella de la Torratxa* printed a comic strip of general Francisco Franco riding a bull and charging violently at a Republican soldier. Although in the political cartoon the militiaman manages to stop and overthrow the beast, reality turned out to be quite different, for, just a few months after this publication, the Nationalist faction would proclaim its victory, marking the end of the Spanish Civil War on April 1939 and the beginning of the Francoist regime (1939-1975).²¹

Even before his proclamation as Head of State and Government under the title *El Caudillo*, Franco had already been associated with the image of the bull, as attested in

²¹ Previously, the Republican journal *La Hora* had published the short story "Un toro antifascista" (no. 73, Aug. 29, 1937), whose title already subverted the Francoist symbol par excellence. The text deals with two Republican soldiers carrying a box with an anti-fascist bull during the Spanish Civil War. When caught in an ambush, the beast is released to shoo the Nationalist troops (Catalá-Carrasco, *Vanguardia* 97).

the written and graphic press of the Second Republic and the Civil War (L. Campos 5-29; Catalá-Carrasco, *Vanguardia* 97; Fandiño 9-12). The Republican journal *El Mono Azul* viewed the military advance led by the Spanish general as “la amenaza del toro” [the bull’s threat] (1936), and other Nationalist commanders were also seen through the same zoomorphic metaphor. This is the case, for example, of Emilio Mola y Vidal, one of the leaders of the military uprising that culminated in the Spanish Civil War. In a sarcastic poem, he is compared to a wild bull, whose mother is a cow which produces very bad milk, with the intended pun on the Spanish idiom *tener mala leche* (literally “to have bad milk”), meaning “to be bad tempered.”



Embisté, Mola, si puedes,
si es que aún te quedan fuerzas,
desde el morrillo hasta el rabo
para moverte siquiera.
Embiste como quien eres,
hijo de buy de carreta,
de vaça de mala leche,
no de vaca de dehesa.

Image 2. Poem to Emilio Mola (*El Mono Azul*, 1936)

The foreign press equally echoed the zoomorphic identification of the soon-to-be dictator of Spain with the bull right after the breakout of the Civil War, as seen in a US caricature dated July 1936 (image 3). The Florida newspaper *Tampa Tribune* interpreted the Spanish military insurrection in bullfighting terms. The image entitled “Just An Old Spanish Custom” personified the nation as a clumsy bullfighter unable to resist the powerful charge of Franco, pertinently metamorphosed into a bull. The fearful beast is branded with the word “Revolution,” probably a mocking remark that refers to Spain’s political instability since the 19th century.

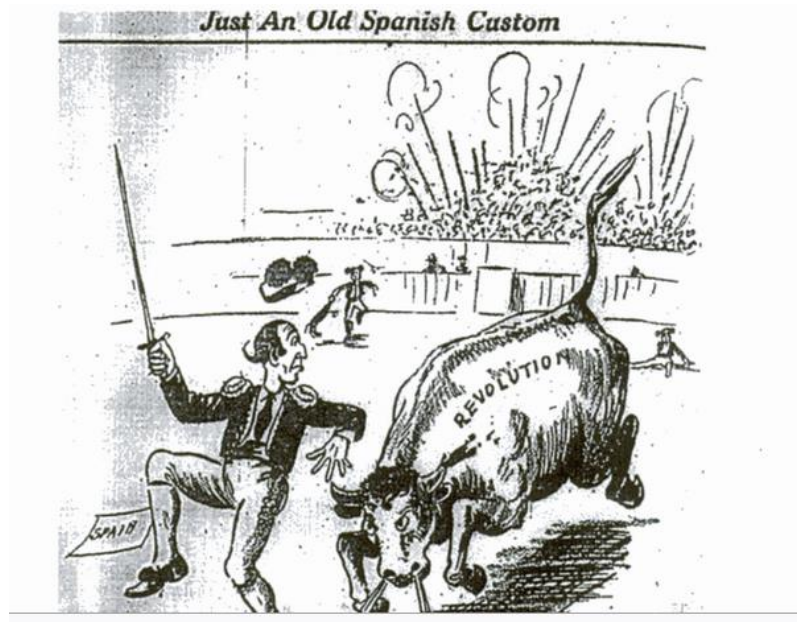


Image 3. “Just An Old Spanish Custom” (*Tampa Tribune*, July 21, 1936)

The very same year in Europe, a British cartoon (image 4) depicted the nascent European fascisms breastfed by Italian leader Benito Mussolini, transformed into the legendary she-wolf that suckled the mythical twin founders of Rome. The second from the right is Francisco Franco, who, significantly, is being hoisted by a bull fuming with anger, indicative of Spain.²²

²² The cartoon depicts 20th-century European fascist leaders led by Mussolini. From left to right one can see German Hitler, followed by Turkish Kemal Atatürk, who, in turn, is accompanied by his Greek counterpart Ioannis Metaxas. After him is Spanish Franco and, finally, British parliamentary Oswald Mosley. For a detailed analysis of the comical portrait see Fandiño 80-112.



Image 4. “All Dictators” (Cartoonist Kimon Evan Marengo, December 1936)

Symbol of the Spanish nation since the Greek writer Strabo described the Iberian Peninsula as “a bull’s hide” in his geographical treatise *Geographia* (30-25 BC) (C. Douglass 47-65; Luzón and Núñez 5-9), the bovine epitomized the traditional values defended by the Nationalist cause. Such principles not only pertained to the national festivity, whose popularity, needless to say, reached high levels under Franco’s mandate in a well-planned maneuver to counteract the debacle that bullfighting had undergone during the Second Republic (Núñez Florencio, “Bullfights” 181-195), but also to a patriarchal society constructed around a polarized conception of gender.

Upon his rise to power, Franco himself envisioned his regime through the symbol of the bull in order to project the image of a nation not only as a fierce animal capable of attacking its enemies mercilessly, but also as eminently masculine:²³ “La nación española embestirá como un toro bravo a sus enemigos” (*Discursos*, 1936). The

²³ In one of his first radio messages (1940) Franco made it clear that the essence of the Spanish nation was going to be virile: “No queremos una vida fácil... Queremos una vida dura, la vida de un pueblo viril” (qtd. in Mora, *Margen* 34).

same zoomorphic image resurfaced on addressing the Spanish men, whose courage, sacrifice, and strength were required in the construction of the New Spain: “hay que sacar el toro que todo hombre español lleva dentro” (Vázquez Montalbán, *Crónica* 86). The bull, eventually, would become “the metaphor par excellence” (Moreno and Núñez 6) of Francoist discourses on nationhood articulated around the interplay of politics and gender.²⁴

As the totalitarian regime consolidated, so did the image of Franco as a bull in the collective imagination. The new Spanish nation could not be understood without its dictator, let alone without its omnipresent bull. Nationalist oratory typically included references to its iconic beast to bolster the Francoist government. The Director General of Cinematography and Propaganda, Falangist journalist Manuel Augusto García Viñolas, suitably referred to *el Caudillo*'s administration as “Gobierno del toro” (*Vértice*, 46-47). The co-founder of NO-DO—the state-controlled news and documentaries—disseminated the faunistic epithet through the official television channel. The broadcasting of information in favor of the regime often included the triad of cheers “¡Viva Franco! ¡Vivan los toros! ¡Viva España!” during the frequent spectacles of bullfighting that inundated Spanish T.V. (Box, “Anverso y reverso” 243-248; de Haro 69).

Political speeches were also rife with bovine imagery to signal the supremacy of *la Nueva España*. In response to the sanctions and attacks of international democracies, the authoritarian country, far from intimidated, challenged them to fight against the

²⁴ Franco constantly deployed bull imagery to refer to the Spanish nation, as seen in *Discursos y Mensajes del Jefe del Estado*: “vivimos todos en la misma piel de toro” (259), “bajo el signo de una misma fe, llevamos veinte siglos sobre esta piel de toro de nuestra geografía” (282), “de los distintos pueblos de esta tierra de infinidad de héroes anónimos que esparcidos por la piel de toro de nuestra nación” (202).

bull-like Spain. In his tirade against Britain and the United States on 17 July 1941, Franco got carried away by the force of “the bull’s hide” (Smyth 639), prompting his foreign minister, Ramón Serrano Suñer, to query “is this a bull-fight?” (qtd. in Preston, *Franco* 441). On festive occasions, *el Generalísimo* would reminisce his military triumph in the Civil War by evoking the image of the Nationalist faction as a bull fighting against the Republican army in the bullring, as seen in his address to Falangist troops in Granada on 13 October 1952, a day after the commemoration of the Reconquest of Spain by the Catholic Monarchs:

El Estado español es un estado social. Así lo definimos cuando estaba el toro en la plaza. Cuando había que perder, cuando levantábamos nuestras banderas y nuestros pendones y velábamos las armas en lucha por una España mejor... la inquietud del Estado hace que lleve a sus hombres ...a cambiar la suerte y el porvenir de España (*Portal Fuentesrebollo* 2)

Token of the *Generalísimo*’s absolute power, the archetype of the mighty bull transcended national borders.²⁵ International media recurred to the zoomorphic metaphor to alert of the dangers of another European dictatorship. The Mexican journal *España Popular* included a drawing of a bull’s attack when reporting on the Francoist scourge of Madrid in the 1945 article “Madrid, bajo el azote franquista” (8). The French newspaper *Le Monde* warned in 1946 of the inefficacy of the UN’s isolation policies over Spain by comparing them to mere pins unable to kill a bull: “Con alfilerazos no se mata el toro” (qtd. in D. Arasa 176). The German publication *Die Welt* included in 1968 a caricature of the Spanish General riding a bull when welcoming Federal Chancellor

²⁵ Since the Civil War and during the first years of the dictatorship, the Nationalist faction used bullrings as public execution sites for the dissidents (Chaves Palacios 33-35). Therefore, in the public mind bulls were not only associated with the national spectacle but also with the cruel dictator.

Kurt Kiesinger during his controversial visit to Madrid (2)—intended to establish closer relations between the European Economic Community and the totalitarian state (image 5).²⁶

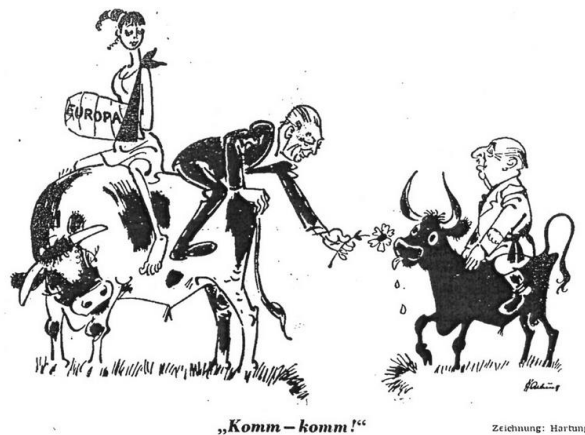


Image 5. Cartoon on the establishment of closer relations between Franco’s Spain and the European Economic Community (Cartoonist Wilhelm Hartung, October 30, 1968)

Under Franco’s rule the presence of the bull was ubiquitous, circulating widely in the “social space of representation” (Lefebvre 186-187) in endless artefacts, which constituted a clear expression of the previously mentioned “banal nationalism.”²⁷

²⁶ The meeting was meant to gain Franco’s support to stop the threat of the communist bloc. Inspired in Classical mythology, the cartoon portrays Europe as a beautiful (yet wounded) woman on a cow’s back. The legendary princess is enticing, along with the flower of the German leader, Franco’s bovine beast. The caption that reads “Komm-Komm!” [Come, come!] is a typical call for animals that completes the zoomorphic sketch. The cartoon appears to ridicule the Francoist dictatorship through the very same zoomorphic symbols employed by the regime to construct its patriarchal society. To begin with, Franco and his bull are, by far, smaller than the cow and its riders, with the corresponding optical effect that implies belittlement. Moreover, the depiction of the bull and of Franco equally transmit debasement. The Spanish dictator is portrayed as an old man (versus the sexy, young, feminine Europe) on the back of a peaceful and even amicable bull that has nothing to do with the fierce beast illustrative of the regime, but, rather, it reminds of the friendly Ferdinand created by Munro Leaf and which was banned during the dictatorship.

²⁷ According to Lefebvre, social spaces are not only physical places where people gather to share experiences, but also mental domains that exhibit common symbols that relate to a particular social group (186-187).

Visual representations of the country in the guise of a bull, reminiscent of Strabos' cartography, permeated official propaganda, since they graphically captured the masculine essence historically attributed to Spain (Schammah 237-239).²⁸ Posters and stamps (image 6) displayed this animalized version of the nation (Navarro 37).

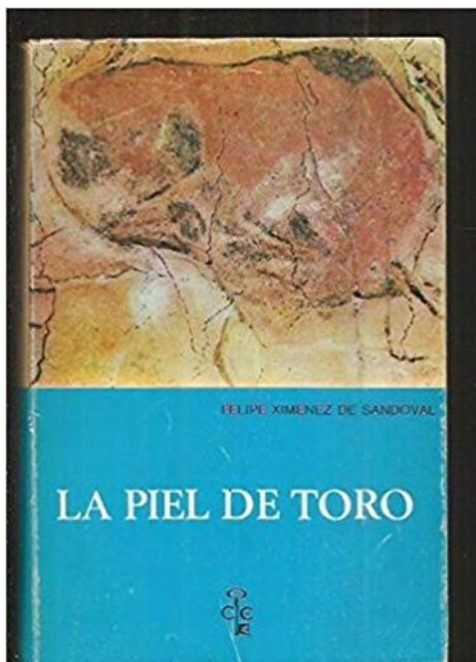


Image 6. Stamps based on Bulls. Fiesta Nacional Tauromaquia (1960) and Encierro (1960)

Textbooks often simplified the geography of the country adjusting it to the symbolic figure of the bull: “una piel de toro desollada y extendida sobre el mar, cual la había visto el Padre Mariana: España como un cuero de buey tendido con los cuernos en los Pirineos, hundidos en Francia” (Schammah 237-238). Similarly, school manuals like

²⁸ To criticize the dictatorship, anti-Francoist writers adopted the symbol of the bull as the genuine representation of Spanishness. In “Llamo al toro de España” (1939), Miguel Hernández urges the Spaniards to rebel against the newly founded totalitarian state: “Alza, toro de España: levántate, despierta.” Novelists Luis Martín Santos and Juan Goytisolo deployed the silhouette of the noble animal to recreate the disastrous effects of the Civil War on the Spanish nation in *Tiempo de silencio* (1962) and *Señas de identidad* (1966), respectively: “del descendiente del águila de la Guerra y destructor de cuantas bibliotecas habían osado distribuir por la piel de toro los venales ministros de Carlos III” (Martín Santos 176) or “Por ese espacio de tres años un vendaval de locura había soplado sobre la piel de toro, completando la obra destructora” (Goytisolo 128). Similarly, an exiled Rafael Alberti uses the tail of the animal to depict the coastal scenery of Andalusia as his ship sets sail to America: “Amanece el Peñón de Gibraltar/ y la cola del toro se estremece” (“Vida bilingüe,” 1939-1940).

España nuestra: el libro de las juventudes españolas (1943) included activities that encouraged children to imagine and draw their country as a bull's hide: “¡Adivinad! ¡Adivinad! Y, entre tanto, pintad a España... Con forma de animal... como la vieron los antiguos: toro” (Giménez Caballero 21-22). Even history books addressed to an adult audience, like Felipe Ximénez de Sandoval’s *La piel de toro. Cumbres y simas de la historia de España* (1944), resorted to the mythical beast on narrating the glorious past events of the country (image 7).²⁹



Quando la historia despierta de su letargo en Iberia una vez cada siglo, se advierte que esos hombres no han pasado. Los que fueron al morir a fundirse en la estirpe de la tierra, vuelven a resucitar en ella. Y la piel de toro—igual que hace cincuenta mil años—está ahí, bajo nuestros pies (155)

Image 7. Front cover and extract from Felipe Ximénez de Sandoval’s history book *La piel de toro* (1944)

Other popular forms optically relating the bull to the masculine nation included advertising and comics. Several Spanish brands of spirits, for instance, designed their logos and mottoes resorting to bull imagery to appeal to a masculine audience genuinely representative of a virile nation (Montero 219). The well-studied case of the Osborne

²⁹ Significantly, the illustration for the front cover of Ximénez de Sandoval’s history book belongs to the Prehistoric cave paintings of Altamira (Santillana del Mar, Santander), for some of the earliest representations of bulls in the Iberian Peninsula are found here.

bull exploited the nationalist and masculinist significance of the animal both in its pictorial and linguistic dimensions (Romero de Solís 372-379). Along its omnipresence on huge billboards that populated the Spanish landscape since the 1950s (image 8), commercials often juxtaposed images of the beast, the drink, and the country (image 9) and made the link between masculinity and the beverage explicit by means of different slogans (images 10 and 11). The name of the brandy “Soberano” (i.e., Sovereign) gave rise to wordplay with the royal title “sovereign,” since bridal manuals recommended that women use this term to address their future husbands (Pujante 91).



Images 8-11. Brandy Soberano advertising with its bull logotype

As for its use in graphic media, the bovine also filled the pages of numerous comics that re-enacted the national festivity to mark the genuine essence of the virile Spanish race (González Viñas, *Toros* 2-15). One of the front covers of *TBO* (no. 338, 1964), the comic that lent its name to the genre of the graphic novel in Spain (i.e., *tebeo*), shows a rainy afternoon of bullfighting (image 12). *DDT* also opts for the same spectacle, but this time instead of the frightful beast, the bullfighter faces two men

disguised as bulls in the bullring under the gaze of an upset audience that throws all sorts of objects at the matador and his fake beast (image 13).



Image 12. *TBO*, no. 338 (1964).
Front cover by Cavestany

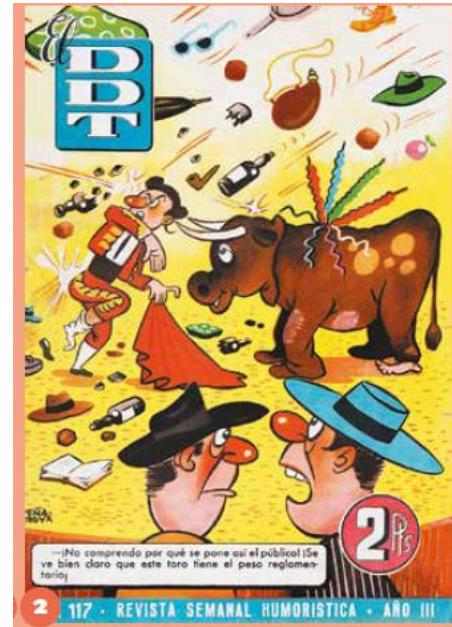


Image 13. *DDT*, no. 117 (1953)
Front cover by Peñarroya

The same costume will aid the clumsy secret agents Mortadelo and Filemón to accomplish one of their missions in the homonymous comic series (image 14). The hugely successful cartoons created by Francisco Ibáñez were frequently immersed in the universe of taumachy during the dictatorship (Sánchez and Sánchez 1; Vicente 2-11; “Viñetas” 1-3; Zamora 1-3). Apart from their frequent disguises as bullfighter and bull, some of the adventures of these private detectives were entitled with bull idioms, such as *Valor y ...¡al toro!* (1970) (image 15). The story about the retrieval of some stolen plans, hidden in the horn of a humongous bull, led to the creation of a secondary male character named after the potent animal. The identity of Toro, the world’s weightlifting champion, was remarkably mistaken for a real bull and proved to be like one when attacked (image 16).



Image 14. Mortadelo and Filemón in their bull costume (1970)

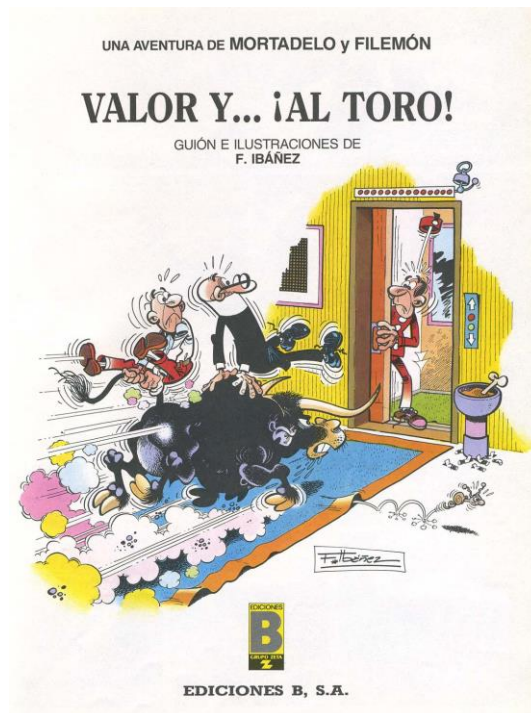


Image 15. *Valor y ... ¡al toro!* (1970)



Image 16. The character Toro, the world's weightlifting champion (1970)

In Franco's time to speak of the bull was tantamount to speaking of Spanish manhood (Alcalde 182). The national beast became the archetype of the Nationalist man and its fierce nature was used to reinforce the patriarchy by instilling fear among the female population. "Pero al toro del hombre se le tenía miedo" (Martín Gaité, *Usos* 144) read official documents cautioning women of the dangers of establishing relationships with the opposite sex, and the ritual of courtship was often understood as an act of bullfighting between woman and the beast-like man, as Carmen Martín Gaité documents in *Usos amorosos de la posguerra española*: "Mira, hija, eso de jugar a los novios ... es como torear" (149), or "La diversión, por lo tanto, quedaba circunscrita a la etapa anterior al compromiso, al entretenimiento solitario. Era, por otra parte, algo insatisfactorio, como torear sin toro" (149).

Analogously, folk songs expressed the perils of falling in love by equating men with wild bulls ready to charge at women, as observed in Rafael de León's "Con divisa verde y oro:" "Ganadera con divisa verde y oro, / ten cuidado, / que el amor no te sorprenda como un toro/ desmandado." Likewise, the suffering experienced by an enamoured woman is seen through the lens of tauromachy in Valverde, León and Quiroga's "Te quiero," since lovesickness is compared to a perdition bull: "El mal de amores, cariño mío, / es como un toro de perdición" and in León and Solano's "El amor es un toro desmandao," whose title is self-explanatory (qtd. in Martín Villegas 342).

Apart from inspiring terror, the figure of the bull also evoked physical strength, fighting spirit and sexual potency (de la Fuente 139-148); in other words, defining traits of the canonical masculinity extolled by the regime to promote its military and natality policies. As already mentioned, in Francoist harangues it spurred the military men to use their virile strength in defense of the nation, and a similar exaltation of males' physical power was carried out through this zoomorphic transformation of fictional

masculine characters, usually conveying sexual innuendoes. In Elena Quiroga's novel *La última corrida* (1958), whose title is already reminiscent of the masculine universe of bullfighting, the male protagonists are equated with bulls because of their triumphs in the bullfighting and amorous arena (Zovko 231-232): "los hombres son como toros" (69). Similarly, in *Guanche* (1957) and *La rosa* (1959) Enrique Nácher and Camilo José Cela, respectively, construct the male characters of Felipe and Álvaro as bulls due to their successful love affairs. The former is described as "[a]ncho, alto, fuerte como un toro" (156) and the latter as "fuerte como un toro y jovial" (282). More sexually explicit is the taurine depiction of the males that grope dancer Coral in Eduardo Mendoza's *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* (1975). Sexually aroused by the vedette's performance, the force of the masculine group is compared with the authority and sexuality of the fierce beast: "aquellos forzudos... y bestiales que la sobaban y mandaban con el gesto autoritario del toro semental" (164).

Music also incorporated the erotic bovine. The popular song "El toro y la luna" (1965), for instance, dealt with a fiery animal enamoured of the moon, the feminine symbol of *antonomasia* (Cirlot 283-285). A more explicit link between the Spanish man and the wild creature appears in Manolo Escobar's lyrics of "La minifalda" (1971): "No me gusta que a los toros, te pongas la minifalda," where the male voice strongly disapproves of his girlfriend's wearing a miniskirt during the spectacle of bullfighting given the eminently masculine audience.

The image of the fierce animal was so important in the official imaginary that Munro Leaf's best-selling tale *The Story of Ferdinand* (1936), a picture book about a peaceful bull named Ferdinand that lives in Spain's countryside and refuses to fight

(image 17), was immediately censored by *el Caudillo* and remained banned after his death (Villanueva 4), for it represented the opposite view of the national icon.³⁰

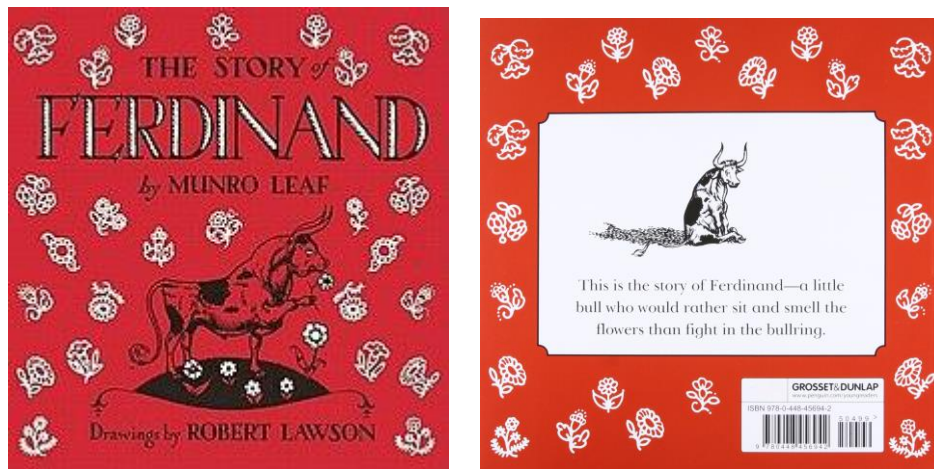


Image 17. Front and back covers of *The Story of Ferdinand* (1936)

³⁰ *The Story of Ferdinand* (1936) was published when the Spanish Civil War had erupted, stirring controversy since it was seen as anti-fascist propaganda (Villanueva 4-5). The book, which was extremely popular and was adapted as a Walt-Disney short 8-minute movie (1938), was also burned and banned in Nazi Germany.

3.1.2. Bull-like Women and Oxen-like Men

Son raras las mujeres, no hay que dudarlo, amigo Álvaro, pero requieren todas un manejo cuyo secreto conozco, hay que tratarlas de forma que tú no las quieres tratar... A las mujeres hay que agacharlas la cabeza como a los toros, y Micaela es un Miura. (Jorge Villarín, *La enfermera de Ondárroa* 48)

When Micaela Ramírez, the young female protagonist in Jorge Villarín's *novela rosa* [romance novel] *La enfermera de Ondárroa* (1938-1940?), refuses to marry second lieutenant Álvaro Armenta, she is described as “un Miura.”³¹ Her portrayal as one of the wildest breeds within the bull species represents an unacceptable transgressive behavior within the fixed monolithic gender boundaries that assigned women the domestic role of marrying and begetting children during Francoism. Micaela's characterization as a bull, the icon of Franco's hypermasculine Spain, ultimately conveyed the threat to the patriarchal regime that such independent women constituted.³² Her subversive zoomorphic identification somehow anticipates her fatal end. Not only will the girl fall in love with the militiaman, who ends up marrying Micaela's best friend Ana María, but she will also be killed by *gudaris* (i.e., the Basque militia) and Republican soldiers—the antagonistic factions of the Nationalist army.

Micaela's taurine depiction formed part of a repertoire of non-compliant females sketched with bull traits that the dictatorship used to caution women of the dangers of sabotaging the virile regime. In fact, the same tragic destiny awaits María, the central

³¹ A relatively unknown author of Francoist ideology, Villarín wrote this romance novel in compliance with Nationalist ideology (González-Allende, “Novela rosa” 81-86). The love story of Micaela, known as “la niña de los desaires” because of her constant snubs to the males that woo her, serves as a cautionary tale for all those girls that do not accept their submissive position in a patriarchal society.

³² In *Hemos perdido el sol* (Ángel María de Lera, 1963) Ramón also employs bullfighting imagery to comment on his friend's self-determined girlfriend: “veo que el toro te cogió bien por la faja” (327). By identifying this woman with a bull, he reveals his chauvinistic conception of heterosexual relationships, where men need to assert their masculinity exercising control upon their female partners (González-Allende, “Displaced Spanish Men” 13).

bull-shaped figure of Margarita Alexandre and Rafael Torrecilla's movie *La Gata* (1956). Her initial comparison with a bull ("bravía, indómita, como los toros... vivía María, la hija del Mayoral" [00:21:18-00:21:19]) foreshadows the protagonist's indomitable behavior. The only daughter of an Andalusian landowner, María fails to comply with her father's commands. Instead of becoming a housewife by marrying the family friend Joselillo, she engages in sexual relations with the Casanova Juan. Despite warnings about the infamous womanizer, María continues trespassing both physical and moral boundaries, running unnecessary risks and compromising her personal as well as familial integrity. María's contempt for patriarchal authority will be punished when, in one of the secret nightly meetings with her lover, the ranch workers who safeguard the family country house will accidentally kill the girl. Stories like Micaela's and María's, with their blatant gender ideology (González-Allende, "La novela rosa" 80-102; Ruiz and Sánchez 53-54; Santamaría 2), served as cautionary tales for the female sex. Through their identification with the nation's iconic beast, women were warned of the dangers of appropriating masculine powers in Franco's virile Spain.

Popular songs similarly reinforced this message advocating masculine domination and aggression through the representation of women as bulls in need of taming: "A los árboles blandeo, / a un toro bravo yo amanso, / y a ti, flamenco, no pueo" (Blanco, Rodríguez and Robles 53) or "Esa mujer que tienes/ que es un toro de lidia/ amánsala con unos cuantos palos, / ponle el estoque y las banderillas" ("Canciones populares" 9).

Filmic productions equally implied physical violence via bovine symbolism. In *La chica del gato* (Clemente Pamplona, 1964), for instance, the orphan Guadalupe is forced into crime by her brutal uncle, who, grabbing her arm and pushing her against the wall, blurts out: "a este toro lo corro yo" (00:12:19). Vicenta's identification with a

bull also serves as a preamble to domestic abuse in *¡Cómo está el servicio!* (Mariano Ozores, 1968). Her outspoken observations regarding her cousin's swindles, who takes advantage of girls with the false promise of marriage, results in her being insulted and secluded in a room as though she were the frightful beast: "encerrado queda el toro" (00: 45:02). Comedies often recurred to the woman-as-bull trope to represent—and solve—marital conflicts with the application of man's force. In *Manolo la nuit* (Mariano Ozores, 1973), when questioned about his constant cheating, Manolo settles the argument with his wife by concluding his telephone conversation with a taurine remark: "así lidio yo con este toro" (00:32:19). The character of José in *Cuando el cuerno suena* (Luis María Delgado, 1975) gives a similar warning to stop his spouse's nagging: "oye, cálmate, toro, que no me aguanto" (00:17:12).

Literary works equally contributed to the dissemination of this beastly portrait to paint a negative image of assertive women. In Gonzalo Torrente Ballester's *La saga/fuga de J.B.* (1972) the females of the Barallobre family, who have a reputation for being more dangerous than their male relatives ("Y es una familia en la que las mujeres son más peligrosas que los hombres" [164]), are granted the epithet "toros" (164). Another atypical feminine group subject to taurine metamorphosis appears in Lauro Olmo's play *La pechuga de la sardina* (1963), whose erotic title—fish species euphemistically denote the vagina (Fernández Insuela 309)—transpires in the sexual freedom of the young protagonists. When university student Paloma and non-conventional Concha, who ends up getting pregnant outside of marriage, engage in amatory relationships, they are reduced to potent bulls (52-53) that must be tamed by their suitors, in turn characterised as matadors.³³

³³ HOMBRE A.—(Sujetando a su compañero, que ya iba detrás de la mujer). Déjamela a mí. (La sigue y, sobre la marcha, vuelve la cabeza y le dice al otro, que se ha quedado

A similar negative image of the bull was projected in connection with non-heteronormative masculinities. Given that the bovine beast became the archetype of virility in Franco's Spain, on no account could it represent a type of sexuality that was considered deviant, sickly, sinful, and detrimental to a country obsessed with the continuation of the Hispanic race (Mora, *Margen* 8-45; Pérez-Sánchez, *Queer* 11-34). Ironically, however, depictions of non-canonical men as bulls were utilized for derisive purposes. In Rafael Sánchez Mazas' *La vida nueva de Pedrito Andía* (1951), the unorthodox manhood epitomized by Willy Adamson, a foreigner of Jewish ancestry, reduces him to the category of a bull ("rojo como un toro" [46]). During his confrontation with Pedro, the fight between the Englishman and the Spaniard is newly understood through bullfighting symbolism, with Pedro playing the role of a bull that pierces Willy's throat with a spike—reminiscent of the sword used to kill the animal (González-Allende, "Héroe" 484-487). To finish off the zoomorphic portrayal of the Briton, Pedro feminizes Willy with the metaphor of a female bull's calf: "daba berridos, con una voz muy rara y como de mujer" (46).

As in Mazas' novel, the deployment of cow symbolism served to question a man's sexual identity and to attack his virility. The young intellectual that frequents the artists' coffee house in Cela's *Café de artistas* (1969) is compared with "las señoras que hieden a vaca" (198). The stereotypical portrait of the artist as emasculated, doubly achieved here through his connection with women and the fetid female bovine, also appears in Cela's *La Colmena* (1950), with the description of a fearful leftish journalist and aspiring poet Martín Marco as a sweaty cow's offspring ("sudaba como un becerro"

parado). Te brindo la faena. HOMBRE A. —Las dos están buenas. (Yendo hacia ellas). Venga, ¡al toro!... HOMBRE A. —A solas tenía que pillarlas. ¡Verías si las domaba! ... HOMBRE A. —No sabes tratar a las hembras... HOMBRE A. —Te veo con divisa y en las Ventas. HOMBRE B. —Y tú de traje de luces, ¿a que sí? (52-53).

[94]). Afraid of coming across as homosexual, the male that seeks Soledad's sexual favors at night in Olmo's *La pechuga de la sardina* urges his male companion to leave him alone. By making the cow's sound, he alerts of the dangers of homosexuality: "Hombre B.-¡Déjame echar una ojeadita! -Hombre A.-¡Calla y aguanta! ¿Es que quieres ponerme haciendo muuu? La Sole es cosa mía" (91).

Of all the bovine tropes used to define non-hegemonic masculinities, it was the oxen, that is, the castrated domestic bull that became the archetype of man's impotence in totalitarian Spain. Figurative oxen scorned submissive males in literature. This is the case, for instance, of the waiters and musicians working for Doña Rosa in her cafeteria *La Delicia* in *La Colmena*: "¡Sois igual que bueyes!" (263) or "El violinista... como un buey... la mira mientras lía un pitillo. Frunce la boca, casi con desprecio, y tiene el pulso tembloroso" (163).³⁴ Andrés' docility towards his wife similarly grants him the zoomorphic epithet "el buey" (qtd. in Hervás Fernández 424) in Antonio Ferrer's *La piqueta* (1959). In like manner, the tearful reaction of homeless León after being slapped by a man on the street reduces him to a crying boy and a meek ox in Cela's *Viaje a la Alcarria* (1948): "lleva los ojos llenos de lágrimas, como un niño, parecen los ojos de un buey" (126).

In Ramón Hernández's *El buey en el matadero* (1966), whose highly symbolic title alludes to the emasculated male protagonist, Berilo Escruto is characterized as a red ox ("el buey rojo" [95, 134, 205, 274]).³⁵ Despite the evident erotism of his last name—"escruto" irremediably suggests "escroto" [scrotum]—, the middle-aged wine

³⁴ Also in *La Colmena* Cela describes Pablo Alonso "con la sonrisa del buey benévolo del hombre que tiene las mujeres no por la cara, sino por la cartera" (54).

³⁵ His chromatic last name may be illustrative of his sinful nature and probable Republican ideology, since red is the color par excellence associated with the devil and with the Republican faction.

manufacturer ironically lacks the virility to act (Bergeson 587; Cabrera and González 136), and his cowardice will result in the termination of his lineage. When his young pregnant lover Sira dies falling into a well while he is chasing her, Berilo's determination to keep the accident a secret for fear of social exclusion brings to the forefront his sinful nature and, above all, unmanly deeds. Tormented by a crime that he never committed, the Castilian businessman is metaphorically castrated, as embodied in his stillborn baby. On top of that, his legitimate son Celso decides to become a priest, putting an end to both the family business and his lineage.

In Franco's Spain, the bull epitomized the nation and its virile archetype. It represented a totalitarian state firmly cemented and consolidated upon gender difference. Exclusively pertaining to the male dominion—both figuratively and literally speaking—the bovine beast ironically illustrated non-canonical femininities and masculinities. On the one hand, images of women in the guise of bulls were utilized for moralizing purposes. Implying physical aggression, isolation and even killing, the taurine metaphor served as a warning to those females that dare usurping masculine powers. With a similar cautionary aim, the figure of the ox, on the other hand, epitomized non-hegemonic masculinities. Apart from underscoring lack of manhood, the domestic and castrated bovine simulateously derided and ostracized non-heteronormative and foreign males. The Francoist bestiary rhetoric deployed this sacrificial emblem as a compelling reminder of the social—and sometimes even physical—castration awaiting non-heteronormative males.³⁶

³⁶ As is well known, some of the therapies and punishments inflicted upon non-heteronormative males during Franco's dictatorship included their physical castration (Altmann; Mora; *inter alia*).

3.1.3. From the Bull Ring to the Big Screen: The *Macho Ibérico* as a Bull in National Cinema

He entrado en conocimiento y con júbilo (como hombre y como español) ... del episodio...en algunos trabajos realizados por un equipo rigurosamente científico... que la potencia de la musculatura penal y vesico-excretona del varón español está muy por encima del resto de los varones, y se aproxima a la del toro... con las consecuencias indudables y beneficiosas que ello tendría de cara al turismo. (Camilo José Cela, *La insólita y gloriosa hazaña del Cipote de Archidona* 28-30)³⁷

The film industry exploited the sexual element of the bull and its projection onto Spanish manhood, particularly for touristic purposes. As the country underwent in the 1960s massive economic development and gradual liberalization owing to the regime's efforts to incentivize foreign investment during the period known as *desarrollismo*, the state's official propaganda coined the icon of the *macho ibérico* upon the sempiternal bull. In an unprecedented campaign that would promote tourism under the motto "Spain is different" (Crumbaugh; Faulkner), the image of the bull-like man not only served to entice foreigners, but also to reinforce the totalitarian state and its masculine archetype, which, somehow, was at stake due to the rapid arrival of new gender models via emigration and the touristic boom (Vivancos 2-3).

Apart from movies dealing explicitly with bullfighting and with the lives of popular matadors (Feiner 8-29; Vidal 87-100), bull imagery was a fundamental component of these artistic productions, since it served to capture the true masculine

³⁷ In *La insólita y gloriosa hazaña del Cipote de Archidona* Cela explicitly condemns the sexual tourism promoted in Spain. The Galician author explores the contradictions of the Francoist regime regarding the tourism industry and its ultraconservative sexual mores. On the one hand, the government used the erotic image of the *macho ibérico* as a potent bull to entice foreigners with the purpose of fostering Spain's economy. On the other hand, the same official bestiary rhetoric was religious and prudish. Hence, Cela criticizes the Regime's double-voiced discourse on projecting a sexual image of the nation internationally while keeping the national borders under strict Catholic control.

essence embodied by the stereotype of the *macho ibérico*. As movie critic Fernando González Viñas explains: “aparece la imagen de los toros... para hablar de las bondades del macho hispánico” (*Cine* 3).³⁸ In addition to folkloric motifs such as bulls’ heads and horns as well as bullfighters’ outfits that decorated taverns and other public spaces frequented by men in films such as *Bienvenido Mr. Marshall* (Luis García Berlanga, 1953), *Un vampiro para dos* (Pedro Lazaga, 1965), *El turismo es un gran invento* (Pedro Lazaga, 1968), *Vente a Alemania, Pepe* (Pedro Lazaga, 1971) or *Vente a ligar al oeste* (Pedro Lazaga, 1972), the actors who played the role of sex symbols included a wide repertoire of words and gestures from the world of tauromachy to transmit the Francoist ideal of masculinity.

The case of actor Alfredo Landa, who lent his name to a national film genre known as *el landismo* (*Diccionario de cine* 493; Hartson 110; Huerta and Morán 2-6; Mira, *The A to Z* 181-182), clearly illustrates the binomial Spanish manhood-bull.³⁹ Embodiment of the “producto nacional” (Fouz and Martínez 11), the Basque star represented the average Spaniard and played the parodic roles of “macho ibérico” in the so-called “comedia sexy celtibérica” [sexy comedies] (Crumbaugh 88). With such performances he transmitted a type of masculinity inevitably linked with the potent bull and, by association, with the powerful nation, for, as Tatiana Pavlóvic has noted, in this

³⁸ Some of the movies about bullfighting and the lives of popular matadors were *Tercio de quites* (Emilio Gomez Muriel, 1951), *Tarde de toros* (Ladislao Vajda, 1956), *Aprendiendo a morir* (Pedro Lazaga, 1962), *Sangre en el ruedo* (Rafael Gil, 1968) and *Manuel Benítez el Cordobés* (Pedro Lazaga, 1966).

³⁹ The *Diccionario del cine español* defines *landismo* as intimately related to Spain’s sociopolitical context and the multiple changes involved in its imminent modernization, particularly regarding gender roles: “hijo de la confusión y el desconcierto de un país sumido en innumerables cambios que no comprendía demasiado bien, muestra también un código a medio camino entre la incertidumbre y la duda ... personajes atrapados en la encrucijada entre la tradición y la modernidad, el nuevo español se debatía penosamente entre la estabilidad que se encontraba a punto de dejar atrás y las borrosas e inciertas perspectivas que empezaban a dibujarse ante sus ojos” (493).

type of cinema the Spanish male protagonist performs both masculinity and national identity (82).

Even though Landa's fictional manhood could be read at times as "a caricature of the Spanish ideal of masculinity" (Vivancos 4), particularly when comparing his physique, mentality, and behavior to his "more advanced" Northern European neighbors, his unequivocal association with the state's animal signals his triumph (and that of his country) over foreign influences. The characters he depicts on the big screen, usually lewd and sex-crazed males in the pursuit of foreign women (i.e., those sexy blondes in bikinis stereotypically known as "las suecas" [the Swedish]), try to reconcile antagonistic models of femininity and masculinity (Huerta and Morán 2-16; Vivancos 3-4). At the core of these cinematic productions lies a palpable tension between the traditional and the new gender canons that were seeping in through increasing contact with influences from abroad within the "apertura" context, which went hand in hand with the unstoppable transformation of Spain into a consumer-based society.

Although providing at times a farcical approach to the ideal of manliness, with multiple gags that revealed Spain's backwardness despite its imminent modernization, Landa's comical persona succeeded in preserving the conservative archetypes of manhood and womanhood largely conveyed through animal imagery.⁴⁰ In many of his filmic productions the actor's symbolic and literal relationship with the bull marks his supremacy both as a male and a Spaniard. In *Manolo la Nuit* (Mariano Ozores, 1973),

⁴⁰ In this context, Ana Vivancos argues that, despite their unbridled sexual desire, their affairs with sexy foreign tourists and dreams of living overseas, male protagonists end up conforming to the traditional hegemonic masculinity by remaining in the Francoist nation and marrying their traditional Spanish fiancées. According to this scholar, "the Spanish sexy comedy offers a conservative haven in which the Spanish masculinity—and by association, also the nation—could safely navigate and survive the dangerous waters of modernization" (18). Huerta and Morán offer a similar gendered reading when studying the construction of male and female characters in late Francoism *landismo*.

for example, his performance as Manolo, an employee of a tourist agency in the Costa del Sol, entails his figurative metamorphoses into a bull to appease his angry wife during a heated argument (“mira, que como sigas así, me pongo como un toro y sabes que no respondo”) and to flirt with Nordic babes in the presence of other European men (“estoy hecho un toro”). This zoomorphic characterization gains especial prominence in those movies focusing on emigration, where an apparently Spanish “paleto” [country bumpkin] brings out the beast in him and destroys alien masculine constructs as well as the idyllic view of life overseas.⁴¹

Reflecting the plights of thousands of rural villagers flocking to other cities and countries in the midst of Spain’s economic situation in the 1960s, *Vente a Alemania, Pepe* (Pedro Lazaga, 1971) and *Vente a ligar al Oeste* (Pedro Lazaga, 1974) follow the adventures of folkmen Pepe and Benito in Munich and Almería, respectively.⁴² The former European metropolis has become the promised land for most Spaniards in search of jobs during the dictatorship (Muñoz Sánchez 23-40; Vega-Durán 1-51). The latter Andalusian town, by contrast, has been transformed into a microcosm of The United States of America with the arrival of a US film crew that has imposed its language, values, currency, and lifestyle among the Spanish native population while shooting a Western movie. The presence of these two international powers in the background of each film will bring to the forefront the power of their male protagonists via their

⁴¹ This subgenre of comedies focusing on the predicaments of backward rural immigrants in cities of Spain or overseas has been referred to as “paleto cinema” (Faulkner 107-108; García de León 41; J. Pérez 7-11; Richardson 21; Vivancos 3-4), and is inevitably associated with actors such as Alfredo Landa (*Vente a Alemania, Pepe; Vente a ligar al Oeste; Jenaro, el de los catorce; París bien vale una moza*), Paco Martínez Soria (*La ciudad no es para mí, El abuelo tiene un plan, De picos pardos a la ciudad, El turismo es un gran invento*) and actress Gracita Morales (*Sor Citroën*).

⁴² For a reading of these movies in light of the phenomenon of international migration during Francoism, see Rita Martín Sánchez (89-90), Berena Verger and Miya Komori (20-21) and Raquel Martínez (1-12).

ceaseless identification with their nation's iconic bull. *Vente a Alemania, Pepe* deals with Pepe, a youngish Spaniard living in the tiny village of Peralejos (Aragón). This Jack of all trades, who works as an electrician, farmer, altar boy, veterinary, and whatever job comes his way, is soon mesmerized by fellowman Angelino, who has just returned from Germany driving a brand new Mercedes, dressed up in a coconut fibre suit and boasting about the wonders of his newly adopted country and, above all, its women.⁴³ His best friend's stories, particularly as a *donjuan*, ignite Pepe's desire to try his luck in the foreign land only to find out that the life prospects for Spaniards living abroad do not entirely match Angelino's fairy tales.⁴⁴ At the outset there is a strong bond between Pepe and the bull. In the village tavern, as he listens entranced to Angelino's stories about the economic marvels of "el milagro alemán" and its exuberant ladies—seen semi-nude through a souvenir camera that he brought for the delight of his masculine audience and which is soon confiscated by the priest—, Pepe does mental math. After converting the German mark to the Spanish peseta, the *paleto* daydreams of owning a dairy and marrying his life-time girlfriend Pilar (images 18 and 19).

⁴³ In several scenes Pepe complains about his multiple jobs in the village and his pressing need to go to Germany to make a decent living: "Porque aquí hago de sacristán, de electricista, de cartero, pongo inyecciones y atiando a la vaca y con todo eso aún no hemos podido casarnos" (00:09:39-00:09:40). He will repeat this list after discovering that Pilar has been displaying physical affection to distract him from Angelino's imminent departure: "Digo que estoy hasta las narices de repartir cartas, de arreglar enchufes y de llevar la cruz hasta en los entierros" (00:13:01).

⁴⁴ Martínez and Vivancos have drawn attention to Angelino's stories as a Spanish *donjuan* when analyzing Pepe's motivations to leave for Germany. When Pepe's friend unravels his tale of emigration, the focus is placed on the sex-appeal and, above all, accessibility of German women, since, quoting Angelino, "son ellas las que te siguen."



Image 19. Pepe is doing mental math after learning about the conversion rate between the German mark and the Spanish peseta



Image 19. Pepe is daydreaming about owning his own cattle

Economic and sexual desire merge in Pepe's imagination, as the bovine figures represent the most coveted values for a Spanish male, namely, a stable job in the rural world and a Catholic marriage; in other words, the ideals that the propaganda machine of the regime had so long championed as essential to the national identity. In fact, not only are Angelino's anecdotes superseded by a montage of images of cattle flooding Pepe's mind, but the original constant beep of the cash register prompted by his friend's explanations regarding the top-notch German economy is also replaced by the more bucolic animal noise of bellows in the village of Peralejos. Such juxtaposition of pictures, places, and sounds, illustrative of urban and rural life, functions as a sign of identity of both countries, especially when taurine tropes resurface during the protagonist's homesickness in Munich.

Later that night, Angelino's fantastic tales (i.e., fibs) literally plunge Pepe into an oneiric state. As he lays placidly in bed, the camera penetrates his bedroom, allowing the spectator to gain access to his innermost (sexual) desires. Tellingly announced by cowbells, moos and bellows, Pepe dreams of owning a dairy, prerequisite for marrying Pilar. Several shots show the protagonist with an elegant suit and a top hat reminiscent of a crown. In fact, sitting on a throne-looking chair in his milking shed, Pepe adopts a majestic pose that underscores his twofold ruling position in his own business and his household. Besides, as the cows moo when they are mechanically milked, their owner produces an orgasmic sound and is viewed moving his lips as though he were suckling their milk. The pecuniary and sexual connotations of milk are activated in Pepe's mind while he reaches this highly pleasurable moment, since his hunger for money is only paralleled by his hunger for sex.⁴⁵



Image 22. Pepe's dream of owning a dairy

Determined to fulfil his (sexual) dreams and facing Pilar's fierce opposition, Pepe reaffirms his masculine authority and sets off to Germany by train.⁴⁶ Upon arrival at the Munich station, Pepe is accosted by the stereotypical signs of urban chaos. After a

⁴⁵ In Spanish, "milk" not only refers to the drink obtained from the cow, but also to semen.

⁴⁶ As Vivancos explains, this scene is particularly rich in terms of gender dynamics since not only does Pepe put his own desires ahead of Pilar's, but his girlfriend's controlling attitude, which represents a threat to patriarchal authority, also constitutes the ultimate reason for him to emigrate to Germany (9)

fast-paced sequence of high-speed trains, unintelligible German signs, colorful advertising, hurried and harried travelers, and a humongous clock, which stands in stark contrast to his slow and peaceful rural lifestyle, Pepe cannot help but noticing that his friend has lost the bull-like essence of the Spanish male. No longer the self-proclaimed womanizer and businessman, but rather a solitary waiter during the day and poster boy at night, Angelino tellingly confesses to Pepe the truth about his life in Germany while displaying a sign that announces a Spanish bullfighting spectacle (image 24). On stating that “Primero trabajaron ellos y ahora trabajamos nosotros” (00:19:25), the spectator witnesses the Spaniard’s transformation into a beast of burden.



Image 24. Angelino confesses to Pepe the nightmare of the so-called German dream

Even though Pepe’s professional prospects seem dim, his sexual fantasies may still be fulfilled when spotting two sexy German women in Angelino’s lodging house, which hosts other Spanish emigrants, including a Republican exile. Bringing out the sexual beast within, Pepe paws and sexualizes his housemates via their animalization as pathers: “Oye, ¿esas dos panteras viven aquí?” (00:21:40). This faunistic epithet not only highlights their menacing (sexual) nature, but also contrasts with the image of the meek cow that he uses to compare Pilar: “y no tienes que tener celos, que yo a las vacas las quiero de otra manera” (00:41:19). Immediately thereafter, Pepe is explicitly (self-) identified with the bull to signify both his masculinity and nationality. While sleeping on

the couch, Pepe is awoken by the sensuous tone of voice of the German women, who, appealing to his nationality (“españolito, españolito”), sexually tease him. After pinching their legs to check that he is no longer dreaming (image 25), Pepe’s sexual advances are seen in terms of a bull charging.⁴⁷ His assertion “Sí. Yo, españolito, fuerte, toro” is followed by his recreation of the bovine’s bellows as he fondles the foreign girls (00:27:00):



Image 25. Pepe is awakened by his German housemates and pinches them to check that he is no longer dreaming

Pepe: Ahhhhhhh....¡Ay madre, que son de verdad! Eso se avisa.

German housemates: Sexy... españolito (caressing and waking him up)...

españolito, relax.

Pepe: Sí, señora. Tú y yo relax. Ven con el chache.

German housemate 1: Chache, chache?

Pepe: Sí, chache. Sí. Yo, españolito, fuerte, toro... (he makes the bull’s bellows and grabs one of the women)

Pepe’s erotic dream, however, will not come to fruition since his female companions appease this sexual beast by giving him a glass of milk with somniferous.

⁴⁷ Berger and Komori also underline Lazaga’s use of stereotypical taurine images to represent Spanish virility in the movie (23-24).

In this scene with strong sexual overtones, the audience is inevitably reminded of Pepe's previous vision suckling milk. The picture of a horny Spanish *paleto* gulping down the white liquid that he so desperately craves for and enticed by his equally desired foreign women serves to draw the blurry line between fantasy and reality that often blinds many rural immigrants. Moreover, Pepe's sexual fiasco outside his homeland is accentuated when he finds a job as an outdoor window cleaner of skyscrapers. In fact, exhausted by endless work shifts, Pepe is unable to live up to the expectations of a *macho ibérico* and, instead of engaging in amorous dealings with his German housemates, he falls sleep (00:42:57). As soon as the rejected women remind Pepe that he is no longer a Spanish bull ("No españolito, no toro" [00:43:00]), the protagonist (and the audience) realize the dangers of the contamination of the pure national breed in alien environments.⁴⁸



Image 26. Pepe is unconsciously swallowing a glass of German milk containing sleeping pills

⁴⁸ The popularity of this film seemed to rest on the clash between the corrupted urban culture and the benign rural world of the Spanish *paleto*, who somehow epitomized the pure Hispanic essence promoted by the propaganda machines of the regime. Resorting to clichés and stereotypes, this blockbuster served to naturalize the dominant ideology by showing the triumph of the Spanish *paleto* over the toxic and morally corrupted cosmopolitan life. This Manichean view of the urban and rural world was made even more noticeable when dealing with Spaniards emigrating abroad, for, in this case, national values were at stake.



Image 27. The German housemates waking up Pepe on uncorking a bottle of champagne

In its zeal to restore his virility, Pepe decides to flirt with other German ladies. As bullfighting music is played in the background, Pepe ironically ends up seducing another Spanish expatriate, whom he takes to “La Casa de España,” aptly presided by a bull’s head and decorated with taurine paraphernalia (image 28).



Image 28. The House of Spain presided by a bull’s head in Munich

The absence of bull symbols in the last scenes of a movie rife with taurine references prophesies the unstoppable denigration of Pepe in a foreign country where all the national values have been turned upside down.⁴⁹ As a matter of fact, not only has Pepe’s big dream of working in Germany become a real nightmare, since he must juggle between different jobs—including being mocked as a hairy model for an epilation brand in a window shop of a mall—, but the well-defined gender models of Francoism have

⁴⁹ For a Carnavalesque interpretation, in the Bakhtinian sense, of Pepe’s masculinity in this movie see Faulkner (50-51) and Vivancos (10-27).

equally been called into question.⁵⁰ Apart from the menace to his virility embodied by the sexually and economically independent German women, Pilar's defiant behavior on selling Pepe's only cow to pay for her trip to Munich equally shakes the foundations of dictatorial Spain.⁵¹ Indeed, the confrontation between Pilar and Pepe in the guest house (01:00:03) offers a distorted view of an earlier sequence in the village where the protagonist was able to exert control over his girlfriend by leaving her in the village. Now, however, Pilar has been transformed into a "modern" European woman whose job as a waitress wearing a sexy uniform provides her with expensive gifts, such as a furry hat and a coat that visually accentuate her aggressive role as a predatory animal—reminiscent of the German housemates. Even when Pepe physically forces Pilar to quit her job, he is punched by a male customer in the German tavern. Sporting a black eye, Pepe's humiliation reaches its zenith when Pilar breaks up with him and returns to Peralejos.

Alone in an alien place during the family-oriented Christmas season, Pepe desperately looks for a way to return to his village and reconquer Pilar. After a disastrous sojourn through a cold city that is far from a dreamland, and when all hope seems lost, Pepe discovers a coach exhibiting an enormous sign that reads "España." This bus transporting folkloric dancers sent by the regime to enliven the holidays of Spanish expatriates will take Pepe to his destination: Peralejos.

⁵⁰ Tellingly, in Spanish culture, a hairy man is indicative of virility, as reflected in popular sayings such as "hombre peludo, hombre forzado"; "ser un hombre de pelo en pecho" or "el hombre y el oso, cuanto más peludo, más hermoso."

⁵¹ Pilar is not the only woman who has defied masculine authority, since back in Spain Angelino's girlfriend, whose obedience used to be contrasted with Pilar's unruliness, has eloped with an itinerant merchant taking with her Angelino's immigration savings. In this sense, according to Vivancos, the most dangerous aspect of migration presented in the movie has to do with women (12).

The film's happy ending in the homeland repairs Pepe's damaged masculinity through his unequivocal association with the iconic bull. Pepe marries his fiancée Pilar, who is visibly pregnant—a conspicuous sign of the renewed sexual potency of the bull-like Spanish male. In addition, as Pilar hastens to comply with Pepe's commands by bringing him lunch to the field, the reassuring words to his increasingly impatient spouse deliberately coincide with the noise of his cattle. Such sought-after sound effects project, again, the animal pair cow/bull onto the married couple Pilar/Pepe. Whereas notions of domesticity and possession underlie the metaphorical female identification, the link between Pepe and the bull is similarly transmitted through a final ostentatious display of (erotic) force in front of his masculine audience.

Having assured his dominant place in the marital relationship, Pepe is able to assume now Angelino's privileged position as a storyteller in the village. The camera literally highlights Pepe's central role with a series of close-ups that show the male protagonist right in the middle of the screen. Sitting under a tree while his cows graze and Pilar brings his food basket, Pepe enjoys telling stories of his life in Germany to the male youngsters that listen entranced. With this idyllic image the movie ends, as moos and bellows are once more heard as a backdrop. Pepe's fantasies in Germany may not have been fulfilled, but at least "he can happily sleep a siesta" (Vivancos 13) resting assured of his indisputable masculinity in his native land.

Vente a ligar al Oeste bears a striking resemblance to *Vente a Alemania, Pepe*. Apart from the similar inviting titles, same director (Pedro Lazaga) and leading couple (Alfredo Landa and Tina Sainz), both movies exploit the sexual and national symbolism of the bull to reaffirm the hegemony of Franco's virile Spain. The railway switchman Benito of *Vente a ligar al Oeste* finds his monotonous and tranquil rural life disrupted by a US film crew shooting a spaghetti western in his native village in Almería. Upon

hearing a bugle call followed by a clamorous squad of American riders, Benito fears an invasion and immediately seeks help. Shouting “¡Los americanos, los americanos! ¡Que se han salido de Torrejón!” (00:03:49), Benito attempts to warn his fellow countrymen of the imminent danger, while arousing, at the same time, the latent anti-American sentiment in an audience familiarized with the diplomatic conflicts between the US and Spain (Cornejo-Parriego, “Arriba” 200-203). After all, Torrejón was one of several US military bases established during the regime in exchange for military and economic aid. This North American assistance, however, was always interpreted as a humiliation to the nation by the Francoist government and, above all, the Falange, since, when compared to other European countries, Spain received by far less funds (Gil Pecharromán 155-156).

This political tension on the international stage will transpire—and be resolved—in the film through the sexual tension between the Spanish male protagonist Benito and the US female star Ursula Malone, whom he will meet after the accidental detonation of a charge of dynamite in the middle of the diva’s love scene. While the actress is kissing the soldier who proudly bears the star-spangled banner, Benito inadvertently appears on the set carrying the red flag of trains—a subtle parody of the most powerful American symbol (image 29).⁵² The presence of the *paleto* in the midst

⁵² It is worth noting that parody will permeate the movie with constant juxtapositions that compare the USA with Spain from the opening scene. After enumerating several of the glorious American deeds in a grandiloquent tone of voice, the narrator focuses on the Union Pacific Railway. Its flamboyant description as a train is displayed on the screen sharply contrasts with the sound of the whistle of a points man and an important correction regarding the origin of such an engineering feat, since that train does not belong to the USA, but rather, to Spain. It is the mail train that goes to Almería, a popular setting for US Western movies: “He aquí el legendario Oeste americano, un viento de epopeya estremece la tierra reseca por donde cruzaron las caravanas de los buscadores de oro. Aquí cayó el General Custer al frente de su brigada ligera. Sobre estas cumbres se escuchó el grito de guerra de los Sioux, de los Apaches y de los Comanches. Esta no es una tierra cualquiera. Es la tierra sagrada y democrática donde

of the shooting exasperates the director, whose wild gesticulations and yells falsely give the sign to activate the blast that throws Benito into the air. In this explosive way a red-neck Spaniard comes into contact with the fascinating world of American cinema; blowing away the filming of the movie along with the chimerical view of this democratic empire and making the headlines with the American bombshell (image 30).⁵³



Image 29. Benito bursts into the movie set with the red flag of the train while the soldier that kisses Ursula bears the US banner



Image 30. Benito makes the headlines with US actress Ursula Malone after the accidental explosion on the movie set⁵⁴

nació el pueblo más grande del mundo: The United States of America, que quiere decir Los Estados Unidos de América. Y este es el Unión Pacífico, el fabuloso camino de hierro que realizó el gran milagro de abrir la ruta desconocida y fascinante del Oeste...Pues no...No es la ruta fascinante del fabuloso Unión Pacífico. Es el correo de las 9.50 que tiene prisa por llegar a... Almería City: el nuevo Oeste americano” (00:02:12-00:03:54).

⁵³ Martín Gaité points out, Spain’s relationship with the USA was ambivalent since it produced “a mixture of fascination and repulsion” (*Usos amorosos* 29). Although the American empire represented a corrupted materialistic society compared to the spiritual Spanish nation fostered by Francoist propaganda, the financial standing of the USA was needed for impoverished post-war Spain.

⁵⁴ The humor in the headline resides in the pun on the idiom “estar como un tren,” since it has to do with Benito’s job as a railway switchman and with the sex appeal of the

After the accident, a seriously injured Benito is seen bandaged in bed at home, where he receives the visit of the movie team captained by miss Malone. Her partner and film producer ask the prima donna for a photograph smooching Benito to avoid any compensation for damages. Grudgingly, Ursula accepts, but not without having insulted first the man that she is about to kiss: “And why do I have to kiss this jerk?” (00:06:23). In this way, she shares her boyfriend’s disdain for Benito: “Can’t you see that he is a god damn stupid idiot?” (00:06:29). Meanwhile, unaware of being the object of scorn, since the conversation takes place in English, Benito gets carried away by the sexual force of the actress and the bundle of US bills that precede the signature of an agreement precluding him from suing the American company (image 31).



Image 31. Ursula’s orchestrated love scene to avoid paying a wounded Benito any compensation for damages

The contract between the two parties, reminiscent of the unequal negotiations between the USA and Spain previously mentioned, undermines Benito’s virility. Ursula’s orchestrated sensual performance is given a thumbs-up by her partner-producer

American actress. Literally “to be like a train,” this Spanish expression refers to someone sexy and hot.

in front of an eminently foreign masculine audience that rejoices in the twofold mockery of a Spanish *paleto*.⁵⁵ In fact, not only has Benito been misled regarding money, but also sex. After all, the actress's exaggerated dramatization similarly underscores the gender imbalance between a sexually powerful American woman and a seemingly powerless Spanish male. On top of that, Ursula's use of the diminutive "Beni" in her farewell (00:08:18) contributes to Benito's belittlement, since this abbreviated form signals minimization along with fake endearment. Besides this phoney display of affection, the chief executives of the movie keep on tricking Benito by providing him with some business cards to contact them, giving him false hopes of a future career in the cinematographic industry together with the bombshell.

Back home the derision of Benito's manhood continues. His interest in working for the US movies shot in Almería meets with his mother and girlfriend's disapproval. The two women invite Benito to look at himself in the mirror to laugh at his inferior physique: "—Pero, hijo. ¿Tú crees que con esa cara?" (00:09:24). Above all, sweetheart Lorenza's negative comparison of her boyfriend with American sex-symbol Paul Newman—mispronounced "Paulino Niuman" with a strong Spanish accent—rounds out her animalized caricature of the *paleto* as a gorilla in a US circus: "Yo veo a un gorila del circo americano" (00:12:54).

Despite the initial attacks on Benito's masculinity, his (sexual) force as a Spanish man will resurface through his constant associations with the nation's iconic bull.⁵⁶ As a matter of fact, no sooner has Benito found a job as an extra in a Western

⁵⁵ For an analysis of the character of Benito as a *paleto* see Diego Galán's "*Vente a ligar al Oeste, el español paleto*".

⁵⁶ It is important to pinpoint that from the very beginning of the film Benito is associated with the universe of bullfighting. When working as a railway points man, he compares his job with that of a matador: "pegando pases de muleta al correo" (00:09:25).

than he is invited to a party with the US cast, where he will be identified with the country's bull, and even perform the role of the wild animal in order to fulfill Ursula's erotic fantasies. In a celebration rife with stereotypes of flamenco music that parody the USA, a drunken Ursula shows up behaving like a beast.⁵⁷ Furious due to her partner's delay at the airport, the American star breaks a bottle of wine and insults her male assistant in the presence of the scared film staff, who aptly compare her with a wild animal: "¡menuda fiera!" [what a beast!] (00:24:40). As her hysteria increases so does the fright of the personnel, until the Spanish recruiter Paco asks one of the male artists to sing in order to "amansar la bestia" [to tame the beast] (00:27:34). With his moving performance, he manages to control the actress' bad temper, paving the way for Benito's introduction:⁵⁸ "Buenas. Soy Benito, el de la bomba. ¿No se acuerda de mí?" (00:28:56).⁵⁹ The first one to approach the seemingly indomitable diva, Benito's bravery is rewarded with Ursula's zoomorphic compliment: "un bravo toro español" (00:28:41). Next, the inebriated actress, who is seeing blurry, mistakes Benito for a courageous matador: "Yes, darling... Tú matador. Mi bravo matador. Español. Mi bravo español" (00:29:06). Mentally replacing his flamenco hat for the bullfighter's *montera* (image 32), Ursula plants Benito a long kiss on the lips, making him faint.

⁵⁷ Benito and other Spanish staff take advantage of the language barrier to make fun of the USA: "¡Oklahoma, Oklahoma, Oklahoma el chicle de goma! El chicle de goma que los yankies toman mascando el inglés, mascando el inglés, mascando el inglés, mascando el inglés, y si les preguntas te contestan 'yes.' El dólar, el dólar, vamos con el dólar. ¡Ay el dólar! ¡Ay el dólar! ¡Que nadie lo quiere y todos lo cobran!" (00:25:32).

⁵⁸ Within the zoomorphic symbolism that permeates the movie, it is relevant to note that the artist's song about a male shepherd that breeds his female lamb with extreme care somehow relates to Benito's previous use of the animal name "cordera" [female lamb] to address Ursula in their farewell: "Bye-bye, cordera" (00:08:18). The use of such a faunistic epithet appears to highlight Benito's "taming" of the wild actress, since he seduces and abandons her at the end of the film.

⁵⁹ Ursula's characterization as a wild creature is reinforced by Pepe's repetition of the verb "tame" to describe the effect of music as the actress calms down: "Se amansa, se amansa" (00:28:31).



Image 32. An intoxicated Ursula mistakes Benito with a bullfighter, mentally replacing the flamenco hat with the matador's *montera*

Once he has come around, Benito is left alone with the US actress, who wants to realize her erotic dreams with a *macho ibérico*. As cars are seen leaving Ursula's house, the Spanish *cantaor* that appeased her before expresses his concern about Benito's well-being by recalling the faunistic view of the American woman: "¿Lo vamos a dejar solo con la fiera?" (00:29:41). Yet, Paco's similarly animal-based reply will soon ease the singer's worry: "¿Fiera? ¡Eso para Benito es un gato!" (00:29:43). The manager's transformation of a menacing Ursula into a domestic cat serves to assert Benito's virility within the official bestiary rhetoric that equates Spanish manhood with the nation's bull. Not surprisingly, taurine imagery will permeate the next scenes oozing sexuality. The US celebrity, dressed in a sexy nightgown, plays the typical *pasodoble* music heard in bullfights while awaiting Benito in her bedroom. His appearance in a *matador* outfit (image 33) is part of the sexual performance envisioned by the American actress to satisfy her erotic dreams.



Image 33. Benito dressed in a matador outfit as part of his sexual role-play

The conversation that follows, centered around tauromachy, is full of sexual innuendoes. Ursula addresses Benito as Manuel, alluding to Manuel Benítez (a.k.a. “El Cordobés”). The most popular matador during Francoism for his performances both in the bullring and the sexual arena (de Haro 72-73), the Cordobés’ international reputation as a bullfighter and womanizer was even taken to the big screen in the movie *Aprendiendo a morir* (Pedro Lazaga, 1962). Although at first Benito corrects Ursula, reminding her of his real name, the artist’s insistence on calling him Manuel makes him realize that this is part of the sexual role-play that he has to accept to have sex (Bentley 172-173). In this way, impersonating the well-known bullfighter, a horny Benito kisses Ursula and, before fondling her, affirms: “Nada, que esta corrida es a beneficio del Cordobés” (00:28:00-00:28:30), with the double entendre of “corrida,” meaning “bullfight” but also “orgasm.” The passionate love scene between Benito and Ursula to the beat of the *pasodoble* will be abruptly interrupted by the maid, who warns them of Mr. Morrison’s unexpected arrival. The presence of Jimmy at home unleashes a series of comic situations that revolve around the universe of bullfighting to demean the cuckolded American male (González Viñas, “Cine y tauromaquia” 2-3). Hidden behind a folding screen and not knowing that he fell onto the same trap before, Benito witnesses Ursula’s fabricated display of affection towards the US businessman (image 34).



Image 34. Ursula fakes affection towards Mr. Morrison so that she is not get caught in flagrante with Benito

From his privileged position now—both physically and sexually speaking—the Spanish *paleto* laughs at his foreign rival, who cannot see—in the literal and metaphorical senses—what is happening. Mr. Morrison’s blindness, in turn, is accentuated by his thick pebble glasses. When he takes them off in the bathroom in preparation for sex, the mogul, once again, fails to notice the faux *torero*, who, secretly lying in the bath top, mimics Ursula’s voice, hands Jimmy a towel and escapes through the window (image 35).



Image 35. Mr. Morrison is physically and symbolically blind to Ursula’s affair with Benito

Aptly disguised as a bullfighter, Benito has transformed Jimmy into “un cornudo” (00:36:12). Literally “with horns,” this expression denoting the partner of an adulteress pertains to the semantic field of animals and serves to reinforce the link between Landa’s character and the bull. After this carnal episode, the taurine associations of Benito will go in crescendo. His friend Pepe encourages him to continue cheating by recurring to the bullfighting jargon, plagued with sexual innuendoes (Durán and Manjón 43-67): “Tú ibas de matador. Lo que pasa es que se ha aplazao la corrida, pero en cuanto se largue el míster hacemos otra vez el paseillo” (00:37:56).

Furthermore, until his next visit to Ursula, Benito will evidence his bull-like nature with other secondary US actresses that he meets on set while bullfighting music is heard in the background.⁶⁰ In an erotic conversation that, once more, stems from the

⁶⁰ Benito will also show up at Ursula’s house when she is in Niza with Mr. Morrison. Wearing an outfit reminiscent of *novilleros* (i.e., bullfighters-to-be) Benito is

language of tauromachy (00:43:22), the Spaniard is again confused with “El Cordobés.” Appropriating the bullfighter’s magnetism, Benito takes the two girls inside a caravan for a sexual encounter that he defines as “faenas” (image 36), a polysemous term meaning “tasks,” “bullfighter’s performance” and “sex.”



Image 36. Benito resorts to bullfighting stereotypes in order to flirt with two US extras

Upon Ursula’s return, Benito will no longer play the sexual role of a bullfighter but will simulate a bull in order to seduce the star. Placing his hands on both sides of his head as though they were horns (image 37), Benito makes the animal’s bellows to remind the actress of their unfinished passionate night when he performed as “El Cordobés.”

accompanied by his friend Pepe. The maid that opens the door immediately recognizes Benito as Ursula’s “bull-fighter” lover. After telling him that the actress is away with her partner, Isabelita’s sarcastic remark based on the bullfighting jargon reveals the sexual intentions of Benito’s visit: “Ah, venían a torear los dos” (00:39:00).



Image 37. Benito playing the role of a bull as part of the sexual performance with US actress Ursula

In his attempt to re-enact the star's erotic fantasies with the matador, Benito states: “rabo for me” (00:58:54). After this sexual pun on “rabo,” referring to the beast's tail as well as the man's penis, the US diva shrieks with laughter and corrects him: “tú toro, tú no matador” [00:59:05]. Yet, feeling the sensual disposition of his female partner, Benito accepts his zoomorphic moniker and equates bullfighter and bull to signal his imminent triumph in the sexual arena: “Yo, toro. Bueno, da lo mismo. Ya nos vamos entendiendo. ¿A que sí?” (00:59:04). Afterwards, the bull-like Spaniard sexually charges at Ursula: “Ataca, Benito. ¡Vamos!” (00:59:34) (image 38).



Image 38. After his performance as a bull, Benito sexually charges at Ursula. Seduced by Benito, Ursula kisses him back: “Benito, bésame” (01:01:00).

Nevertheless, due to the multiple shots he had previously drunk when acting as a

stuntman, Benito's upset stomach makes it impossible for the US woman to realize her erotic dreams with the Spanish male. As Benito heads to the bathroom afflicted by a diarrhea bout, Ursula is seen abandoned in a room presided by a deer's head (image 39). A reminder of her constant cheating, since "poner los cuernos" signifies "cuckoldry," this hunting motif literally expresses the diva's sexual frustration.⁶¹ Through a voice in off, the horned trophy asserts: "Este es el único romance que no podrás contar nunca, Ursula Malone" (01:02:31).



Image 39. Benito is running to the bathroom because of his diarrhea while Ursula is left alone under the head of a horned deer that presides the living room

Back at the movie set, Benito's identification with the bull will carry on through his role as the Native American chief "Toro Sentado" [Sitting Bull]. While acting as the head that led his people to resist the US ("Sitting Bull" 2-5), Benito symbolically opposes the American government that the Francoist regime resented for its meager economic aid. Simultaneously, having given up on Ursula, the former points man falls

⁶¹ Also starring Alfredo Landa, *Cuando el cuerno suena* (Luis María Delgado, 1975) deploys horn imagery to underline José's cheating on his wife with three women with whom he gets locked in a castle.

in love with a female compatriot: the Spanish extra Marisa. The single mother to a baby boy will eventually marry him, forming a traditional family in Benito's hometown.

The last scene, showing an exultant Benito playing Western films in his village's movie theater for the entertainment of his country folk, represents the triumph of the bull-like Spaniard over the US empire. In the screening room the rural man manipulates a sequence from a Western in which he significantly acts as "Toro Sentado." Just when the native chief is throwing spears at the US cavalry, the protagonist rewinds the image repeatedly as to create the impression that the indigenous leader, that is, himself, defeats the American army. Among the spectators enjoying this display of patriotism appears Benito's family. Along with his mother and stepson, his wife is holding their new baby, embodiment of the sexual potency of the taurine Benito. Proud of her husband, Marisa urges her older son to look at his father, as the Spanish *paleto* fictitiously drives back the American riders: "Gorrión, mira a papá" (01:24:23). Finally, the camera focuses on Benito, who, laughing his head off, yells: "¡Vamos, Toro Sentao!" (01:25:36). Both movies—Benito's and Landa's—end with these words encouraging all the Spanish males to take out their bull within and fight against the Yankees.



Image 40. Benito manipulates the movie scene in which he acts as "Toro Sentado" in front of his proud family

More straightforward is the identification between Spanish virility and the bull in *Celedonio y yo somos así* (Mariano Ozores, 1974), whose title already equates the nature of the national beast with his male owner (Albert 1-2). The comedy follows Daniel, an average countryman who makes a living renting his stud bull Celedonio in his hometown. The sexual prowess of the animal and man alike are graphically captured in the movie poster (image 41).

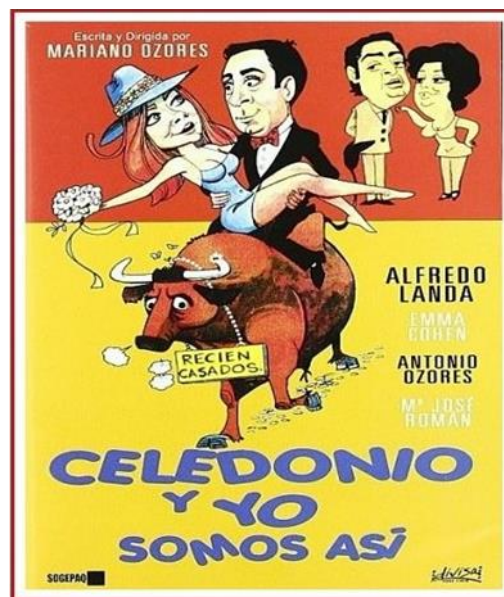


Image 41. Movie poster of *Celedonio y yo somos así* (1974)

The newlywed protagonist, holding his attractive wife, has deliberately replaced the traditional car of the just-married couple with his beloved bovine. The smoke coming out of the bull's nose, indicative of its impending attack, tallies with Daniel's heated passion towards his hot spouse Araceli on their way to their honeymoon. Tellingly, the picture reflects the gender politics embedded in the iconography of the bull that contributed to the formation and consolidation of Spanish masculinity during the dictatorship.

The opening scene already connects Daniel's virility with Celedonio's potency. Proud of his bull's new-born twins, the rural man not only identifies himself with his adored companion ("Si es que Celedonio es una fiera. Sale a mí" [00:01:22]), but he

also celebrates the sexual feat by adding these offspring to the beast's large brood painted on the wall of the barn (image 42).



Image 42. Daniel adding two offspring to his bull's large brood

This visual display of erotic force, which somehow mirrors the regime's promotion of big families through the implementation of natality policies, is followed by a phallic shot centered around the animal's antlers. The camera zooms in on Daniel as he painstakingly polishes Celedonio's sharp horns (image 43). The symbol associated with cuckolding anticipates the protagonist's cheating. In fact, when Daniel receives a letter from Antonio, one of his country folks who emigrated to Switzerland, asking to substitute him in a marriage by proxy to Araceli, little does the country bumpkin know that he will end up seducing and marrying his childhood friend's bride—a prostitute trying to escape from the sordid sex industry. After consulting with the town mayor, representative of the Francoist government on a local scale, Daniel accepts to help Antonio. So begins this hit-and-miss comedy where the protagonist Daniel proves to be as (sexually) powerful as his stud bull Celedonio.



Image 43. Daniel polishing Celedonio's horns after learning of his bull's new two offspring

The movie constantly projects Celedonio's carnal nature onto the protagonist's manhood. In the village, the presence of the bovine functions as a preamble to Daniel's sexual encounters, as observed in the remarks made by his girlfriend Cristina ("Mira, cállate y no cambies de conversación... que cuando sacas a Celedonio es para... [00:05:23]) and the townsfolk ("Ahí van Celedonio y Daniel al mismo negocio" [00:04:17]). Furthermore, as Daniel fondles his sweetheart, not only do his erotic moans merge with the animal's bellows, but his assertion that the bull's life represents any man's most coveted aspiration ("Y ya quisieran muchos tener un trabajo así. ¿Verdad, Celedonio?" (00:05:23) serves to reinforce the bond between hegemonic masculinity and the nation's iconic beast.

In the city, taurine imagery continues shaping the protagonist's mannish profile. After recurring to the legal services of clumsy Contreras in Madrid, Daniel's first meetings with Araceli exploit the erotic innuendoes of the lexicon of tauromachy.⁶² His introduction as "Bueno, pues yo soy el de los poderes" (00:11:30) etches a smile of the bride-to-be, given the polysemy of "poderes," meaning "marriage by proxy" as well as "(sexual) prowess" (*DRAE*). Once in the girl's apartment, Araceli's work colleague Vicenta puns on "apoderado," denoting "a legal representative," "a bullfighter's agent"

⁶² The agent's name illustrates his ineptitude, since the Spanish saying "No te enteras, Contreras" [You don't get it, Contreras] refers to someone uninformed.

and “a sexually potent male” to address whom she catalogues as *un palurdo* (00:13:13), that is, a hick.

Vicenta: Así que usted es el apoderado.

Daniel: No, no, no, no. Mi negocio está relacionado con los toros, pero de apoderado de toreros no.

Vicenta: Bueno, yo quiero decir que... ¿si es usted el que se casa por poderes? (00:18:02)

Then, while Araceli is putting on some proper clothes to look like “una mujer decente” (00:16:13), Daniel sees a box of matches with the image and name of “El Cornetín” [a cornet] (image 44).⁶³ This musical instrument, the logotype of the housemates’ brothel, inevitably recalls the bull’s anatomy. Synonymous with cuckoldry, the reappearance of the horns will dictate the course of actions, with Daniel’s showing up in Araceli’s nightclub and later cheating with the former prostitute.



Image 44. Box of matches from the night club with the image of the musical horn

In the restaurant run by townfolk Rosario, further taurine references reinforce the bond between Daniel and the bull. His appropriation of the bovine’s name when

⁶³ Araceli’s insistence on being “una mujer decente” is in accordance with the Francoist ideal of womanhood. When looking for proper clothes to wear on her night out with Daniel, the bride-to-be and her work colleague Vicenta express the polarized view of women as whores/angels in the house: “—Araceli: ¡Nada, que esta tampoco sirve! —Vicenta: Pues esa parece que no esté mal. —Araceli: Sí, claro, con un escote hasta aquí (baja la mano hasta el ombligo) —Vicenta: Araceli, guapita, ¿no pensarás ir vestida de colegiala? —Araceli: Pero sí de mujer decente” (00:15:52-00:16:35).

telling the waiter that he is Celedonio (“Dígale a la cocinera que está aquí Celedonio” [00:21:11]) clearly marks their similar noble and sexual natures, as cook Rosario states: “Daniel, Daniel... sabía que tenías que ser tú ¡Qué alegría me has dado!... Se lleva usted una buena persona. ¡Qué digo! Se lleva usted algo mejor: un hombre” (00:22:00-00:23:00). In addition to this onomastic shift, Daniel’s celebration of his stag party with Contreras in the night club “El Cornetín” is surrounded by bull symbolism that accentuates the *paleto*’s masculinity. The protagonist’s choice of a glass of milk, instead of an alcoholic beverage, accords with the erotic and virile charge of the archetypal bovine. A euphemism for semen, “milk” in Spanish not only suggests libido but also bad temper (“tener mala leche”), as reflected in Daniel’s display of physical force when punching the male customer that sexually harasses an unknown Araceli.

On the nuptial day, the wedding cake inspired in tauromachy literally and metaphorically places Daniel on the same level as Celedonio. Contreras exclaims “¡Olé!” (00:35:27), the taurine interjection that heralds the audience’s approval of a matador and proceeds to detail the figurines displayed on the sweet creation. After pointing to groom and bride with his fork, the focus is on the miniatures of Celedonio and Daniel, whom he calls “el apoderado,” with the sexual connotations abovementioned. Placed on the same tier, these small figurines visually represent the close relationship between the protagonist and his bull (image 45).



Image 45. The figurines of Daniel and Celedonio on the same tier of the wedding cake

Bull motifs intensify once Contreras discovers during the wedding reception that Araceli is one of the prostitutes working in “El Cornetín.” Daniel’s decision to take her to Barcelona to inform Antonio about his wife’s morally dubious past results in a series of libidinous scenes in which Araceli recurs to the universe of bullfighting to bring out the *paleto*’s sexual beast. To seduce Daniel, with whom she has fallen in love, Araceli pretends to be suffocated, and asks him to dress her in a sexy red night gown (“Maleta... camisón...El rojo, el rojo... que me sienta mejor” [00:48:43]), since this is the color believed to attract bulls, the animal epitomizing Daniel (image 46).



Image 46. Daniel getting Araceli’s red lingerie

In fact, no sooner has Araceli put on her sexy lingerie than Daniel sexually charges at her. Making the gesture of a bullfighter taking off his cap (image 47), he dedicates the imminent sexual achievement to Celedonio (01:25:38):

Daniel: Que ya no puedo resistirme más.

Araceli: Te quiero. No estoy dispuesta a perderte.

Daniel: Pues entonces... [Daniel makes the gesture of a bullfighter taking off his hat and adopts the pose of a bull ready to charge] ¡Va por ti, Celedonio! [They have sex]



Image 47. Daniel dedicates his imminent sexual feat to Celedonio

At the next train stop, the couple's sexual encounter takes place in a barn that homes a bull. Here, as the animal bellows, Daniel unleashes his basest instincts, making love to Araceli on a pile of hay that is in front of a two-forked rake (image 48). The recurrence of this image suggests both cuckoldry and Daniel's bull-like essence.



Image 48. Araceli and Daniel have sex in the barn

The iconography of the bull also stands out in the movie's denouement to highlight Daniel's masculinity and nationality. Upon arrival in Barcelona, the couple heads for Antonio's hotel to inform him of their romance. The now adopted Swiss guy turns up wearing a bright red jacket (image 49), which, reminiscent of a matador's cape, inevitable catches Daniel's attention: "El de la chaquetita discreta" (01:07:38). If Araceli's scarlet nightwear had sexually provoked the bull's breeder, Antonio's burgundy outfit similarly brings forth Daniel's bull-like nature.



Image 49. Antonio shows up at the reception desk wearing a bright red jacket

Next, Antonio not only mistakes Celedonio's name on calling him Sinfonso, but he also parodies Daniel's virility when inviting his rural friend to return to the village and kiss his beloved bull: "Eso, Celedonio. Dale un besito, eh. ¿Vale? ¡Adiós!" (01:09:42).⁶⁴ Antonio's pressing desire to take Araceli to bed, which Daniel sees through a taurine lens: "Es como si llevase a Celedonio a la vaquería pero al revés" (01:21:03), leads the bumpkin to fake a heart attack to impede their sexual encounter. After a series of comic events in the hospital, Contreras, now engaged to Daniel's girlfriend Cristina, appears in the Catalan city to communicate that his marriage to Araceli is valid due to some legal mistakes. To avoid being a cuckold: "no quiero que me pongan los dos cuernos en la frente" (01:25:00), Daniel hastens to Antonio's hotel room and, knocking down the door, punches the now foreign male and takes Araceli on his back—somehow evocative of the movie poster.

The comedy concludes with Daniel's exhibition of his supremacy—and that of Spain—through the iconography of the nation's iconic beast. Having defeated the now foreign and urban Antonio, who ultimately epitomizes one of the many emigrants that left the country in search of a better life, the Spanish *paleta* culminates his triumph in

⁶⁴ Daniel's virility is called into question through the display of physical affection towards his male animal and through the diminutive "besito," which, in this context, signals disdain. Yet, far from intimidated, Daniel belittles Antonio by resorting to the diminutive form of his name: "Antoñito" (01:10:11).

the sexual arena. Once again, seeking inspiration in his stud bull Celedonio (“Celedonio, como haces tú, que a ti siempre te sale colosal” [01:28:08]), Daniel asserts his masculinity, and, therefore, that of Spain.

3.2. Eagles and Capons

3.2.1. The Predatory Bird and Its Domestic Prey

Los niños españoles de hoy se convertirán en las águilas del Imperio mañana
(Popular chant, Castañón 463)

Maricón, capón
(Popular saying)

In the Francoist sex-segregated school system boys were instructed on National-Catholic principles that exalted the supremacy of the white heterosexual male, whose inherent force was regarded as vital for the nation's strength and power (Alcalde 2-16; Velasco and Torrego 52-81).⁶⁵ The cultivation of this sole form of masculinity, based on a narrow curriculum which favored the study of heroic male figures and daily physical education classes to form robust bodies representative of the body politic, and reinforced by active participation in the so-called *Frente de Juventudes*—the male equivalent to the Women's Section (Pérez-Samaniego and Santamaría-García 4)—, was often channelled through animal metaphors.⁶⁶ Popular chants intoned by young males spoke of different forms of masculinities by means of avian imagery. Whereas the imperial eagle, with its aggressive, courageous, and potent nature, came to represent the hegemonic masculinity of the fascist nation (Rogers 94-98), non-heteronormative male sexualities were excluded and disdained via castrated domestic birds, for one of the most common insults to refer to homosexual men was *capon* (Gómez Beltrán 178; Mora, *Margen* 97).

Spanish schools put into practice a gendered curriculum that was part of Franco's national project of recovering the supposedly lost glorious past traditionally

⁶⁵ The teachers' main task was "troquelear al niño que va a ser hombre, y lo ha de troquelear con perfiles recios y viriles" (Minardi, "Funciones" 254).

⁶⁶ In 1960 the *Organización Juvenil Española* (OJE) substituted the *Frente de Juventudes*. The change of nomenclature, however, did not alter the virile ideology transmitted by such organizations (Pérez-Samaniego 4-5).

associated with manliness (Blasco 106-110). Like in the other European fascist regimes, the virile man was regarded as “the driving force of history and one of the principal symbols representing the nation’s strength” (Mosse, *Fascist Revolution* xvi).

The state’s powers were inherently masculine and so were its symbolic animal representations. If a young female accompanied by a lion standing for the people allegorized the Second Republic (1931-1939)—a period that significantly witnessed key advances in women’s rights (Cuesta and Johnson 418)—the eagle became the emblem of Franco’s New Spain (images 52 and 53).⁶⁷ The Regime hastened to erase previous feminine symbols of the Republican country to institute others according to the newly constructed masculinist fatherland. Although the lion of the Second Republic persisted in national iconography under the dictatorship, it was always accompanied by an eagle rather than a woman (Campos Pérez, *Los relatos* 227).⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Often referred to as “La niña bonita,” the iconography of the Second Republic, despite its variations, stood out for its feminine nature. The young female holding the Republic’s tricolor flag in one hand and the scales of justice in the other symbolizes the nation. On her right side stands a lion, symbol of the natural strength and courage of the Spanish people and government (Cuesta and Johnson 432-433).

⁶⁸ Feminine representations of Spain, nevertheless, continued during Franco’s dictatorship, but to convey a maternal image of the nation, and usually recalling its history and traditions—as opposed to the generic norms and values transmitted through the country’s masculine symbols (Mosse, *La imagen* 13). For example, the historical figure of the Catholic Queen, Saint Theresa of Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and other motherly-like images often illustrated Francoist Spain (Bergès 91-100; Blasco, “Género y nación” 49-71).



Image 53. The Francoist flag with the imperial Eagle.

Image 52. J. Barreira. The Spanish Republic. Poster. Valencia, 1931. Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica. Spanish Ministry of Education.

The so-called Eagle escutcheon, representative of the Nationalist group and its ideology, became the national escutcheon, as enacted in the Decree of February 2, 1938 (Box, *Fundación* 309). Already on the coat of arms of the Catholic Monarchs, whose reign Franco always looked upon with nostalgia, the eagle of Saint John the Evangelist rescued the ideals of Imperial Catholic Spain and dovetailed with the Francoist extensive use of animal imagery in the construction of gender.⁶⁹ Symbol of strength, power, and victory (Box, *Fundación* 183), the eagle is an archetype of the masculine too (Neumann 42), which accounts for its prominence in fascist iconography.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Queen Isabella I of Castile had used the eagle of Saint John the Evangelist on an escutcheon to which she added the motto *sub umbra alarum tuarum protege nos* [protect us under the shadow of your wings] (Esparza 231-274).

⁷⁰ The national emblems of Hitler's Germany, Mussolini's Italy and Franco's Spain share this avian predator (Rogers 95-97).

Besides wielding power in its pictorial form, the Francoist eagle became branded on the public imagination.⁷¹ Its ubiquity in the space of representation, not limited to its display on flags, included other more mundane artefacts such as stamps, beer logos, identity documents or lottery tickets (Eiroa 81; Esparza 231-274; Sueiro 169-189).⁷² The value of the iconic eagle was such that advertising campaigns turned it into their profitable logotype. The alcoholic drink “Manzanilla triunfal,” with its patriotic slogan “Manzanilla triunfal. La España Nueva” (image 54), showed “su adhesión al régimen y a su moral por medio del águila nacional” (Intxausti, “El arte” 3). Although printed at the beginning of the Civil War in support of the Nationalist cause, the beverage’s sales skyrocketed during Francoism for obvious nationalistic purposes.

⁷¹ Other forms of visual propaganda establishing a connection between the masculine eagle and the Francoist nation included maps. School textbooks like *España nuestra. El libro de las juventudes españolas* (1943) provided children with instructions on how to draw the Spanish map in the shape of this bird: “¡Adivinad! ¡Adivinad! Y, entre tanto, pintad a España en forma geométrica de pentágono; con forma lineal y dardeante de escudo y águila” (Giménez Caballero 21).

⁷² The case of brands and logos of beer deserves further clarification, for it constitutes an example of re-appropriation of an animal symbol to serve the interests of the Regime. Such is the case of “El Águila,” a Spanish beer brand founded in 1900, whose logo included the avian image that named the beverage. During the Civil War Falangist groups took control of the beer company, modifying the original logo to resemble the Fascist bird in a crafty political propagandistic maneuver (J. Gutiérrez 23-30).



Image 54. Manzanilla Triunfal Advertisement (1936)

Due to this frequent usage, the eagle became “naturalized” (Barthes, *Mythologies* 5-27), in other words, part of the discursive practices—whether visual or linguistic—employed by the Regime to instill its national patriarchal ideology. Other forms of “banal nationalism” (Billig 5-7) establishing a direct link between the eagle and the masculine nation included names of military divisions, songs, newspapers, and literary texts. One of the leading squadrons of La Falange was “Águilas de Libertad” [Eagles of Freedom], and the Falangist journal *Águilas* [Eagles] (image 55) owed its name to this pseudonym used for the Nationalist men during the Spanish Civil War (E. González 5). The very same term was applied to Spanish boys and young men in the songs “Águilas de España” (1942) and “Águilas del Imperio” (1954), learned at school, and sung and played in military marches and at only-boys’ camps (Castañón 463).



Image 55. Front cover of the Falangist journal *Águilas* (1937)

Metaphorical eagles denoting nationalist men abounded in the literary field too.

The *Caudillo* himself was casted in this avian form in poems praising his role in the Civil War. Federico de Urrutia's "Franco. Leyenda del César visionario" (1938) describes the General's flight on an iron eagle from Morocco onto the Spanish battlefield to save the country from the Republican devastation: "del Marruecos legendario, / sobre un águila de Hierro/ volaba Francisco Franco" (Caudet 167; Moradiellos, *Las caras* 247). After the warfare, in "Elegía heroica del Alcázar" (1945) Gerardo Diego would envision the birth of a virile New Spain by identifying Franco with an eagle's egg and his men with hawks, another bird of prey closely related to the masculine (Cirlot 57): "Vivero de esforzados capitanes. /Nido de Gavilanes. /Huevo de Águila: Franco es el que nombro."

The avian profile of male characters often gave away their political affiliation. From their nicknames to their physical traits passing through their attire eagle imagery was the badge of the Francoist men. The veteran legionnaire *el Grajo* [the rook] enlists in the Nationalist army during the Civil War in Juan de Orduña's *¡A mí la legion!* (1942). The eagle-like look ("mirada de águila" [205]) of Cardinal Talavera reveals his fascist ideology in Juan Antonio Zunzunegui's *¡No queremos resucitar!* (1937-1938).

Darío's description of his classmates as eagles similarly discloses their Falangist adherence in Emilio Romero's *El vagabundo pasa de largo* (1959): "había media decena de católicos encasillados, tres de los cuales eran sinceramente confesionales, y, los otros tres, perspicaces y águilas" (198).

The model of hegemonic masculinity embodied by the eagle reached boys through its symbolic offspring. *Aguilucho* [eaglet], a frequent epithet for boys, was also the nickname of the Francoist *Frente de Juventudes* (Uría 28). The name of the bird also titled several publications mainly addressed to a young male audience. Founded by Father Enrique Bartolucci to raise awareness of poverty in Africa (Hernández and Eyeang 102), the magazine *Aguiluchos* (1957) served simultaneously to instill the Regime's patriotism, Catholic fervor as well as gender ideology. Its first number explaining the significance of its avian insignia deployed a myriad of symbols pertaining to the Falange:

Los aguiluchos extienden las alas hacia el azul y fijan sus ojos en el sol.
Aman las alturas y los panoramas inmensos. Son el símbolo de los
muchachos generosos, de los que tienen un corazón grande como el
mundo y sueños sin fin como el cielo. Solamente con ellos contamos al
iniciar este experimento audaz. (Jan. 1957, no. 1, p. 2)

The identification of boys with eaglets was followed by a description of the blue sky, the color of the fascist party. In addition, the children's facing the sun irremediably evokes the hymn "Cara al sol" [Facing the sun], credited to the Falangist leader José Antonio Primo de Rivera, and adopted as the *himno nacional* [national anthem] under the dictatorship (C. Vidal, "Cara al sol" 2).⁷³ Besides, its articles extolling the figure of

⁷³ Promoter of the Spanish fascist party Falange Española during the 1930s, Luys Santa Marina had previously referred to the young Spanish militiamen as eaglets in *Tras el*

the Spanish missionaries in the developing world clearly aligned with the paradigm of man as *monje-soldado* [monk-soldier] that Francoist propaganda fostered in its attempt to project its National-Catholic enterprise as a Crusade against dissidents as well as to gain the alliance of the Church (Nash, “Towards” 295; Winchester 143-160).⁷⁴ Rooted in Medieval chivalric codes (Blasco 62; González Aja 64-80), this masculine paragon was often displayed on the front cover of the magazine with a photograph of altar boys (image 56):

Entre las páginas más brillantes de la historia de la humanidad, hay algunas que han sido relegadas casi completamente al olvido. Ellas cuentan las empresas de una reducida serie de hombres valerosos; los misioneros cada uno de los cuales es a la vez explorador, científico, soldado y evangelizador. (Jan. 1957, no. 1, p. 2)

águila del César (1924), a book whose violent aesthetics served to praise the troops of the Legion (Alcalde 105) and which somehow anticipated the Falangist “Cara al sol”: “¡Arriba, arriba, aguiluchos, que hoy hay que mirar el sol de hito en hito!” (65).

⁷⁴ According to Mary Nash, “[i]n the post-war years male gender models were those of outstanding soldiers and fighters, exceptional figures that transcended daily life. The image of the warrior-monk shaped around a combination of *conquistador* and the founder of the Jesuits, Saint Ignatius de Loyola, and combining courage, virility, religiosity, and military values, became the prototype of role models for young Spanish males” (295).

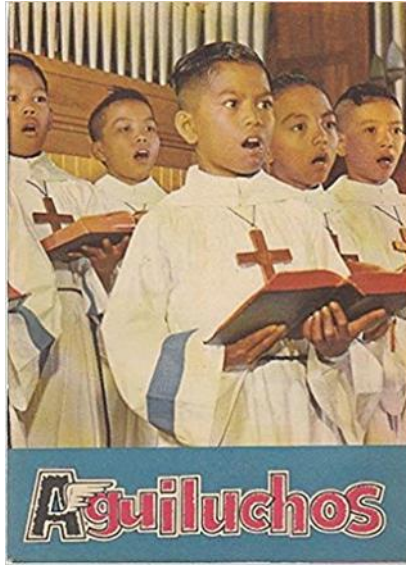


Image 56. Front cover of magazine *Aguiluchos* (July-August 1962)

Although not overtly religious, Manuel Gago's graphic novel *El Aguilucho* [eaglet] (1959), named after its male protagonist, equally aligned with Franco's political agenda (R. Fernández, *Héroes* 70; Uria 28).⁷⁵ Following the adventures of a brave teenage boy who engages in epic battles during the Middle Ages, the comic book bore striking similarities to the abovementioned missionary magazine regarding the religious zeal and, above all, prototypical manhood of its hero. Known by the pseudonym of *Aguilucho*, the young nobleman Marcel, whose blonde hair, blue eyes, and robust physique conformed to the Nazi corporeal ideal, embodied the Christian knight. In a Manichean world, his religious faith, representative of the force of good, prevailed over the evil, embodied by the Arabs—the nemesis par excellence of Catholic Spain.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ The Francoist regime manipulated comics for propagandistic purposes since these were the most popular publications for children and, very often, the only reading available to the popular classes (Uria 28). As a corollary, comics mushroomed during the dictatorship: *Chicos*, *Flechas*, *Pelayos*, *Maravillas*, *Clarín*, *Bazar*, *Baladín*, *La Ballena alegre*, *¡Zas!*, *Aguiluchos*, *En marcha*, to mention a few.

⁷⁶ Carles Fuiguerola studies the xenophobic and racist characterization of the Arab in Francoist comics like *Aguilucho* (39-40). His analysis reveals that derogatory representations of Muslims served the regime's twofold purpose of, on the one hand,



Image 57. Comic *El Aguilucho* (Manuel Gago, 1959)

The preoccupation with masculinity as a national virtue and a defining characteristic of the Hispanic race—expressed by the *Caudillo* himself on a radio message no sooner had the Civil War reached an end: “Queremos la vida de un pueblo viril” (1940) and disseminated through the state’s official propaganda—resulted in extreme homophobia (Altmann 193-208; F. Olmeda 20-86; Mora, *Margen* 12-68; Pérez-Sánchez, *Queer* 11-33). The figure of the homosexual became the antithesis of the Spanish man and was, therefore, subject to a great deal of abuse; becoming the bull’s-eye of the virile fascist state, as manifested in its zoomorphic representations.

In popular parlance the repertoire of epithets that referred to homosexual men included a list of domestic fowl. Along with the previous *capón* [capon], frequently used in the rhyming pair *maricón, capón*, other common terms of opprobrium included *pollitos* [chicks], *polluelos* [baby birds], *palomos cojos* [lame male doves] and *pavos*

recover Spain’s glorious past during the Reconquest, and, on the other hand, instill National-Catholic values through one of the most consumed literary genres.

[turkeys], in addition to a series of colloquial expressions pertaining to the avian world, such as *tener pluma* or *vérsese el plumero* (Mira, *Para entendernos*; Ortega 69-80; Rodríguez, *Diccionario Gay*).⁷⁷

As opposed to the wild eagle that symbolized the New Spain, such avian metaphors deprived homosexual men of their virility by equating them with castrated and young animals. Furthermore, as will be dealt with, these identifications coincided with the recurring conceptualization of females as domestic birds, notably *chickens* and *hens*. Such an overlap appears to corroborate not only the marginalization of the homosexual community during Francoism, but also the attribution of feminine characteristics to homosexual men with the aim of highlighting their lack of manliness (Connell, *Masculinities* 2-65; I. Gómez 311-329).⁷⁸

Novels incorporated non-heteronormative males in the guise of capons. The homosexual *licenciado* Don Roque Sartén is described as having a shrill voice and peculiar manners. These traits, which set him apart from the masculine genre as God-given, transform him into a capon in Cela's *Nuevas andanzas y desventuras de Lazarillo de Tormes* (1944): "don Roque Sartén... tenía voz de flauta porque no era

⁷⁷ In 1991 Eduardo Mendicutti published his semi autobiographical novel *El palomo cojo*, a coming-of-age story in which a ten-year-old boy comes to terms with his homosexual identity in Franco's ultraconservative Spain. The novel was later adapted into film by Jaime de Armiñán (1995).

⁷⁸ As Connell has argued in *Masculinities*, in homophobic societies the clear-cut boundary between the two homogeneous heterosexual gender categories "masculine" and "feminine" becomes blurred when it comes to the representation of non-heteronormative sexualities, so that gay men are imagined as feminized whereas lesbians as masculinized. In Franco's Spain pseudo-scientific treatises attributed corporeal deficiencies to the transgression of the strict gender binary. The labels *efeminado* (i.e. effeminate) and *marimacho* (i.e. tomboy/butch), for example, illustrated that mental illness caused the deviance from the heteronormative *statu quo* in Vallejo-Nájera's *Psicología de los sexos* (1944): "Toda desviación del destino biológico transmuta también los caracteres psicológicos, y hace del varón un afeminado y de la hembra un marimacho" (43).

hombre como Dios mandaba y como todos los hombres, sino espadón y acaponado” (105). A similar high-pitched tone forges the unmanly vagabond’s friend in *Primer viaje andaluz*, also by Cela (1959): “El amigo del vagabundo es un hombre redicho y relamido... con voz de capón, pero que, por no tener, no tiene ni aceite para freír tres peces” (36). His identification with the castrated fowl due to his distinctive voice goes hand in hand with the mention of his lack of oil, given that expressions with “aceite” (e.g., “perder/ soltar/echar aceite”) pertain to queer slang in Spanish, denoting a homosexual man.⁷⁹

Music served to propagate the avian view of the homosexual. With its effeminate aesthetics and leading homosexual singers, the genre of the *copla* displayed an authentic homosexual fauna. In musical shows and cabarets, where most of the audience was male, canonical manhood was strengthened by ridiculing other masculinities (D. Pérez, “La homosexualidad” 58). Effeminate men were often the object of derision through comparisons with birds. In *the cuplé* “El peluquero de señoras” [The women’s hairdresser] (J.J. Cadenas, 1941-1942?), whose title already alludes to a job typically performed by women—as opposed to its male equivalent barber—, the latent homoerotic relationship between the hairdresser and his male customer becomes apparent in the animalization of the client as a long-haired chicken in need of pampering:

Un pollito de esos que llevan	No hay un batidor en la ciudad
Las melenas hasta los pies	Que peine con tanta suavidad
De este modo habló al peluquero	...
Con un poco de timidez:	“A nadie jamás yo dejaré
“Quiero que me haga usted un peinado	Que ande en mi cabeza más que usted”

⁷⁹ Even in Cela’s *La Colmena* (1951) the cowardly behavior of a ladies’ man like Consorcio López, who abandoned his pregnant girlfriend, might turn him into a capon—literally and figuratively speaking—if caught by the girl’s brother: “Consorcio, como no quería casarse ni tampoco quedar capón, cogió el tren y se metió en Madrid” (156).

Con raya al medio, en dos bandos, Y con gran amor él le dijo así
Que sea así por el estilo Lleno de rubor: “¡Ay sí!”
Del de la Cléo de Mérode

...

Musicals allowed for the integration of bird imagery so intimately associated to the universe of non-heteronormative masculinities. Deliberately defined by its director as “un musical de plumas” (Gregori 736), with the intended *double-entendre* of “pluma,” meaning “feather” but also “effeminate homosexual male,” Angelino Fons’ *Mi hijo no es lo que parece* (1974) resorted to the colorful spectacle of *vedettes* in order to characterize the main homosexual characters (Lomas 74). The opening scene, which focuses on the show of Marga (based on singer and homosexual icon Celia Gámez), already announces the presence of “plumas” (i.e., homosexual males) in the movie. Enjoying the artist’s performance, two young effete males wearing flashy outfits and commenting on the need to add more “plumas y colas” to the musical stand out in the audience (Lomas 74-77; Sanz *et al.* 5). Throughout the film, the constant associations of the homosexual protagonists with feathers will signal their sexual identity.⁸⁰

Pervasive in a myriad of forms, these avian metaphors helped shape the homophobic discourse that prosecuted homosexuals during the dictatorship. In fact, the conceptual scenario that framed conflicting masculinities in terms of predator and prey translated into the figurative hunt for the homosexual. As Begoña Piña’s “Franquistas a la caza de bolleras y maricones” attests, the use of hunting metaphors in the codification of non-normative desires under the Francoist regime materialized in the persecution, mistreatment, containment and even killing of homosexual subjects. The motto “cazar al

⁸⁰ Several filmic productions visually exploited the symbolism of feathers to question the sexual identity of male characters, such as *Los días de Cabirio* (Fernando Merino, 1971) and *Operación cabaretera* (Mariano Ozores, 1967) (Cáceres 42; Melero, “La representación” 23)

homosexual,” which often preceded police operations, became part of the debate about the criminalization of homosexual practices, as will be seen in the next section.

Franco’s enterprise of securing a strictly heterosexist country seemed more attainable through the identification of (non-)heteronormative males with capons and eagles, respectively. The projection of the homosexual as a weak, docile and, more importantly, reproductively useless capon not only clashed with the powerful, aggressive, and sexually potent eagle representative of the Nationalist man, but it also tallied with the discourse of hunting whereby the predatory state could easily catch its homosexual prey.

3.2.2. On the Hunt for the Homosexual

En esta selva petrificada...que es la ciudad...La manada de fieras sodomitas, por millares, se lanza a través de la espesura de las calles ciudadanas en busca de su presa juvenil. Disfrazada de persona, la fiera sodomítica ojea entre el matorral ambulante de las aceras su pieza preferida, el cándido muchacho... la alimaña sodomita, valida de su apariencia humana, una vez elegido el joven, se le aproximará... Vuestro hijo puede volver a casa corrompido, guardando su bochornoso secreto, que nada delatará; la monstruosa relación continuará, y, dada su edad, su instinto sexual se torcerá y será para siempre un invertido. (Mauricio Carlavilla, *Sodomitas* 11-12)

Security Inspector Mauricio Carlavilla's view of the homosexual subject as a treacherous animal capable of corrupting the virile nature of the Spanish youth in his highly successful work *Sodomitas* (1956) reveals the anxiety that non-heteronormative masculinities generated to the virile Francoist state.⁸¹ In fact, along with the contemptuous, yet seemingly innocuous, depictions of homosexual males as domestic birds dealt with in the previous section, there were other, more threatening, representations of non-heteronormative males as wild beasts and pernicious parasites. These menacing images were particularly salient in the legal and medical discourses that justified the prosecution and pathologizing of homosexual practices.

In the dictatorial regime, where males' camaraderie was cultivated through sex-segregated schools, compulsory military service and men-only associations, homosexuality could corrupt homosociality (Mora, *Margen* 37; Mosse, *The Fascist* 175-176).⁸² The body of the homosexual, thus, posed a threat to the body politic, which explains its symbolic transformation into all sorts of pernicious fauna—from wild beasts (e.g.: *fiera*, *depredador*, *bestia*, *cobra*) to contagious vermin (e.g.: *alimaña*, *reptil*,

⁸¹ Published in 1956, *Sodomitas* had reached its twelfth edition by 1973 (Galván 68)

⁸² Juli Cáceres affirms that “la amenaza inminente que estas relaciones homosociales y el culto a ese vigoroso cuerpo joven y lleno de vida conllevan se encuentra en un potencial deslizamiento hacia tendencias homosexuales” (73).

cucaracha, rata). Besides dehumanizing purposes, these taxonomies served to cast the homosexual target as a menacing and poisonous social agent, making his disposal imperative. This zoomorphic categorization ultimately served, borrowing a suitable animal metaphor, as the necessary scapegoat for the homophobic Francoist Spain to function.

The language of jurisprudence rendered homosexuals as wild animals to establish a link between their allegedly uncontrollable (sexual) instincts and their tendency to criminality (Campos 16; Galván 67-68; Melero, “La construcción” 52; Mora, “Ciencia” 38-46). In *Peligrosidad social y delincuencia* (1972), Magistrate Antonio Sabater Tomás, referring to the violent behavior of animals and homosexual people, asserted that non-heteronormative males were prone to felony in order to satisfy their sexual urges: “para satisfacer su instinto sexual [los homosexuales] no reparan en recurrir a la fuerza bruta o cualquier otra violencia psíquica o corporal” (138).⁸³ With the same rationale, the district attorney of Huesca inscribed the criminal profile of the homosexual individual in the discourse of animals: “es el instinto sexual el que el torna al homosexual en una fiera criminal” (qtd. in Ramírez, “Los homosexuales” 4).

Based on these images of homosexuals as menacing animals, the Francoist judicial apparatus conceived the prosecution of homosexuality as an animal hunt. Jurist Gómez Aranda de Serrano explicitly referred to “una caza de homosexuales” (qtd. in Mora, “Rastros biopolíticos” 185) when defending the bill “Peligrosidad y Rehabilitación Social” (January 1970), a preventive law against homosexuals.⁸⁴

⁸³ As Mora states: “El homosexual en Sabater Tomás presentaba una vida esencialmente instintiva, lo que lo convertía en antagonista de la especie humana, cuyo desarrollo ético se ha basado históricamente en negar y domesticar esos instintos animales” (“Ciencia” 39).

⁸⁴ In his revision of the Republican law of *Ley relativa a Vagos y Maleantes* [The Law of Vagrants and Thugs], which did not include homosexuality as a dangerous state, the

Similarly, law enforcement coded police operations as “la caza del homosexual” when planning to arrest these individuals (Piña 1), whose testimonies equally reveal how their capture was framed as an animal chasing (Ramírez-Pérez 139; Weiss).

The bestiary rhetoric of social danger also represented homosexuality as an infection (Cayuela 73; Olmeda 116), both in law and medicine. Seen as vermin, venomous reptiles, plagues and parasites, legal and medical documents registered the moral toxicity of the homosexual body upon the heterosexual community. Judges and physicians alike described non-normative males as “parásitos y sujetos indeseables que torpemente dañan la convivencia humana” (qtd. in Ramírez, “Los homosexuales” 3) and “termitas para pervertir la naturaleza humana” (qtd. in Mora, *Margen* 54).

Judicial writings also exploited biblical symbolism on casting homosexuality as a sinful plague (Huard 148; Terrasa 194). The Ministry of Justice’s annual report referred to this sexual condition as “esta repugnante plaga tan extraña a la geografía patria” (*Informe fiscal*, 1963, 39). *Memorias de la Fiscalía* (1974) not only defined homosexuality as “una auténtica plaga” (9), but also explained it in relation to the homosexual community’s lack of spirituality: “carencia total de formación religiosa y ausencia del sentido del pecado” (qtd. in Ramírez-Pérez 142).⁸⁵

Pseudo-scientific writings further emphasized the connection between homosexuality and epidemics through pestilent images of dirty animals. Defined as “sucias ratas” [dirty rats] (qtd. in Ramírez, “Franquismo” 146) and “inmundas cucarachas” [filthy coackroaches] (qtd. in L. Martín 18), the homosexual body stood out

Francoist government codified homosexuality as a crime in 1954 (Pérez-Sánchez, “Franco’s Spain” 376-378).

⁸⁵ Echoing this legal discourse, newspapers reported on homosexuality as mankind’s most shameful plague: “la tragedia que sobre nuestra juventud se está echando como una de las más vergonzosas plagas de la humanidad” (qtd. in Ramírez, “Los homosexuales” 9).

for his lack of hygiene. Certainly, with the prosecution of homosexuality, homosexual men frequently met in germ-packed places—public washrooms, subterranean sites, alleyways full of garbage, etc.—reminiscent of the habitat of rodents and bugs.⁸⁶ This metaphorical connection between non-heteronormative males and all sorts of unclean, unsanitary creatures, in turn, overlapped with the eugenic discourse that promoted the cleansing of sexual dissidents for the sake of the purity of the Spanish race (Campos 2-13; Dualde 131-155). In fact, the Francoist government facilitated “la limpieza de maricones” [the cleansing of fags] (Corazón 2; García, “La persecución” 1-4) through their prosecution and seclusion in penitentiaries and mental hospitals. Tellingly, in these institutions, aimed at the rehabilitation of their deviant orientation, homosexual men were constantly showered as to get rid of what was regarded as their dirty sexual nature (Arnalte).

The representational schema relating homosexuality with contagion certainly called for places of containment. Retaking the parasitic metaphor, the district attorney of Huesca advocated for internment in labor camps: “que se creen establecimientos especiales... para el escarmiento de sus parásitos, los homosexuales” (qtd. in Ramírez 145). The establishment of these “campos de trabajo” [labor camps] served the twofold purpose of metaphorically stopping the spread of their alleged sickness while literally making the homosexual body productive for the Francoist state.

Artistic manifestations also captured the zoomorphic conceptualization of the homosexual as a wild or pestilent animal to alert of their social threat. The homosexual protagonist in the song “A la sombra de Colón” (1941?) is depicted as a beast and a

⁸⁶ When narrating their living conditions under the dictatorship, homosexuals tend to self-identify with rats and bugs given the dirty spaces they inhabited whether for their clandestine sexual encounters or even when incarcerated in prisons and labor camps (Arnalte, L.; Martín; Ramírez).

lion: “Yo soy un matón, soy un brabucón, / Yo soy una fiera...Yo soy un león que sin compasión, / Se come a la gente” (qtd. in D. Pérez 58). His roaming through one of the main streets of Madrid, hurting and devouring people, stressed the insatiable sexual appetite that unleashed the criminal instincts of the homosexual, as explained before from the legal and medical perspectives. Novels equally characterized non-heteronormative males in the guise of libidinous beasts and dirty rodents. The homosexual couple formed by Pepe el Astilla and Julián La Fotógrafa, who, by the way, are imprisoned for their sexual orientation, are referred to as “bestias” in Cela’s *La Colmena*: “bestia, que te van a oír!, ¡Ay, bestia!” (188), whereas the anonymous homosexuals in *Oficio de tinieblas 5* (1973), by the same author, are reduced to “sucios ratones” (qtd. in Hernández 43).

In sum, the deployment of the bestiary rhetoric in the articulation of legal, medical, religious, and artistic discourses around homosexuality contributed to the dehumanization and legitimization of the prosecution of homosexual people during Franco’s regime. Seen as wild fauna and pernicious parasites, the metaphoric hunt for the homosexual turned into a literal chase of dissident sexualities. Subject to imprisonment, medical therapies, spiritual retreats and religious confessions for their sexual preferences, non-heteronormative males could easily fall into the trap of the dictatorial regime.

3.2.3. It's a Dog's Life: Animal Metaphors and Non-Heteronormative Masculinities in the "Comedia de Mariquitas" [Sissy Comedies]

¡Sevillanos! No tengo que recomendaros ánimo, porque bien conocido tengo ya vuestro valor. Para terminar, os digo que a todo afeminado o invertido que lance alguna infamia o bulos alarmistas contra este movimiento nacional tan glorioso, lo matéis como a un perro. (Falangist leader Queipo de Llano, radio message, 1936)

A staunch supporter of the Nationalist cause and its politics of virility, Falangist leader Queipo de Llano advocated the killing of effeminate and homosexual males as though they were dogs. The canine metaphor of the far-right wing officer, whose speeches stood out for their sexual violence (Preston, "La forja" 87-119), took up the Catholic Church's stance on homosexuality.⁸⁷ The Holy Scriptures refer to sodomites as dogs in order to sanction and prosecute this sexual orientation: "No traerás la paga de una ramera ni el sueldo de un perro a la casa del Señor tu Dios para cualquier ofrenda votiva, porque los dos son abominación para el Señor tu Dios" (Deuteronomy 23:18), or "Afuera están los perros, los hechiceros, los inmorales, los asesinos, los idólatras y todo el que ama y practica la mentira" (Apocalipsis 22:15). In accordance with the Bible, religious sermons constantly preached about this sinful practice (Borraz 1-6; Ramírez, "Los homosexuales" 7).⁸⁸ Additionally, medical texts misleadingly associated promiscuity with homosexuality based on the behavior of dogs (Patiño and Serrano 35);

⁸⁷ According to Preston, Queipo encouraged and celebrated his violence and killings on his nightly radio programs. On July 23rd 1936, the Fascist officer declared: "Nuestros valientes Legionarios y Regulares han demostrado a los rojos cobardes lo que significa ser hombre de verdad. Y, a la vez, a sus mujeres. Esto es totalmente justificado porque estas comunistas y anarquistas predicán el amor libre. Ahora por lo menos sabrán lo que son hombres de verdad y no milicianos maricones. No se van a librar por mucho que berreen y pataleen" (qtd. in Preston, *España* 89).

⁸⁸ Olga Merino recurs to this prevailing dog imagery on recreating the life of a homosexual male during Franco's dictatorship in her novel *Perros que ladran en el sótano* (2012). In like manner, Vicente Villanueva's film *Mariquita con perro* (2007) exploits the stereotypical view of the gay man accompanied by a small dog.

whereas legal discourse recurred to mongrel imagery to devise the criminal profile of the homosexual subject as lazy and vagrant (Valenzuela 3).

Ingrained in the collective imagination, canine images were instrumental in queer representation in cinema.⁸⁹ In fact, although Francoist authorities soon censored any hint of homoerotic relations on the big screen on the grounds of morality (González and Alfeo 63-64; Lomas 65-66; Zubiaur 13-29), for humorous purposes, homosexual characters became indispensable in the so-called “comedia de mariquitas” [sissy comedies]. This type of movies exploited all the homosexual clichés (Melero, *Placeres* 127-180; Mira, *Miradas* 365-370), including their most common animal symbols.⁹⁰

Ramón Fernández’s *No desearás al vecino del quinto* (1970), the best exponent of this subgenre (Barahona 71; Jordan 261-129; Triana-Toribio 99), offers an animalized caricature of Antón (Alfredo Landa), a real womanizer who pretends to be a homosexual tailor in order to thrive in his fashion business.⁹¹ The dressmaker’s homosexual performance indisputably entails his pup, and, throughout the movie, the symbiotic relationship between Antón and his pet is such that even their sexual identities are comparable.⁹²

⁸⁹ In Fernando Merino’s *Los días de Cabirio* (1971) the masculinity of the protagonist Alfredo, also starred by Alfredo Landa, is questioned through a poodle. A foreign woman ridicules him—optically minimized (i.e., belittled with the camera)—by giving him her poodle (Cáceres, *El destape* 52).

⁹⁰ The Censorship Code of 9 February 1963 stated: “Se prohibirá: la presentación de las perversiones sexuales como eje de la trama y aún con carácter secundario, a menos que en este último caso esté exigida por el desarrollo de la acción y éste tenga una clara y predominante consecuencia final” (qtd. in Vanaclocha 253).

⁹¹ Interestingly, the protagonist’s name, Antón, refers to the patron saint of animals (San Antón), which could reinforce the zoomorphic caricature of the homosexual in the movie.

⁹² Several scholars have drawn attention to the importance of the poodle in the homosexual performance of Antón (Chamouleau; Epps; Jordan; Martínez-Expósito; Mora; Ryan and Corbalán, *inter alia*).

The movie poster visually informs of the gendered politics behind the iconography of the dog. Following the stereotypical homosexual aesthetics of the time—i.e., feminine pose, long died blond platinum hair and violet suit, whose color is reminiscent of the chromatic name given to homosexuals during the dictatorship (“los violetas,” Melero, *Violetas* 2-19)—the dressmaker appears holding his inseparable poodle Fifi. This breed of dog, characterized by its small size, weakness, high-pitched bark, and beauty, belongs to the prevailing bestiary rhetoric categorizing non-hegemonic masculinities.⁹³

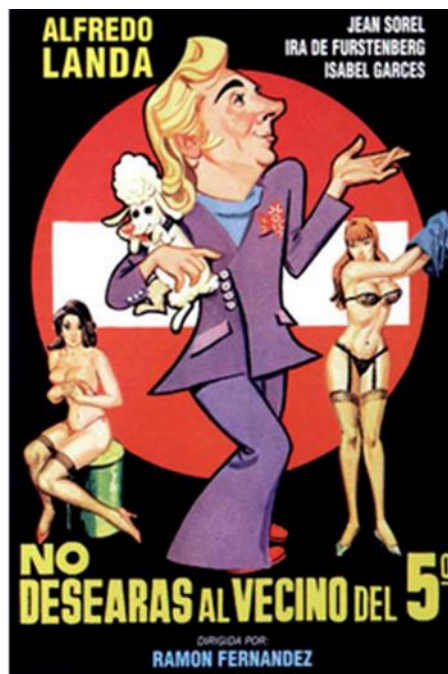


Image 58. Movie poster of *No desearás al vecino del quinto*

Multiple scenes show owner and pet working in tandem. Both Antón and Fifi assist customers in the boutique, attend social events and even look alike in terms of

⁹³ The poodle represents the opposite of the bull in terms of masculinity. In *Celedonio y yo somos así*, the owner of the stud bull contrasts the potency of his animal with the helplessness of the poodle when trying to seduce his girlfriend (00:05:23): “Cristina: Mira, cállate y no cambies de conversación, que todo el mundo sabe que cuando sacas a Celedonio por la calle es para... [Bull belows in the background]. Daniel: Mujer, no le iba a sacar a hacer pipí como si fuera un caniche. El hombre va a trabajar para mí. Y ya quisieran muchos tener un trabajo así. ¿Verdad Celedonio?”

their hairstyles and outfits (59-61). The speech of the couturier often overlaps with the barks of the dog, making their *dramatis personae* virtually indistinguishable.



Images 59, 60 & 61. Antón and Fifi on the street, at work and at a costume party
Furthermore, when Antón's female clientele questions his virility in the presence of semi-nude women in the fitting rooms (image 62), the tailor replies comparing his sexual identity to that of his poodle (00:06: 32):

Antón: Bueno, es mejor que me vaya porque tendréis que desvestiros.

Female customer 1: Por nosotras puedes quedarte. No importa.

Antón: Ay, desvergonzadillas, delante de un hombre...

Female customer 2: ¿Quién? ¿Tú?

Antón: No va a ser el caniche, vamos [giggles]

[Everybody laughs]



Image 62. Antón compares with sexual identity with that of Fifi while observing semi-naked women

So strong is the link between Antón's homosexual farce and his little dog that, when he shows his true colors as a *macho ibérico* on a supposed monthly business trip to Madrid where all he does is party and flirt with numerous foreign women (image 63), there is no trace of the poodle—nor of his extravagant wig or attire—since all that is part of a (sexual) performance, in Judith Butler's terms, for the sake of his boutique.



Image 63. Antón's true heterosexual self

Anton's homosexuality, thus, is simply a façade, which makes it possible to deal with this taboo topic within the censorious context of the ultraconservative regime, as Santiago Loma observes: “la homosexualidad que se tematiza resulta no ser lo que parece, haciendo aun más socialmente aceptable el hecho de que se hable de ella” (66). Indeed, despite the overtly playful, flamboyant, and deceptive flirting with queer representations, there is not a real single homosexual in the film (Martínez-Expósito, “Visibility” 23). The protagonist's virility, in truth, is unquestionable, judging from his

potent animal magnetism among international and national women. In his bachelor's apartment in Madrid, the playboy spies on foreign stewardesses with a telescope, using a matador's cape to draw their attention and even wearing a bullfighter's outfit to seduce them (images 64 and 65).



Images 64 and 65. Antón trying to seduce foreign women with his *matador* outfit

In this regard, Antón embodies the Francoist hypermasculine archetype constructed upon taurine associations and illustrated in the film through another male character explicitly defined as “un toro.” The husband of one of the patients of the handsome male gynecologist brings out the beast within when learning that his wife is at this doctor's office for a check-up. Trying to preserve his spouse's (sexual) decency and, above all, his virility, the man physically and verbally attacks both physician and wife. This display of masculinist behavior grants him the epithet of bull.



Images 66 and 67. The average Spanish bull-like man attacking (physically and verbally) his wife and her male gynecologist

Husband: Ya sabía yo dónde encontrarte. ¡Sinvergüenza, inmoral

[the husband punches the gynecologist and his wife screams]

Husband: Y tú yo ya haremos cuentas al llegar a casa.

Wife: Pero si yo no he hecho nada.

Husband: Tú cállate...

[a few minutes later. The gynecologist's wife arrives and enquires about the situation]

Gynecologist's wife: ¡Pedro! Pero, ¿qué ha pasado?

Nurse: Estaba reconociéndola y el marido entró como un toro. (00:08:00-00:10:00).

Once Antón's homosexual farce has been exposed, thanks, in part, to his bullfighter's performance indexing his true heterosexual identity, the conservative agenda of the movie is completed with the discovery of the rogue's family.⁹⁴ Antón happens to be a married man with four boys. The head of one of those large families promoted by the dictatorship, the protagonist's cheating is unacceptable within Catholic tenets, and, consequently, will be sanctioned in accordance with the moralizing purpose of these comedies (Mora, "La popularización" 344). Despite returning to his happy married life, Antón's final punishment will include the continuation of his homosexual charade in his flourishing business. This time, however, not only will the protagonist be accompanied by his poodle Fifi, but also by his wife, who appoints

⁹⁴ Nuria Triana-Toribio analyzes *No desearás al vecino del quinto* from the perspective of the construction of Spanish national identity: "throughout the 1970s, censorship encouraged a cinema that consistently associated Spanish identity with heterosexual sexuality" (98).

herself as his secretary to keep him under strict surveillance. “A movie about the limits and limitations of heterosexuality” (Martínez-Expósito, “Visibility” 23), *No desearás al vecino del quinto* camouflages the regime’s gendered politics behind the false impression of sexual liberation on dealing with the forbidden homosexuality (Caparrós Lera 57-58). At the end of the day, the film views this sexual practice as a chastisement imposed upon the heterosexual male who transgresses the well-defined boundaries within the family home. Despite his true virile Spanish essence, symbolized in the taurine paraphernalia employed in his sexual exchanges with foreign females, in the eyes of Spain’s patriarchal society Antón will come across as a ridiculous homosexual with his poodle. His reputation as a *macho ibérico*, then, has literally gone to the dogs. The last shots focus on the homosexual caricature of Antón. Chased by his five children, who call him “¡mariquita!,” the fake homosexual male obeys his wife’s commands as a faithful dog.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ Mora draws attention to the word “mariquita” with which the movie concludes (“La popularización” 344), suggesting that its use reinforces the notion of homosexuality as a punishment—in this case for the straight Antón.

4. Animals and Femininities

4.1. From Wild Beasts to Domestic Hens: Women's Transition from the Second Republic to the Dictatorship

Was life worth living? My companions in misery and I often asked this question as we discussed our situation, our wretchedness. They spoke with resignation; after all, what could we women do? I rebelled against the idea of the inevitability of such lives as ours; I rebelled against the idea that we were condemned to drag the shackles of poverty and submission through the centuries like beasts of burden—slapped, beaten, ground down by the men chosen to be our life companions. (Dolores Ibárruri, *They Shall Not Pass*, 1966, 60-61)

Written from her exile in Moscow, the memoir of the key political figure Dolores Ibárruri, known worldwide as “La Pasionaria” [i.e., The Passionflower] is both a mixture of history and an apologia for the rights of women (Mangini 176). Reflecting on her personal situation and that of many of her female counterparts, Ibárruri advocates women's liberty through animal imagery (Byron 138-165). Her refusal to comply with the subjugated position historically assigned to her sex is expressed through the metaphor “beasts of burden” [*animales de carga*].⁹⁶ This analogy is part of the long-established bestiary rhetoric linking women with animals that Francoism recovered in order to justify and relegate females to their biological role of mothers, as expressed in school textbooks where motherhood was evoked through the metaphor of the doting hen: “Y la buena madre, como la gallina, siempre cuida y protege a sus hijos noche y día” (qtd. in Alonso 10).

For a woman who had abandoned her miner husband to go into the public political sphere and who had played an active role in the feminist movement during the Second

⁹⁶ Female writers harshly criticized women's subservient position in society by resorting to the bestiary rhetoric. In María Teresa León's short story “Infancia quemada” (1934), the protagonist refers to the fate of a low-class girl as follows: “La habían convertido, nada más nacer en un animal doméstico” (*Fábulas* 202).

Republic (1931-1936),⁹⁷ Franco's regressive policies syncretized in the discourse of animality targeted at women.⁹⁸ In her autobiographical account *El único camino* (1962), she describes a meeting with Nationalist troops captured by Republican soldiers where Ibárruri mischievously questions these Francoist men about her public persona. The soldiers' reply "no es una mujer, es una bestia," followed by "La Pasionaria dicen que no es española; y que es un marimacho" (535), reveals the construction of the feminine gender through animal symbols during Franco's dictatorship.

The image of *Pasionaria* as a wild beast of undetermined sex, in other words, a monster, represented a type of femininity associated with the foreign liberal ideals of the Second Republic that the Francoist state always viewed with fear, for it could shake the foundations of the patriarchal society established upon the pillars of National-Catholicism in the aftermath of the Civil War.⁹⁹ As a matter of fact, the Nationalist press constantly rendered suffragist women in the guise of ferocious and poisonous animals to instill fear (Bunk, *Ghosts* 120-149; Vázquez Montalbán, *Pasionaria* 179; Rodríguez López, "Mujeres perversas" 177-183). In 1937 the newspaper *ABC* devoted an article to communist leader Margarita Nelken, significantly entitled "La Serpiente con faldas." Her metamorphosis into a venomous reptile due to her influential role as a

⁹⁷This period opened up public spaces to females and gave visibility to women's concerns, with greater access to co-education, universal suffrage, the legalization of divorce and abortion or the right to administer states and sign contracts (Carbayo-Abergónzar 75-78; Madorrán 246-250).

⁹⁸ With the establishment of a democratic government in 1931 a few women were elected to Parliament. Politician Clara Campoamor advocated women's rights and suffrage during the writing of the Spanish Constitution of 1931. The anarchist thinker Federica Montseny was elected to a ministerial post. Victoria Kent, a female member of the Parliament, was appointed director general of Spanish prisons. In addition, there were several women writers and activists who fought for the equality of the sexes, like María Teresa León, María Martínez Sierra and María de Maeztu.

⁹⁹ Jim Fyrth and Sally Alexander explore the construction of *Pasionaria* as a Medusa-like legend, explaining the symbolism of the serpent associated with the female gender in Francoist Spain (307).

politician and, above all, as a feminist activist went hand in hand with a vehement attack based on her foreign Jewish origin (“no es de nuestra sangre y nuestra raza” [qtd. in Langa 156-157]). Along the same lines, in 1939 the female magazine *Y. Revista de la mujer nacional sindicalista* caricatured Sylvia Pankhurst, the leader of the British women’s movement, by explicitly depicting her as a male (“El hombre que está a la derecha de la fotografía, con los ojos cerrados, es Sylvia Pankhurst, famosa agitadora revolucionaria”) and, together with other feminist campaigners, as part of a streak of tigers (“aparece junto con otros tigres”) (qtd. in Rodríguez López, “Mujeres perversas” 178). Anarchist, feminist, and intellectual Federica Montseny was similarly seen through an animal lens, judging from her nickname “la loba” [the she-wolf]. The first woman in the history of Spain to be a cabinet minister was constantly described as “loba feroz” [fierce she-wolf] in the many debates where she partook due to her oratory as well as her staunch defense of female education (Álvarez 4-6).

The striking similarities between the depictions of the Basque politician and her (inter)national fellows formed part of a propagandistic manoeuvre that constructed models of femininity based on zoomorphic metaphors. Far from the Francoist ideal of the angel in the house¹⁰⁰—fashioned through symbols of domestic animals, like the “gallinas en la cocina” [hens in the kitchen] (Moa, *Mitos* 162)—that filled the pages of women’s publications, female figures like *Pasionaria* constituted a menace for the virile fascist state and were, consequently, characterized as dangerous beasts, such as “fieras,” “bestias,” “hienas,” “lobas” and “perras de presa” (Baquero 1-4; Hernández Luis 384; Tobin and Zinn 58).¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ This clearly represented the recovery of the 19th-century model of femininity.

¹⁰¹ In order to justify violence and incarceration, the totalitarian government constantly depicted Republican militants as she-wolves, as seen in the Expedientes de Responsabilidades Políticas y los Expedientes de Prisión de las mujeres de la provincia

Interestingly, during the dictatorship the television program *Noticario Español* (1938-1942) employed the domestic fowl, quintessence of Franco's true womanhood, to ridicule both *la Pasionaria* and Republican lawyer Victoria Kent.¹⁰² When reporting on one of their political meetings, their speeches were replaced by the clucking of hens.¹⁰³ This animal noise not only referred to the content of the harangues, deemed as vague, but it also constituted an attack on women who had left the domestic sphere assigned to their sex in order to venture into the male public terrain of politics to defend an equalitarian society (Gil and Gómez 166-167).¹⁰⁴ Tellingly, the identical animal noise was employed to refer to the dialectical battle between Victoria Kent and Clara

de Jaén (1939-1945): "María Rosillo Teruel, 'La loba,' vecina de Quesada. Pertenecía antes del alzamiento a la Sección Femenina de la C.N.T de cuyo partido era una gran propagandista, y durante la dominación roja en Quesada, en unión con otras mujeres de su misma calaña acompañó a un grupo de milicianos forasteros que se presentaron en el pueblo el 23 de septiembre del 36... (qtd. in Peinado 350). The same is evident in the archives about Republican dissidents that formed guerrillas (*maquis*) to struggle against the Francoist regime in the northern part of Cordoba (Gutiérrez López 110).

¹⁰² The symbol of the hen was so ingrained within the Francoist imaginary that Galician writer and journalist Carlos Casares published the short story "A galiña azul" [The blue hen] (1968) to criticize the regime. Described as "metáfora de las persecuciones del franquismo" (Llargo 2), the tale deals with an atypical blue hen that has some red feathers, lays colorful eggs and cackles like a rooster and this, the narrator concludes, "preocupa a las autoridades" (19). Due to her odd behavior, the town major decides to capture her, but he fails when the fowl's owner decides to paint all the hens blue so that the protagonist can never be found, remaining forever free.

¹⁰³ In this piece of news another bird metaphor was employed to mock the gestures and language of Pasionaria and her political colleague Victoria Kent: "En las imágenes, se observa a un grupo de mujeres que, encima de un camión, exponen sus proclamas a la población. Una voz en off comenta: '...más allá de nuestras trincheras una emuladora de la Pasionaria y Victoria Kent subida en un camión alimenta a este auditorio de la zona roja con palabras y gestos, excesivos como aquel filete con patatas que volaron como las golondrinas de Becker'" (qtd. in Gil and Gómez 166-167).

¹⁰⁴ Regarding the superposition of the clucking on the speech of Pasionaria, Gil and Gómez stress the satirical as well as sexist attitudes conveyed through the animal sound: "Este cacareo no sólo referencia el contenido de la arenga, claramente insignificante, sino, también, a la persona que lo declama, una mujer ejerciendo una actividad política" (167).

Campoamor around their views on the rights of women, since they were presented as “mujeres que cacarean” in several texts of that time (García Torres 315).

Furthermore, in 1938 the Falangist magazine *Y* allegorically identified Republican leaders with domineering red hens in the fictional account “De cómo fueron a morir siete gallinas rojas” (31).¹⁰⁵ Set in Extremadura during the Civil War, the didactic short story focuses on seven noisy hens that rule the village El Gordo: “hay unas gallinas en un loco revuelo de anchas formas, rigiendo el pueblo con su matriarcado” (31). When Nationalist legionnaires arrive, they cannot help but noticing the red bows around the fowl’s necks, which give away their political ideology as “las rojas” (i.e., Republicans). The tale concludes with the public trial of the hens and their death sentence in the town’s main square:

No es nunca despreciable una guarnición de gallinas, pero éstas de El Gordo llevan, además, como un torpe atributo, grandes lazos rojos atados al cuello. Una batida general hace hasta siete prisioneras. Los legionarios abren en la plaza Mayor el juicio sumarísimo; no hay defensor posible, y ante la prueba de los lazos rojos las siete gallinas de El Gordo son condenadas a opulenta muerte (31).

Hen metaphors became a prolific source of feminine exemplars under Francoism.¹⁰⁶ Besides connotations of fertility derived from egg-laying species (Cirlot

¹⁰⁵ This magazine’s number also published the misogynistic medieval tales by El Arcipreste de Talavera (3-4), where female characters tend to be associated with the hen, either to signify women’s virtues or vices.

¹⁰⁶ The woman as chicken metaphor has a long tradition in Western Culture (Adams and Donovan 12-13; Hines, “Foxy Chicks” 9-23; López Rodríguez, “From the Bible” 129-142; Nilsen 2729). This animal, which usually embodies the maternal and domestic qualities of a woman, has also forged the stereotypical image of females as domineering, talkative and gossipy. After the demise of Franco, hen imagery will

19), the small size of fowl and loving care towards their offspring in the reduced space of the nest tallied with the regime's view of women as devoted mothers within the confines of the house.

Publications compared women with hens in their roles of both mother (“como las gallinas con sus polluelos, así ha de cuidar la madre a sus hijos en el hogar” [qtd. in Alonso 45]) and housewife (“como gallinas en la cocina” [qtd. in Moa, *Mitos* 162]). Church sermons similarly employed the image of the doting fowl as the epitome of motherhood: “y como una gallina la mujer ha de acoger a sus hijos bajo el ala” (qtd. in Santiago 99); whereas popular songs such as “La gallina clueca” (1946), “Mi abuela tenía un pollito” (1947), “Coplas del kikiriki” (1950) or “La gallina turuleta” (1971) helped to consolidate the bond between the domestic female and hen (Castañón 456). Furthermore, food brands like *Gallina Blanca* [White Hen] increasingly feminized and personified its hen logotype (image 68) in accordance with the avian representation of its predominantly female audience and even sponsored the women's association *Club Fémina Gallina Blanca* (1962).¹⁰⁷ This organization issued its own identity card (image

undergo a radical change, serving to transmit the sexual and economic liberation of women in the “cine de la transición” [Spanish movies produced during the transition to democracy]. Jesús Yagüe's *Más fina que las gallinas* (1977), whose title originally was “más puta que las gallinas,” follows Alicia, an ambitious young woman who decides to become a prostitute so that she can make money and open her own business. Alicia's identification with the prostitute becomes evident in the movie poster, where she appears half naked emerging from an egg.

¹⁰⁷ The brand *Gallina Blanca* was so intrinsically linked to the female sex that it named and sponsored the highly successful radio program *Consultorio Avecrem* (1964-1968), where presenter Luisa Fernanda Martí replied to the correspondence of her female audience, giving advice on diverse matters such as cooking, courtship, and marriage. Besides sponsoring the television contest *Sí o No* (1962), it also edited the monthly women's magazine *Club Fémina, revista del ama de casa* (Balsebre and Fontova 37-40).

69) based on the Francoist *documento nacional de identidad* [The Spanish identity card].¹⁰⁸



Image 68. Increased feminization of the logo *Gallina Blanca* from the 1940s to the 1960s



Image 69. Identity Card of *Club Fémima Gallina Blanca*¹⁰⁹

Literary works frequently used hen traits to sketch domestic female characters.¹¹⁰ Carmen feels “como gallina en corral ajeno” (57) when leaving her home

¹⁰⁸ On March 2, 1944, Franco decreed the issue of a national identity card. Theoretically to create an unquestionable individual identity, this document was conceived first to control prisoners, but it was, later, extended to all the Spanish population (Ortega 2).

¹⁰⁹ Image taken from <https://www.todocoleccion.net/documentos-antiguos/antiguo-carnet-club-femina-gallina-blanca-maria-reyes-suarez-gordillo-sevilla-1963-64~x118131250>.

¹¹⁰ As could be expected, hen metaphors served to ridicule males that deviated from the hypermasculine standard. In *El canto de la gallina* (1965), for example, Ramón Solís recurs to avian imagery on dealing with a bullfighter’s tragic loss of his genitals. In

alone to attend a party where she would be wooed by young men in Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio's *El Jarama* (1955). Mother and wife Soledad is depicted through this metaphor while darning her husband's socks in Cela's *La colmena*: "En la casa, en una habitación interior, doña Soledad, su señora, repasa calcetines mientras deja vagar la imaginación, una imaginación torpe, corta y maternal como el vuelo de una gallina" (350). María Eulalia's protective attitude towards her male partner symbolically metamorphoses her into a hen in Juan Marsé's *Últimas tardes con Teresa* (1966). If her arms turn into shielding wings ("Ricardo Borrell, encogido junto a María Eulalia, que iba ganándole terreno con un brazo adornado de pulseras y sedas, desplegado como un ala" [337]; "ya casi había conseguido cobijar a Ricardo bajo su ala de gallina" [345]); her words are, analogously, transformed into clucking: "y emitiendo un cloqueo cerró el ala definitivamente" (345).

Coming-of-age novels frequently deployed bird imagery on dealing with the domestic instruction of females. In *Memorias de Leticia Valle* (1945), Rosa Chacel describes adolescent Leticia as "pichona" (171) and "pimpollo" (90) while she gravitates around Doña Luisa's kitchen as part of her education. Similarly, Martín Gaité views female students as obedient hens in *Entre visillos* (1957) (86). For Mercè Rodoreda, Quimet's indoctrination of his fiancée Natalia about her future role at home begins with an onomastic change to "Colometa" ("little dove" in Catalan) (Glenn 61) in *La plaza del diamante* (1962): "y dijo que yo sólo podía tener un nombre: Colometa" (11).

Moix's *Walter, ¿por qué te fuiste?*, Ismael's derision of his virility includes this animal name as well: "las bofetadas que caerán sobre él no le importan, pero después Ricardo, Ernesto, Luisín y Rafael, le dirán eres un gallina, te pegan dos gritos y ya lloriqueas como una niña" (112).

Women's poetry rendered the female anatomy in the guise of birds to reinforce the bond between domesticity and womanhood.¹¹¹ Montserrat Vayreda depicts a woman breastfeeding her babies as doves nourishing little birds in "Autoelegía de la mujer estéril" (1954): "mis senos... vibran y laten como dos palomas... de los pájaros todos que la habitan" (qtd. in Jurado 534-535). Susana March turns a woman's arms ("los brazos... el vuelo de los pájaros") and heartbeats into little birds ("El seno te latía/ dulcemente, como un pequeño pájaro") in "Amor" (1964) and "La campesina" (1964), respectively. For María Beneyto, a woman's anguished call resounds like "pájaro mudo y apresado, que da contra la angustia/ con sus alas inmensas" in "La lejana" (1954) (qtd. in Gala 283). In the eyes of Carmen Conde, a woman's domestic existence resembles a bird's flight around the nest: "Ahora ya estoy aquí bajo tu cielo, /dulcísima provincia de mi casa, /nido de sombra donde cierro el vuelo... a las alturas de un segundo piso" (202). This allegorical view of the home was recurrent in conduct manuals instructing wives-to-be, such as Mariano Ribas' *Cartas a dos novios* (1947): "Para Elvira... tu esposa, ese hogar será siempre el refugio, el nido de su labor principal... con el cuidado, con el orden y con la limpieza" (168-170).

The plethora of avian symbols defining womanhood crystallized in the foundation of the *Sección Femenina*. The organization to which the regime officially entrusted the instillation of domestic values in the female population was presented as a nest by the *Caudillo* himself upon its foundation:

No acabó vuestra labor con lo realizado en los frentes... Todavía os queda más, os queda la reconquista del hogar. Os queda formar al niño y a la mujer española... Tengo fe en vuestra obra. Yo os ayudaré... Yo

¹¹¹ All these poets published their work in the magazines sponsored by the *Sección Femenina* (Jurado 525-541).

haré que en este vetusto nido se forje la primera escuela de la Sección Femenina (*Discursos* 129)

The women's branch of La Falange would, in turn, explain its role in all girls' schools and in the "casa cuna" [orphanages] with the same metaphor: "la escuela maternal—verdadero hogar con calor de nido" (qtd. in Palacio 147) and "donde hay criaturas haya nidos... una Casa-Cuna" (*Y*, 1941,18). It even deployed this symbol in several of its publications teaching females about domesticity. In the magazine *Y*, for example, the image of the nest was projected onto the making of a home ("Y si una vez probada siente usted... la conveniencia—o la vocación—de colgar su nido en un árbol alejado de los estrépitos ciudadanos" [1943, 8]), and the arrival of a newborn ("En el umbral de la vida... Entrada al nido" [01/03/1943, p. 36]).

By the same token, women deviating from the standard of domesticity were represented as predatory and loquacious birds. "Magpies," "parrots," "crows" and "cockatoos" were always at hand to disparage female politicians and activists (Barreiro 3; García 40; Salomón 41-55). Along with implications of home abandonment and menace to the androcentric regime, such avian symbols clearly derided these women's claims. The press caricatured suffragettes "en forma de cotorras o loros" (Salomón 54-55) making non-sensical petitions. A string of avian names also defined the female political dissidence: "cotorra... ha cantado como un loro" (qtd. in Serrano 184-185) or "la mujer se revoluciona... una cotorra, una charlatana que quiere inmiscuirse en lo que no le importa y en lo que no entiende" (qtd. in Ruiz Roa 11).

Fictional works lampooned female characters through vociferous birds. In *La Colmena* several passages mock the conversations of women by describing them as parrots. The pensioners with whom doña Pura chats are called "dos loros" (167) and Visi's husband resorts to the same metaphor to refer to his wife's friends: "-¿Sabes quién

va a venir esta tarde? -Algún loro, como si lo viera... No, mi amiga Montserrat... Doña Visi voló a saludar a su amiga” (245-246). The image of rooks comes to Pascual’s mind when describing his female relatives as they assemble for gossiping in Cela’s *La familia de Pascual Duarte* (1942): “Las mujeres son como los grajos” (109). Carmen Laforet chooses another boisterous bird, the crow, to recreate the gatherings of Aunt Angustias with her female friends in *Nada* (1945): “Como una bandada de cuervos posados en las ramas del árbol... así las amigas de Angustias estaban sentadas... las amigas ahora volvían aleteando... La verdad es que eran como pájaros envejecidos y oscuros” (98-99).

Graphic novels gave a more vivid picture of this animalized portrayal of women too. Penned by Miguel Bernet, the comic series Doña Urraca [Mrs. Magpie] starred the homonymous bird-like female character (image 70).¹¹² Modelled upon a noisy magpie, the resemblance with this animal not only pertained to her name, protuberant nose, unmistakable dark clothes, flying ability and fondness for stealing, but also to her aggressive and garrulous personality. With her ever-present umbrella, used as a weapon to hit other people, this maleficent woman reminiscent of gothic literature provided a negative model of femininity (McGlade 134-142; Canyissà 49-52).

¹¹² The character of Mrs. Magpie is believed to be based on the figure of María Rosa Urraca Pastor, a Spanish Carlist politician and propagandist who supported the coup d’état in 1936. After all, her creator, Miguel Bernet Toledano (alias Jorge) championed the Second Republic during the Spanish Civil War (Martínez Peñaranda 16).



Image 70. The comic character of Doña Urraca (1948). Her characterization as a magpie

Far from embodying the womanly archetype promulgated by the Regime, Urraca was, in comic critic Manuel Barredo's words, "una solterona amargada" [a bitter spinster] (ii) whose maternal instinct was non-existent. Her abhorrence of children manifested in copious vignettes where her enjoyment derives from hitting and making them cry. Besides, Urraca's unduly pessimistic outlook on life had nothing to do with the woman of perpetual smile projected by the *Sección Femenina*. In addition, her attendance of funerals for her mere pleasure and to poke fun at the mourners were also traits of her anti-religiosity in National Catholic Spain. As a corollary, the comic was censored, and Francoist authorities forced its publishing company Bruguera to sweeten Urraca's temperament and behaviour for its continuation (E. Martínez 16).



Image 71. Doña Urraca: The antithesis of the maternal archetype

Cinema projected this polarized view of the female sex as wild animals and peaceful birds to comply with the governmental agenda.¹¹³ Gonzalo Suárez's *La Loba y la Paloma* [The She-wolf and the Dove] (1974) serves to illustrate this dichotomy. The title of the movie irremediably lends itself to the identification of its female protagonists, Sandra (Carmen Sevilla) and María (Muriel Catalá), with the binary zoomorphic models of femininity.¹¹⁴ In fact, the movie poster displays the drawings of a she-wolf and a dove crowning several photographs of the two characters. Whereas Sandra's voluptuous physique—her cleavage becomes the focus of attention—, aggressive postures—she grabs the girl's neck—, and tight dark clothes—to accentuate her sexuality and criminality— seem to relate to a sexual animal, María's plain appearance, sitting quietly and wearing a long white dress, evokes the docile dove.

¹¹³ The Francoist gender discourse (Guillamón-Carrasco 95-100; Rabazas and Ramos 43-70; Rodríguez-Martínez 133-145) resurfaced in historical films that characterized female heroines as wild animals in the absence of male figures. The legendary widows María de Guzmán and María de Padilla in Luis Marquina's *Doña María la Brava* (1948) and Juan de Orduña's *La Leona de Castilla* (1951), respectively, earn their zoomorphic sobriquets (i.e., the fierce animal and the lioness) on playing a much-needed masculine role in military exploits aimed at avenging their husbands' deaths or the fulfilment of their last will (Labanyi, "Historia y mujer" 50).

¹¹⁴ This movie was the first one to display a woman's breasts during Francoism (Barry and Morgan 113; Fernández Rubio 2).

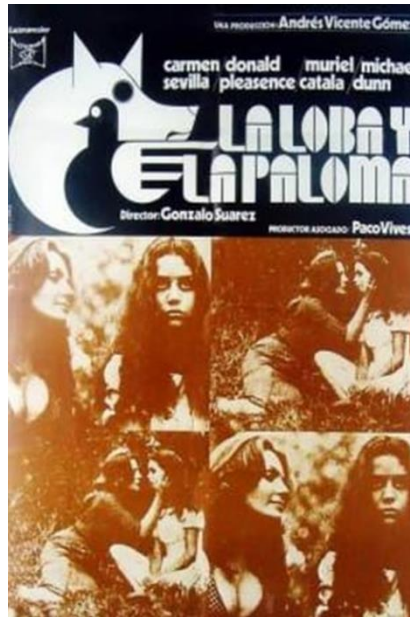


Image 72. Movie poster of *La Loba and La Paloma* (1974)

The film, which revolves around the quest of a diamond-encrusted gold statue that becomes the source of greed, sex, and murder, characterizes Sandra as a (sexual) predator (Aguilar and Losada 108; Alonso Fernández 111-112; Martialay 251).¹¹⁵ Despite being married to Atrilio, Sandra's appetite for both sex and money results in her cheating with Zayas, her husband's work colleague as well as the murderer of María's father. The voracity of the adulteress wife transpires in her libidinous nature as she seduces Zayas and adopts a dominant position when mounting him in bed (00:42:23). After copulation, the insatiable Sandra heads to the kitchen to wolf down a loaf of bread spread with white cheese—with the obvious phallic connotations—in front of her impotent spouse, whose virility has become the object of scorn by all the males in the house, especially by Bodo, Sandra's dwarf brother.

¹¹⁵ The film, which exploited eroticism through the lens of the horror genre, was partly designed to revitalize Carmen Sevilla's career within the "apertura" context of the last years of the dictatorship (Naval and Carandell 28). Relaxation of censorship, increasing industrialization and foreign influences paved the way for a slow rise of sexuality on the big screen (Fouz-Hernández, *Spanish Erotic* 1-18; Gullo 181-183).



Image 73. Sandra playing the role of sexual predator and wolfing down bread and cheese after having an adulterous relationship

Sandra's identification with the she-wolf clashes with María's virginal, innocent and peaceful demure. The adolescent, traumatized and mute after witnessing her father's murder at the hands of Zayas over the precious statue, has been released from a mental institution to inform of the whereabouts of the coveted treasure. Moved by greed, all the characters attempt to persuade María to reveal the secret location. This includes all sorts of stratagems, such as Atrilio's frustrated sexual assault on the adolescent to prove his downtrodden masculinity after learning about his wife's affair.

As could be expected in Franco's Spain, such anti-exemplary behaviors result in an accumulation of violent deaths at the end of the movie. Sandra murders her husband and, later, commits suicide. Bodo also takes the life of Zayas away but is eventually killed by his agonizing victim. María, then, emerges as the only survivor, retrieving the jewel hidden inside her riding horse toy, and, somehow, bringing to that old mansion the necessary peace associated to her through the symbolic dove.

In its double manoeuvre to terminate the feminist accomplishments of the Second Republic and to relegate women to the confines of the home, the Francoist

regime offered a Manichean view of the female sex as wild beasts and docile birds. Paragon of domesticity and maternity, the state's iconic hen with its clucking paradoxically served to quieten the roaring petitions for women's rights that had arisen prior to the Civil War, since radio and television programs superimposed the fowl's noise on the speeches of female politicians to deride and silence their claims. In addition, the dictatorial machinery exploited the farmyard animal, both metaphorically and literally speaking, to vilify female dissidence. Their avian representation in didactic stories that ended with their tragic death somehow correlated with the real punishments given to Republican women. Forced to walk with a hen, put on her feathers and even eat her corn (Arnabat 57), they were reminded of their true natural state as well as domestic place in Franco's nation.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ It is worth recalling that *el emplumamiento* (i.e., tarring and feathering) was a common punishment given to prostitutes during the Middle Ages (Iglesias, "La prostitución" 13)

4.2. Dissecting the Female Body: The Animal Nature of Women in Pseudo-Scientific Writings

A la mujer se le atrofia la inteligencia como las alas a las mariposas de la isla de Kerguelen, ya que su misión en el mundo no es la de luchar en la vida, sino acunar la descendencia de quien tiene que luchar por ella. (Antonio Vallejo-Nájera, *Psicología de los sexos*, 44)

Leading Spanish physician and chief psychiatrist of Franco's army, Antonio Vallejo-Nájera compared a woman's brain with the wings of a butterfly in his psychological treatise *Psicología de los sexos* (1944). Apart from underscoring the feeble intellect of the female sex by relating it to the frailty and smallness of an insect's body, the doctor's analogy also connected the feminine and animal nature (Bandrés and Llavona 4-5; Campos 11; Cayuela 285-287; Mitchell 1-9). In fact, medical practitioners and scientists at the service of the dictatorship constantly drew parallelisms between women and beasts to rationalize both their low intellectual faculties and their primary reproductive function, and to ostracize them from the public and intellectual sphere. The fatherland envisioned by the Francoist Regime stood upon fundamental National-Catholic values that framed rigid societal roles for women. Woman's entire being was conditioned by motherhood and the state apparatuses were geared towards the fulfillment of "their biological destiny as breeders of the nation's future generations" (Nash 183). Policies and institutions were put in place to regulate women's bodies. Natality measures were devised to promote large families (Caldwell 171; Cousins 178-186), laws were passed in order to hinder women from accessing the job market (Domingo 28; Ortiz 2) and, with the proscription of co-education, a new feminine curriculum oriented towards the promotion of motherhood was instituted and reinforced through the mandatory courses offered by the *Sección Femenina* (Morcillo, *True Catholic* 90-98; Richmond and Gil 15-68), whose emphasis was on the natural, God-

given maternal role of women: “La misión natural de la mujer es ser madre y esposa” (qtd. in Martínez Cuesta 151).¹¹⁷

Women were then, by nature, associated to the corporeal and the private sphere of the house; men, on the other hand, were linked to the intellectual and the public space. As a corollary, any woman deviating from her biological role as mother and transgressing the confines of the home was deemed unnatural in scientific discourse. Medical treatises underscored that non-compliant females went against the dictates of Nature. According to Vallejo-Nájera, “[l]a mujer moderna ha traicionado la condición de su sexo y se desvía de la función que le ha encomendado la Naturaleza” (*Antes* 133). Similarly, gynecologist José Botella Llusia explained the futility of women’s attempts at any endeavour outside their domestic roles as mother and wife since these were the only functions inherent to their sex: “Ella no debe luchar nunca por la existencia porque no es su misión, ni biológicamente está preparada para ello. Del mismo modo sería contranatural que un padre se ocupase de cuidar de sus hijos, mientras la mujer se emplea en otros menesteres.” (44)

Scientific texts explained the female anatomy in terms of animal symbolism to bring to the forefront the instinctual—instead of rational—side of women (Bosch 35-38).¹¹⁸ In “Psiquismo del Fanatismo Marxista” (1939), renowned Vallejo-Nájera and Eduardo Martínez affirmed that “la mujer en su condición de hembra ligada a la reproducción y por tanto a la naturaleza [es] como animal, carente de razón” (qtd. in

¹¹⁷ The leader of the *Sección Femenina*, Pilar Primo de Rivera, voiced her concern with increasing birthrates in her first speech to Franco: “España tiene prisa por doblar el número de habitantes” (qtd. in Domingo 122).

¹¹⁸ Spanish doctors also employed translations of German Paul Moebius’s *La inferioridad mental de la mujer*, a popular treatise that stated: “Many female characteristics are very similar to those of beasts: mainly the lack of a mind of their own” (qtd. in Morcillo, *True Catholic* 70).

García Prieto 223) and that “el psiquismo femenino tiene muchos puntos de contacto con el infantil y el animal” (qtd. in Hernández-Holgado 127). Therefore, to prove their mental inferiority, women’s brains were measured against the tiny dimensions of insects’ bodies, such as ants and spiders in Misael Bañuelos García’s *Psicología de la feminidad* (1946) and José María Pemán’s *De doce cualidades de la mujer* (1947) (Scanlon 333; R. Torres 109).

Gynecological essays employed arthropods as well to account for the reproductive system of women (Murillo 92). Their (in)fertility was paralleled with spiders producing egg sacs (Medina-Doménech, *Ciencia* 184) and their conception, with the fecundation of ants: “[la concepción de la mujer es similar] a la condición de hormiga reina, que luego de desplegar sus alas en el cortejo, en el vuelo nupcial, se las arranca cuando es fecundada” (R. Torres 109). In addition to underlining the generative function of women, these tiny creatures also fell within the scope of small animals suggestive of the (mental) inferiority of the female sex, as abovementioned.

Further comparisons with animals in medical writings served to delineate the scientific profile of the female subject as an instinctual beast, particularly as regards her sexuality (Regueillet 1036). Physician Francisco J. de Echalecu stated that “la mujer tiene... un predominio de la vida instintiva” and that “se guía por impulsos sexuales... animales” (255). Sharing his views, Vallejo-Nájera even asserted women’s inability to refrain their basest bestial passions: “[una] irrefrenable tendencia animal” (*Psiquismo* 19). Doctors spoke of “celo animal” and “pasión bestial” to refer to the female sexual drive, and the lascivious nature of women was equated with ferocious creatures, such as she-wolves, lionesses, and tigresses (Medina-Doménech, “The Experts” 182).

The clinical narrative rendering women as unbridled lecherous beasts contributed to the legitimization of Franco's biopolitics. In accordance with its pronatalist and Catholic tenets, the state's control of female sexuality served its reproductive as well as ideological needs. In fact, as Michel Foucault has argued in *The History of Sexuality* (1976), as sexuality became part of discourses of discipline and power, the state created official institutions (penal, scientific, medical) aimed at the regulation of people's sexuality. Under Francoism, the establishment of *el Patronato*, females' penitentiaries and mental institutions designed for the rehabilitation of Republican, prostitutes and single mothers clearly fulfilled this function.

If during the Civil War, the *Sección Femenina* posited marriage and motherhood as the mechanisms to tame the bestial feminine ("el amansamiento de la fiera humana" [Y, 1938, 16]), during Francoism non-canonical females were hypersexualized through their incessant animalization. Medical works postulated that prostitutes were "eróticas propensas a la bestialidad" and "con pasiones animales" (qtd. in Bandrés 5) to justify their reclusion in prisons. In like manner, single mothers were represented as wild beasts to seclude them in centers of *El Patronato de Protección de la Mujer*.

The medical establishment determined that Republican women were prone to violence and sex due to their uncontrollable bestiality. In their study on Republican inmates in Málaga, Vallejo-Nájera and Martínez observed the triad bestiality-criminality-*las rojas*: "en la revolución comunista española haya participado el sexo femenino con entusiasmo y ferocidad inusitada" (398). These females ranked lower than prostitutes. Their political ideology, indeed, was thought to infect their descendants according to genetic beliefs of the so-called "gen rojo" [red gene] that would pass onto their offspring. At the end of the day, this faunistic conception of women provided

moral and scientific grounds for their incarceration and forceful separation from their children as well as for their rapes by Nationalist men.

The Francoist project aimed at the institutionalization of domestic motherhood via the association of women with animals was supported by medical authorities who attempted to prove epistemologically the mental inferiority of the female sex and their solely reproductive function. Their studies on the female body based on similarities with tiny and prolific insects served this twofold purpose of, on the one hand, demeaning women's intellectual faculties, and, on the other hand, highlighting their biological nurturing role. In addition, although the bond between women and beasts ultimately gave prominence to their carnal nature, female sexuality was solely understood through the prism of procreation within marriage. As a matter of fact, medical writings profiled prostitutes, Republican and sexually liberal females (i.e., single mothers, lesbians, etc.) as lascivious and depraved animals threatening the established order. These representations linking bestiality, sexuality and criminality were instrumental in the establishment of punitive centers—*el Patronato*, penitentiaries, mental hospitals—aimed at the domestication of women.

4.3. The Taming of Women: Animal Metaphors in The Discourse of Female Education



Image 74. (“¡Singhi-Lay, la mujer pirata!, *Capitán Trueno*, no. 32, 1970)

In one of his travels enforcing justice around the world, Capitán Trueno [Captain Thunder], the best-known fictional hero during Francoism (Alary 42-58; Jiménez 1-7), confronts a Chinese female pirate whom he constantly describes as “la mujer salvaje” [the savage woman] and “la fiera” [the wild animal]. Speaking of his imminent combat in terms of the taming of a beast (“Una fierecilla sin domar”), the Medieval Christian knight reproduces the traditional view on the education of women. Through the

application of physical force, Capitán Trueno manages to defeat his foreign adversary, putting her back in the right place traditionally assigned to women. At the end of the comic, indeed, the once female warrior has become the crew’s cook, having replaced her sharp saber—and tongue—with a saucepan.



Image 75. Taming a wild woman: from pirate to cook

During Francoism, the education of women, as in Trueno’s mind, was equivalent to the domestication of animals.¹¹⁹ The dictatorial regime, indeed, recovered this folkloric motif regarding female education to justify gender violence and to deter girls from any academic aspiration. Along with the revival of Medieval and Golden Age treatises whereby female education was somehow tied to animals, such as Juan Luis Vives’ *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana* [The Instruction of the Christian Woman] (1523) and Fray Luis de León’s *La perfecta casada* [The Perfect Wife] (1583)

¹¹⁹ This analogy between the education of women and the taming of beasts was already present in the 19th century. In the Educational Conference of 1892, Spanish intellectual, writer and professor Emilia Pardo Bazán resorted to this zoomorphic simile in order to criticize female instruction according to patriarchal values of submission and compliance: “No puede en rigor la educación de la mujer actual llamarse tal educación sino doma, pues se propone por fin la obediencia, la pasividad, la sumisión... Aspiro, señores, a que reconozcan que la mujer tiene destino propio, que sus primeros deberes naturales son para consigo misma... que su felicidad y dignidad personal tienen que ser el fin esencial de su cultura” (qtd. in Rodríguez Martínez 63).

(Morcillo, *True Catholic* 30-34; *The Seduction* 141-142), the Francoist government promoted other classical readings in which the subjugation of females was achieved through the exertion of physical force, namely, Don Juan Manuel's *El conde Lucanor* and Shakespeare's translation of *The Taming of the Shrew* (Gregor and Bandín 143-157).¹²⁰ This last play, which was adapted cinematographically with the title *La fierecilla domada* (Antonio Román, 1956), achieved enormous popularity in dictatorial times due to their gender politics (Gregor and Bandín 143-157).¹²¹



Image 76. Movie poster of *La fierecilla domada* (1956)

¹²⁰ Focused on the importance of female's beauty, Vives equates the choice of a good spouse with the buying of a beast of burden or a slave, since both need to be closely examined to make a wise judgment based on their physical appearance (Morcillo, *True Catholic* 32). *La perfecta casada*, which became a staple wedding present for brides in Spain during Franco's time, similarly pointed out the difficulty of finding the ideal wife by identifying women with animals.

¹²¹ This is the tale no. XXXV "De lo que contesçio a un mançebo que casó con una mujer muy fuerte et muy brava" in which a young Moor marries a shrewd of a girl and gains ascendancy over her by killing three animals which refused to bring him water with which to wash his hands. On seeing the increased violence towards the dog, the cat and the horse, the bride is convinced that she will have the same destiny unless she follows the groom's commands. As for Shakespeare's play, the main plot revolves around the courtship of Petruchio and Katherina, the obdurate shrew. Initially unwilling to participate in that relationship, Katherina is eventually "tamed" by Petruchio, who resorts to a series of torments, such as food deprivation, until she becomes a desirable, compliant, and obedient bride.

Apart from contributing to the dissemination of this long-established tradition, these texts paved the way for a plethora of coetaneous works (literary, filmic, musical, journalistic, legal, educational) that also conceptualized female tutoring in the light of animal taming.

In the literary field, the authoritarian old widow Práxedes in Ana María Matute's *Primera memoria* (1959) regards the education of her grand-daughter Matia as the taming of an animal: "Te domaremos—me dijo, apenas llegué a la isla" (20). In Carmen Laforet's *La isla y los demonios* (1952), despotic Falangist Matilde expresses her teachings to her young niece Marta in similar terms: "Matilde, desde que se enteró que su sobrina iba con ellos, empezaba a tomar con Marta un aire autoritario. A la niña esto le asombraba un poco, pero se dejaba domar pasivamente, con todas sus fuerzas y sus esperanzas concentradas en la próxima partida" (301).¹²²

As for theater, Alfonso Paso's *Enseñar a un sinvergüenza* (1967) recurred to the taming analogy to show the domestication of an intellectual working woman.¹²³ Concerned about their daughter Rosana, a bookish single teacher that repels all her suitors with her indomitable personality, Margarita and Gregorio wish for a strong-willed man capable of controlling her. When Lorenzo appears in Rosana's class, not

¹²² As has been noted elsewhere in Spanish novels of female development written under Francoism the use of this bestial rhetoric informing the education of women has a clear subversive purpose. Its use represents a form of covert resistance to the regime's propaganda intended for the domestication of the female sex (Bieder and Johnson; Briggs; López Gallego, *inter alia*)

¹²³ Considered "el autor teatral favorito del Régimen" (Pérez and Pérez 137), playwright Alfonso Paso deferred to the most conservative tastes of theater goers in Franco's Spain, with gendered-laden comedies such as *Los derechos de la mujer* (1962), *Educando a una idiota* (1965) or *Domesticar a una mujer* (1970). He also contributed to the cinematographic adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, which might have inspired *Enseñar a un sinvergüenza* (1967) (Payá 57). His play, which was a blockbuster since its premiere (Paso, *El teatro* 2), was adapted for the big screen by Agustín Navarro in 1970.

only is the young lady smitten by the fun-loving rascal, but also her parents, who see him as the ideal candidate to domesticate their wild offspring. In an interview with Lorenzo, Gregorio makes it clear that Rosana is like a beast in need of taming: “Usted es nuestra salvación. Nadie ha querido acercarse a ella. O usted la doma o dentro de cinco años mi mujer y yo estaremos a pan y agua como el conde de Montecristo” (40). Throughout the play, the repetition of the verb “domar” alluding to the masculine control over Rosana reminisces the zoomorphic conception of female instruction (Puchau 27). At the end of the comedy, in fact, Rosana gives in to Lorenzo’s desires, adjusting to the prototype of submissive woman, while the rogue poker-player continues with his dissolute lifestyle despite his girlfriend’s (academic and professional) sacrifices.¹²⁴

Prior to Pasos’ comedy, Enrique Jardiel Poncela had staged the allegorical taming of a self-willed woman in *Blanca por fuera y Rosa por dentro* (1943).¹²⁵ During the constant quarrels between married couple Blanca and Ramiro, the former exhibits her brutal temper—yelling, insulting, pushing, scratching, throwing objects—comparable to a beast’s behavior. Ramiro’s string of zoomorphic epithets to define his brutal wife (“pantera,” “sabandija,” “hiena” [36]) is followed by his determination to instruct “una mujer indómita” [an untameable woman] (37) through physical and verbal abuse.

¹²⁴ In this regard, Ana Puchau de Lecea observes: “[Rosana] se humilla hasta el extremo para convertirse en su mujer o, en su defecto, para seguirle de la forma que él establezca. Se ofrece a él siguiendo el prototipo de mujer sumisa. Lorenzo, por el contrario, no ofrece nada, se mantiene en su papel de vividor e insiste en que no va a cambiar su estilo de vida por ella” (66).

¹²⁵ Pedro Lazaga took this play to the big screen in 1971. In the movie poster, significantly, she is seen wearing boxing gloves on top of her defeated husband.

This taming often entailed physical violence and verbal abuse in filmic productions where men used artifacts designed for the subjugation of beasts, such as horsewhips, leashes, and chains, to discipline women.¹²⁶ The male protagonists of Pedro Lazaga's box office hit *Vente a Alemania, Pepe* (1971) animalize their female partners to defend their maltreatment. After referring to her friend's fiancée as “una mula” [a mule], due to her reticence to support Pepe's decision to emigrate to Germany, Angelino's remark “Jarabe de palo, eso es lo que las doma” (00:14:23) suggests giving her a thrashing in order to “tame” her.¹²⁷ In Manuel Mur Oti's *Fedra* (1956), horse-rider Fernando hits his stepmother Estrella with one of his horsewhips after finding out that she has married his father Juan in order to seduce him. Estrella's confession of her ignominious actions gives way to a series of bloody scenes in which she is explicitly compared to—and treated like—one of Fernando's wild equines (Nekane 23): “Llévame

¹²⁶ In *Destination Dictatorship*, Justin Crumbaugh notes the story of the taming of sexy foreign female tourists in Spanish movies. His analysis of *Bahía de Palma* (Juan Bosch, 1962), the first Spanish film to display a bikini on screen, shows “the story of the taming of the bikini-clad shrew” (97). The sexy Swedish Olga is violently forced into submission by the Spanish Mario who responds to her provocations with a forceful blow to the face that eventually knocks her to the ground, leaving her both in pain and in love with him. In Crumbaugh's words, the film transforms the *sueca* into a submissive Spanish woman: “Subject to domestication—in several senses of the term (being tamed, becoming domestic, and ceasing to be foreign)” (97).

¹²⁷ The animalization of females also went hand in hand with their mistreatment in novels. In Laforet's *Nada* (1947), Juan constantly insults his partner Gloria calling her “fiera” (34), “bestia” (122, 125, 270) or “perro” (49) and also beats her up: “Juan metió a Gloria en la bañera y, sin quitarle las ropas, soltó la ducha helada sobre ella. Le agarraba brutalmente la cabeza, de modo que si abría la boca no tenía más remedio que tragar agua... Él soltó una blasfemia y le empezó a dar puñetazos en la cabeza. Luego se quedó otra vez quieto y jadeante: ‘Por mi puedes morirte, ¡bestia!’” (122). In Cela's *La familia de Pascual Duarte* (1942), Pascual sees his rape of Lola as the taming of a mare: “Fue una lucha feroz. Derribada en tierra, sujeta, estaba más hermosa que nunca... Sus pechos subían y bajaban al respirar cada vez más deprisa. Yo la agarré del pelo y la tenía bien sujeta a la tierra. Ella forcejeaba, se escurría... La mordí hasta la sangre, hasta que estuvo rendida y dócil como una yegua joven” (68).

con la manada, llévame a tu lado corriendo como un perro, átame a tu caballo, pero llévame” (02:23:14). Estella’s self-identification with a dog, even begging for physical abuse as long as she can remain with her beloved man, seems to reflect her internalization of the faunistic view of female education. Aware of her transgressive behavior on taking the reins of her sexual desires, Estella debases herself to the category of a faithful pet and asks for forgiveness through Juan’s exertion of physical pain on her.



Image 76. Fernando punishing Estrella with his horse whip to teach her a lesson in Manuel Mur Oti’s *Fedra* (1956)

In Clemente Pamplona’s *La chica del gato* (1964), Guadalupe’s uncle identifies his orphan niece with a cat (“¡Ahora te vas a enterar, tanto tú como tu gato!” [00:11:29]) while beating her up with the same slippers used to train her feline companion for refusing to follow his commands. When reprimanding his wife, Elsa’s husband uses a stick to cane his spouse “como un perro” (00: 34:03) and, later, abandons her on the streets in Rafael Gil’s *El canto del gallo* (1955).¹²⁸

¹²⁸ While exploring domestic violence in Francoist cinema, Fátima Gil Gascón also notes the use of animal metaphors in scenes dealing with female abuse (256-259).

This bestiary rhetoric reverberated in musical compositions that metamorphosed women into all sorts of beasts subject to physical violence for didactic purposes. Lola Flores' "Mi abuelita tenía un pollito" (1947) shows the fatal consequences of female disobedience by identifying the domestication of a young girl with that of a chicken. Unlike the compliant fowl, which performs the domestic chores ("el pollito barría y fregaba") assigned to the female sex, the granddaughter's rejection of her grandmother's commands regarding marriage results in her being hit with the stick used to train the animal: "Mamá agüela, yo quiero casarme/ Y de eso también replicarme/ La vieja enfadada cogió una varita fontana/ '¡Que te doy en la punta de la cresta!'"

Far from pertaining solely to the fictional world, these "pedagogical" zoomorphic images were part and parcel of the grim reality in Franco's Spain. In fact, the regime's propaganda machine sustained gender-based violence in its newspapers. Published in the regional journal *El Regadío* in 1956, the article "¿Debe castigarse a las mujeres?" tackled the issue of domestic abuse. Upon consideration of the similarities between women and beasts, the writer recommended wife beating on instructive grounds:

Una pequeña paliza es, a menudo, la manera más eficaz de corregir a una mujer... La mujer llega a este mundo como cualquier otro animal, y debe aprender la diferencia entre el bien y el mal y es el marido el que tiene el deber de enseñarle...En tal caso, el marido puede ser disculpado y hasta elogiado por pegar a su mujer. (qtd. in Fandiño 116)

This instance in Francoist media is representative of the state's faunistic view on female education that was channeled and perpetuated through its official institutions.¹²⁹ The totalitarian government, indeed, adopted the taming simile in policies regulating its female citizenry. The natality measures on January 24, 1941, outlining severe penalties for abortion were implemented “domando los instintos extraviados y pervertidos, estimulando el deseo de tener hijos” (qtd. in Montejo Gurruchaga 198). The same year, the *Patronato de Protección de la Mujer*, an institution founded to rehabilitate prostitutes, was established to “domar a las [mujeres] más difíciles” (qtd. in Azul 2) and “para amansar su espíritu con disciplina y castigo” so that they could be re-integrated in mainstream society (Navarro 00:45:00).

Of all the agencies under the auspices of Franco's administration it was the women's branch of *La Falange* that most significantly contributed to the entrenchment of the animalistic view of female education. The *Sección Femenina*, the official institution in charge of defining womanhood during the dictatorship, regularly deployed animal symbols in the instruction of women.

Conceived to instill the feminine ideal of domesticity, the *Sección Femenina* highlighted the primitive, instinctual side of the female sex through the bestial iconography. In her inaugural speech outlining the goals of the Falangist organization,

¹²⁹ During Francoism, sexual crimes often reduced female victims to the category of a beast to underscore the inappropriateness of women's sexual agency, particularly outside of wedlock, and to teach them of the dangers of being with males. In 1967, *El consultorio de Elena Francis*, the most popular radio program aimed at females, represented a woman's self-defence in an attempted rape by her boyfriend as the fight between two beasts: “lucharon como dos fieras... [la joven] estuvo en un hilo de caer en ese terrible pecado” (qtd. in Balsebre and Fontova 273). Despite her partner's attack, the female broadcaster places the male agent and female victim on the same animal level. The presenter's recommendation: “cuando estén juntos, siempre en sitios muy concurridos y bien iluminados” is followed by her advice to marry him and put up with his violent temper: “También debe considerar que después del matrimonio, posiblemente seguirá con su temperamentabilidad” (qtd. in Balsebre and Fontova 273).

its leader Pilar Primo de Rivera drew attention to the unruly, animal-like essence of females to justify the provision of mandatory courses on housekeeping and grooming:

In our Schools, we will absolutely insist that a vase is placed well and that unharmonious strikes in conversation are avoided... In other matters of our personal grooming, housekeeping, of our concealment of our animal instincts, we must keep on telling our comrades how they must organise their lives so that their outer appearance is in accordance with the truth and finesse of their Falangist temperament. (qtd. in Richmond, *The Yoke* 85)

The *Sección Femenina* designed textbooks offering guidelines and advice on home décor, health, and beauty to camouflage the faunistic nature of women (Glenn and Ferrán 87; Labanyi, “Resemanticizing Feminine” 411). In Carmen Werner Bolín’s *Pequeñas Reglas* (1941), the chapter devoted to the sanitization and aestheticization of women’s bodies was tellingly entitled “De la higiene o disimulo de la vida animal” [On Hygiene or The Dissimulation of Animal Life]. Its practical, simple instructions served to shame the female’s anatomy by relating it to its primitive, animal state. The manual *Formación Familiar y Social* (1946), analogously, associated women’s urges with animal drives in order to encourage manners for the sake of the public good: “La persona correcta oculta su vida animal (su miedo, su frío, su calor), oculta sus preocupaciones íntimas (su excesiva alegría, su excesivo dolor) en beneficio del bienestar general” (9).

The magazines sponsored by the organization often inculcated their female readership with the cultivation of their physique via the symbolism of the beast within. In *Y* a woman’s beauty routine included brushing her clothes and taming her mane: “entregarme a una presunción tardíamente juvenil, cepillando mis trajes, domando mi

melena, acostumbrada hasta entonces al descuido estudioso” (Pombo, “Un cuento” 34). Its section “Escuela de Educación Física” [School of Physical Education] appraised of the dangers of gaining weight should physical education be neglected by comparing a girl’s carelessness with her sport routine as “un descuido gracioso de animalillo joven:”

Y todas las muchachas, acostumbradas muchas veces a un descuido gracioso de animalillo joven, que pasado muy poco tiempo se convertiría en desgaire antiestético de hembra pregorda, van aprendiendo la belleza suprema del gesto, de la línea cuidada y flexible, el encanto y la ciencia de la actitud... Además de las clases de gimnasia y rítmica, con métodos especialmente adaptados a la mujer, tenemos varias horas al día para natación, juegos infantiles y deportivos y atletismo (Lula, “Carta de un cursillista” 58).

Other descriptions concerning a woman’s looks drew from the domain of animals too. The same newsletter commented on a girl’s mouth as “su boca de animal joven” (Puerto, “Mi mujer” 31) whereas a lady’s expressionless gaze was pejoratively compared to that of an old beast: “La mujer mira al chico con la fijeza inexpresiva de los animales viejísimos” (Sánchez, “Nochebuena” 29).

This obsession with the taming of the beastly feminine did not merely apply to the outward appearance of women and their homes, but, above all, to their innermost feelings and moods, as Carmen Martín Gaité recalls in *Usos amorosos de la posguerra española*: “aquella competencia o incompetencia femenina había que demostrarla no sólo a través de las capacidades para gobernar el desorden exterior sino también el interior, o sea la doma de los propios humores y descontentos” (87). In fact, the *Sección Femenina* bolstered the binomial female-fauna to foster females’ self-regulation. If domestic duties were posited as a mechanism to “domar la pereza femenina” (qtd. in

Alonso 89), the promotion of physical education was similarly aimed at “the taming of the soul” (Morcillo, *The Seduction* 190).

The periodicals of the *Sección Femenina* projected female moods onto different animal species. Negative emotions such as anger, envy, nervousness, jealousy, and rage were usually conveyed through metaphoric wild beasts to underscore the inappropriateness of such feelings. Dragons, for example, symbolized women’s disappointment at a man’s choice of bride in *Y*: “Incontables señoras que habían alimentado secretamente la esperanza de convertirse en suegras de Alfredo, rugieron con la furia de cien dragones” (Puerto, “Maribel” 59). The metaphorical tigress defined a reader’s selfish, temperamental and unstable disposition according to the graphological analysis of the “Sección de Grafología” [Section of Graphology]: “LA TIGRESA... Pequeños egoísmos. Temperamento nervioso y voluntad estable y desigual” (4). Another personality test referred to a sybarite, idle female prone to emotional crisis as “una indomable fierecilla” (9).¹³⁰

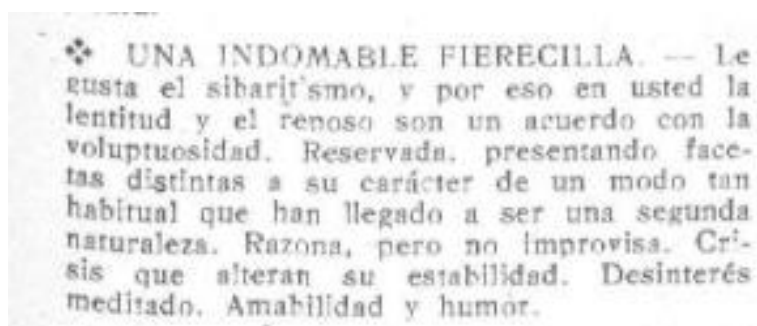


Image 77. Extract from the Graphological Section defining a woman as an indomitable wild beast in *Revista Y* (1 October 1941)

¹³⁰ The Graphology Section frequently used animal names to describe women’s personalities. In *Revista Y*, number 61, “bicho raro” applied to a vehement and vain female (5).

The taming trope also served to mock the stereotype of the loud woman in *Y*. Illustrated with several vignettes caricaturing boisterous females, “Campana contra el ruido” (de Lara 29-30), aimed at “lograr que la voz de las españolas sea un deleite para el oído” (29), provided a series of tips to “domar a una chillona” (29). Despite its humorous tone, the article transmitted the prototype of the demure, quiet female by encouraging people to control the tone of voice and verbosity of women.

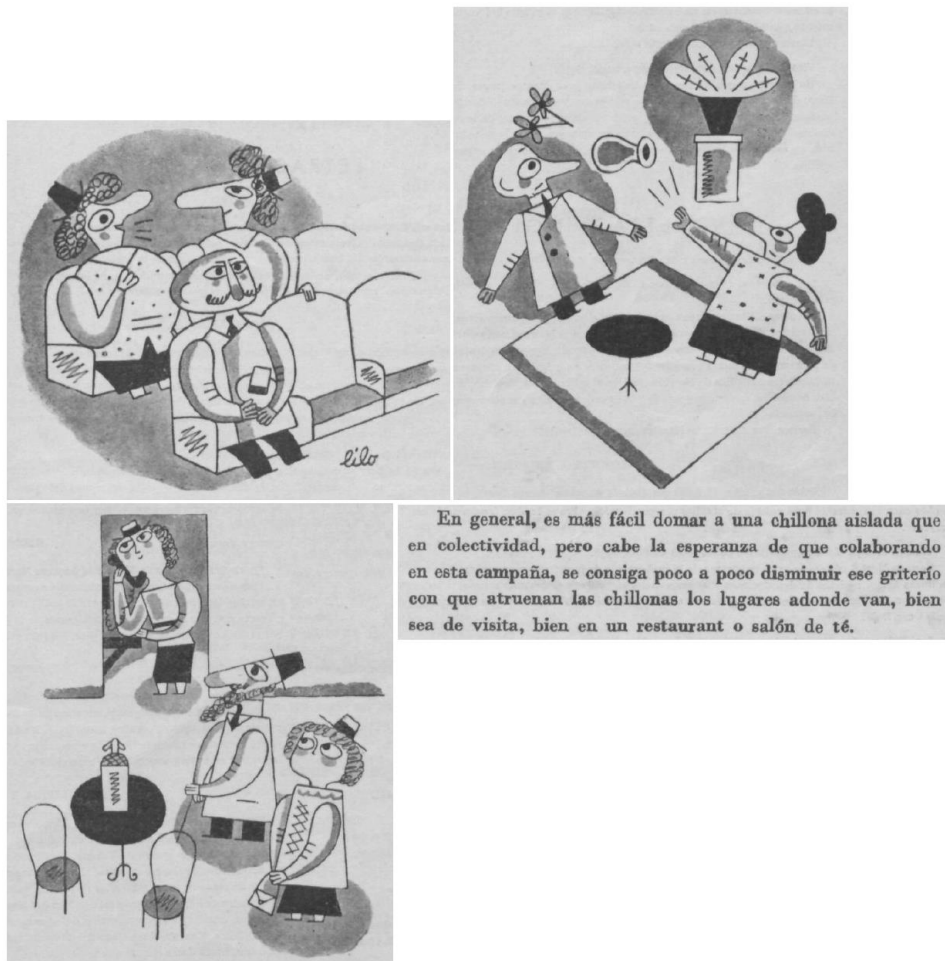


Image 78. The taming of the loud woman in “Campana contra el ruido” (*Y*, June 1, 1939)

This identification between female instruction and the taming of the beast was commonplace in these magazines that often printed texts pertaining to the education of women. Ángeles Villarta’s “La llamaban ‘rara’” (28-29), published in *Y*, a short story about the transformation of “una chica rara” (i.e., a non-conventional girl) into an

exemplary wife thanks to the aid of her husband-to-be was rife with animal symbols.¹³¹ Defined as “bestia” and “bruta,” the young intellectual girl with a thirst for knowledge gradually gives up her studies as she falls in love with a man that would end up wedding her. Their courtship, interpreted in terms of the taming of a wild beast (“ella había lanzado aquella especie de alarido” [29], “—¿Qué tal te va con Rara?... ¿La domaste ya?” [29], “era preciso domar su comprensión” [29]) culminates with the protagonist’s domestication through marriage and the removal of her sobriquet “rara:” “No es una niña rara. Es una chiquilla preciosa” (29).

The parallelism between female learning and animal taming was so ingrained in the ideology of the Sección Femenina that its publication *Y* deliberately reversed it to caricature British suffragist Sylvia Pankhurst as a male domesticating her caged feminized husband in the ironic article “Civilización” on June 1, 1939: “El hombre que está a la derecha de la fotografía, con los ojos cerrados, es Sylvia Pankhurst, famosa agitadora revolucionaria. A la extrema izquierda aparece su esposa, con las medallas que ha ganado domando en el interior de una jaula a su marido y otros tigres.” (Miquelarena, “Civilización” 35).

As a matter of fact, the epithet “indomable” [untameable] was granted to feminists proposing educational reforms like, for example, Federica Montseny or Margarita Nelken (Álvarez-Romero 3; Cruz-Cámara 7-9). The former Spanish intellectual and Minister of Health, indeed, had published, years earlier, her semi-autobiographical work *La indomable* (1928) [The Untameable Woman], which

¹³¹ The expression “chica rara” (literally “the odd girl”) derided those intellectually inclined girls that deviated from the conventional domestic and maternal feminine figure. In her essay “La chica rara” Martín Gaité analyzes the literary figure of “la chica rara” to explore the artistic protest against the Francoist canon of femininity. This female character starring coming-of-age novels defied social norms and pushed well-defined gender boundaries by pursuing activities outside the confines of the home.

advocated female education by subverting the folkloric motif of “the taming of the beast” (Cruz-Cámara, “Matando” 14-21).

The insistence on establishing a link between woman and beast ultimately served to underscore the limited intellectual capacity of the female sex and to clip their wings regarding any aspiration outside the limits of the home, such as post-secondary studies. Despite having the right to access university after completing the mandatory domestic training and corresponding official exam established by the *Servicio Social* [Social Service], an educated woman was a *rara avis* and the *Sección Femenina* presented women’s intellectual pursuits as unnatural to their essence.¹³² On August 1939, *Y* provided Schopenhauer’s misogynist quotation: “La mujer es un animal de cabellos largos e ideas cortas” (34). In *Acción* the article “Nosotras, las estudiantes” harshly criticized females’ academic ambitions by reducing them to the category of irrational beasts, because, regardless of their achievements, men would always be superior to them: “En igualdad de condiciones, siempre es el hombre superior a la mujer, [incluso con la educación universitaria] la mujer continuase siendo el clásico animal de cabellos largos e ideas cortas” (qtd. in Rodríguez Tejada 98). With the same intention of diminishing female intelligence, the journal *Medina* used the previous symbol in a poem that described women as irrational and primitive beasts: “esta esperanza mía irracional, de hembra, / mi fe animal y pura y primitiva” (qtd. in Jurado 539).

Through the identification with tiny animals, women were encouraged to minimize their presence in intellectual circles and the work force. One of the leaders of

¹³² The *Sección Femenina* created the *Servicio Social*. This domesticity-oriented program lasting six months was mandatory for any woman aged 17-35 who wanted to obtain a passport, a driver’s license or to have access to university education. In addition to volunteering in hospitals, schools, orphanages and nursing homes, females were instructed in National-Catholic principles that instilled the canon of domestic womanhood.

the *Sección Femenina*, Carmen Werner, urged women to conceal their importance by becoming charming little ants: “disimulemos o disminuyamos nuestra presencia física en el trabajo. Seamos hormiguitas, hormiguitas graciosas y amables” (53-54). The organization’s propaganda also opted for the bee, another small and laborious insect, to cajole females into the sweetness of house chores: “women are expected to be like busy bees... to carry out constant and essential labour... quietly and out of sight” (qtd. in Keene 247).

In its zeal to instill its domestic curriculum, the *Sección Femenina* disseminated the trope of the woman-as-household animal via its publications. *El Ventanal* summed up the female condition as the state of the domestic reproductive animal: “la condición de la mujer es la de animales reproductores y conservadores del fuego del hogar” (qtd. in Paz Torres 60). In this line, the poetry published in the journal *Medina* employed symbols of reptiles with carapace to visually evoke a woman’s attachment to the home, such as the snail in María Beneyto’s “Caracol”: “En mi parece vibrar/todo el ajeno penar. / ¿Seré como el caracol/que recoge bajo el sol/el gran sollozo del mar?” (qtd. in Jurado 540). This newsletter, whose literature circumscribed the feminine sphere to the kitchen with avian imagery (“Después me iré otra vez a mi cocina, / a mis pájaros mudos” [qtd. in Jurado 542]), fostered subservience comparing wives with docile little creatures at the service of their husbands: “yo llevaré el sol hasta tu lecho/ como a un animalillo siervo tuyo” (qtd. in Jurado 540).

Entrenched upon the folkloric motif of the taming of the beast, the faunistic view on female instruction permeated all facets of a woman’s life during Francoism. Comics, novels, plays, movies, songs, radio and television programs, governmental policies, and, above all, the *Sección Femenina*, with its multiple propagandistic artefacts and educational programs, contributed to the domestication of the female sex. The myriad of

zoomorphic images in didactic matters, apart from justifying gender violence and abuse, gave the false impression of women's intellectual inferiority, and served to curtail females' academic endeavors.

Chapter 5. Hitting the Bull's Eye: Deconstructing Gender and Nation through Animal Metaphors

5.1. Letting the Cat out of the Bag: Revealing a Woman's True Nature in *La Gata* (1956)

La Gata era una moza en un cortijo de Almonte, al borde de las marismas, más cielo y tierra que grano. Allí manda el toro. Es el rey. Y se lo merece. Hay casta, trapío y pitones con puntas como alfileres. Allí, arisca o cariñosa, como una verdadera gata, bravía indómita, como los toros que ella conocía uno a uno, como los toros que ella quería y cuidaba, vivía María, la hija del mayoral. (La Gata 00:21:18-00:21:20)

Surrounded by a male group of bull breeders in front of a fireplace at night, Juan recounts his passionate love story with an Andalusian girl to whom he refers as “la Gata” [the She-cat]. Branding her identity with the zoomorphic sobriquet, the farmworker ascribes a feline personality to his former flame. To enhance this portrayal, the Casanova focuses on the mighty bull to recreate his partner's temperament. The beginning of his narrative is, thus, articulated around the pair cat/bull, gender-laden metaphors that will generate the sexual tension of a dramatic movie based on a woman's inner conflict to come to terms with her true feminine nature within a male-dominated world. In this way, as suggested by the title's play-on-words, this section will analyze how faunistic imagery reveals *la Gata's* secret sensuous persona that defies the dictates of Franco's Spain.

Tandem-made by Margarita Alexandre and Rafael Torrecilla before leaving for Cuba in search of greater freedom of expression abroad during the Francoist dictatorship, *La Gata* (1956) was the first Spanish Cinemascope-stereophonic

production (Bentley 127).¹³³ The novelty of the movie resided not only in its cinematographic technique or in its female director (Aio, *Margarita Alexandre*; García López 29; Martínez Tejedor 336), but, more importantly, in its representation of gender roles revising the clichés of dictatorial Spain (Martin-Márquez 250-264; Santamaría 1-2), which inevitably required censor's cuts (Bentley 127).¹³⁴ The rural drama, set in the *cortijo* of a bullfighting state, follows María (Aurora Batista), nicknamed "la Gata." The daughter of Don Manuel gets immersed in a love triangle with José (José Guardiola), a young family friend, and Juan (José Mistral), the new horse trainer. Rebelling against paternal authority and transgressing the social, moral as well as physical boundaries delimited for her sex, María rejects the ideal suitor José and, instead, engages in amorous dealings with Juan, whose solid reputation as a womanizer concerns María's father and the men working under his command. In fact, despite their constant warnings, María will have an affair with Juan, eventually losing her life to save his.

Alexandre and Torrecilla's movie *La Gata* owes its title to the faunistic moniker of its female protagonist. The synergy between the feline species and the central character is evident in the movie poster, where a black cat replaces half of María's face

¹³³ Married to aristocrat Juan José Melgar y Rojas, XII Count of Villa Monte, Alexandre and her husband decided to go their separate ways although divorce was not allowed in Franco's Spain. During the shooting of a movie, she met cinema critic Torrecilla, who became her personal and professional partner till the end of her life. Together they founded Nervión Films, the production company that made *La Gata*. Due to the lack of freedom during the dictatorship, Margarita and Rafael abandoned Spain and settled in Cuba after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959. There they partook in the creation of the Instituto Cubano de Arte e Industria Cinematográficas (Jiménez-Leal 1-6).

¹³⁴ There was a national and an international version of *La Gata* due to its erotic innuendoes. In fact, the sexual charge resulted in a pornographic French adaptation. Alexandre confessed her shock after learning that the movie had been projected in a Parisian porn theater with some added nude scenes: "Era increíble. Habían intercalado en la secuencia del pajar con Aurora Bautista y Jorge Mistral imágenes ajenas con un muslo por acá, un seno por allá, un revolcón... Estuvimos pensando si poner un pleito, pero al final la cosa se quedó como estaba" (Galán 2).

(image 79).¹³⁵ This visual dyad seemingly reflects the Francoist binary virgin/whore that the onomastic pair María/la Gata conveys.¹³⁶ If the former clearly alludes to the Virgin Mary, the latter refers to a woman who actively engages in sexual relations and even in prostitution (Faulkner 659; Martin-Márquez 253).¹³⁷



Image 79. Movie poster of *La gata*

¹³⁵ Apart from symbolizing bad luck, the black cat also oozes sexuality since it represents the dark-haired María. The protagonist's physique corresponds with the stereotype of the Andalusian woman traditionally associated with an unrestrained and destructive passion (Ruiz and Sánchez 51-52). In fact, the first time appearing on screen María is wearing a light pink night gown that accentuates her feminine sensuality and voluptuous physique. As she stretches in bed after presumably having had sex with Juan the night before, the satisfied young woman looks at herself in the mirror.

¹³⁶ In terms of name symbolism, Carmen Santamaría Salinas states that “el acto de nombrar construye en sí una dualidad identitaria marcada por la rebeldía inherente al propio filme... ‘La gata’ y ‘María’ se convierten en nombres que construyen diferentes modelos de mujer que parecen ser encarnados por el mismo cuerpo” (2).

¹³⁷ In Franco's time to speak of the cat was tantamount to speaking of women's sexuality. Artistic productions often deployed feline imagery to add to the eroticism of female characters, which often resulted in censor's cuts. The playful lyrics of “Tango del morrongo” related a woman's genitalia with her furry animal companion (Lorenzo 3). Popularized by Carmen Sevilla in the film *La guerrillera de Villa* (1967), the scene of the song was immediately banned, for it included the sensual performance of the Spanish actress caressing a fizzy cat for their mutual satisfaction. Likewise, in Víctor Erice's *El espíritu de la colmena* (1973), adolescent Isabel tries to suffocate a cat and, when the animal bleeds, she uses its blood to paint her lips. As for foreign cinema, the US movie *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1958) starring Elizabeth Taylor underwent some changes due to censorship. Its translation in Spain as “La gata sobre el tejado de zinc,” as opposed to the Latin American version “Una gata sobre el tejado caliente,” attests to the erotic relationship between women and cats.

To complement—and bolster—this patronymic symbolism, the two males that woo her are called José and Juan, with the corresponding heavenly and devilish associations attached to them. Evocative of the biblical figure of Joseph, the first name relates to the Virgin’s husband, aligning in this way with the religious significance of María and signaling, then, his adequacy for the overseer’s daughter. On the contrary, Juan seems to connect with the literary Don Juan, Tirso de Molina’s well-known Andalusian philanderer condemned to the Inferno after seducing women with the false promise of marriage. Significantly, the antagonistic love rivals argue about how to address their coveted girl.¹³⁸ While José corrects Juan’s use of the zoomorphic nickname, the latter insists on calling her “la Gata” echoing popular opinion (“todos la llaman así”) and implying her loss of chastity by stripping her of her virginal baptism name: “Además, María es el nombre de la Virgen.”

Juan: ...tú siempre has vivido entre las faldas de la Gata.

Joselillo [raising his voice and body in an aggressive attitude]: ¡No la llames así!

Juan: ¿Es que no te gusta?

Joselillo: Tiene su nombre.

Juan: Sí, ya lo sé, pero todos la llaman así. Y a mí me gusta. Además, María es el nombre de la Virgen. (00:34:10-00:36:02)

At the outset, then, the onomastic symbolism discloses the Manichean construction of the feminine gender as either a religious chaste woman or as a sexual predator. Yet,

¹³⁸ Later, when José steals a rifle to threaten Juan, the two will argue again about the form to address María-(01:01:01-01:01:24). In addition, Joselillo will confront a group of male workers that sing a song about *la Gata*. After hearing the lyrics referring to María (“Que la gata la llamaban y era una mujer hermosa pero queriendo arañaba” [01:03:00]), the young suitor throws the vocalist’s guitar onto the floor.

when the movie progresses, the viewer will soon realize that these names are mere social labels whereby the true nature of a woman is trapped in a religious fabrication.¹³⁹

The only child of a cattle farm owner, María's life is conditioned by her sex. Her domestic universe revolves around her father, the head of the family and of the family-run bull business. His masculine dominance is visible in several scenes where he presides the home reading under an imposing bull's head whereas his daughter is cooking in the kitchen in the background (image 80). As the camera zooms in on both characters, the viewer soon notices the different roles and spaces assigned to the sexes. The "intellectual" *mayoral* in charge of his bull industry deals with the world outside whereas María is limited to her household chores.¹⁴⁰



Image 80. María does house chores in the kitchen while her father reads under a bull's head

Not content with her pre-established location in a patriarchal society, María constantly pushes boundaries. Climbing onto roofs and walls, which helps define her feline profile, the young woman achieves a privileged position from which she gains

¹³⁹ Susan Martín Márquez states that "the animal metaphor paradoxically serves to draw out the human quality of María's sexuality" (253).

¹⁴⁰ Regarding spatial symbolism, it is worth commenting on the numerous scenes where María is behind gated windows to talk to Juan in front of other people in the *cortijo*. This sharply contrasts with the open fields at night that witness their incipient romance.

access to the masculine world. As she pans down to a group of men in the bullring or the courtyard below (images 81 and 82), *la Gata* takes pleasure in the male anatomy.



Image 81. María looks down on the male workers who brand cattle with hot iron



Image 82. María looks down on the male workers who are bullfighting

María's gaze becomes explicitly sexual as she salaciously eyeballs Juan's torso from the top of the house. Rejoicing in the matador's sweaty body, María's voyeuristic interest in her lover-to-be and concomitant objectification represents a reversal of traditional gender roles (Iniesta 5; Martín Márquez 258). In fact, as explored in Laura Mulvey's classical article "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," pleasure in looking has been traditionally split between active/male and passive/female. In *La Gata*, however, there is a subversion of this representational schema, for it is the female protagonist that seeks and obtains pleasure when scrutinizing Juan's body in different places (e.g.: *cortijo*, house, bullring, barn, countryside) and from different angles (e.g.:

hidden, face-to-face, from walls and trees). This visual effect is, thus, part of the transgressive nature of a film that questions traditional gender constructs and norms.¹⁴¹



Image 83. María's sexual gaze at a half-naked Juan

Having caught sight of her prey, the protagonist's cat-like nature will resurface through a series of hunting metaphors where she explicitly takes on the role of (sexual) predator. When Juan notices that María is alone setting up mice traps in the barn, the ill-reputed seducer acknowledges her control over males through a faunistic remark: “¿Qué haces aquí? No queda ni un ratón. Es que eres mucha gata” (00:21:17). The projection of the pair cat/rodent onto María/man is followed by several shots with a buzzing erotic charge. As the couple gets closer and closer, Juan's compliment “A veces eres suave y zalamera como las gatas” (00:33:13-00:33:16) incites her to get carried away by her true feelings. Yet, despite the protagonist's playful disposition, María finally rejects him. After this anticlimactic moment, she is seen running to the courtyard, where a male

¹⁴¹ According to Barbara Zecchi, “el cuerpo del hombre es objeto de la mirada de la directora, que se concentra a menudo en sus detalles: cuando se lava el torso desnudo, los primeros planos, en este caso filmados con una cámara objetiva, se fijan detenidamente en la piel del hombre, poniendo en evidencia, con claroscuros, el entramado de sus venas y sus músculos” (225).

worker that overheard her previous conversation naughtily greets her with the cat's sound: "¡Eh, tú, gata! ¡Miau!" (00:33:14-00:33:16).



Image 84. María plays the role of sexual predator while setting up mouse traps in front of Juan

Feline imagery will further reinforce the protagonist's subversive personality. After learning that Juan's ex-girlfriend, Carmen, is one of the seasonal workers in the *cortijo*, María adopts a vigilant attitude towards them. Taking advantage of her upper social status, she marks her territory by keeping them apart and even ordering her rival to leave the ranch. Given Carmen's refusal to quit her job, the jealous-crazed María engages in a verbal and physical confrontation reminiscent of a catfight (image 85).



Image 85. A catfight over Juan's affection between María and Carmen

María: ¿No tenéis faena en tu cortijo?

Carmen: No esperabais verme... ¿eh? Pues, ya ves, la necesidad. Aquí me pagan mejor.

María: ¿Solo buscas eso?

Carmen: Yo cumplo. Lo demás corre de mi cuenta.

María: Coge tus cosas y vete.

Carmen: ¿Es que tú eres la manijera?

María: Yo soy quien soy (raising her voice), con que ya sabes.

Carmen: Bueno es lo bueno. Más mujer tenías que ser para echarme de aquí.

María: No me haga decir lo que me vengo callando, aunque todos lo saben y se lo callan.

Carmen: ¿Qué tienes tú que decir de mí?

María: Lo que corre... Te va a escocer un poco.

Carmen: Lo que pasa es que tú no me tragas por lo que yo me sé. Pero lo saben tós.

María: A mí nadie me ha faltao como a ti. Deberías irte a Huerva donde no te viéramos más.

Carmen: Cállate o ... (she leaps on María)

[A few men try to stop the fight between the two women]

María: Déjame, que la mato.

Carmen: Canalla. Suéltame. Me las pagarás.

María: Déjame.

Carmen: Sinvergüenza. To porque le he quitao al novio me quiere pegar.

Porque soy más mujer que ella me quiere echar del cortijo. [00:30:52-00:32:15]

The women's violent behavior, in turn, contrasts with José and Juan's inaction. Despite their constant disputes over María's affection, where Juan uses his bullfighting experience to measure their manhood ("A tu edad había hecho yo más de una capea y tenía ya un siete aquí" [01:12:03]), they never come to blows. In fact, if Joselillo's masculinity is questioned throughout the movie via his associations with the peaceful doves that he keeps in the secluded attic where he also conceals his literary aspirations, the aspiring matador's hegemonic virility is equally at stake due to *la Gata's* power.¹⁴²

Juan admits María's control in their relationship: "eres la primera que me manda" (01:05:27). Her domination not only has to do with class privilege as the daughter of the overseer, but also due to her sexual agency that shifts the traditional dynamics whereby man pursues woman (Martin-Márquez 254).¹⁴³ In fact, it is María who sets eyes on Juan since his arrival—and not the other way round. Right after witnessing the branding of her father's cattle with hot iron, María hastens to the ring where Juan is training horses. Despite the apparent dominant masculine position—he is yelling and using a whip—the camera adopts the female's perspective. Progressively enclosing Juan in a fenced space, María perches on one of the branches to see the equestrian exhibition. From her characteristic feline position, the young female awaits.

¹⁴² Martin-Márquez offers a homoerotic reading of José. In addition to his association with doves—*palomo* in Spanish is a euphemism for a homosexual male—Joselillo is afraid of bullfighting. While Juan exhibits his equestrian expertise, he is featured in the bullring crouched behind a railing and later tragically dies charged by a bull (259-260).

¹⁴³ Throughout the movie María actively pursues Juan. During the day, she tries to see him in the fields, the courtyard, the house, or the barn. At night, she leaves the ranch on horseback and rows herself across the marshes to meet her lover.

When Juan notices her, María stares at him, smiles and sensually eats a grape in front of her lover-to-be, in anticipation of her sexual hunt.¹⁴⁴



Image 86. María approaches Juan while he tames horses

The next scene brings to the forefront María's self-awareness of her (animal) magnetism and power over males. Once she has entered the house, *la Gata* goes straight to the mirror. Practising sensual poses, the protagonist takes delight in her own image. This sequence, which certainly calls for a psychoanalytic reading using Jacques Lacan's theory of the mirror stage, marks a decisive turning point in María's development and her essential libidinal relationship with her body image. Instead of conforming to the canon of Catholic womanhood that only conceives sex for procreation within wedlock (Morcillo, *True Catholic Womanhood*), María comes to terms with her own femininity, giving free rein to her sexuality.

¹⁴⁴ María's subversion of gender roles is highlighted by her family's negative opinion of Juan. Just before these shots, Don Manuel and María's grandmother had commented on this man of ill-repute: "—Grandmother: ¿Qué tal es el hombre que te ha traído el amo? —Don Manuel: Sabe el oficio, pero no me gustan sus formas. Es brabucón. —Grandmother: No piensan lo mismo las mujeres. Trae mala fama." (00:11:08-00:11:18).



Image 87. María looks at herself in the mirror after her encounter with Juan

The mirror scene will be repeated throughout the movie when the protagonist has sex with Juan. After a presumably torrid night, María wakes up in a sweat and rushes to do house chores in the kitchen, where her grandmother sits quietly sewing in a corner. Instead of ironing, *la Gata* gets a beautiful, patterned piece of cloth and, in front of a mirror, wraps it around her body to accentuate her voluptuous physique.



Image 88. María poses sensually in front of the mirror

Even though Don Manuel's arrival puts an end to María's pleasurable moment, the protagonist goes against her father's commands in her determination to fulfil her sexual desires. The overseer's disapproval of the infamous womanizer ("Tampoco Juan es de buena calaña" [00:32:44]), which equally applies to the females who are with him ("No es hombre para una mujer decente" [00:34:05]), serves as a caution to his daughter. Nonetheless, disregarding patriarchal authority, María continues trespassing

boundaries. To reunite with her lover, *la Gata* leaves the house at night—with the nocturnal connotations associated with her feline portrayal.



Image 89. María's passionate encounter with Juan at night

Furthermore, although the *mayoral* suspects that Juan is ruining his bulls by secretly fighting them at night, María decides to aid his lover by informing him that her father has ordered his men to shoot the intruder that is ruining the cattle. In this way, María dishonors the name of her family and the bulls' breed.

As María's romance with Juan intensifies, so does her zoomorphic characterization highlighting her sensuous personality. In addition to her feline portrait, numerous scenes visually and linguistically relate her to the bull. When *la Gata* feeds the bovines, for example, the camera aligns them both.



Image 90. María is visually and symbolically juxtaposed with the bulls

The dominant chromatism of María's outfits also pertains to tauromachy, for they are yellow, pink, and red, the colors of the matador's cape.¹⁴⁵ Moreover, the malicious rumors about María's relationship with Juan run parallel to the negative criticism of her family's bulls in the local newspapers.¹⁴⁶ Besides, during their passionate encounters, Juan equals his lover with the potent animal: "La verdad es que te veo y no sé, siento que la carne me quema como cuando tengo cerca un toro" (00:40:04).



Image 91. The chromatism of María's dresses symbolically reminisces the colors of a matador's cape (yellow, pink, red)

As a matter of fact, in the narrative prologue prior to Juan's retelling of his love story, the seducer compares María with the regal creature. When hearing the bulls moaning, the herder remarks: "buscan vaca" (00:05:03), to which Juan replies: "la Gata me busca" (00:06:06). The correlation bull/*la Gata* and cow/Juan attributes the male and female animal species to the feminine and masculine characters, respectively. It also

¹⁴⁵ According to Martín Márquez, the protagonist's yellow and red dresses, when whipped by the wind, evoke a *capote* (262).

¹⁴⁶ The movie makes it clear that the reputation of the family's cattle goes hand in hand with María's. At the beginning, Don Manuel's breed of bulls makes the local headlines for their bravery. Yet, once María gets involved with Juan, who surreptitiously fights the bovines at night, the newspapers harshly criticize the beasts. For example, after an evident passionate night of sex, María is seen satisfied in bed while her father reads the negative reviews of his cattle in front of some male workers in the *cortijo*.

foresees the questioning of the fixed gender constructs in a movie articulated around the Francoist bestiary rhetoric.

The film finishes in bloodshed. The orphaned young man Joselillo is fatally gored by one of the bulls, ironically called “Amoroso” [the loving one], when trying to impress María in the Sevillian bullring of *La Maestranza*. After the unfortunate event and worried about Juan’s safety, since he continues fighting the family’s bulls, María, as usual, leaves the family house at night to warn him. On hearing noises, the overseer’s men accidentally mistake the red-shawled young woman for their intended target, shooting her to death.

The protagonist’s tragic end, then, seems to corroborate Francoist ideology, which sanctions women that transgress the boundaries—whether social, physical, or moral—strictly demarcated for their sex. In this sense, the movie apparently reproduces the traditional 19th-century gendered discourse that allowed females to temporarily defy the established order to finally punish them (e.g.: *La Regenta*, *Madame Bovary*, *Anna Karenina*). Yet, when considering the censorious context of the dictatorship and its prevailing bestiary rhetoric, the denouement of the movie is certainly ambiguous. To avoid censorship, María’s death was unavoidable, and it served to camouflage the film’s subversive message articulated around animal symbols. Notwithstanding that the protagonist dies in the arms of her lover, who repeatedly utters her name “María,” the denouement of *La Gata* centers on the now living dead Juan. The former Casanova concludes his story affirming that María still chases him every night when there is a full moon: “Juan, para su desgracia, aún vive, pero María no murió. Vuelve a los prados todas las noches de luna llena como esta” (01:28:00).

With these words, reinforcing the bond between the protagonist and the nocturnal cat, the solitary horse rider continues roaming through the Andalusian fields

as the bulls bellow in the background.¹⁴⁷ These two animals that forge the protagonist's identity symbolically begin and end the film. Furthermore, despite being narrated by Juan, the death of María/*la Gata* has not silenced a woman's voice to claim her sexuality regardless of her (nick)name. After all, Juan's final acknowledgment of the protagonist's baptism name serves to deconstruct the official bestiary rhetoric that brands females that do not conform to the virginal archetype of domestic womanhood.

¹⁴⁷ The soundtrack poignantly increases Juan's suffering in the last scene. The lyrics of the song "Sufriendo yo" superbly express the feelings of a muted Juan, who is only able to speak to tell his love story with *la Gata*.

4.2. Keeping the Wolves at Bay. The Marginalized She-Wolf in the Song “La Loba” (1960)

“La Loba, ¡vaya una fama!
no callarse, ¡qué más da!”

“La Loba, ese es mi nombre
no te calles, ¡qué más da!”

(*Copla* “La Loba”)

Written by Rafael de León and Andrés Moles in 1959 and adapted later by Manuel López Quiroga for Marifé de Triana’s show “Carrusel de España” (1960), the musical composition “La Loba” (i.e., The She-wolf) was immediately classified by Francoist censors as “no radiable,” that is to say, not to be broadcasted (Parra 3; Román 5).¹⁴⁸ Despite its original ban from national radio, the song reached high levels of popularity (Bejarano 2; Román 4). It was performed at theaters, cafés, cabarets as well as *verbenas* (i.e., open-air dances) and sung in countless Spanish homes. There, cooped up like the hens that the Francoist bestiary forged in its zeal to promote domesticity, women were presented with an antagonistic model of femininity (Gallego 6). The predatory She-wolf that starred and named the hugely successful *copla* could eventually wolf down the very same metaphorical avian prey used by the Regime to pigeonhole, belittle and, above all, silence women.¹⁴⁹ Notwithstanding Franco’s policies targeted at

¹⁴⁸ The show “Carrusel de España” not only enjoyed tremendous popularity in Franco’s Spain as soon as it was premiered, but it also served to establish Marifé de Triana as a successful *copla* singer.

¹⁴⁹ *La copla*, also known as *copla andaluza*, *canción española*, *tonadilla* or *canción folclórica* is a type of Spanish popular song derived from the poetic form of the same name. Although this musical genre has a long tradition, it flourished in the 1930s and 1940s thanks, mainly, to the works by León, Moles and López Quiroga (Martínez and Fouce 90). Stephanie Sieburth defines them as “an amalgam of popular, mass and high-cultural genres that united new forms with traditional ones. *Coplas* were simultaneously poetry, narrative, music, theatre, and sometimes dance. They drew on traditional folklore but also on the highbrow poetry and classical music of the twentieth century, which themselves had appropriated popular forms. Thus, the post-war *copla* was an

keeping females at bay, as stated in the title of this chapter, the wild feminine fauna that populated Spanish music like in the abovementioned song unquestionably posed a threat to the hypermasculine state. In fact, far from not making a peep, the female protagonist of “La Loba” howls her suffering at the society that unjustly marginalizes her and, in so doing, voices the vulnerable situation of many other women whose destinies are inevitably at the mercy of men.



Image 92. Marifé de Triana’s *Cancionero* based on her musical show “Carrusel de España” (1960)¹⁵⁰

exceptionally rich middlebrow compendium of traditions dating back many centuries in several genres” (46).

¹⁵⁰ Image taken from <http://www.tesorosdelayer.com/esp/subseccion.php?id=152>.



Image 93. Cartel del programa “Carrusel de España” (Leaflet announcing the musical show “Carrusel de España” on January 21, 1960)¹⁵¹



Image 94. News on the popularity of the show “Carrusel de España” in the Spanish newspaper ABC (April 17th, 1960, p. 125)

Despite being a *zambra*, that is, a style of Flamenco music part of the gypsy ritual of dancing that marks courtship and marriage (“Letras del flamenco” 1), in “La

¹⁵¹ Image taken from <https://www.todocoleccion.net/cine-folletos-mano/cartel-programa-folletto-mano-cine-royal-malaga-ano-1960-carrusel-espana-marife-triana~x40040956>.

Loba” there is neither the wooing nor wedding expected for a woman within Francoist society.¹⁵² Instead, the listener is moved by the story of an abandoned single mother who drowns her sorrows at night and witnesses the re-enactment of her own life as her son, following in his father’s footsteps, also decides to end the relationship with his pregnant girlfriend. Behaving like a wounded animal, this maternal figure cannot be hushed, but, rather, emits a piercing cry that echoes the grief of a woman betrayed by her lover and father to her child. Morally fallen into disgrace and socially condemned to ostracism, *la Loba* does not hide, but, honoring her zoomorphic nickname, fiercely attacks the society that preys upon women while letting their male predators get away with their misdemeanors.

The maternal-filial tension at the core of “La Loba” is reminiscent of melodrama. This dramatic subgenre, characterized by its excessive theatricality and histrionic sentimentalism, has traditionally been linked to the feminine essence (Herlinghaus 27) and to the so-called *canción española* (Castaño Vera 15-23; J. Rodríguez 12-56). Despite having been disregarded as a form of “low culture” in academic circles (Brito and Capito 192-193; Brooks xiii-54), its subversive potential should not be underestimated. Indeed, from its inception, melodramas have been a vehicle for the expression of the popular classes and, as such, were conceived with a clear subversive purpose, allowing for the transgression of strict social limits, as studied in Michael Lowy and Robert Sayre’s *Rebelión y melodrama*. The revolutionary content of melodramatic stories like the one transmitted in “La Loba” must certainly account for

¹⁵²Although for methodological purposes in this project the umbrella term “copla” will be used to refer to the song “La Loba,” strictly speaking, this musical composition is classified as a *zambra*, a type of flamenco music stemming from Arabic culture and intimately associated with festivities, particularly weddings. For more on its etymology, origin, and history, see Gértrudix and Gértrudix (185).

its instant ban by Francoist authorities. After all, as social discourses, “el melodrama coloca a los marginados en los relatos oficiales, en la centralidad discursiva, haciéndolos parte de la historia como forjadores de narraciones patrias” (Brito and Capito 192)

“La Loba” lyrics

(Rafael de León and Andrés Moles, 1959)

Siempre escondiendo mi pena por la cortina del vino,
pero no ambiciono más fortuna que mi corazón desierto
y la plata de la luna entre las sombras del puerto.
Prisionera de ilusión rezo a la cruz de mi alcoba.
La vida me hizo traición y por esta sinrazón
me conocen por... la Loba.

La risa en los labios, la noche en el pelo
soñando vestirse de blanco azahar
y un día sus rosas cayeron al suelo
con cuatro palabras: no te quiero ya.
A nadie dijo su historia
y el barco de su alegría
se hundió sin pena ni gloria
en el mar de la “bebía.”

La Loba, ¡vaya una fama!
no callarse, ¡qué más da!
pero a ver quién me lo llama
con la cara “levantá.”
La Loba, “pal” que hace alarde
de jugar con un querer
y “pa” llamarle cobarde
al que engaña a una mujer.
¡Ay, paredes de mi alcoba
cárcel de condenación,
que aunque quiero ser la Loba
no me deja el corazón,
no me deja el corazón!

Su pelo es de plata y sigue bebiendo.
Un día una moza la viene a buscar
y ve que su hijo la aparta diciendo:
“perdóname madre, no la quiero ya.”
Palabras de desengaño,
palabras de desengaño,
que vuelven a su memoria
al cabo de tantos años

La Loba, ese es mi nombre
no te calles, ¡qué más da!
pero a ver si tú eres hombre
“pa podérmelo” quitar.
La Loba, pal que hace alarde
de jugar con un querer
y “pa” llamarte cobarde
si no cumples tu deber.
Por la cruz que hay en mi alcoba
que no digan sin razón
que eres hijo de la Loba
y no tienes corazón,
y no tienes, y no tienes corazón.

“Documentos históricos de valor incalculable,” in Manuel Vázquez

Montalbán’s words (*Cancionero* 12), no other social discourse captured the sentiment

of life in the Spanish post-war period as *coplas* did (T. Moix 11-13; Quiñones 2-7;

Sieburth 3-4). Although already in vogue during the Second Republic and the Civil War

(Carreño 4; Postigo 155-170), their blatant appropriation by Francoist authorities—which singer and songwriter Carlos Cano aptly compared to a dog peeing on a tree in order to mark its territory (qtd. in Peñasco 15-16)—formed part of the state’s propagandistic operation to divulge its morals through the most popular artistic manifestation at that time (Peláez 3; Prieto, “La copla” 291; Ramos 236-237). Apart from dominating the airwaves for decades, *coplas* were part and parcel of popular festivities such as *fiestas patronales* and *romerías* (i.e., regional and religious celebrations), which were celebrated throughout Spain (Prieto, “La copla” 314). In addition, *coplas* were sold as cheap *cancioneros* (i.e., booklets with song lyrics) in newsstands and small shops. Lay people, thus, knew the lyrics of these songs by heart and often sang them at home (Ramos 237).¹⁵³

Inexpensive and accessible to most of the population, *coplas* became, then, an indispensable indoctrinating tool in the hands of the government and as such “were central to a demographic project to control how women used their bodies” (Prieto, “La copla” 287). The corporeality of the so-called “canción española” was patent in its seductive lyrics, which vividly recreated the female anatomy (Ruiz Barranchina; Ortiz Hedesa 271-311; Sopena 11-59). The figurative dismemberment of a woman into her eyes, gazes, tears, lips, mouths, moles, sighs, and smiles, as seen in suggestive titles such as “Ojos verdes,” “Suspiros de España” or “El beso,” provided a patina of

¹⁵³ As regards the extreme popularity of *la copla* and its use as an indoctrination tool, Lucía Prieto Borrego states: “La copla visitaba los lugares más remotos durante las fiestas patronales y romerías a través de compañías de variedades que la divulgaban en espacios comunes o bien en espacios más restringidos donde actuaban de forma puntual... Los espectáculos eran temporales, pero tras la fiesta, las letras cantadas habían quedado adheridas a gargantas que las soltaban en las faenas campesinas, en el hogar o en el lavadero. Una oralidad que, acompañada de melodiosos compases, en lugar de golpear con el martillo del adoctrinamiento o de dogmatizar mediante el sermón, introducía subliminal pero eficazmente el modelo de mujer que la población española debía rehuir” (“La copla” 314-315).

eroticism to otherwise prudish songs whose focus was on the biological dimension of the female sex (J. Vallejo 1-4). Underpinning most of these musical compositions, indeed, was a clear gender bias that reflected the biopolitics of a patriarchal regime which subordinated females to their reproductive functions within the sacred institution of marriage (Cayuela 62).

Even though the protagonists of the world of *la copla* almost never wedded, for they were mainly adulteress, prostitutes, concubines, libertines, and single mothers, as detailed in María Carreño's study "La copla y sus protagonistas," matrimony was always pending in their unfulfilled existences (7). At the end of the day, their sad and bitter stories were the consequence of their dissolute actions, since their (sexual) independence led them to abandon the safety of their homes and walk through perilous places. The streets, taverns, ports, brothels, or lover's houses frequented by such women would eventually cause their downfall, as highlighted in Antonio Perriñez's "El espacio y la copla."

It is significant that the official term to refer to such anti-exemplary women was "mujeres caídas" (i.e., fallen women), implying their moral, social, and even physical degradation for taking the reins of their sexuality (Núñez Díaz-Balart 290-291). Besides, in 1941 the Francoist state created an organization called "la Obra de Redención de Mujeres Caídas" for the internment and indoctrination of such women (Egido and Montes 285). This institution, among many others, had a punitive and disciplinary nature. Its aim was "el internamiento, corrección y formación de jóvenes caídas o próximas a caer en el vicio" (Prieto, "La prostitución" 679). It ultimately persecuted and secluded women of ill-repute to prevent them from setting a negative example for the rest of their congeners. Therefore, on the margins of society, the

heroines of *copla* songs mirrored a series of (sexually) transgressive behaviors easily identifiable and socially punishable during the dictatorship (Prieto, “La copla” 291).

The boom of *la copla* with its execrable female protagonists took place in the very particular context of the first years of the dictatorship, when the *Generalísimo* was trying to secure his dictatorial mandate through a vast moralizing project whose main target was the subjugation of women. The songs that narrated the despondent stories of “mujeres de mala vida o de aquellas que transitaban en los márgenes de la sociedad” (García Moreno 3), then, had a clear didactic and moralizing purpose since they “advertían de los peligros de llevar otros modos de vida fuera de la moralidad del nacional catolicismo” (García Moreno 3). As a matter of fact, the passionate love stories that conformed the universe of the *copla* masked social policies oriented towards the control of the female citizenry, particularly as regards their sexuality (Murillo 92; Prieto Borrego, “La copla” 290; Rosal 23-66).¹⁵⁴

In *La copla sabe de leyes* (2018) Rosa Peñasco has delved into the legal backdrop to some popular songs where women are aware of the legal void they face when engaging in illicit sexual relationships.¹⁵⁵ The unknown prostitute in Juanita

¹⁵⁴ According to Prieto Borrego: “No parece casualidad que tanto la fijación como la divulgación de un contra modelo arquetípico de mujer a través de la copla, coincide con la implantación, en los primeros años cuarenta, del vasto proyecto de moralización impuesto a los españoles. Un proyecto que pasaba por el control del comportamiento femenino, sobre todo en lo que a su sexualidad se refiere (“La copla” 290).

¹⁵⁵ The “fallen women” populating the universe of the *copla* often morphed into beasts to take revenge on those men responsible for their miserable state. The prostitute in Ignacio Román and Francisco García-Tejero’s “Consolación, la de Utrera” turns into a panther to stab the pimp that lured her into prostitution as a young girl: “Al café de La Bizcocha, llegó de Utrera, / un campero de rumbo gitano, / y la niña morena y graciosa, como una pantera, / saltó faca en mano. / Mírame, bien a la cara, / para que sepas quien te dio, / piensa un poco y repara, / que te mato por ladrón.” To avenge her defamed honor, the marginalized protagonist of Quintero and León’s “Candelaria, la del Puerto” turns into a beast, kills her resentful suitor and warns other men of the fatal consequences of playing with her: “que lo mismo que las fieras, / contra todos se defendiera, / Candelaria, la del Puerto... / quien se acerque a mis umbrales / no dirá que

Reina's "Yo soy esa" (1952) probably represents the zenith of marginalization, for not only has the protagonist of the song been stripped of her identity, as revealed in the lack of a proper name ("soy la que no tiene nombre"), but she also lacks a physical place ("que va de esquina en esquina") in a society that, according to the dominant bestiary rhetoric, treats her like a stray dog ("Y ahora soy lo mismo que un perro sin amo"):

Yo era luz del alba, espuma del río,
candelita de oro puesta en un arta.
Yo era muchas cosas que ya s'han perdido
en los arenales de mi voluntad.

Yo soy...esa...
esa oscura clavellina
que va de esquina en esquina
vorviendo atrás la cabeza.

Y ahora soy lo mismo que un perro sin amo,
que ventea er sitio donde va a morí.
Si arguien me pregunta que cómo me llamo,
me encojo de hombros y contesto así:

Lo mismo me llaman Carmen,
que Lolilla que Pilá;
con lo que quieran llamarme
me tengo que conforma.
Soy la que no tiene nombre,
la que a nadie le interesa,

The status of female lovers is likewise echoed in countless songs. Concha Piquer's "Romance de la Otra" (1944) clearly illustrates the precarious situation of a mistress, entitled to neither a place nor even food—let alone some legal rights:

Yo soy la otra, la otra,
y a nada tengo derecho,
porque no tengo un anillo
con una fecha por dentro.
No tengo ley que me ampare
ni puerta donde llamar,
y me alimento a escondías
con tus besos y tu pan.

In the same fashion, single women who took pride in their sexuality by engaging in carnal relationships with different men were chastened to perpetual solitude and agony. The disdain with which the protagonist of Lola Flores' "La Zarzamora" (1946) treats her lovers ("Decía la gente que si era de hielo, /que si de los hombres se andaba

no le advierto, /que, entre lirios y rosales, ha sembrado también puñales, / Candelaria, la del Puerto."

burlando,” or “Ella, que siempre reía y presumía de que partía los corazones”) cannot go unpunished in a patriarchal society, and, it goes without saying, it is a man who will avenge her insolence and daring by taking her “por la calle del dolor.” Alone and heartbroken, *la Zarzamora* (i.e., the Blackberry), whose eyes resemble such fruit because of her inconsolable crying, has been condemned to a life of loneliness. In this way, quoting Marina García Moreno, “[e]n forma de moraleja, la Zarzamora recibía en su canción un escarmiento por haber querido gozar de su sexualidad” (5).

Nonetheless, it was not prostitutes, mistresses or promiscuous women who became the main headache for the Francoist body politic, but single mothers who occupied an interstitial position in society. In fact, as Lucía Prieto Borrego affirms, “el trasunto del peor de los demonios del proyecto moral del franquismo [era] el de la madre soltera” (“La copla” 305). Legally and socially marginalized by their reprehensible sexual behaviour outside of wedlock, their offspring, however, was central to the state’s natalist policies (Nash, “Pronatalism” 160-175). Therefore, “los hijos del pecado”—as they were officially known following the religious terminology adopted by the government to reprobate female’s sexual agency (Armengou and Belis 8-36)—were indispensable for the project of the fascist state (Prieto Borrego, “La copla” 305-306). Indeed, at a time when abortion was illegal and prosecuted and many women were forced to terminate their pregnancies in clandestine places or overseas in order to avoid social stigma and exclusion (Ignaciuk 231-250; Ortiz Heras 2-4; Sethna and Davis 4-11), the existence of these illegitimate children, to some extent, “reconciliaba a la mujer con la sociedad” (Prieto Borrego, “La copla” 305).¹⁵⁶ Yet, this

¹⁵⁶ The issue of illegitimate children was such a controversial one that even the Penal Code (1944, article 416), which harshly punished any type of measure against procreation, contemplated the reduction of sentences for women who alleged the

was only the case for those mothers who ended up marrying the father (or another male who could be a father-figure) to their child (“[l]a mujer caída’ era en este caso ‘reparada’ en una boda posterior y por tanto aceptada como esposa y como madre” [Prieto Borrego, “La copla” 304]), while the rest, whose children were never acknowledged, faced constant humiliation and discrimination.

As shown in Miguel Paredes’ heart-breaking documentary *La madre sola* (2010), single mothers under the dictatorship became the victims of a system that promoted natality exclusively within the traditional family model. Legally forsaken, since the Penal Code of 1944 exempted the male parent from any type of obligation with his illegitimate child (Prieto Borrego, “La copla” 305), these women had serious difficulties in finding their place in a family-oriented society. On many occasions, single mothers were interned with their sons and daughters in shelters for “mujeres caídas,” where, as a sort of penance, they were forced to work for free for the same community that constantly rejected them. Most of the times, however, deemed morally unfit and, consequently, unable to perform their maternal duties, they were separated from their children.

During a period when eugenics was popular across European fascist states, the Francoist regime pushed for children to be taken away from unsuitable mothers, which, basically meant “las madres rojas” (i.e., Republican mothers) (Borraz 2-9; V. Navarro 1-7).¹⁵⁷ Their political ideology, believed to be a hereditary pathology transmitted in the so-called “gen rojo” [the red gene], threatened to contaminate the Hispanic race. To preserve “la pureza de la raza,” thus, children had to be separated from their Republican

potential dishonor caused to their families when voluntarily interrupting their pregnancies (Ortiz Heras 3).

¹⁵⁷ The umbrella term “rojas” encompassed all those women who, regardless of their political ideology (i.e., Marxism, Communism, etc.), supported the Republic.

parents: “Tal inferioridad de raza podía corregirse, sin embargo, a la temprana edad de la infancia. De ahí que se requiriese que a las madres *rojas* se les quitaran los infantes para evitar su contaminación y degeneración” (V. Navarro 3).

Leading eugenics psychiatrist Vallejo-Nájera often portrayed Republican mothers as sex-crazed maniacs closer to animals than human beings in order to justify the abduction of their offspring: “la mujer degenerada roja... dotada de instintos bestiales y sanguinarios” or “con ferocidad inusitada...con veneno... llevan acabo crímenes” (qtd. in Hernández Holgado, *Mujeres encarceladas* 127-129). Within his organicist view of the state, the Francoist physician promulgated the necessary separation of dissident parents from their tots for the sake of the body politic: “la segregación de estos sujetos desde la infancia podría liberar a la sociedad de una plaga tan temible” (*La locura* 29). His goal was the elimination of the “gen rojo” through the extermination of political dissidents. The abduction of the children of “mujeres rojas” not only guaranteed the termination of their lineage (and probably ideology) but also the erasure of their memory in historical terms, as the doctor exposed in his pseudo-medical tratises: “la extirpación de los transgresores y degenerados de la sociedad sana... la renuncia de sus descendientes a su apellido, para borrar incluso la propia memoria de su existencia” (qtd. in Richards 65).¹⁵⁸ This faunistic discourse permeated state-run institutions where detained “red mothers” were frequently likened with wild beasts.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ The doctor’s obsession with the children of Republican mothers generated a series of studies that focused on the dangers of home ambience in the young individual. In *Niños y jóvenes anormales* (1941) Vallejo-Nájera proposed the internment of these children in state institutions that promoted “una exaltación de las cualidades biopsíquicas raciales y eliminación de los factores ambientales que, en el curso de las generaciones, conducen a la degeneración del biotipo ” (qtd. in Baelo 265).

¹⁵⁹ In addition to testimonies of Republican inmates regarding their brutal treatment in Francoist penitentiaries (Macsutovici 293), the most common punishment applied to “las rojas,” that is, the shaving of their heads to deprive them of their femininity, was related to animals. As lawyer Eduardo Ranz explains, “[e]l verbo fue ‘rapar’ y no

In the Andalusian archives of the *Patronato de Protección a la Mujer*, one can see their categorization as sanguinary she-wolves: “esos niños han de ser rescatados de las garras de mujeres salvajes ... de lobas cruentas” (qtd. in García del Cid 16), just like in the files of “La Casa Cuna” in Extremadura: “madres sucias... lobas viciosas” (80). Meanwhile the “lost children of Francoism” (Rodríguez Arias) were kidnapped at birth, given up for adoption, sent to orphanages or *internados católicos* (i.e., Catholic boarding schools), in which abuses have also been reported, as journalists Montse Armengou and Ricard Belis have widely documented in their hair-raising documentary *Los niños perdidos del franquismo* (2002) and their historical account *Los internados del miedo* (2016).

Pushed aside by society, *la canción española* provided a space for single mothers.¹⁶⁰ Their marginalized existences were at the center of several songs, which, somehow, mirrored their wretched conditions. León and Quintero’s “Y sin embargo te quiero” (1948) expresses the desperation of a mother whose son is deprived even of a last name by his biological father: “Sabes que tienes un hijo/ y ni el apellido le vienes a dar. A similar lament is heard in other *coplas* such as “Almudena” (León, 1941), “La Mariana” (León, 1943), “Amparo” (Quintero, León and Quiroga, 1951), “La niña de la puerta oscura” (Quintero, León and Quiroga, 1953) or “La Salvaora” (León and Quintero, 1944). The first one, which probably hints at the maternity prison Nuestra Señora de La Almudena, a nun-run institution which assumed guardianship of single pregnant teenagers, tells of a female whose child wonders about his father’s absence: “—Y papá, ¿nunca viene? — /me pregunta quien tiene/ derecho a preguntarme.” As for

‘cortar,’ sólo el uso de la expresión ‘raparles el pelo,’ más propia de los animales, definía el propósito deshumanizador del franquismo” (67).

¹⁶⁰ See the on-line forum devoted to single mothers in *copla* songs: <http://sellamacopla1.forumotion.com/t3087-la-madre-en-la-copla-espanola>.

the second, the presence of the protagonist in an orphanage (“Cuando vio a la Mariana/ que al hospicio fue a rondar”) searching for her son (“Ella no busca a su amante/ que a su hijo va a buscar”) also reflects their isolated lives in state-founded institutions.

The third *copla* recreates the sadness and loneliness with which a single mother rocks the cradle of her illegitimate baby: “Amparo triste mece en la cuna/ a un chavalillo que es un lucero. /-Es su madre una cualquiera/dicen por la vecindad, el morir más le valiera, / ¡qué penita de chaval!” The same image is evoked in “La Niña de la puerta oscura:” “¡Qué pena, Manuel Centeno, / que no quieras de venir/ a ve este clavel moreno/ que me ha nacido de ti! / Bordando pañales/ pa su criatura, / lloraba a canales/ la de Puerta Oscura.” The last song blames a mother for the suffering of her illegitimate seventeen-year-old son: “Qué razón tenía/ la pena traidora/ que el niño sufriera/ por la Salvaora. / Diecisiete años / tiene mi criatura/ y yo no me extraño/ de tanta locura.”

“La Loba” is embedded within this repertoire on single motherhood, and the lyrics by León and Moles share certain similarities with other coetaneous *coplas*. After all, the harsh reality of a woman who engages in pre-marital sex in the hope of marriage but is abandoned when pregnant and excluded from society with her illegitimate child must have certainly rung a bell within the Francoist musical panorama that trumpeted the dangers of female sexuality outside the traditional Catholic family. Yet, despite the exemplary social punishment inflicted upon women who (freely) made use of their bodies—as seen in the previous songs—there was something in this *copla* that set it apart. As a matter of fact, no sooner was it released in 1960 than “La Loba” was subject to censorship (“Los inicios de Marifé”), and it would require some time for this musical composition to take off under the scrutinizing gaze of the dictatorial state. Despite these difficult beginnings, however, this *copla* became a hit, making a name for itself in the music industry (Román 7).



Image 95. The cover sheet of Marifé de Triana’s album which includes the song “La Loba” (1959)¹⁶¹

Furthermore, the dramatic performance of “La Loba” by Marifé de Triana, who, significantly adopted this animal name as part of her artistic persona (C. Fernández 2; Parra 2; Pérez Robles 7), contributed, without any doubt, to the mass appeal of this *copla*. The Andalusian singer would declare in an interview: “No tengo nada que ver con esa fiera en la que me convierto en escena” (Arco 1), highlighting her drastic transformation on stage while acting out the controversial *copla*. This fictional beast was magnificently recreated through her dramatization, which included histrionic gestures and, above all, vocal cadences that simulated the excruciating painful howl of the she-wolf (Boyero 27). So heart-breaking was her performance of “La Loba” that Marifé would end up in tears, moving her entire audience, as recalled by Manuel Román in *Retratos de la nueva copla*: “Se desgarraba cantando la melodramática historia escrita por Molina, Moles y Rafael de León, musicada por Quiroga. Marifé llora siempre que

¹⁶¹ Image taken from <https://www.todocoleccion.net/discos-vinilo/marife-triana-disco-ep~x8788599>.

interpreta esa canción y el público, a su vez, queda conmovido” (7). Certainly, if the performative component of songs can never be overlooked, for the music, voice, gestures, attire and even the stage, among other elements, contribute to the meanings and repercussions of lyrics (Ramos 237), in the case of Marifé de Triana this theatrical dimension takes on special relevance, since her incomparable performances earned her the pseudonym of “la actriz de la copla” (Bejarano 1, “Obituario de Marifé de Triana” 1; Sotorrió 1).¹⁶²

To get into the character of the abandoned single mother, the native of Almería prepared conscientiously (Román 5-6). Before singing the song, Marifé admitted to undergoing a complete makeover that would eventually help her *dramatis persona* become more believable. Her transformation into the wounded animalized mother entailed the dying of her hair white—for she had to look like a mature unmarried woman who has a son. The application of heavy make up also gave the impression of deep eye bags, mirroring her nocturnal wandering and inconsolable crying. By contrast, the absence of lipstick enhanced her phantasmagorical figure, which, in turn, was reinforced by her dark clothes.

Once on stage, with a very dim light that recreated the physical and metaphorical darkness of the protagonist’s existence, Marifé would spend a few minutes in silence only to break it by reciting the first stanza with “a voz quebrada” (literally “a broken voice,” that is, a dark tone in her voice), suited for a woman with imposing presence and with the life experience alluded to in the lyrics of “La Loba:”

Siempre escondiendo mi pena por la cortina del vino,
pero no ambiciono más fortuna que mi corazón desierto
y la plata de la luna entre las sombras del puerto.

¹⁶² The incursion of the Andalusian artist in the cinema industry did not run parallel to her singing career. She starred in two low-quality movies, *Canto para ti* (1959) and *Bajo el cielo andaluz* (1960), which did not receive the support of critics or audience.

Prisionera de ilusión rezo a la cruz de mi alcoba.
La vida me hizo traición y por esta sinrazón
me conocen por... la Loba.

In tune with this aura of obscurantism that preceded Marifé's actual singing, the first lines of "La Loba" are built upon shadowy images which will irremediably lead to the introduction of its zoomorphic protagonist: a marginalized single mother nicknamed the She-wolf. Her concealment of feelings ("escondiendo mi pena") through alcoholism is metaphorically expressed through "a curtain of wine" ("la cortina del vino"). Her lack of affection is accentuated by the absence of a beloved man, evoked by her deserted heart ("mi corazón desierto"). On top of that, her solitude is condensed in the places she frequents. Whereas the port is solely illuminated by the moonlight ("la plata de la luna entre las sombras del puerto"), her plain bedroom ("mi alcoba") is dominated by a crucifix, which symbolically stands for the social cross that she has to bear as a consequence of her extramarital sex. These confined and dark spaces produce a claustrophobic dusky ambience partly reminiscent of an animal's cave.

Following this sequence of solitary and bleak pictures, Marifé—impersonating the animalized single mother of the song—would make a deliberate pause, leaving the sentence "me conocen por..." incomplete. In this way, the audience is kept on tenterhooks, eager to learn the name imposed upon the lonely heart-broken woman who dulls her pain drinking in the wee hours. Despite asserting that her social label is unjustified ("por esta sinrazón"), the protagonist of the *copla* finally admits in a whisper that she is known as "la Loba." The animal metaphor has, therefore, marked her reputation, since the lyrics do not mention her first name at all.

Onomastics, indeed, plays a pivotal role in the construction of identity (Allport 117; Aksholakova 467; Cherchi 77-80). People's names are the most important anchorage point for their individual and social existence, disclosing valuable

information regarding their ancestry, ethnicity, nationality, religion and, above all, gender. As shown in Jane Pilcher's provocative essay "Names and Doing Gender" (2017), the practice of naming is intimately connected with social classificatory systems that, apart from pigeonholing people into the gender binary, often leads to discrimination and bias. As a corollary, the shift in one's name—whether voluntarily or, like in this song, forcibly—will invariably result in changing attitudes and perceptions towards the (gender) identification of the subject (VanderSchans 2-12). This is particularly relevant when it comes to the zoomorphic categorization of an individual, because, according to Allan Nilsen, animal names, when applied to people, can tell more about human perceptions of gender than people's names due to their strong associations with sexuality as well as their symbolic meanings ("Of Ladybugs" 257-269).

In this regard, the "social baptism" of "la Loba" bestows upon this single mother the threatening role of a predator waiting for her male prey. This reverses the traditional active and passive roles assigned to males and females in the metaphorical hunting scenario that frequently frames heterosexual interactions (Robinson 272-277). Such a gender-laden epithet, apart from revealing prejudices surrounding woman's sexuality, constitutes a form of "oppressive speech act that alters power via discourse role assignment" (Popa-Wyatt and Wyatt 2879). Transcending its pure semantic content (Cepollaro 53-60; Hedger 74-80), thus, the social message conveyed through this dehumanizing and sexualizing faunistic slur resides in its pragmatic force within the dominant bestiary rhetoric that constructed canonical womanhood through domestic animals, notably the hen.¹⁶³ Hence, the equation woman-she-wolf represented the

¹⁶³ *Coplas* will significantly deploy avian imagery to subvert the official idyllic view of the home-as-nest by transforming it into a cage that imprisons bird-like women

antithesis of this type of femininity, conveying notions of threat, danger and, above all, a type of (sexual) freedom that needed to be sanctioned and controlled. Through her own murmur, the leading character of the song discloses her zoomorphic identity, which immediately brings to the mind of the contemporary listener a whole network of negative associations defined in the official bestiary rhetoric; for it is no coincidence that this faunistic symbol was commonplace to pejoratively refer to Republican mothers (Cuevas 6-7; Peinado 339-352).

Uttered in a reedy voice that eventually will end in silence, the protagonist's introductory soliloquy evokes the atmosphere of seclusion and, above all, fear surrounding her marginalized existence. Apart from the currency of "loba" in colloquial speech, testimonies of illegitimate children brought up in women's shelters and penitentiaries recall the pervasiveness of this animal moniker in reference to their mothers, who, as soon as they stepped into such institutions, were branded as the predatory canid creature.¹⁶⁴ "A partir de la detención, mi madre se convierte en una

(Sieburth 172-174). In "Cárcel de oro" (1959) Concha Piquer dramatizes the asphyxiating conditions of a young female trapped at home by her domineering lover: "yo no lo puedo aguantar. Como un pájaro me muero, me muero: necesito libertad... en la cárcel de tus brazos tú me vuelvas a encerrar" (Sieburth 172-174). Marifé de Triana's "Alondra del cielo" (1962) poignantly recreates how the singing career of a woman nicknamed Lark comes to a halt with the promise of a domestic life through marriage: "El mozo le dijo: /Te enteras Alondra, /jaulita de oro, para ti he comprado" (Burgos 1). Quintero, León and Quiroga's "¡Aguántate, niña!" (1944?) also metamorphoses a young woman into a quiet caged bird: "Aunque esperes en la reja/ de las diez hasta las dos." Patiently awaiting her partner, the girlfriend is advised to "cerrar el pico" [close her beak] if she even considers marriage: "más humilde que una malva, / yo mi pico no he de abrir.../Niña feliz, que sueña con un marío, / nunca le debe al novio decir ni pío."

¹⁶⁴ Within the Hispanic folkloric tradition, the figure of the she-wolf was one of the most popular beasts terrifying children in popular lullabies (Lorente 225) like the well-known "La Loba": "La loba, la loba/ le compró al lobito/ un calzón de seda/ y un gorro bonito. /La loba, la loba/ salió de paseo/ con su traje lindo/ y su hijito feo. / La loba, la loba/ vendrá por aquí/ si esta niña mía/ no quiere dormir." In fact, the reputation of the she-wolf was so frightful that it even competed with the totemic bull in post-war lullabies that scared infants, as Pedro César Cerillo Torremocha points out: "En el sur,

loba” (qtd. in Cañada 5); “Nuestras madres eran conocidas como lobas” (qtd. in Cuevas 6); “en el patio de la casa de acogida se encontraban las lobas con sus hijos” (qtd. in Alonso 19). The term, indeed, acquired such derogatory maternal connotations that it was used as virtually synonymous with “mala madre” [i.e., bad mother], “una madre prostituta” [i.e., a prostitute mother] or simply “una puta” [i.e., a whore]: “malas madres, lobas viciosas con hijos del pecado” (qtd. in Alonso 13) or “lobas siniestras de los arrabales... prostitutas” (qtd. in Sawicki 120).¹⁶⁵ It was also employed as an insult in the expression “hijo de loba” [i.e., son of a bitch] to describe an individual’s despicable and ruthless behavior, as inferred from several documents extracted from Francoist prisons: “Asesino, usted es hijo de una loba” (qtd. in Cuevas 6); “me daba de ostias el hijo de la loba” (qtd. in Cuevas 5-6); or “nos levantábamos y a las ocho nos daban un café que no era café ni nada. Estuvimos un montón de meses que sólo nos daban nabos... El director de [la cárcel de] Alicante se conoce que lo parió una loba” (qtd. in Martínez and Ors 89).

Having introduced herself as the She-wolf in a hushed tone, the voice of the female protagonist fades away only to give rise to the loud vocal sound of a narrator that inaugurates the singing part. This external voice resoundingly recalls the past events that led to the transformation of a cheerful young dark-haired female (“La risa en los labios, la noche en el pelo”) who dreamed of getting married into a sorrowful broken-hearted woman immersed in alcoholism. Such a drastic change is marked by the

el toro y la reina mora son las amenazas [en las nanas de los niños], en Castilla, la loba y la gitana” (33).

¹⁶⁵ At the end of the dictatorship, filmic productions also portrayed wicked mothers as she-wolves. For example, the widow matriarchs in *Ana y los lobos* (Carlos Saura, 1973) and *Furtivos* (José Luis Borau, 1975), and Paulina in Jaime de Armiñán’s *Un casto varón español* (1973).

juxtaposition of bright and dark images that allegorically represent the two opposite poles of an existence truncated by a man's broken promise. At first smitten and naïve, due to her unconditional love, blind faith in her relationship and youth, the sheer bliss of the protagonist augurs marriage. Her wish to become a conventional bride is conveyed through her dream of wearing a wedding gown, whose white color, symbol of purity, is emphasized through the pleonasm "blanco azahar" (literally white orange blossom). The use of this flowery metaphor related to the traditional nuptial color transmits the notion of virginity presupposed in single women and ties with another floral trope ("sus rosas"), whose fall on the floor ("cayeron al suelo") visually recreates the social and moral fall of the leading character. The flower par excellence associated with romance, roses, stereotypically red, signify both passion and loss of chastity (López Castro 313-342). This metaphorical deflowering in a society that chastises female sexuality, particularly outside marriage, will eventually unchain a series of tragic events.

The protagonist's unplanned pregnancy leads to the imminent termination of the relationship by her partner, who, unwilling to assume responsibility for his actions, puts an end to their love story with the mere utterance of four words: "no te quiero ya." The length and significance of their romantic liaison, expressed through the term "story" ("a nadie dijo su historia"), are drastically reduced and minimized with the small cipher "four" ("con cuatro palabras"). This disparity in terms of discourse practices reveals the power imbalance as regards gender during the dictatorship. In fact, at a time when women literally did not have a say, the secrecy surrounding the identity of her son's father sharply contrasts with the hearsay around the protagonist's public persona and the forging of her reputation as the She-wolf. It is, after all, her inarticulateness, that is, her inability to express her suffering and name the perpetrator that leads to her self-degradation and drunkenness, captured via the nautical allegory that equates her life

with a ship sinking in a sea of alcohol (“y el barco de su alegría/ se hundió sin pena ni gloria/ en el mar de la bebía”).

Even though the protagonist’s downgrade, plastically represented through a combination of images where a catastrophic shipwreck is accompanied by a sudden descent in the melody and pitch tone, seems to anticipate her social death, the third stanza opens with the voice of the single mother. Energetically proclaiming her fame as the She-wolf (“La Loba, ¡vaya una fama!”), this zoomorphic female refuses to remain quiet (“no callarse”) regardless of the consequences (“¡qué más da!”) and delivers a discourse laden with speech verbs (“callarse,” “llama,” “alarde,” “llamarle”), indicative of her emerging fierce oratory and regained strength. Deliberately using the third person on speaking of the man that triggered her animalistic moniker (“quien me lo llama,” “pal que hace,” “pa llamarle,” “al que engaña”), “la Loba” makes her personal claim a universal one, for, instead of focusing only on her own grief, she voices the social injustice that affects many other females (“a una mujer”) whose male partners are not true to their words (“engaña”). In doing so, she becomes a spokesperson for women’s rights, showing support towards other single (presumably Republican) mothers like her, and, ultimately, creating an alliance.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁶ Interestingly, during Francoism the term “loba” was commonly applied to advocates of women’s rights. Such are the cases, for example, of communist politician Dolores Ibárruri (San Martín 13), Spain’s first female minister Federica Montseny (Álvarez Romero 2) or Spanish educator, lawyer, and co-founder of the *Association of Spanish University Women* Matilde Huici Navaz (San Martín 13), all of whom were constantly caricaturized as she-wolves due to their outspoken criticism of the patriarchal regime. Even their political meetings supporting female equality and education were presented as “una manada de lobas” (i.e., a pack of she-wolves) (Álvarez Romero 2-3). Moreover, although less prominent, other dissidents were similarly portrayed. For example, Republican militiawoman María Muñoz Caballero (Gutiérrez López 110) and CNT (National Confederation of Labor) propagandist member María Rosillo Teruel (Peinado 350) were socially stigmatized as “lobas” due to their fierce behavior both in the battlefield and political arena.

In the articulation of her message, the protagonist speaks loud and clear, acoustically signalled by her strong voice as well as the rising tone and music of this part of the melody. Acknowledging her faunistic moniker, the well-known She-wolf dares those anonymous critical voices to face and address her with the animal name: “pero a ver quien me lo llama/ con la cara levantá.” This defiant attitude has nothing to do with the initial collapse of a young female downtrodden by a society that protects the man that did not face the consequences of his own actions and turns the back on the betrayed woman. On the contrary, far from her former demoted presence, the star of this *copla* stands up for herself and points at the male who brags about playing with women like her (“La loba, pal que hace alarde/ de jugar con un querer”). Immediately thereafter, without hesitation, the She-wolf calls him “cobarde” (i.e., coward) for lying (“y pa llamarle cobarde/ al que engaña a una mujer”).

Having called a spade a spade, the protagonist’s clamorous voice denouncing and even insulting the man that deceived her drowns in a sea of tears motivated by asphyxiating images that flood her mind with her former flame. Sniffing, “la Loba” suffocates amid memories of confinement. The four walls of her bedroom, which metonymically represent the place of her sexual encounters, have been transformed into the prison where she has been condemned by society: “Ay, paredes de mi alcoba/ cárcel de condenación.” Her frustrated attempt to redefine the semantics of the term “loba” by becoming a brave, outspoken single mother (“que aunque quiero ser la Loba”) and codify a counter-discourse that can answer back to the Francoist society that silences females translates into her lack of words, expressed by the repetition of the sentence: “no me deja el corazón, / no me deja el corazón.”

Once again, retold by the narrator, the fourth section of the *copla* offers a retrospective view of the protagonist’s life. Describing her aging process (“su pelo de

plata”), the She-wolf’s worst nightmare becomes reality on reviving the cruel words that unjustly silenced her. Witnessing the shocking scene in which her own son physically (“la aparta”) and verbally (“no la quiero ya”) rejects his pregnant girlfriend with the same speech made before by his father (“no te quiero ya”), the protagonist recalls her traumatic experience:¹⁶⁷ “Palabras de desengaño, / palabras de desengaño/ que vuelven a su memoria/ al cabo de tantos años.” Such devastating words serve to underscore the power of discourse to defame a woman.

Trapped in a vicious circle drawn by the men in her life, then, the unmarried mother of the song is fenced in with the official bestiary rhetoric that has branded her as a wild beast. As a matter of fact, not only has this woman been signalled as “the She-wolf” due to her sexual mores, but her son also appears to adhere to the official semantics of the animal name due to his despicable behavior, since, as mentioned before, the faunistic expression “hijo de la loba” was equally applied to cruel and mean people.

Unwilling to become an accomplice to the history dictated and written by the men in her life and, in a broader sense, in Franco’s Spain, the She-wolf refuses to fulfill the aphorism “silence gives consent.” On the contrary, she firmly decides to speak at the end of the song, with the pragmatic implications derived from having the final word, usually reserved for the person with authority and/or the right to conclude an argument (Drew 2-29; Levinson and Torreira 19). The final stanza culminates with a contestation of power based on the very same discourse of power articulated around the prevailing

¹⁶⁷ Sieburth studies the interrelationship between memory, trauma and *coplas*. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach that combines musicology, history and clinical psychotherapy, her book *Survival Songs: Conchita Piquer’s ‘Coplas’ and Franco’s Regime of Terror* views *coplas* as “coping mechanisms” that help deal with traumatic experiences during the Civil War and the Francoist dictatorship.

bestiary rhetoric. Reclaiming the zoomorphic epithet as part of her identity, the female protagonist admits without reservation that her name is “La Loba:” “La Loba, ese es mi nombre.” As opposed to her previous interventions, where the animal name was presented as a socially imposed label (“me conocen por,” “¡vaya una fama!”), this time the single mother takes pride in her faunistic moniker; erasing, on the one hand, the negative evaluation encoded via the zoomorphic slur and, on the other hand, re-defining the semantics of a term intended to demean and silence women. In fact, the re-appropriation of an offensive word by the target group not only constitutes an expression of solidarity and even pride, but it is also one of the most effective mechanisms to counteract abusive discourse practices that alter social reality in the interest of a privileged group (Galinski *et al.* 2020-2029; Popa-Wyatt and Wyatt 2879-2904). The recognition of the zoomorphic nickname, therefore, shifts the well-defined gender notions conveyed through animal terms by changing, or at least ameliorating, the negative import attached to it.

To conclude her plea, the newly self-proclaimed She-wolf confronts her offspring, the spitting image of his father, with the very same bestiary rhetoric used to construct their identities. Drawing from past metaphors that mirror and project her former relationship onto her son’s one—as seen in the parallelisms between the third and last stanzas—, the protagonist of the song seeks to revive the traumatic experiences derived from the animal names imposed upon both single mothers and their illegitimate children. By doing so, she hopes to gain the empathy and solidarity needed on behalf of her son to repurpose their zoomorphic slurs.

Her appeal to a new sense of masculinity (“a ver si tú eres hombre”) capable of erasing the social stigma attached to her zoomorphic nickname (“pa’ podérmelo quitar”) is followed by a reminder to her son of his equally constructed faunistic identity.

Through the cunning reference to the animal saying “hijo de la loba,” the She-wolf echoes societal prejudices regarding her son’s identity (“que no digan sin razón/ que eres hijo de la loba”). Used as an insult for either illegitimate children or despicable individuals, this metaphor serves the twofold purpose of, on the one hand, reminding the young male of his marginalized existence since birth and, on the other hand, his reprehensible behavior.

At the same time, the polysemy of the term enables the She-wolf to detach herself from her son’s ignominious actions, which might contribute to the perpetuation of the hegemonic gender models and the imposition of the faunistic sobriquets upon the pregnant girl and her future grandchild. In fact, unable to relate to him now, and, therefore, leaving the epithet “hijo de la loba” void of its original maternal-filial value, the “Loba” exploits the sense of “heartless individual” to refer to her offspring. Her final words, repeating thrice “y no tienes corazón,” certainly evince this notion of cruel behavior. Their estrangement is marked by presenting mother and son in antithetical terms, since the protagonist had previously described herself as good-hearted (“no me deja el corazón”).

In addition to breaking with her son, her final remark simultaneously questions the gender ideology of the Francoist regime cemented upon the official bestiary rhetoric. Virtually voicing the same discourse that unjustly animalized her (“y por esta sinrazón / me conocen por la loba”), the She-wolf attributes the inhumane deeds of abandoning mother and child exclusively to her young male. In doing so, “la Loba” removes herself from her own flesh and blood, leaving it up to her son to redefine the semantics of his own name (“que no digan sin razón/ que eres hijo de la loba”) following, instead of his paternal, his maternal example. The Francoist authorities that hastened to ban the song “La Loba” certainly did not cry wolf on its transgressive

content. The animalized single mother starring and naming the *copla* clearly overthrows the foundations of the patriarchal regime by resorting to the subversive melodramatic discourse. Through the re-appropriation of the official bestiary rhetoric not only does the She-wolf reconstruct her own faunistic identity, but she also deconstructs the discourse of power whose son is about to perpetuate on repeating his father's words when abandoning his pregnant girlfriend. Criticizing her offspring's cowardly behavior, the She-wolf tears down the patriarchal legacy that silences women. Her piercing howl voicing the vulnerable situation of other single mothers turns upside down the fixed gender constructs of the totalitarian regime which misleadingly confers the roles of predator-prey upon sexually active females and their male partners, respectively. No longer falling into this trap, the motherly character of León, Moles and Quintero's forbidden *copla* exposes her own son as the real predator, proving him to be the wolf in sheep's clothing.

5.3. Horsing around in Francoist Times: Centaur Woman Albina in Ana María Moix's *Walter, ¿por qué te fuiste?* (1973)

Te busqué, durante todo el día. Tu apartamento estaba ocupado por dos chicas. Mostré tu foto a la que me abrió la puerta... Te busqué, todo el día, toda la noche, por las calles, por los bares, mostrando tu foto (me sacas la lengua y pones cuernos con los dedos) a camareros, transeúntes, porteros de cine y teatros, barrenderos ya de madrugada (253-254)

In *Walter, ¿por qué te fuiste?* (1973) Ana María Moix creates a horse-like character, centaur woman Albina, to question the fixed gender constructs. This mythological creature allows for the exploration of non-normative forms of sexualities by crossing the well-defined boundaries that delimited the personal and social spaces of people living under the Spanish dictatorship. Certainly, not only is Albina a hybrid being—half human, half animal—that engages in amatory relationships with a clownish cowboy, but the circus ambience to which she belongs also becomes the ideal scenario to show all sorts of (sexual) performances within the censorious context of Franco's Spain. As a matter of fact, on dealing with taboo topics such as female's sexuality (masturbation, lesbianism, bisexuality), masculine homosexuality, incest and rape, the novel was blatantly provocative, and, as a result, censorship demanded several cuts before its final publication (Levine, "Censored" 293). Hence, as the pun on the title of this section suggests, this chapter will analyze how through the legendary figure of a female equine the Catalan-born writer "horses around," that is, plays with and laughs at the sexual mores and conventions prevailing in Franco's ultraconservative society.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ Spanish poet, novelist, short story writer, translator and editor, Ana María Moix (1947-2014) was the only female writer included in José María Castellet's anthology *Nueve novísimos poetas españoles* (1970) and the youngest member of the intellectual circle of *la gauche divine*, which nicknamed her "la Nena." Born into a literary family in Barcelona's postwar bourgeoisie, Moix developed an innovative personal writing style rife with cultural references and sharp humor that showed her anti-Francoist stance and commitment to the feminist cause (Cornejo-Parriego, *Semblanzas* 2-10). A regular contributor to the influential journal *Vindicación feminista*, she is the author of several

The novel begins with an enigmatic circus character named The Great Yeibo as he approaches an abandoned house carrying a bundle of mysterious letters. The reader will soon find out that he is Ismael, a clownish cowboy and Albina's work colleague and sexual partner. As evoked by the biblical symbolism of his name (Cornejo-Parriego, *Entre mujeres* 111), Ismael is an outcast, for he has spent the last seven years of his life looking obsessively for his beloved cousin Lea, his object of desire as well as the addressee of the letters written by his other cousin Julia on her deathbed.¹⁶⁹ Trying to fulfill Julia's last will, Ismael embarks on a vital journey that will eventually take him to the past. Facing the family house where he used to spend his childhood summers, Ismael is faced by the ghostly memories of his adolescence, a time marked by secrecy, lies, punishments, repressed sexual desire and hidden erotic practices that mirror the strict Catholic education received during Franco's times. So begins a retrospective journey in which Ismael's experiences as he moves onto adulthood are intertwined with those of his relatives, mainly his other cousins of the same generation (María Antonia, Ricardo, Lea, Maite, Ernesto, Rafael, Luisín and Julita), but also his aunts and uncles. As the novel unfolds, the characters undergo several changes—political, religious, social—that go hand in hand with their sexual (mis)beliefs, inhibitions, practices and desires to finally settle down into a comfortable conventional bourgeois life— with the exception of Lea, who devotes her entire life to doing whatever she feels like: “¿Lea?...

novels that stand out for their technical and thematic complexity, such as *Julia* (1970), *Walter, ¿por qué te fuiste?* (1973) and *De mi vida real nada sé* (2002).

¹⁶⁹ As Cornejo-Parriego explains, “Ismael significa el que no fue escogido. Es el descartado, el que tiene que vagabundear” (*Entre mujeres* 102). Apart from the religious significance of the name, Moix also plays with the homonymous literary character in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*: “sus pensamientos se han desbocado como un ejército de caballitos de mar que soñaran en terminar con la dictadura de Neptuno. Es un capitán Acab sin rencor, ignora por qué persigue a una ballena blanca” (208).

Sigue viajando... también ella ha conseguido lo que quería... no atarse nunca a nada, hacer lo que le dé la gana” (258).

Amidst the multiple vicissitudes of Ismael’s life, the character of Albina always remains the same: loving, caring, empathic and faithful to her boyfriend, whose long-life obsession with Lea prevents him from stopping the centaur’s tragic end. After Ismael’s prolonged absence in one of his futile searches for Lea, the centaur woman, literally worried to death, decides to commit suicide. Finally sold as horse meat, Albina is taken to a slaughterhouse, fulfilling in this way her worst prophecy: “me venderán a un matadero, aprovecharán la carne de la mitad de mi cuerpo de caballo, y el resto...” (49).

Modelled upon a real woman who played the role of a horse in a circus because of her resemblance to one, as Moix explains in an interview (Levine, “The Censored Sex” 313), the fabulous white-haired Albina serves as the perfect counterpoint for the dark reality of Franco’s oppressive Spain, the historical framework for Moix’s generational portrait in *Walter, ¿por qué te fuiste?* As her chromatic name indicates—“albina” refers to the color white as well as to clarity and brightness—, the equine character throws light onto the obscurantism enshrouding the adolescent cousins during their sexual awakening in the somber family home, symbolically described as secluded and dark: “Envuelta en la oscuridad, y rodeada de verducos, la casa” (16).¹⁷⁰ If the

¹⁷⁰ Chromatism plays a pivotal role in Moix’s works and the pictorial element certainly contributes to the characterization of the centaur woman—and to the construction of the novel in general. The name “Albina” comes from “albus,” meaning light and white. The Latin word, etymologically related to Spanish “alba” [dawn], also denotes the first light of the day (*DRAE*). The brightness conveyed through her onomastics, reflected in Albina’s description as white (“Albina, el caballo blanco” [43], “larga pelambreira blanca” [40], “cejas blancas” [41], “el pelo se me ha puesto blanco” [51]), also symbolizes the good nature of the female equine as well as her enlightening role regarding the cousins’ sexual awakening in Franco’s society, literally and figuratively

teenage group initiates their erotic practices in hidden places (e.g. attics, basements, garages, locked rooms) and at nighttime, for fear of their repressive Catholic education, Albina gives free rein to her inmost desires in the colorful circus world. Neither entirely a woman nor fully a horse, this hybrid creature not only illuminates—and challenges— notions of gender that defined dictatorial Spain, but also human nature *per se* in the aftermath of the Civil War.

A girl at birth, Albina's transformation into a centaur woman occurs in the precise historical context of the Spanish Civil War.¹⁷¹ During her childhood, the witnessing of the fratricidal conflict that killed her siblings and destroyed the country resulted in Albina's detachment from the cruel human nature and her progressive animalization: "de niña comenzó la transformación" (49). Entrapped in a spiral of destruction—poignantly expressed through military images of rupture ("los [aviones] que volaban durante la noche podían romperme a mí y a mamá, romperla como aquellas casas... personas rotas... animales rotos," [50])—Albina falls into self-destructive anorexia, since the mere thought of breaking foods triggers traumatic warlike experiences: "no quiero romper comida... nunca quiero romper nada... no he roto nada, nunca quiero romper nada, no lo haré... yo no quiero ser mala" (51-52). With a psychosomatic ailment characterized by the rejection of one's body, Albina's faunistic

marked by obscurantism, Moix uses this chiaroscuro effect to paint an impressive fresco of dictatorial Spain.

¹⁷¹ Even though Moix has virtually removed the political referents that date the novel due to the censorious context of the dictatorship (Stovall, "La Nena" 98), *Walter's* historical framework is specific: the post-war Catalan bourgeoisie (Cornejo-Parriego, *Entre mujeres* 101). Ironically, as Stovall affirms, by removing the traditional political referent and including a more personal viewpoint pertaining to sexuality and gender roles, "a novel from 1973 may be more relevant now than when it was originally published" ("La Nena" 100-101).

morphing equally reflects her repudiation of society.¹⁷² Reluctant to accept reality and the cruel human nature, both fantasy and metamorphosis turn into escapist mechanisms in totalitarian Spain (Jones, “Literary Structures” 109). Albina’s mutation into a white centaur, therefore, marks her (sexual) liberation, as observed in her transition from the claustrophobic dark basement as a child war survivor (“bajar al sótano donde a oscuras se oía el estruendo” [49]) and her oppressive nun school (“las monjas que pegan a las niñas y les rompen los dibujos... nos pellizcan y dicen que nos mandarán al infierno con el demonio” [49-51]) onto the bright wide-open spaces of wild horses (“Un jardín de alelúes, y más allá, la frondosidad de los árboles se perdía en el horizonte. Le gustaba trotar, saltar, correr, oler la tierra, las flores” [52]). The liberty she now enjoys as a semi-animal only commensurate with her (sexual) freedom as “a circus freak” (Chamberlin 830), where she performs with her clownish cowboy partner, both in the artistic and sexual scenarios.¹⁷³

With its theatrical performances, (con)fusion of signs, comic entanglements, and corporeal celebration, the circus world to which Albina belongs aligns with the Bakhtinian carnival paradigm that explores the subversion of society through role-play,

¹⁷² Illness and metamorphosis are recurring themes in Moix’s narrative (Jones, “Literary Structures” 109; Schumn “Schizophrenia” 150-162), usually symbolizing an individual’s escape valve from a painful reality. In *Julia* (1969) the homonymous protagonist, feeling trapped after being raped as a child by her brother Ernesto’s friend, develops a split personality in which the doubling Julita/Julia stands for the child and adult within. Other traumatic childhood experiences lead to animalization, as in the short stories “Las nutrias no piensan en el futuro” and “Martín, el recién hermano de Martín, su padre, su madre, el médico, tía Juanita, las jaulas y un pájaro”—included in the collection *Ese chico pelirrojo a quien veo cada día* (1972)—, where children unable to adapt to adult life turn into animals.

¹⁷³ In Classical mythology, centaurs typify civilization as well as sexual passions. Elizabeth Lawrence claims that the contests between the centaurs and the Lapiths exemplify the struggle between civilization and barbarism. As for their sexual symbolism, Chevalier and Jung point out that centaurs represent mankind’s animal nature and lust. Jung also acknowledges the centaur as one of the most powerful archetypes in the human psyche, connected with the unconscious, fantasies and desires.

disguises, polyphonic discourses, bodily functions, and laughter. If the Russian literary critic and philosopher emphasized the anarchic nature of carnivals, noting that they surpass and corrode spatial, religious, and political boundaries, Moix's circus, analogously, transgresses and dissolves the gender boundaries defining Francoist Spain. Home to those deviating from normative masculinity and femininity (i.e., the aspiring, frustrated and emasculated poet Ismael, the foreign communist and virile dwarf Polaco John, and the sexually active female centaur Albina), this place of fantasy provides the ideal scenario to play with traditional gender constructs through humorous shows that reverse the conventional roles assigned to the sexes. Characterized as a cowboy (embodiment of manliness) and known as "The Great Yeibo" (an artistic pseudonym that evokes magnificence and importance), Ismael's performance proves him to be none of the above. Abused and killed as part of his act ("Dar sepultura al cowboy. Formaba parte del número" [42]), his masculinity is called into question as he adopts several (sexual) positions and roles that have little to do with stereotypical manhood. Mute in the boisterous show, Ismael is mounted as though he were a horse by a male clown: "Uno de los cómicos se sentaba, a horcajadas, sobre el cowboy" (42)—with the homoerotic relation visually recreated in this scene. Besides being degraded to a cowboy's animal mate, his feminine and passive representation is accentuated at the end of the play, when female equine Albina, in turn acting as an active male, rescues him to the audience's delight: "Y entre aplausos y algarabías, Albina, el caballo blanco, cogía con los dientes el pañuelo atado al cuello del cowboy y, a rastras, le daba una vuelta a la pista" (43).¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ Stovall comments on the show's reversal of gender roles to criticize Franco's patriarchal society: "Ismael, for example, is mocked and criticized for not being masculine enough. In fact, he often plays a feminine role: as Albina repeatedly rescues him, he is like the damsel who is rescued by her knight in shining armor. She is, in fact,

A parody of masculinity, femininity, and their aesthetics, these dramatizations, gender becomes “a circus act” (Stovall 58). Yeibo’s projection of a virile identity through his cowboy costume is a fabrication, in other words, a mere illusion, which soon vanishes when his unmanly staging takes place. Furthermore, on blurring the fuzzy line that separates appearance from essence, these circus charades also criss-cross the fictional and real domains, since Yeibo’s theatrical representation mirrors Ismael’s life outside the circus world.

There are numerous parallelisms that attest to Moix’s use of this specular function. Yeibo’s comic role as a mute and effeminate clownish cowboy recalls Ismael’s failure as a poet and as a heteronormative male. His physical abuse by male clowns on stage continues once the show is over, with dwarf Polaco John verbally attacking his virility: “¿Y ese, es maricón?, preguntaba señalando a Yeibo, tendido en el catre de Albina” (54). Furthermore, Yeibo’s work colleague Albina also becomes his sexual partner, playing the same role as savior in Ismael’s life: “¿Qué hubiera sido de él, sin la ayuda de Albina? No solo lo vigila, y lo recoge, por las noches, lleno el cuerpo de alcohol y la mente de sombras” (55), and even engaging in amatory relations that border on the circus art—including acrobatics: “Con frecuencia, debido a los violentos movimientos orgásticos, ha estado a punto de aplastarlo con las patas traseras. Incluso, en una ocasión, él salió disparado de la cama y dio media vuelta por los aires” (45-46).¹⁷⁵

the horse minus the knight... the fact that he is not stereotypically masculine may constitute a subtle criticism of the rigid gender roles in Spain” (“La Nena” 98).

¹⁷⁵ Ironically, despite playing the role of a cowboy and having sex with a centaur woman, neither Yeibo nor Ismael appear mounting a horse. In the circus, Yeibo symbolically becomes a horse himself as another clown rides him. During his amatory relationships with Albina, Ismael avoids mounting her to fulfill the centaur’s desire to be more like a woman: “Hay otro modo más cómodo de hacer el amor: montarla. Pero ella le ilusiona realizar el acto en la postura normal, y él intenta complacerla” (45).

This game of mirrors ultimately reflects the narrator's division of the self, as observed in his onomastic split Ismael/Yeibo. In fact, despite psychoanalytical readings of the mirror as a positive element in the formation of identity, in *Walter*, mirror images appear to convey a process of disintegration rather than creation.¹⁷⁶ This sense of loss in the male protagonist's life, vividly evoked through the ghostly images of his past that still haunt him in the present, derives from the disappearance of his former lover Lea, Ismael's *raison d'être*, and Albina's counterpart.

An integral part of the novel's multiple divisions or doublings, Lea and Albina mark Ismael's path of development.¹⁷⁷ Their two photographs inside his circus suitcase metaphorically represent their role as his life travel companions and as the catalyst for his innermost sexual desires—still hidden and repressed in a closed space.¹⁷⁸

en la pequeña maleta roja... dos fotos. Una, amarillenta, se mantiene íntegra merced al papel celo pegado por detrás: el rostro de una mujer joven, la lengua fuera y el dedo índice, a ambos lados de la sien, imitan un par de cuernos; en el ángulo inferior, y con tinta casi desteñida, una dedicatoria, borrosa: ¡Tonto!, y firmado: Lea. En la otra foto: un rostro más alargado que el anterior, mucho más: pertenece a un caballo. Las orejas, la cabeza y la parte visible del cuello cubiertos por larga pelambreira blanca. Labios finos, ojos pequeños, claros. Las

¹⁷⁶ Notwithstanding that in most Bildungsroman mirror images reveal the positive formation of one's identity (Bush 154; Ciplijauskaitė 73; La Belle 199), Moix's novels seem to reverse this function. If Schumm's analysis of *Julia* demonstrates the use of mirror images and doublings in the transmission of the protagonist's loss of self-identity (also observed in her two names Julia/Julita), the same seems to apply to the personal development of Ismael/Yeibo in *Walter*.

¹⁷⁷ For a thorough analysis of Moix's use of doublings in her novels, see Catherine Bellver.

¹⁷⁸ Recurrent in Moix's narrative (Jones, "Literary Structures" 112), images of boxes symbolize both the complexities of reality and an individual's innermost desires. In *Walter*, Julita's favorite pastime is burying objects in boxes, a metaphor for her hidden lesbian passion towards Lea.

cejas, blancas, muy juntas y pobladas. Sonríe. Y escrito con letras casi de palote:

A mi muy querido Yeibo, de la siempre suya Albina. Y junto a la dedicatoria, dos manchas de tinta azul, una de mayor tamaño que la otra: muy bien pudiera tratarse de las huellas de una pezuña de caballo. (40-41)

At first sight displaying “the stereotype doubles of the good and bad woman (Albina and Lea)” (Jones, “Literary Structures” 114)—Albina is white, caring, and affectionate, smiles and leaves her footprints to imitate a human signature whereas Lea is dark-haired, defiant, and rebellious, sticks her tongue out to make fun of Ismael and writes “tonto” as her sole dedication prior to her name—, these pictures, nevertheless, share the animalized image of both females.

If the centaur woman irremediably exhibits her horse-like nature, Lea’s pose, with her index fingers placed on both sides of her head to simulate “un par de cuernos,” seems to imitate a potent bull. Symbols of war, masculine powers and of uncontrollable passions (Chamberlin 823; Cirlot 209, 445), these creatures convey Albina’s and Lea’s (gender) transgressions and (sexual) freedoms. Moix, indeed, exploits the binomial bestiality-sexuality in the representation of Ismael’s former and current lovers to attack the strict gender constructs and lack of (sexual) liberty in dictatorial Spain.

Mirroring the previously analyzed metamorphosis of Albina, animal imagery equally marks Lea’s personal change. Once again shown in two photographs, Lea’s transformation from an obedient girl into an independent woman is expressed through her characterization as “gato malo”:

esas dos fotos mías: una, pequeña, vestida de blanco, peinada con rizos y cintas, tan tímida mi mirada, tanto miedo en mi media sonrisa. Y la otra: de gato malo, me dirás, la expresión dura, provocativa, el pelo corto, muy erguida, los puños prietos sobre la falda, ¿qué sucedió entre las dos fotografías? Y no te lo diré,

porque quizá ni yo sepa qué día ni por qué decidí esa monja no me verá llorar nunca más por un castigo, seré como esa chica de las mayores que tan mal se comporta y la Madre la llama el demonio vestido de uniforme, papá me castigas, pero tanto me da, no me asusto cuando gritas como mamá, eres una criada mamá, te cambias de traje, de peinado si papá lo ordena. (167-168)

An expression of her (sexual) freedom—cats tend to be associated with eroticism, promiscuity, and independence—(Martin-Márquez 253)—, Lea’s feline portrayal underscores her outright rebellion and defiance of patriarchal social norms, at which she constantly laughs with her cat-like smiles: “Sonreías con los labios prietos, las comisuras hacia arriba, la sonrisa de gato a punto de atacar” (232-233), “mira, agresiva, la sonrisa de gato en los labios, medio burlona” (105), or “Aquella perdida sonrisa de gato travieso adolescente... salvaje, sí” (103). Echoing the subversive function of Albina’s comic and sexual performances, Lea similarly disrupts the social order with her clamorous laughter and erotic practices. In fact, her rejection of the feminine gender role of subordinate mother and wife manifests in her heterosexual, bisexual, and lesbian relationships with her friend “El Rubio” and her cousins Maite, Julita, Ismael, and Augusto.¹⁷⁹

In addition, Lea’s creation of Walter, an imaginary being that conceals her affair with the seminarian Augusto, opens a world of (sexual) fantasies only comparable to Albina’s fabulous circus—the most obvious form of escapism on all levels. With her fascinating stories about the fictitious beau, whom nobody has seen, Lea mesmerizes her young cousins. Each of them invents their own descriptions to make Walter

¹⁷⁹ Throughout the novel, Lea makes it clear that she will not become a housewife and mother: “Pues todo el mundo se casa, Lea, es lo normal. Sí, una mierda, y trabajar y tener hijos y aburrirse” (120).

conform to their own ideal—colonel Townsend for María Antonia, a Sandokan pirate and a modern Robin Hood for Ismael, Rafael and Luisín, or a dandy-like Red Butler in *Gone with the Wind* for Maite (129-130). Through the figure of Walter, then, the children channel their most secret (erotic) passions and desires.¹⁸⁰

Ismael's discovery of the real person behind the mysterious Walter on the very last day of his summer holidays destroys the magic of the ideallistic childhood universe: “sin poder arrancar de tu mente la imagen del primo Augusto, tu Walter, tu héroe, repetías en silencio yo iba al encuentro del Gran Walter para ponerme a sus servicios y derrocar al régimen, a los curas...y Walter era un cura a punto de cantar misa” (168). This irreparable loss in the cousins' life, as they move into adulthood, is expressed through Walter's symbolic funeral.¹⁸¹ As a sort of epitaph, Julita makes the name “Gualter”—whose phonetic spelling is typical of children—out of pebbles in order to cover the hole where she has buried her most coveted treasures (some little boxes and cards):

Cava el último hoyo, de la última tarde, del último verano. ¿No entierra nada en el interior? ¿Por qué lo cubre de grava? Con el resto de las piedras va formando letras hasta componer una palabra Gualter. No se escribe con ge, le dices, sino con doble uve. Qué rabia te domina, solo

¹⁸⁰ The homosexual character of Ernesto provides a good insight into Walter's role in the fulfillment of the cousins' (erotic) dreams. Despite Lea's descriptions of her fictional boyfriend, Ernesto's drawing of Walter is, in reality, his self-portrait: “Ernesto dibujó la portada: el Gran Walter, alto, rubio, los ojos azules (cosa que le recriminaron, pues en lugar de dibujarlo con ojos grises y pelo castaño, tal como Lea lo describió, Ernesto se retrató a sí mismo)” (130).

¹⁸¹ This symbolic burial not only represents the death of Julia's fantasies—sexual and childhood ones—but also anticipates her tragic end. She dies from anorexia at a mental institution.

sirves para llorar. ¿Por qué lo entierra con los crometes y las cajitas?...

Gualter, un nombre escrito, con piedras, sobre un hoyo. (169)

Walter's tragic end mirrors Albina's death. Seven years after Walter's and Lea's disappearance, the circus Amadeus Royal arrives in Ismael's hometown. Forgetting about Albina and their performance, the clownish cowboy continues his search for his beloved cousin, to whom he must deliver Julia's (presumably love) letters. After showing, day and night, everyone he sees Lea's burlesque bull-like photograph—an image of her constant defiance, literally and metaphorically speaking—Ismael returns to the circus only to find out that it has left:

Te busqué, durante todo el día. Tu apartamento estaba ocupado por dos chicas. Mostré tu foto a la que me abrió la puerta... Te busqué, todo el día, toda la noche, por las calles, por los bares, mostrando tu foto (me sacas la lengua y pones cuernos con los dedos) a camareros, transeúntes, porteros de cines y teatros, barrenderos ya de madrugada. Amanecía, al llegar a la explanada donde habían instalado el circo, en la parte alta de la ciudad, al pie del monte... Un hombre vestido con mono azul y tocado con una gorra: ¿El circo? Se ha marchado. Ah, ya caigo usted debe ser...el cowboy payaso, lo han esperado, sí, pero, un momento...Han dejado una carta para usted (253-254)

There, in the empty space, when a forest guard tries to deliver Polaco John's letter explaining Albina's suicide—motivated by her unbearable anguish after her boyfriend's prolonged absence—Ismael soon realizes that her partner is lying dead:¹⁸²

¹⁸² Another mirror image in the novel, letters constitute an expression of (sexual) desire and death. Before dying in a mental institution, Julia asks Ismael to give Lea some letters that presumably speak of her lesbian love towards her cousin. Similarly, Polaco John leaves Ismael with a letter blaming him for Albina's suicide and even threatening

“Al volverse la vio, junto a una de las paredes de la cabaña: un caballo blanco, tendido sobre la hierba, la sangre, ya seca y negra, manchando los largos, suaves pelambres del cuello” (254). As the slaughterhouse workers approach to collect the centaur’s body, Ismael faces, again, the painful reality—vividly expressed through the physical and verbal aggression he is subject to when reminding the guard that wants to sell Albina as a horse that she is a woman. Unable to prevent the fulfillment of Albina’s worst dream (“me venderán a un matadero, aprovecharán la carne de la mitad de mi cuerpo de caballo, y el resto...” [49]), Ismael witnesses a grotesque burial, somehow reminiscent of Walter’s. The centaur woman is finally dumped into the slaughterhouse truck: “cómo cargaban el cuerpo de un caballo blanco en el camión del Matadero Municipal” (254-255).

With the loss of Albina not only does Ismael lose his (sexual) partner, but also the world of (sexual) fantasies and transgressions that she represents, for this has no place in Franco’s Spain. In fact, at the end of the narrative, the centaur’s mirror image, Lea, is still missing. She continues travelling: “Sigue viajando” (258), another escapist mechanism from that oppressive reality.

to kill him: “Abre el sobre, apenas puede leer: The Great Yeibo: Escóndete lejos. Si algún día encontrarte, Polaco John te estrangula con sus propias manos. Te esperamos día y medio. Albina quería salir en tu busca, como durante todas las noches de más de siete años, por las calles de las ciudades. Dijo, aquí The Great Yeibo conocer la ciudad, no poder perderse. A pesar de todo, salió una noche, Polaco John verla. Regresó al amanecer, sin encontrarte tras buscarte por los bares. Amadeus llamó a comisarías y hospitales, por si te hubiera ocurrido algún accidente. Estarás con tu familia, tus amigos, o quizá esa mujer a quien buscabas. Eso decir Albina, al entrar en la roulotte para disponer sus cosas antes de partir. La encontró Polaco John, yo, el enano. Se cortó la yugular. Dejó una nota: ella querer que la entierren al pie de esta montaña” (255-256).

6. There is Something Fishy: The Resurgence of the Francoist Bestiary in Spain's Present-Day Politics



Image 96. Santiago Abascal in the political debate prior to the November 2019 Spanish election

Reporting on the political debate prior to the celebration of the November 2019 Spanish general election, the on-line newspaper *El español* referred to the leader of the far-right political party VOX, Santiago Abascal, “como un toro y contra todos” (“Santiago Abascal” 1). Apart from expressing Abascal’s staunch defense of a centralized Spain against the more pluralistic views of the nation held by all of his political opponents—presidential candidate and current president Pedro Sánchez (PSOE), Pablo Casado (PP), Pablo Iglesias (UP) and Albert Rivera (Cs)—, this taurine simile also coincides with the (self-) construction of the public persona of VOX’s frontman, somehow reminiscent of the former Spanish dictator Francisco Franco.¹⁸³

¹⁸³ These are the five dominant parties in Spain organized according to the left-right political spectrum: *Unidas Podemos* (UP-United We Can, left-wing), *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE-Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party, center-left), *Ciudadanos* (Cs-Citizens, centre-right), *Partido Popular* (PP-Popular Party, center-right to right-wing),

In fact, a look at Spanish media shows numerous instances linking Abascal with the bull, both literally and metaphorically speaking. For example, his twitter account, rife with photographs of bullfighters and bullfighting spectacles (Aug. 6, 2020), not only includes threads supporting the *fiesta nacional* (Aug. 12, 2018), but also images of Abascal himself learning to bullfight (June 17, 2019). In like manner, the conservative newspaper *La Razón* (Oct. 5, 2019) and the rightist T.V. program *El gato al agua* (Jan. 14, 2020) describe the leader of Vox as “un toro” when interviewing him.¹⁸⁴ This deployment of bullfighting iconography appealing to patriotic values might be indicative of other similarities between Santiago Abascal and Francisco Franco, whose government was significantly known as “gobierno del toro” (García Viñolas 46-47). Hence, as evoked by the title of this chapter, because there is something “fishy” in the representation of Abascal through bull symbolism, this section analyzes the political ideology conveyed through this animal metaphor in order to see whether there exist further parallelisms between the doctrines upheld by VOX and Francoism. In this sense, special attention will be paid to the gender ideology conveyed through such zoomorphic representations given the significance that the bestiary had in defining different forms of masculinities and femininities in dictatorial times. For this purpose, the chapter explores the binomial bull-Abascal in the speeches of VOX’s leader and in a series of national

and VOX (VOX-Latin “voice”, far-right). Despite the victory of PSOE in the last general election (Nov. 2019), which won 120 of the 350 Parliament seats, the most successful group was VOX, which obtained 52 seats—up from just 24 in the previous poll in April 2019. The PP had 88 seats, UP had 35, and Cs only 10. Rivera resigned after the poor results of his party, which lost 47 seats since the previous election, and Inés Arrimadas became the new leader.

¹⁸⁴ Founded in 1998 by Luis María Ansón, *La Razón*’s editorial stances are primarily liberal economically and conservative socially. The T.V. and radio program “El gato al agua” also adopts a rightist viewpoint. It is produced by the multimedia communication group Intereconomía, whose logotype is a bull and whose main television channel is *Toro TV*.

and international newspapers (*El mundo, El país, La Razón, El español, OK Diario, Libertad digital, The Times, The New York Times*), radio and television programs (*Es la mañana, El gato al agua, El programa de Ana Rosa, El Toro*), and social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube) devoted to the Basque politician. The aim is, ultimately, to understand the political agenda transmitted through the discourse of tauromachy hoisted by Santiago Abascal and to compare it to Franco's partisan use of the (symbolic) universe of tauromachy.

Former PP member Santiago Abascal is an avid fan of bullfighting.¹⁸⁵ His fondness for tauromachy, manifested in his regular presence in bullrings across the country and, as mentioned, highly publicized on his social media, ultimately boils down to its link with Spanish identity.¹⁸⁶ His statements in the newspaper *ABC*: “el toro es seña de identidad de España” (Pérez, “Santiago Abascal” 2) and in the sports journal *Marca*: “atacar a los toros es atacar a España” (Fernández and Campos, front page), serve to illustrate VOX's position on the spectacle of *los toros*, as one can read on the party's website: “[el toreo] es una expresión cultural de más de cinco siglos y un arte íntimamente ligado a la identidad de España. Es parte de su cultura, de sus raíces” (de Miguel 2).

Regarded as an icon of the country—just like in Francoism—, the bull becomes the metaphor par excellence of VOX's nationalist discourse and of its chief man. In fact,

¹⁸⁵ Abascal was a member of the Partido Popular from 1994 to 2013. His growing disenchantment with the PP for not adopting more hard-line stances against the independentist movements in the Basque Country, and, above all, in Catalonia, led him to found VOX along with other conservative politicians.

¹⁸⁶ As Duncan Wheeler observes, “[Abascal] self-consciously stylizes himself as a middle-aged man with old-fashioned values and a fondness for being photographed in bullrings, communicating both traditional respectability and a commitment to the epic adventurism of Spain's national fiesta” (176).

during his political campaigns, Abascal exploited bull imagery to convey VOX's chauvinistic message and to fashion his figure as a national leader. On addressing his audience in the Vistalegre bullring of Madrid on October 7, 2018, Abascal defined his political group as "un miura" ready to attack all his opponents for the sake of the unity of Spain:

Con VOX esto se ha acabado, con vosotros esto se ha terminado, porque los sambenitos y los insultos de Pablo Iglesias, de Pedro Sánchez y de Quin Torra, nos los ponemos como medallas en el pecho. Los progres no contaban con este miura de VOX al que hoy se ha soltado en Vistalegre... hemos venido aquí a representar a la España viva, a representaros a todos vosotros... Hemos venido a señalar a los culpables de la división, del enfrentamiento y de la ruina de España ¡Y a combatirlos! ...VOX es la España grande, la España alegre, la España decente... Esa España viva ...que mañana saldrá a conquistar... España no se va a detener ya hasta reconquistar su grandeza... Porque VOX vive para que España viva, para que ¡viva España! (qtd. in Sumba 60-61)

The quintessence of a violent animal, the symbol of an unrestrained bull is embedded in a warfare rhetoric (e.g.: "medallas en el pecho" [badges on our chests], "combatir" [combat], "conquistar" [conquer]) easily identifiable with antebellum and Francoist Spain. Calling for the reconquest ("reconquistar") irremediable brings back memories of the recovery of a Catholic culture under the reign of the Catholic Monarchs, to whom *el Caudillo* always looked up to formulate his National-Catholic

policies.¹⁸⁷ Indeed, after mocking communist fellowman Pablo Iglesias as “Pablo Mezquitas” [Pablo Mosques], Abascal explicitly recalls this chapter of Spanish history, presumably to awaken an anti-Muslim sentiment and to justify his anti-immigration policies: “somos Europa con más derecho que nadie, porque la salvamos del avance islámico en siete siglos de Reconquista?” (Abascal, “Vistalegre speech”).

Abascal proceeds to emphasize the need to protect the anti-migrant razor wires of Ceuta and Melilla, the two Spanish cities situated in northern Morocco that are the main port of entry for Africans: “la España viva quiere que su hogar sea defendido, que las paredes de su casa sean protegidas, que las vallas de Ceuta y Melilla se defiendan, que se mejoren si es necesario” (qtd. in Sumba 62). In an increasing warring tone, VOX’s leader summons the nation’s security corps to defend domestic borders: “Que a nuestros guardias, a nuestros policías, a nuestro ejército, a los regulares, a la legión o a quien sea, se le den los medios materiales y jurídicos para defender nuestra frontera” (qtd. in Sumba 62). Deliberately omitting the autonomic police forces, the list does mention the legion. This unit of the Spanish army not only was commanded by Franco himself, but it also played a major role in the victory of the Nationalist faction in the Spanish Civil War (Reyes 1-11).

Further parallelisms between the discourse of Abascal and *el Caudillo* appear with the former’s coinage of “la España viva.” Apparently reviving the myth of the “anti-España” developed by the domestic ultra nationalistic forces in the 1930s to designate the inner enemies of Spain (Segovia Vara and Fernández 1), this key notion corresponds with the concept of “Nueva España” that designated dictatorial Spain.

¹⁸⁷ When Abascal founded VOX in 2013, his promotional videos featured him riding a horse and announcing a new Reconquest referencing the 15th-century defeat of the “occupying Moors” by the Catholic Monarchs (Wheeler 175).

Besides, mottoes such as “la España grande, la España alegre, la España decente” also ring a bell to anyone familiar with the propaganda of the totalitarian state.¹⁸⁸

Similarly, in the meeting held in the bullring La Flecha in Valladolid on October 13, 2019, Abascal picked up the taurine allegory again to refer to his organization’s strength and growth vis-à-vis all the other parties: “Somos un toro bravo y nos crecemos ante los boicots” (de la Fuente 3). Other instances whereby VOX’s president explicitly identifies his group with a bull are found in his numerous interviews in the media. Commenting on VOX’s presidential aspirations, Abascal praises his team’s tireless efforts in the final stretch of the campaign via the archetypal bovine: “Salimos a ganar, hasta el rabo todo es toro” (Alvarado 3). When asked about the different ideological positions between VOX and Ciudadanos, Abascal’s reply, “Ciudadanos es un *toro manso*, nosotros somos [toros] bravos” (Cuesta 3-4; Lardiez 2), is indicative of the bull’s rhetorical force in VOX’s imaginary both to signify its party and to debase opposite groups.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ The Francoist government always stressed the importance of keeping a happy and decent façade to conceal the poverty and repression characteristic of the first years of the regime (Caballero). This was superbly encapsulated in its motto: “España, Una, Grande y Libre.”

¹⁸⁹ Abascal frequently deploys the metaphor of the docile bull to discredit Ciudadanos and its leader Rivera: “Ciudadanos es poco definido, es como un toro manso que no sabe si mira para la izquierda o para la derecha” (Gorriarán 2), “Albert Rivera es un toro manso” (Lardiez 1), “hace poco establecía la comparación entre el toro manso y el toro bravo. El toro manso no sabes para dónde va a ir, si va a embestir para un lado u otro, para la izquierda o la derecha... Ciudadanos es un toro manso. Y luego hay un toro bravo previsible, que sabes dónde va a ir, por dónde va a salir. Eso somos nosotros” (Cuesta 2). Pedro Sánchez also becomes an object of scorn through bull metaphors when Abascal states that the Spanish president has nothing to do with the noble and fierce animal: “[Pedro Sánchez] no es el toro” (Arroyo 2). Other animal names recurring in Abascal’s discourse to belittle his political opponents include “conejos asustados” [frightened rabbits] for both PP and Ciudadanos (“La derecha cobarde y la veleta naranja seguirán actuando como conejos asustados”, Vistalegre speech), “perros rabiosos” [enraged dogs] to refer to the PNV (The Basque Nationalist Party) and EH Bildu (“Nos han dejado a merced de los perros rabiosos” 1) and “buitres carroñeros” [scavenger vultures] (Muro 1).



Image 97. Abascal’s tweet referring to VOX and Ciudadanos as “toro bravo” and “toro manso” respectively

The bond between VOX and the totemic bull is so strong that it has transcended domestic borders. International media, indeed, frequently deploy this zoomorphic identification to caution of a new far-right in Spain that many see as the legacy of Francoism (Rubio-Pueyo 3). The Mexican journal *Foreign Affairs Latinoamérica* speaks of Abascal’s group as “Vox, un toro sin complejos” (Segura Valencia 1) to underscore its overt ultraconservative values. *The New York Times* also mentions “el toro bravo” (Fonseca 2) when warning of VOX’s radicalism. Elaborating on the bull metaphor, the Argentinian *Urgente 24* interprets VOX’s attacks on the current gender-violence law in Spain in terms of a bull charging (“embiste”): “Bolsonaro+VOX: Avanza la ‘ola derecha’ y embiste a la agenda de género” (“Bolsonaro +VOX” 1).¹⁹⁰

As expected of VOX’s main representative, Santiago Abascal is also subject to bull identification. His symbolic metamorphosis into the fierce beast not only pertains to the constant projection of the animal’s body, sounds, temperament and behavior onto the politician’s physique, speech, personality, and actions, but also to a wide array of

¹⁹⁰ Even though the fight against gender violence has traditionally had cross-party support (the Spanish parliament unanimously approved the gender violence law in 2004), VOX has broken this consensus with its refusal to back any initiative. According to Abascal’s party, the existing gender violence law discriminates men (Álvarez 1).

taurine paraphernalia that the Basque legislator ostentatiously exhibits in his public appearances to construct his image as a national leader. Epitome of masculinity, physical strength and (sexual) prowess (Brandes; Cirlot), the bull trope contributes to enhancing the muscular and well-built Abascal: “Así se machaca el ‘toro.’ Abascal en el gimnasio” (Rodríguez Veiga 1). His strenuous fitness routine has drawn the media’s attention to such an extent that he has been granted the epithet “toro de gimnasio” (Díaz 1; Rodríguez Veiga 1). Illustrated with photographs of Abascal dressed in tight sport clothes that accentuate his toned body (image 97), several newspaper articles not only convey an image of a virile, robust, and healthy man, which somehow mirrors the strength of the body politic, but also connect his bull-like physique to notions of Spanishness.¹⁹¹ *El español*, for example, explicitly links an athletic Abascal with his passion for Spanish history: “El ‘toro’ de gimnasio Abascal también lee: su obsesión con libros sobre España en su biblioteca. El líder de Vox es uno de los políticos que más citas literarias lanza desde el Congreso. Le interesan el ensayo y la historia, siempre sobre España” (Rodríguez Veiga 1). *El Toro TV*, on the other hand, emphasizes Abascal’s moral strength and defense of a unified country through the iconic bovine: “el toro que planta cara a los etarras” (Ariza).

¹⁹¹ When Abascal tested positive for Coronavirus, VOX’s European Parliament member Jorge Buxade commented on the leader’s health in the following terms: “Abascal está bien... Abascal está hecho un toro, ha pedido asesoramiento a un médico” (“Santiago Abascal” 3).



Image 98. El toro de gimnasio Abascal

This transmission of patriotic values via the association of Abascal with the bull is reminiscent of Francoist propaganda. Indeed, as seen in chapter 2, in several harangues *El Generalísimo* exhorted his troops and fellow Spanish men to “sacar el toro que todo español lleva dentro” (“Discursos del Caudillo” 2; Vázquez Montalbán, *Crónica* 86) to fight for the greatness of *la Nueva España*, and the image of the bull-like man permeated school textbooks, courtship manuals, novels, comics, and movies in accordance with the hypermasculine dictatorial state. Suffice it to say, a popular comic character named Toro was the world’s weight-lifting champion and this animal name frequently referred to suitors and soldiers during the dictatorship (Martín Gaité, *Usos amorosos* 144).

If the anatomy of a bull serves to capture Abascal’s sculpted body, the press similarly turns his petitions into a snarl to communicate his staunch defense of elements and institutions traditionally associated with the Spanish nation: “Bufido democrático de Abascal en Vistalegre: con Morante y ‘Viva el Rey’” (Nieto Jurado 1) or “VOX exhibe poderío en Sevilla... [Abascal] da un bufido” (“10N”). This aggressive metaphor to denote Abascal’s speech is related to other bull images comparing his attacks to a bull’s charge: “Abascal embiste a Pablo Iglesias por ensalzar al Che” (Muro 1) or “Abascal embiste en contra del PP por ‘ patear ’ a sus asociados de VOX” (SentiLecto 1).

In addition to belligerency, the bull has a reputation for being a noble and tenacious animal. These positive traits are transferred onto Abascal's personality in the press. Quoting a PP member who worked with the Basque politician, the journal *El independiente* states: “[Abascal] es muy toro bravo ... Encontrarás poca gente que no le tuviera simpatía dentro del PP” (de la Hoz 2). In a similar fashion, the radio program “Es la tarde de Dieter” extols Abascal's political and moral convictions by equating him with a bull: “noble como los toros a los que su partido defiende” (Brandau). *El Correo de Andalucía* plays on the word “toro” to refer to Abascal and the debate around the prohibition of tauromachy in “El toro sigue sobre la mesa” (del Moral 1). With a photograph of Abascal toasting with a group of matadors at a table, the article informs of—and celebrates—the sentence that annuls the ban of bullfighting in the city of Villena (Valencia).

El toro sigue sobre la mesa

La reciente sentencia que anula la prohibición del Ayuntamiento de Villena para organizar festejos taurinos en su localidad es extensible a toda España. Mientras tanto, el mundo del toro tampoco se ha escapado de acuerdo de gobernabilidad suscrito por el PP y VOX

ÁLVARO R. DEL MORAL / SEVILLA / 14 ENE 2019 / 17:00 H - ACTUALIZADO: 14 ENE 2019 / 17:11 H.



Expertos indican la duración de la inmunidad del Covid tras infectarse

Image 99. “El toro” Abascal celebrating with bullfighters

Not limited to the symbolic domain, the construction of Abascal as a bull also encompasses physical artefacts from the universe of bullfighting. Along with a Spanish flag, a Jesus Christ figurine and a framed card of the Virgin Mary, Abascal's new office contains the statuette of a bull's head and a bookend shaped like a matador's cape. All these elements form "un mercadillo patriótico" (Rodríguez Veiga 1) that advertise and sell Abascal and his party as the safeguards of a Spanish identity that, according to their views, has been put at stake with the coalition government among PSOE, UP, and Catalan and Basque separatist parties (Alonso Rincón 1-5).



Image 100. Abascal's office with the statuette of a bull's head and a book end shaped like a matador's cape

Besides his office décor, Abascal's attire is closely connected with taumachy for the same propagandistic reasons. As noted in the digital newspaper *Voz pópuli*, one of Abascal's favorite clothing brands is the Spanish *Capote* [matador's cape], often worn by bullfighters like Enrique Ponce (Palmero 1-3). Furthermore, the leader of VOX tends to carry an umbrella that has also caught people's attention since it resembles a matador's sword, as one can read in numerous articles: "El paraguas estoque con el que

‘asusta’ Abascal” (Rodríguez Veiga 1), “El paraguas estoque de Santiago Abascal triunfa en los toros” (Rodríguez 1) or “El paraguas estoque de Santiago Abascal que ha llamado la atención en las redes sociales” (“El paraguas” 2).

EL CAPOTE

Santiago Abascal, patriota y taurino hasta en el vestir: esta es la marca de sus camisas

El líder de Vox no deja nada al azar en cuanto a moda se refiere. Prueba de ello es que en los últimos meses se ha hecho fan de una firma muy española



Image 101. Santiago Abascal wearing El Capote clothes



Image 102. Abascal's umbrella resembles a matador's sword

Abascal's manipulation of the iconography of the bull is patent on his social media platforms and interviews with the press. On his twitter profile, for example, he appears climbing a huge Osborne bull, which populated the Spanish roads during the dictatorship in a commercial and nationalistic manoeuvre to disseminate the image of Francoism (Quílez). His interview in the newspaper *ABC*, announced with fanfare on the front page with a photograph of Abascal in front of a gigantic bull statue, is also rife with bull analogies that serve to put forward VOX's agenda: "luchamos como toros por la unidad" (Macías 18).



Image 103. Abascal's use of the iconography of the bull in the media

After comparing those against bullfighting with the enemies of Spain, Abascal's statements in *Marca* bear striking similarities to Francoist discourses. His rejection to call the Spanish national team "la roja" ("Nunca llamaré a la selección la roja, en todo caso la rojigualda" [Fernández and Campos 1]), as it is popularly known, seems to be based on the negative connotations that this color has in the Nationalist imaginary, for it referred to Republicans during the Civil War and the dictatorship. Besides, Franco's

support of a patriarchal society appears to resonate in Abascal's comment regarding the inferiority of women in sports competitions: "Normalmente la mujer no puede competir al mismo nivel que el hombre" (Fernández and Campos 1).¹⁹²

The virile bull icon also serves Abascal to challenge Spain's acceptance of LGBTQ+ rights. His party, which has opposed same-sex marriage and adoptions as well as LGBTQ+ school workshops, has pledged to curtail gay pride parades (Carreño 1-3). With some of its members linking homosexuality with bestiality as in Franco's times (Carreño; León), VOX's president decided to attend a bullfighting spectacle on the gay pride day, as documented in the press: "Un torero alegra el Día del Orgullo a Santi Abascal" (1). Hence, neglecting the celebration of the Pride festival, Abascal opted for the masculine spectacle of tauromachy to reclaim all those ideals in which his party believes.



Image 104. Image of Abascal's twitter account on the Day of the LGBT pride festival in Spain

¹⁹² In this regard, it is worth mentioning that VOX's congresswoman Alicia Rubio declared that "el feminismo es cáncer" y "la costura empodera a las mujeres" (1 Ramírez); a statement endorsed by Abascal himself: "prefiero la costura al feminismo supremacista" ("Abascal costura"). Besides, her proposal to offer a sewing course instead of feminism in the Spanish curriculum soon recalls the type of education given to women by the *Sección Femenina*, as noted by José Antequera in "El modelo de mujer de la Sección Femenina que pretende recuperar VOX" (1-3).

Embodiment of Franco's virile Spain, the symbol of the bull re-appears in the discursive construction of far-right political party VOX and of its leader Santiago Abascal. His politicization of bullfighting, for this is a herald of traditional Spanish values, not only resembles the calibrated promotion of the *fiesta nacional* to counteract the ideals of the Second Republic under *el Caudillo's* mandate, but it also goes hand in hand with Abascal's constant deployment of bull iconography to promulgate his group's agenda. With a rhetoric that clearly rehashes old tropes of Francoism—the reconquest, anti-immigration policies, hatred towards “los rojos,” and support of traditional family and gender models—the Basque politician's reappropriation of the iconic bovine to signify both the ideology of his organization and to self-fashion his public persona reminisces the biased use of taurine semiology during the Spanish dictatorship. In fact, if the Nationalist faction was identified with a potent bull in the Spanish press already during the Civil War, Abascal's comparison of his organization with “un miura” in his political speeches and interviews similarly conveys the belligerent, chauvinistic and masculinist essence of VOX. In fact, turned into an archetype of manhood in Franco's time, the iconic bull similarly forges Abascal's muscular, well-built figure. His outspoken obsession with physical exercise, which has granted him the epithet of “toro de gimnasio,” not only projects the image of a healthy, strong, young, and patriotic leader, but, above all, of a virile man, whose body, ultimately, represents VOX's ideal body politic.

Conclusion

As Claude Lévi-Strauss asserted, animals are essential in people's lives not only because they are good to eat, but, more importantly, because they are good to think with (26). An in-depth examination of the figurative fauna populating Franco's Spain has revealed the hidden political agenda conveyed through such zoomorphic representations. The Francoist bestiary explored in this project in a myriad of eclectic and multi-media discourses has certainly offered a window onto the pivotal role played by animal metaphors not only in the (de)construction of nation and gender during the Spanish dictatorship, but also in present-day politics in Spain, with the deployment of a similar animalesque rhetoric by the far-right political party VOX.

Based on Benedict Anderson's view of "nation as imagined community," this dissertation has shown how animal symbols were instrumental in processes of identity formation in Franco's Spain. Not mere social labels pigeonholing people into the fixed gender dichotomies heterosexual/homosexual, male/female obsessively drawn by the regime to carry out its ideological and political agenda, zoomorphic metaphors permeated all aspects of a person's life, since they helped shape the language of jurisprudence, medicine, education, religion, and culture. An integral part of the state's repressive and ideological apparatuses, to put it in Louis Althusser's words, these faunistic tropes became a fundamental tool in Francoist biopolitics. In fact, the forging of canonical manhood and womanhood upon images of wild and domestic animals, respectively, served the state to define the roles and delineate the physical and mental spaces traditionally assigned to the sexes—i.e., women as mothers and wives within the confines of the home and men as providers for their families in the public and intellectual spheres.

Furthermore, considering Michel Foucault's studies regarding discourses of sexuality and the control of the body in state-run institutions, the analysis of the Francoist bestiary in this complex web of official discourses has also indicated its pivotal role in the indoctrination, regulation, and oppression of citizens. The conceptualization of non-heteronormative males and females as all sorts of menacing beasts and infectious vermin contributed to the criminalization and pathologizing of these sexual orientations, which often materialized in their incarceration and reclusion in mental institutions, labor camps, and other punitive centers such as *el Patronato de protección de la mujer*. Similarly, framing the education of women in terms of the taming of the beast aided in the validation of domestic violence and the confirmation of pseudo-scientific works that, positing the mental inferiority of the female sex, helped to curtail women's aspirations outside the limits of the home.

Acutely aware of the state's construction of gender and nation through animal symbols, Spanish authors working in different cultural fields—cinema, music, and literature—intentionally deployed the Francoist bestiary to criticize the politics, society, religion, and sexuality of the regime. The study of three censored artistic productions rife with zoomorphic imagery, namely, the movie *La Gata*, the *copla* “La Loba” and the novel *Walter, ¿por qué te fuiste?*, has illustrated the calibrated reversal of the official bestiary rhetoric in the articulation of a counter-discourse aimed at the deconstruction of the fixed gender notions vertebrating Franco's Spain. On unveiling the subversive intentions behind the animalization of the female characters *la Gata*, *la Loba* and centaur woman Albina, this project reinforces Antonio Gramsci's theory of “cultural hegemony,” which underscores the role of culture as an instrument of social liberation to combat the *status quo*.

The exploration of zoomorphic symbolism in *La Gata* has shown how the animalization of its main female character is intended to criticize the Francoist construction of Catholic womanhood. The protagonist's (nick)name Gata/María has been read as a criticism of the two opposite archetypes of femininity whore/virgin that demonized and extolled females based on their sexual beliefs and behaviors. Her feline representation not only transmits her yearning for (sexual) independence—visually captured in her constant nocturnal outings to meet with her object of desire Juan—but also indicates a reversal of gender roles, particularly as regards relationships. The film, indeed, visually and linguistically renders María's active (sexual) pursuit of Juan as a cat chasing a mouse. Furthermore, María's opposition to the patriarchal world similarly transpires in the taurine imagery that shapes her *dramatis persona*. Her constant identification with the bull, epitome of Franco's virile Spain, clearly represents her appropriation of the masculine powers syncretized in her father's bullfighting state. Besides, although her final accidental death to save her partner's life apparently restores the patriarchal order that punishes women for their transgressions, María's tragic end—inevitable for a movie that had been subject to numerous censors' cuts—does not diminish the defying message of the protagonist, which persists through Juan's retelling of their love story.

Documenting the term “loba” as a sexual slur used to stigmatize (Republican) single mothers during the dictatorship, the analysis of “La Loba” has demonstrated how the motherly figure starring and naming the popular song fiercely attacks the patriarchal society that unjustly marginalizes women like her while exempting their male partners from any legal obligation towards their illegitimate children. The interpretation of the lyrics in light of the prevailing bestiary rhetoric has revealed how the protagonist manages to reconstruct her socially imposed zoomorphic identity by deconstructing the

discourse of power that her son is about to perpetuate when pronouncing the same words as his father to break up with his pregnant girlfriend. With the support of sociolinguistic research related to hate speech and oppression, the study has demonstrated that *la Loba*'s re-appropriation of her socially imposed animal label serves both as an expression of group solidarity towards other single mothers and as an effective mechanism to counteract abusive discourse practices that alter reality for the interest of a privileged group. In fact, the She-wolf's recognition of her faunistic sobriquet and exposure of her offspring's ignominious actions contribute to turning upside down the Francoist bestiary that misleadingly conferred the roles of predator and prey to sexually active females and their partners.

The section devoted to centaur woman Albina culminated the study of the animalized fictional characters at the core of the second half of this project and corroborated the subversive deployment of the bestial iconography in several works banned during the dictatorship. Research on the etymology of "centaur," from Greek "the piercing of the bull," sheds some light onto the significance of Moix's surrealistic creature in the context of the bestiary rhetoric that identified Franco himself—and his patriarchal regime—with the fierce bovine. Further investigations into Albina have confirmed how this surrealistic hybrid figure (half-human, half-horse) not only challenges the gender binary demarcated *ad nauseam* by the regime, but her amatory relations with the male protagonist also open a world of (sexual) fantasy that functions as a valve of escape from the repressed sexuality of Franco's ultraconservative society. In fact, applying the Bakhtinian carnival paradigm to the circus world to which Albina belongs has brought to the fore how the female centaur questions the fixed gender constructs and sexual taboos that characterized the dictatorship. Her performances in the artistic and sexual scenarios, where she adopts a masculine role with her unmanly lover,

along with the different disguises required for the shows illustrate that gender is a performance. In addition, seen within Moix's narrative production whereby animal metamorphosis symbolizes people's rejection of the human world, Albina's transformation from a girl onto a female centaur in the precise moment of the Civil War has been regarded as an escapist mechanism from the military conflict and as a criticism of the dehumanization of Spanish society. Finally, taking into account the bestial iconography pervasive in *Walter*, the chapter concluded that Albina's tragic suicide and ensuing sale as horse meat to a slaughterhouse while the circus caravan departs from the city represents the loss of (sexual) fantasy and humanity in the dark reality of Franco's Spain.

Apart from lending a fresh perspective to the subject of Francoism, this dissertation also becomes a springboard to analyze more contemporary Spanish creations that similarly recur to the bestial iconography when revisiting dictatorial Spain. Certainly, adopting this approach to literary and filmic works such as Julio Llamazares' *Luna de lobos* (1985), Eduardo Mendicutti's *El palomo cojo* (1991)—adapted cinematographically by Jaime de Armiñán (1991)—Juan Marsé's *Rabos de lagartija* (2000), Juan Eslava Galán's *La mula* (2003), Vicente Villanueva's *Mariquita con perro* (2007), Eduardo Mendoza's *Riña de gatos* (2010) or Olga Merino's *Perros que ladran en el sótano* (2012), to mention a few, may shed some light onto the critical intentions of contemporary authors that recreate and reflect upon dictatorial Spain.

Besides paving the way for future research in the cultural field, this dissertation also becomes relevant to understand Spain's present-day politics. The striking similarities between the bestial rhetoric in the doctrines upheld by Franco's administration and Abascal's VOX, the Spanish far-right party, should be deemed as a warning sign of a return to the not-so-distant past of Spanish history. After all, having

become the third national force in the country's last general election (2019), the party with a strong appeal to the Francoist nostalgic is aptly identified with the menacing bull in national and international media, for it poses a real threat to Spain's democratic and pluralistic society.

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