

MARGINALITY IN HEGEMONY:
WOMEN ON THE MARGIN OF MARRIAGE IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY SPANISH
THEATER

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ABSTRACT

MARGINLAITY IN HEGEMONY: WOMEN ON THE MARGIN OF MARRIAGE IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY SPANISH THEATER

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This dissertation analyzes four plays from twentieth-century Spain: Federico García Lorca's *Bodas de sangre*, Antonio Buero Vallejo's *La tejedora de sueños*, Antonio Gala's *Anillos para una dama*, and Paloma Pedrero's *Locas de Amar*. *La malquerida* by Jacinto Benavente is introduced as a counterpoint. Each of the primary plays features a female protagonist who is on the margin of marriage. This includes engaged women, widows (both literal and figurative), and divorced women. Because they exist outside of the confines of typical marriage situations, these women are able to possess greater power and freedom than their traditionally married counterparts. Each play is examined in the light of four major theories: gender theory, subaltern theory, theater theory, and marginality in hegemony. Marginality in hegemony is introduced in this study and is based on the interplay of the first three theories. As presented in the theater, women who are simultaneously hegemonic due to their social class and marginalized (subaltern) due to their sex exist in marginality in hegemony. This state, when applied to women on the margin of marriage provided twentieth-century playwrights with a vehicle for subversion, both of their government and their society.

Bodas de sangre displays the innovation of the avant-garde both in style and subversive nature. By presenting a young woman who tries to overcome an overwhelming passion in order to marry according to her social class and the wishes of her father, Lorca questions the role that women are expected to play in their society.

In *La tejedora de sueños*, Buero Vallejo presents an alternative version of the myth of Homer's *Odyssey*. His Penélope has chosen a suitor, Anfino, a servant in her household. Instead of being overjoyed and relieved by her husband's return, she sees his disguise as a form of cowardice and sends him from home. By questioning the heroic status of Ulises, Buero Vallejo also leads the spectator to examine the validity of modern heroes.

Gala's *Anillos para una dama* presents the story of Jimena, the wife of el Cid, after the death of her husband. She has fallen in love with Minaya, but is prevented by the king from seeking a marriage based on love. The image of her husband and its importance to Spain demand that she preserve the image that he is irreplaceable. During her husband's life and after his death, Jimena's desires are ignored for the good of the country. Gala's heroine is a model for Spain as it nears the end of the dictatorship. It longs for freedom, but cannot throw off its past.

Pedrero presents a clearly democratic and feminist work with *Locas de amar*. When Eulalia, a traditional wife is faced with her husband abandoning her for another woman, she must reexamine her life and her goals. Through the help of a therapist, she discovers her ability to experience pleasure, and her validity as an individual. Her choice to remain alone and pursue and education instead of marrying her therapist or accepting her errant husband showcases the possibilities available to women under the democracy.

Each of these plays features at least one woman on the margin of marriage who is wealthy but subordinate to men. Although each woman's attempts to achieve her desires, regardless of what is demanded by her society, end in failure, they push the boundaries of the theater and of their sex; making it possible for the next generation to reach farther in the quest for equality.

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Introduction

The many changes in government as well as social and artistic movements in twentieth-century Spain gave the writing of this century a great richness and variety. Literature and arts evolved quickly due to the many changes in both culture and politics. The most notable cultural movements of the century were modernism, the avant-garde, social realism, post-Francoism and postmodernism. Politically, Spain was shaped by the Second Republic, the Civil War, the Franco regime, and democracy. Theater was particularly important because it provided not only a means of expression, but also of social commentary and subversion.

This study explores the representation of women in non-traditional marriage roles – women on the margin of marriage—in four representative plays from twentieth-century Spanish theater: Federico García Lorca's *Bodas de sangre*, Antonio Buero Vallejo's *La tejedora de sueños*, Antonio Gala's *Anillos para una dama*, and Paloma Pedrero's *Locas de amar*. Each of these features one or multiple women who are not traditionally married as protagonists. Lorca's *Novia* goes from being engaged, to married, to widowed in the course of one day. For many years, the *Madre* has been a widow. Buero Vallejo's *Penélope* is a figurative widow, her husband is not verified as dead, but she has lived as widow for decades. Just leaving the period of mourning for her husband, *El Cid*, is Gala's *Jimena*. Pedrero's *Eulalia* finds herself abandoned by her husband and in the process of divorce. Her daughter, *Rocío*, has chosen to pursue an education before a marriage. All of these women exist on the margin of marriage.

Women on the margin of marriage possess a variety of characteristics that differentiate them from women in traditional roles, making them subversive characters. First, the women studied here have unassailable character; they have followed the cultural rituals required of women (namely, appropriate marriages). Also, these women were common. They were a sign

of the times in a century of political upheaval, economic depression, mass emigration, and war. Although not fitting into the traditionally acceptable roles for women (nun, wife, or seeking to become a wife), these protagonists of hegemonic social class are relatable to the upper-class audience of the times. These women are also powerful, but in an acceptable fashion. During much of the twentieth century, the only women in Spain that were allowed any power over property or children were widows. By using literal and figurative widows (until the democracy makes an independent woman less taboo), these playwrights are able to create socially acceptable powerful women. All of these characteristics confirm the specialized role played by the woman on the margin of marriage. She possesses the ability to fight for the rights of women because she is only a woman. Her relationship to men does not determine her identity. Her openly (and, due to censorship, sometimes covertly) subversive plight for equality would not have been possible for traditionally married women.

Because the different roles that they occupy in dramas throughout the century are a way to trace the evolution of the theater, women on the margin of marriage are also very important in the study of twentieth-century theater. The rights of all women were severely affected, pushed forward or dragged backward, with each governmental shift. The portrayal of these protagonists shows how the theater followed a path parallel to these rights, instead of the natural evolutionary path possible in other countries with less political upheaval.

The originality of this study is the choice to examine only women in non-traditional marital situations. Although the study of female characters in theater is common, women are studied as a whole, ignoring that they are differentiated by, as Judith Butler points out, “[. . .] class, race, ethnicity, and other axes of power relations [. . .]” (6). By studying women who exist on the margin of marriage, and consequently on the margin of the socially acceptable idea of a

woman, the mistaken concept of a general category of “woman” that fits every female character is dismantled. Women who do not follow the culturally accepted rituals that legitimize their sex in their society faced different challenges and different stigma than traditional females. All of the women studied here exist on the edge of marital space. This is an area that, according to the socially acceptable roles for women, should not exist. Women who did not fit into these roles were not considered proper women. In a society that created women’s identities based on their relationships to men, women on the margin of were undefinable. They could not be categorized like the others of their sex, but this did not make them cease to be women. The curious space occupied by these characters allowed them to represent more than themselves.

Although the women studied here do not occupy traditional roles for women, they are not exempt from the social rules that govern their society. As Kaja Silverman explains, society is based around the fundamental unit of the family, with the male subject as the head of the household (42). Although these women on the margin of marriage lack a dominant male in their lives, they are still subordinate to the men in their society. Male dominance was societally and governmentally assured during the majority of the twentieth century in Spain. The legitimized subordination of women throughout this time makes them subaltern figures according to Ranajit Guha’s definition: “[...] a general attribute of subordination in South Asian society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way” (Studies vii). Guha’s inclusion of gender in his explanation of the subaltern and the definite subordination of women in twentieth-century Spain allows for all Spanish women of the time to be considered subaltern figures, regardless of the traditional or non-traditional roles that they occupy. Social class and age still figured into Spanish society’s levels of dominance and subordination, thus although all women are subaltern, they are not all equally subaltern.

The women in this study occupy a hegemonic social class because of their secure financial positions. Benavente's Raimunda is married to a wealthy laborer, Lorca's Novia has a wealthy father, Buero Vallejo's Penélope is the queen of Ithaca, Gala's Jimena is the niece of the king and the duchess of Valencia, and Pedrero's Eulalia is financially stable in the absence of her husband. Despite the fiscal security of these women, they are consistently, until late-century drama, made subordinate to men. During the democracy, women are shown to be more independent, as Pedrero's work will show. The hegemonic social class of the women prevents them from being completely subaltern characters.

The elite social class and simultaneous marginalization due to sex calls for a new term to describe these women: marginality in hegemony. Existing in a state of marginality in hegemony allowed these women to represent both of the *dos españas*, that of the comfortable upper class and that of the lower classes that longed for freedom and change. The representation of these upper-class women made them more accessible to a primarily bourgeois audience. The social norms of domination and subordination were harder to ignore when the characters on stage closely resembled the women that were patronizing the theater. A subaltern character suffering at the hands of a hegemonic character would not be able to elicit an empathetic response from the audience because they would identify more with the oppressor than the oppressed. Marginality in hegemony allowed for the presentation of characters that simultaneously portrayed and subverted cultural norms.

In addition to theories of subalternity, gender, and marginality in hegemony, theater theory will be utilized to explore the use of female characters in non-traditional marriage situations. The cycle of production, performance and reception will show how the world of theater was influenced and how it evolved over the course of the twentieth century. Theater

progressed at the same rate as twentieth-century Spain, though often in a different direction. The changes in the horizon of expectation evidenced the social changes (not the governmentally mandated changes) not only in what was acceptable but in what was considered subversive, taboo, or commonplace. This required directorial discretion to assure that the theatrical styles and themes would be received by the audience in the manner in which the playwright desired. The progress and change in theater styles also changed the representation of women on the margin of marriage.

The interplay of gender, subaltern, and theater theories provides fertile ground for the examination of a previously unrecognized sub-group of women on stage. This study will show that women on the margin of marriage who exist in marginality in hegemony are both common in twentieth-century Spanish theater and ideal to the playwrights that created them. The Novia, Penélope, Jimena, Eulalia, and other similar women in twentieth-century Spanish theater provided the perfect vehicles for the subversion of social norms.

Chapter one introduces the theoretical framework that will be used to analyze the plays. It is divided into five principal sections. The first section introduces gender theory with the perspective of three primary gender theorists: Simon de Beauvoir, Gayle Rubin, and Judith Butler. The second section introduces theories of masculinity with the theories of Kaja Silverman and Michel Foucault. The third segment deals with theories of subalternity using the works of Antonio Gramsci, Ranajit Guha, and the Latin American Subaltern Group. Theater theory is introduced next, highlighting the theories of W. B. Worthen, Eli Rozik, Erika Fischer-Lichte, Elin Diamond, and Hans Robert Jauss. The final portion introduces the theory of marginality in hegemony, how the interplay of all of the previously introduced theories is necessary to its understanding, and how it will be used in the analyses of the plays studied.

After the introduction of the theories, the drama *La malquerida* (1913) by Jacinto Benavente will be introduced as a counterpoint. Benavente began writing dramas at the end of the Romantic era. Although his style is primarily that of realism, touches of the romantic are still evident in his works. The protagonist in this drama is Raimunda, the wife of a wealthy laborer. Raimunda was widowed when her daughter, Acacia, was very young. As an alternative to living in poverty, she chose to marry a second time. Her inability to live in a financially secure situation after the death of her first husband, her re-marriage, and her initial willingness to choose the happiness of her husband over that of her daughter differentiate her from the protagonists of the plays from later in the twentieth century. Benavente has a character that lives in marginality in hegemony, but instead of using that character as a means of subversion, he uses her to uphold the status quo.

Chapter two examines Federico García Lorca's *Bodas de sangre* (1933) written during the Second Republic. This drama provides a variety of marital situations for examination. The Novia, who goes from engaged, to married, to widowed during the course of the drama shares her role as protagonist with the Madre, who has been widowed for decades. The Mujer de Leonardo is a secondary character, but the only traditionally married woman in the drama. Lorca subtly leads his spectators to identify with the Novia before orchestrating her fall from grace while fleeing her wedding with a married man. *Bodas de sangre* calls the entire institution of marriage into question by presenting only one happy marriage: one where the husband died years ago and that marriage is only *remembered* as perfect. By combining the hegemonic social class with the marginalized sex of the Novia, and then portraying her passion for an unapproved man in an eloquent and powerful way, Lorca leads his spectators to wonder why two characters that share such deep feelings for one another should not be allowed to marry simple because they are

from different social classes. This drama suggests that happiness for women is only possible if they are of low social class, and can marry a man of any financial status, or if they are free to marry the man that they love, not the man that is chosen for them. Both of these go against the fabric of society in Lorca's Spain. *Bodas de sangre* questions the role of women in society subtly and eloquently and cements Lorca's fame as a playwright.

The third chapter analyzes Antonio Buero Vallejo's *La tejedora de sueños* (1952) and the early dictatorship. This drama presents an alternative version of the myth of Ulysses. Buero Vallejo suggests that Penélope chose a suitor, but was unable to marry him because he was a servant, not a nobleman. Though she is the queen of Ithaca, Penélope is not powerful enough to choose the man that she wants and marry him. She is conscious that the other suitors will kill the man that she chooses, and her son also seeks to control her decisions. Despite being controlled by the men that occupy her household, when her husband returns she has the strength to send him away in disgust for his cowardice. Penélope faces a challenge similar to that of the Novia, in that she is from too high of a social class to marry a common man, but not sufficiently strong, due to her sex, to overcome the rules of men that oblige her to marry someone of her own caste. Buero Vallejo also uses the character of Penélope to critique Ulises, and consequently the "great heroes" that were ruling the Spain of the dictatorship. Buero Vallejo's questioning of societal norms had to be more subtle than that of Lorca, as he lived during the time of strict censorship, but his agility at drawing comparisons between the government and a hero that failed everyone as well as leading the audience to identify with a rebellious character allowed him to entertain his spectators and critique his government.

The fourth chapter is dedicated to Antonio Gala's *Anillos para una dama* (1974) and the late Franco dictatorship. Because censorship laws lessened in stringency due to the 1966 Press

Law, Gala was able to take on a national myth with less fear of imprisonment or other severe measures that would have been faced earlier in the dictatorship. When asked his opinion of the remarriage of Jacqueline Kennedy, Gala began to think of the situation of Jimena after the death of her husband. Jimena was a powerful woman in her right, as the duchess of Valencia and the niece of the king. When the official mourning for the death of her husband ends, she approaches the king with a petition to remarry. Although the king initially approves this marriage as a means of fortifying her position, he balks at the idea that she should, as she desires, marry Minaya for love. Through Jimena's memories, Gala humanizes the hero and shows that the lot of his wife was a difficult one. Although Jimena seeks to become a traditionally married woman again, her status as the widow of the hero prevents that possibility. Jimena has power, but her dead husband is still far more powerful than she will ever be. Spain needed the image of the hero and it was Jimena that was able to keep that image alive. The denial of Jimena's wishes and her move to a convent to live out her days leaves the spectators wishing that she had been successful. Through the use of modern dress and language, Gala relates Jimena's struggle to the modern day, casting the protagonist as a metaphor for Spain at the end of the dictatorship. Like Jimena, Spain was ready for a new era and a change. Though Jimenas's defeat seems to show that Gala supports maintaining the myths of Spain, he does not leave the myth untouched. By showing that Jimena loved another man, and perhaps did not love her husband, Gala makes a man out of the myth, a very daring move in a time when national heroes were prized by the country's leadership.

The final chapter analyzes Paloma Pedrero's *Locas de amar* (1996) and the democracy in Spain. Eulalia, the protagonist of this drama showcases the democracy from the first moment, when it becomes clear that she is on the path to divorce. Because she was raised during the

dictatorship, caring for her husband and child is all she was trained to do, and because her husband left her and her daughter is an adult, she does not know what to do with her life. She is juxtaposed with her daughter who makes full use of the options provided to women by the democracy and instead of seeking to get married, she is studying to become a doctor. Through the help of a therapist, Eulalia discovers her anger at her husband, her ability to experience sexual fulfillment, and her inner strength. As she comes to terms with her divorce, she finds herself facing declarations of love from her estranged husband and her therapist. Throwing off the role of the traditional woman, Eulalia chooses to remain alone and to pursue an education instead of a marriage. By showing Eulalia's ability to become something more than a wife and a mother, Pedrero leads her audience to reconsider the role that women still play decades after they have been freed to be something different. Men and women alike had to confront the reality that the lives that they had been leading were still oppressive to women. While questioning the validity of a marriage that subjugates women, Pedrero also reinforces the importance of relationships between women as a source of solidarity and support.

All of the dramas studied here showcase women on the margin of marriage who live in marginality in hegemony. All of these women defy the social norm and the model of the family that orients itself around a man. Whether they achieve happiness or not, each of the women featured in these dramas is used by the playwright to subvert the social norms. Although the format of the plays and the overt nature of the subversion vary according to what the government allowed playwrights to express, each of these dramas leads the audience to question the role of women in modern Spanish society.

Theories of Gender, Masculinity, Subalternity, Theater and Marginality in Hegemony

The artistic production of twentieth-century Spain was created in a time of great political turmoil which provided periods of both vast liberty and tight constraints. Although advances were achieved in all fields of art, some of the greatest productions were those in the theater. Playwrights from all periods of this century pushed the boundaries of the traditional, exploring new and reexamining old themes and characters. The theater of this century provided a number of characters worthy of consideration, most notably many female protagonists. For modern-day playwrights such as Paloma Pedrero, who consciously comments on the situation of women in order to change it, the choice to use women in her starring roles is a necessity. For playwrights such as Federico García Lorca, Antonio Buero Vallejo and Antonio Gala, however, the reason for choosing female protagonists was not as evident. When Gala was interviewed regarding the choice of women to fill his leading roles, his answer is a good indicator of why many playwrights made the same choice:

[. . .] a lo largo de la historia de la humanidad, la mujer ha personificado más ideas, ha encarnado más símbolos, ha incorporado más alegorías que el hombre. La humanidad, de una forma casi filial, instintiva—y muy justificada —, confía más en la mujer; descansa más en ella. Por si fuera poco, parece que los sentimientos que caracterizan al ser humano logran, en el alma femenina, una floración y una cosecha especialmente luminosas y visibles. (Interview 27)

These reasons stated by Gala give powerful rationale for the incorporation of female protagonists. Spectators confided in women as unimpeachable characters and that made them ideal protagonists for theater that wished to be inconspicuously subversive.

Among the frequent female protagonists in twentieth-century Spanish theater, many occupy an important subgroup of women in non-traditional marriage roles. In order to fully understand the importance of these women on the margin of marriage in the theater of the twentieth century, multiple theories must be applied. Gender theory is necessary to understand the role of women in twentieth-century Spain. Subaltern theory is also important because of gender, as women by their sex alone can be considered subaltern figures. Theories of masculinity address the crisis of masculinity apparent in twentieth-century Spain. Also, because these works are dramas and not narratives, theater theory must be used to understand them. The combination of all of these theories leads to marginality in hegemony, which addresses the unique position and representation of women of high social class. Although each of these theories elucidates some aspect of twentieth-century Spanish theater and the representation of non-traditional women therein, it is the interplay of all of them that provides for a true understanding.

In addition to explaining the theories that will be used to understand the four principal plays in this study, this chapter will also include a counterpoint. *La malquerida* by Jacinto Benavente will be used to show how dramas from early in the twentieth-century had more traditional female protagonists and a less subversive nature.

Gender Theory: Simone de Beauvoir, Gayle Rubin, and Judith Butler

Gender theory is critically important to understanding the role of non-traditional women in twentieth-century theater. Gender was, and to a lesser extent still is, essential in determining what was customary and acceptable for women. In order to classify a woman's role as traditional or otherwise, several aspects of her life must be taken into account: her behavior,

social standing, relationships with other women and men, and her role in society as a whole. All of these factors, however, are subordinate to the primary consideration of her gender. To address gender theory, three main theorists will be used: Simone de Beauvoir, Gayle Rubin, and Judith Butler. Although these three women are from different time periods and they address gender and feminism in different ways, their theories complement each other to form a coherent idea of the factors that determined a woman's identity and her role in the society of twentieth-century Spain.

In the introduction to *The Second Sex* (1949), Simone de Beauvoir made a statement about women that has defined Women's Studies ever since: "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (35). In Beauvoir's view, it is civilization as a whole, not some particular aspect of it, which determines women's role in society. For example, it was not just the government during the Franco dictatorship that oppressed women; the church, societal traditions, and culture, in addition to a variety of other factors, contributed to that subjugation. All of the aspects of civilization that surrounded a woman made her what she was in her society; one element alone was not enough to determine her role.

Beauvoir also posits that women occupy the role of the Other, that is, they are defined by not being men: "She is defined and differentiated with reference to a man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute—she is the Other" (29). This theory is critically important to the study of women in non-traditional marriage roles in twentieth-century Spain because Spanish culture during this century aligned with this idea. Women were not important in and of themselves, but only in reference to men.

Beauvoir's theory on women as the Other provides a point of departure to explore the role of the non-traditional woman in Spanish society. Women are the Other because they are not men, the figure upon which their society and their negative identity is based. In twentieth-century Spain, a woman's centrally defining point was her relationship to men. A woman was a man's wife, daughter, sister, or mother. In and of herself, she was, as Beauvoir suggests, only incidental. Women outside the role of a traditionally married woman can be doubly considered the Other. They are not only the Other because of their sex, but also due to their status among women. They did not participate in the roles that were considered acceptable for their sex. Sometimes their departures from the norm were unavoidable due to their circumstances, but in other situations, these women chose to behave in a way that deviated from the standards of acceptable female behavior. Women who remained on the margin of marriage did not associate themselves with men in a manner that was accepted by society. The female characters studied here do not fit into the role ascribed to women by their society. Thus, they become something other than women. Because their society did not have a way to identify a woman that was not associated with men, her identity was negative. Not only to men, but to other women as well, women on the margin of marriage—women who were not married, but had been or were going to wed—were the Other.

As the study of gender progressed throughout the twentieth century, a distinction emerged that differentiated sex from gender. Sex was considered to be a fixed, biological characteristic while gender was seen as a social construct. The stable nature of sex offered significantly less area for study than the fluid and constantly changing social climate that

determined gender. Thus, when the study of feminism became more prevalent,¹ it was gender, not sex that was nearly always the central focus. Because sex was unchangeable, feminism sought to alter the way that society constructed the feminine identity.

Twentieth-century Spain is ideal for studying the difference between sex and gender because of the many leadership and social changes that occurred. Due to the frequent governmental shifts in Spain, and the consequences those fluctuations had on the rights of women, the difference between sex and gender was more pronounced in certain parts of the century than in others. At the beginning of the twentieth century, up until the Second Republic, and also during the Franco dictatorship, sex and gender were essentially the same thing. Although gender was socially constructed, it was based entirely on sex. A woman's sex prescribed her role in society. In both of these time periods, that role was the *ángel del hogar*. Being female meant that you married and stayed in the house, bearing and raising children and managing the domestic sphere. During the Republic, women had equal rights to men, so a woman's job was not necessarily based on her sex. Being a woman could mean more than staying at home. The social construct of gender now allowed a wider definition of what it meant to be female. This differentiation between sex and gender grew even more pronounced with the installation of the democracy.

¹ Feminism is seen as having three "waves" throughout its existence. The first wave is the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The second wave is the mid-twentieth century. The third wave is the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The focus here is the theories that were developed in the second and third waves, where some countries had developed rights for women, allowing for considerations beyond a fight for basic rights.

The differentiation of sex and gender became very important to the study of feminism, as can be seen in the work of Gayle Rubin. Her article, “The Traffic in Women: Notes of the ‘Political Economy’ of Sex” (1975), examines the position of women in systems of class oppression by employing the theories of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. She also considers the oppression of women as it is seen in anthropology (Claude Lévi-Strauss) and psychoanalysis (Sigmund Freud). The works of Lévi-Strauss and Freud are seen by Rubin as overlapping and she considers them: “[...] the place to begin to unravel the system of relationships by which women become the prey of men [...]” (106). She uses these works to understand the systematic oppression of women. When exploring Marxism, Rubin notes that sex was not a tremendously important consideration: “In Marx’s map of the social world, human beings are workers, peasants, or capitalists; that they are also men and women is not seen as very significant” (107). This stands in stark contrast to the theories of Lévi-Strauss and Freud in whose maps of social reality Rubin says: “There is a deep recognition of the place of sexuality in society, and of the profound differences between the social experience of men and women” (107). The works of Lévi-Strauss and Freud provide important material for the understanding of male/female relationships and it is for this reason the Rubin uses the ideas of these two theorists to develop her own concepts regarding the relation of sex to gender.

Despite the tendency of some gender theorists to focus on gender instead of sex, to truly understand the feminine and feminism, both must be considered. Rubin’s work on feminism exemplifies this dual focus through her examination of the “sex/gender system,” which she generally describes as “[...] the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity, and in which these transformed sexual needs are satisfied” (106). She defines gender alone as a “[...] socially imposed division of the sexes. It is

a product of the social relations of sexuality” (121). Thus, for Rubin, sex is biological, gender is social, and the first is converted into the second. In her words, there is a “[...] systematic social apparatus which takes up females as raw materials and fashions domesticated women as products” (106). Although sex and gender are considered by Rubin as two different entities, the first is seen as a crucial element in the formation the second.

The first crucial element in the construction is sex; the second is Rubin’s concept of the social apparatus. This explains the instability of gender in Spain throughout the twentieth century. Because social conditions, which were based primarily on the government, determined how a person’s sex was translated into gender, the instability of the government made gender unstable as well. Thus, throughout the century, a woman’s sex, when subjected to the current social apparatus was able to produce varied outcomes. Given the frequent political upheavals during this century, even within the period of one woman’s lifetime, the social system could assign her very different gender roles.²

Rubin’s discussion of the perception and transmission of the phallus is also important to the study of women on the margin of marriage. For her discussion of the phallus, Rubin centers on Jacques Lacan’s theory because it avoids anatomical associations with the penis, focusing instead on desire and need.³ Outside of Lacan’s ideas, she provides her own definition:

² After 1939 the political upheavals were much less frequent, but their enduring character created thoroughly developed gender roles that were difficult to achieve during the earlier, more frequent governmental and social shifts.

³ Lacan’s definition of the phallus is not a penis, but an object of desire, a “fully-satisfying love object” (IEP). This is different from Rubin’s definition of the phallus, but closer to Rubin’s ideas than Freud, who focuses on the phallus as an object of envy.

It is where we [women] aren't. In this sense, the phallus is more than a feature which distinguishes the sexes: it is the embodiment of the male status, to which men accede, and in which certain rights inhere—among them, the right to a woman. It is an expression of the transmission of male dominance. It passes through women and settles upon men. The tracks which it leaves include gender identity, the division of the sexes. (131)

This definition of the phallus is tremendously important to the identity of the female characters studied here because they, and the playwrights that created them, occupied a phallogocentric culture, and many had a phallus. Thus Rubin's focus is less on desire and more on the status that comes naturally to men and is denied to women.

Because the phallus is passed from man to man, and never to a woman, a woman can never assume the position of power that is afforded to men by their possession of it. A married woman in a patriarchal society had no right to the position of power in her relationship with her husband; his sex made him the dominant figure. When a woman's husband died, disappeared, or left her, however, she did not receive that phallus that had been his. If she had male children, such as Homer's Penelope did, the phallus would pass over her to them. Even if she had no male children, the phallus did not become hers. Although she had to function in society, taking charge of the elements of life that were traditionally managed by men, she was neither allotted the same respect nor the same power as a man.⁴ She could attempt to fill the role of a man in her household, but her lack of the phallus would prevent her from occupying that position in society.

⁴ Even characters such as Lorca's Bernarda Alba, which many would consider as possessing a phallus, do not traditionally exercise the power or receive the respect associated

Because she did not possess the phallus, a woman that was not traditionally married did not have total control over herself. Rubin describes the rights of men with regard to women, considering those that men have *over* women. She mentions: “As long as men have rights in women which women do not have in themselves, the phallus also carries the meaning of the difference between ‘exchanger’ and ‘exchanged,’ gift and giver” (130). This is particularly true in kinship systems where women are treated as a form of commerce. A father has rights over his daughter until he gives her to a husband. The dissolution of that marriage in any form should, then, theoretically eliminate all rights over that woman except her own. This is not always the case, however, because some women have mature sons or brothers that claim rights over her in the event that the domination of her husband comes to an end. Nonetheless, it is true that women who are no longer married (particularly widows) had far more rights to determine the course of their own lives and their actions than married women.

Following her examination of theories of sex and gender and their application to women, Rubin sets new goals for the feminist movement. For her, feminism “must dream of the elimination of sexualities and sex roles. The dream I find most compelling is one of an androgynous and genderless (though not sexless) society, in which one’s sexual anatomy is irrelevant to who one is, what one does, and with whom one makes love” (140). Though the plays studied here do not question the validity of heterosexuality, they do demonstrate the idea that sexual anatomy does not necessarily determine identity. Biological sex is seen as something different from gender. A woman’s sex is determined by anatomy, while her gender is predicated upon her actions and society’s view of the role of women. Women on the margin of marriage

with the phallus outside of the home. Bernarda’s iron rule over her household does not extend to her role in society.

are the embodiment of this idea, because in twentieth-century Spanish drama we see them doing things that would traditionally only be done by men, despite their sex and their lack of the phallus.

A different view of the relationship of sex and gender was presented by Judith Butler, one of the best-known and most influential gender theorists. Her book *Gender Trouble* (1991) transformed the study of gender and sex as well as the consideration of the binary gender system (male/female) that has long been used for the understanding of both. She explains: “Even if the sexes appear to be unproblematically binary in their morphology and constitution, there is no reason to assume that genders ought to also remain as two” (9). For Butler, the support of this gender binarism is one of the great flaws of traditional feminism. She seeks to change the way that gender is viewed. This change would allow women who are not traditional in terms of gender roles to still be considered as part of the feminist movement.

Butler’s criticism of the binary male/female system counters the idea that certain behaviors are feminine. If gender is not exclusively a choice between two available options, the roles that people of both sexes can occupy increase exponentially. The women in the works studied here, though often occupying positions that are traditionally masculine, are not masculine themselves. Butler’s theory dispels the notion that behaviors of women *perceived* as pertaining to males comes from manly women. If no behavior is specifically masculine or feminine, those performing those acts are also able to avoid that form of classification. If the perception of behaviors can change, the reality of gender in society can do the same. Butler’s support of this idea is visible in the preface to the 1999 edition of *Gender Trouble*. She says: “I sought to counter those views that made presumptions about the limits and propriety of gender and

restricted the meaning of gender to received notions of masculinity and femininity” (vii). In her view, gender neither has to be masculine nor feminine. Gender can change, just as culture can.

For Butler, gender is a continuum. Through these considerations we begin to see many more options for women. Because behaviors are not inherently masculine or feminine, actions that have been traditionally considered masculine can be carried out by women (and vice versa) without creating conflict. Therefore, the women studied here cannot be considered as demonstrating masculine behaviors, or being “masculine women.” The continuum of gender prevents sex from being a determining factor in gender.

Butler’s continuum of gender provides different understanding of the relationship of sex and gender. Rubin examines the relationship that society creates between sex and gender, while Butler views both as social constructs. Both theorists acknowledge a strong social component in the creation of gender. Rubin uses the concept of the social apparatus while Butler explains as follows:

Although the unproblematic unity of “women” is often invoked to construct a solidarity of identity, a split is introduced in the feminist subject by the distinction between sex and gender. Originally intended to dispute the biology-is-destiny formulation, the distinction between sex and gender serves the argument that whatever biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed: hence, gender is neither the causal result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex. (8)

Neither theorist thinks that gender results causally from sex. Instead a strong social component is involved in the determination of gender. Butler later explains that she believes sex to be as socially constructed as gender,⁵ a point where she does deviate from traditional feminism.

Butler also disagrees with the generalized conception of structures of domination and of women. Women are not all the same, and not all are dominated in the same way. The appeal of this generalized conception is that it creates solidarity among all women and establishes a common enemy: the patriarchy. If gender is not seen as a binary system, it becomes much more difficult to establish a universal conception of the patriarchy and of feminism. The idea of women as a generalized group, however, continues to be employed. Butler notes: “Although the claim of universal patriarchy no longer enjoys the kind of credibility it once did, the notion of a generally shared conception of ‘women,’ the corollary to that framework, has been much more difficult to displace” (5). Placing all women in the same group is insufficient and, as Butler notes, ignores such issues as class, race, and ethnicity (4). Although race and ethnicity are not important components in the theater of twentieth-century Spain, class is an indispensable consideration not only in the plot of the drama, but also in the intended audience, because it is used to establish a point of social division and to ensure audience identification with characters.

The most important contribution of Butler to the study of gender is the concept of gender as performance. For Butler, gender creates itself—it is “performatively produced” (34). As

⁵ Butler’s exact quote is: “If the immutable character of sex is contested, perhaps this construct called ‘sex’ is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps it was always already gender, with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all” (9-10).

Butler herself notes, her first explanation of performativity received a great deal of criticism.⁶

As a result, the introduction to her 1999 edition of *Gender Trouble* contains a clearer explanation of exactly what performativity means:

In the first instance, then, the performativity of gender revolves around this metalepsis, the way in which the anticipation of gendered essence produces that which it posits as outside itself. Secondly, performativity is not a singular act, but a repetition and a ritual, which achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of a body, understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration (XV).

Thus, for Butler, gender is not stable. It changes based on performance, not of the individual but of a social group. It can be said that gender is as gender does. Also, the repetition naturalizes the division of men and women and the roles prescribed to different genders in society. By repeating the acts that form their gender, people also forge their identities. Generations of men and women follow in the footsteps of their parents, and with each repetition, the sharp delineation of male and female characteristics and duties is reinforced. In the plays addressed here, Butler's theory of performativity explains the societally enforced division of men and women and of male and female identities.

Butler's theories present a foundation to rethink female representations in twentieth-century Spanish theater. Her ideas of performativity and the importance of repetition in the

⁶ Butler specifically notes insightful criticisms from Bidy Martin, Eve Sedgwick, Slavoj Žižek, Wendy Brown, Saidiya Hartman, Mandy Merck, Lynne Layton, Timothy Kaufmann-Osborne, Jessica Benjamin, Seyla Benhabib, Nancy Fraser, Diana Fuss, Jay Presser, Lisa Duggan, and Elizabeth Grosz

formation of gender show that the strict delineation of male and female identities in twentieth-century Spain is not natural but historical. Butler shows that, despite the perceived natural differentiation between appropriate male and female actions, it is the culturally enforced repetition of certain roles and behaviors that are responsible for this segregation.

Beauvoir, Rubin, and Butler approach feminism from different angles, and follow the progression of the movement over the course of the twentieth century. Beauvoir distinguishes men from women, Rubin distinguishes sex from gender, and Butler defines the way in which gender is created. All three theorists share the idea of a social component in the differentiating of male and female. They also see male power passed through generations in the same manner as female subjugation. The reason for specific gender identities is identified. Together, these theories explain why the protagonists in *Bodas de sangre*, *La tejedora de sueños*, *Anillos para una dama*, and *Locas de amar*, as women forced to contend in a male-dominated world, must both acknowledge and overcome the gender identities that their society has assigned to them.

Masculinity: Kaja Silverman

The feminist theories of masculinity are also very important to the understanding of the marginalization of twentieth-century Spanish women and their theatrical representations. Masculinity is based on not only the idea of the separation of the sexes, but of the male figure as the head of society's most fundamental unit: the family and thus also the State. One of the most influential theories of masculinity is explained by Kaja Silverman. In her book, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins*, she introduces the concept of the dominant fiction: "*Male Subjectivity at the Margins* will theorize the ideological reality through which we 'ideally' live both the symbolic order and the mode of production as the 'dominant fiction,' and it will posit the positive Oedipus complex as the primary vehicle of insertion into that reality" (2). Using this

concept of dominant fiction, Silverman points out the binary system that Butler critiques: “‘Male’ and ‘female’ constitute out dominant fiction’s most fundamental binary opposition” (35). It is the joining of these two opposing figures, male and female, that forms a family and legitimizes masculinity. According to Silverman, this image of the family is critical to society’s definitions of its relationships and the legitimization of masculinity: “[T]he dominant fiction presents the social formation with its most fundamental image of unity, the family. The collectives of community, town, and nation have all traditionally defined themselves through reference to that image” (42). The family, seen as a unified group, headed by the male subject is considered essential to our reality: “[...] our ‘dominant fiction’ or ideological ‘reality’ solicits our faith above all else in the unity of the family, and the adequacy of the male subject” (Silverman 16). If the male figure to which women are, through the views of society, legally or socially subordinate is not present, the dominant fiction is destroyed. Society is built on an idea that can only be sustained as long as the legitimacy of male-dominated families is maintained as fundamental. The protagonists in the dramas considered in this study defy the dominant fiction by maintaining the unit of the family stable and intact while the male figure is absent. They question the need for the male dominance which society requires.

Silverman’s idea of the dominant fiction expresses ideas similar to those of subaltern theory. The dominant male subject is also the hegemonic subject. Faith in the unity of the family, as the dominant fiction requires, also necessitates a male subject that is capable of heading that family. As the head of the family, a man must be able to be a hegemonic presence, that which dominates the subaltern presence of the female. It is also important to note that the family does not consist only of the male element. A family involves both male and female, both the hegemonic and the subaltern. The family is a place of balance.

Silverman's insistence on the unity of the family and the essential nature of the male subject helps us to understand why there was a crisis of masculinity in twentieth-century Spain. The Disaster of 1898, the frequent political upheavals, including the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, the Second Republic, the Civil War as well as the ensuing poverty (partially) related to the autarky, and the repression of the dictatorship all confronted men with situations that they could not control, calling into question their adequacy. The resultant crisis in masculinity is also sometimes called male hysteria. In her book *Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Culture*, Elaine Showalter talks about the clinical origins of hysteria:

Although male hysteria has been clinically identified at least since the seventeenth century, physicians have hidden it under such euphemistic diagnoses as neurasthenia, hypochondria, phthiatism, neuropasia, eleorexia, koutorexie, Briquet's syndrome, [and in the twentieth century] shell shock, or post-traumatic stress disorder. (64)

Joseba Gabilondo, in his article on male hysteria uses Showalter's description of male hysteria to talk about the manifestations of this hysteria in the twentieth century:

In this historical context, the last decade of the nineteenth century is crucial in precipitating the "disappearance" of male hysteria. In the twentieth century, male hysteria continues to emerge although always disguised under new euphemistic terms such as the ones listed by Showalter. More specifically, male hysteria reoccurs in two fronts in which the male body experiences utter defenselessness: poverty and war.

In addition to poverty and war, which were certainly prevalent during the twentieth century, three other factors contributed to the crisis of masculinity: the disruptions of the traditional nuclear family through an increase in the number of widows (particularly after the

civil war), the rise of feminism, and the legalization of divorce.⁷ As the head of the family, and, thus, the traditional site of power in the family, men had to find a way to deal with widows, figurative widows, divorcees, and feminist women. Maintaining or recovering the power over all women was fundamental to the retention of male domination and the preservation of the unit of the family.

The theories of masculinity are important to this study because they explain male dominance, while questioning its legitimacy. It is particularly important in these dramas because the central male element is missing in Lorca's *Bodas de sangre*, Buero Vallejo's *La tejedora de sueños*, Gala's *Anillos para una dama*, and Pedrero's *Locas de amar*. Each of these dramas has a family that was once submissive to a dominant male but that has, in the absence of that masculine figure, preserved, and occasionally even flourished. The idea that a woman is as capable as a man as the head of the family is suggested in each of these dramas, and lends them their inherently subversive nature.

Subaltern Theory: Antonio Gramsci, Ranajit Guha, and the Latin American Subaltern Group

Three important points that are only partially addressed by feminism are race, class, and power. These three topics heavily influenced the lives of women in twentieth-century Spain, and although they are not a central focus in the gender theories considered here, they can be understood using subaltern theory. This theory addresses marginal groups of all types. Subaltern theory is not commonly associated with the theater or with twentieth-century Spain,

⁷ Although divorce was not legal during much of the twentieth century, during the Second Republic and again after the installation of the democracy, divorce was, and is legal in Spain.

but it is a theory that relates to nearly all women. If women are viewed as occupying a subaltern or marginal position, a link can be seen between women and other marginalized groups. The authors who have most developed the theories of the subaltern are Antonio Gramsci, Ranajit Guha, and the theorists of the Latin American Subaltern Group.

Gramsci explains the subaltern as one half of a binary relationship, the other half of which is the dominant. Gramsci negatively defines the subaltern subject itself; he merely establishes that the subaltern exists as a group of classes that, by definition are not unified and can only unite when they become part of a “State,” where the unity of the ruling, or hegemonic class is realized (52). This “State” is also what prevents the subaltern classes from gaining power through the use of what Gramsci terms politics. Although the subaltern classes do not have power, Gramsci remarks that among subaltern groups, some do bring to bear some hegemony:

Among the subaltern groups, one will exercise or tend to exercise a certain hegemony through the mediation of a party; this must be established by studying the development of all the other parties too, in so far as they include elements of the hegemonic group or of the other subaltern groups which undergo such hegemony. (53)

This certain hegemony exercised by some groups, therefore, should not be confused with that held by the ruling classes. The groups that possess some hegemonic characteristics are still subordinate to the dominant group, but they are stronger than the other subjugated groups. It is similar to the adage that says that in the land of the blind, the man with one eye is king.

According to Gramsci, a social group in Italy must express leadership and exist in a state of “political hegemony” before attaining governmental powers (57). None of this can be

achieved by a subaltern group because in its essence it is a “led” group, not a “leading” group. Thus the subaltern cannot achieve governmental powers. This can be extended outside of Italy and the governmental and political realm to apply to any type of power. In order to achieve political hegemony, multiple subaltern groups must band together as one. As long as the subaltern allows itself to be led instead of uniting to make a bid for a leading position, power of any sort cannot be achieved.

An important aspect of Gramsci’s theory is that he sees the subaltern as a social group or groups. He also focuses on political power. In this, Gramsci’s view of the subaltern differs from that of later theorists because it ignores the impact of caste, age, gender, and colonial history. The other theorists studied here allow an exploration of the subaltern that goes beyond social groups to see different types of domination. These theorists also move beyond Gramsci’s focus on political power to explore the many types of power that can and cannot be achieved by the subaltern.

One theorist in particular that proposed a wider definition of the subaltern was Ranajit Guha. In the aftermath of the Indian independence from Great Britain, Guha turned to Gramsci’s theory of the subaltern and developed it to apply India due to the main shortcomings of nationalist historiography. Similar to Gramsci, Guha sees the subaltern as one of the elements of a binary relationship: “We recognize, of course, that subordination cannot be understood except as one of the constitutive terms in a binary relationship of which the other is dominance [...]” (*Subaltern Studies* vii). Guha does not see the subaltern as a social group, but as any dominated group, allowing for a wider definition of the subaltern. Any group that is subordinated in any way can be subaltern.

In volume one of *Subaltern Studies*, Guha expresses the principal ideas of what he considers to constitute the subaltern. He gives a succinct definition of the subaltern as: “[...] a general attribute of subordination in South Asian society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way” (vii). Though the subject of this study is Spain and its theater, the same concept of subalternity is still applicable. By introducing gender as one of the possible determining elements in the system of dominance and subordination, Guha makes his work indispensable both to the study of subalternity and to the study of gender. It is through Guha that the relationship between the two fields of study becomes evident. Guha’s definition of subalternity establishes the possibility of women as subaltern subjects. During the majority of the twentieth century, Spanish women were legally subordinate to men, making them subaltern according to Guha’s definition.

The subaltern debate is also prevalent in a discussion of Latin America. Because its colonial history had a definite impact on the formation of groups of dominance and subordination throughout Latin America, critics who address the subaltern in this area must, like Guha, confront issues of colonialism and its impact on society. This is not to say that subaltern studies in Latin America are the same as they were in southern Asia. José Rabasa, a member of the Latin American Subaltern Group, is conscious of the manner in which the idea of the subaltern has changed since it was introduced by Gramsci: “The transformations that the concept of the subaltern has undergone as it has traveled from 1930s Italy to 1990s Latin American entail radical revisions [...]” (201). The subaltern now has a wider focus, allowing for specific groups, not necessarily only social, to be in the dominant or subordinate position. It also has come to have an association with colonialism. These theories began to encompass more individuals and different areas.

In Latin America, subaltern theory tends to focus on the effects of colonialism and post-colonialism on the native population. The colonial experience is an important point of contrast between Spain and Latin America. In the dominant/subaltern binary already established, Spain was, for centuries, the dominant group. Thus, in comparison with the Latin American woman, the Spanish woman was dominant while her Latin American counterpart was subaltern. This implies levels of domination and subalternity based on the situation. All women can be called subaltern because of their sex. However, by saying this, one succumbs to what Butler cautions against by assuming that all women are alike. In a colonial situation, the women of the colonizing country or empire can be dominant while the women of the colonized area are subaltern.

The relationship between colonialism and native populations is the main topic in the discussion of subalternity in Latin America, but several theorists have explored how the role of women is woven into that dynamic. Florencia Mallon talks about liberating women in Latin America and how the native (subaltern) legal system and the colonial (dominant) were equally oppressive to women: “Ultimately, the message seems to be that neither the native/subaltern legal practices nor colonial legal practices were in and of themselves liberating to women. In a sense, women could only choose between systems of hierarchy, colonial or ethnic/communal” (1510). Essentially, women in colonized countries only had the ability to choose their oppression; there was no option to escape it. The situation for women in Spain was different. They occupied the dominant role in a colonized society, so their colonial history did not force this type of decision. This is not to say that women in Spain were liberated because of their country’s role in the colonization of Latin America. It was only in the situation of the colonization of Latin America that Spanish women could claim to have a dominant role. They

still occupied a subordinate role within their own society. The oppression of Spanish women, unlike that of their Latin American counterparts, was coming primarily from one direction; that of a hegemonic culture that normalized class and gender divisions.

Following the ideas of Gramsci, Guha, and the Latin American Subaltern Group, one can see that Spanish women in the twentieth century are subaltern figures. They are subordinate to men, the dominant group. As the subaltern classes mentioned by Gramsci, they are unable to unite sufficiently to gain power. By keeping women in their *esfera natural* of the house, marginalized, the culture of Spain ensured two things: that women would not unite and that they would be completely dependent upon, and thus subordinate to men. In order to apply these theories to Spain and to the female protagonists of Spanish theater, however, a departure from conventional subaltern theories is necessary. Although the women represented here are subaltern, they do not experience subalternity in the same way as other women. Their history and national traditions affect the way that they live the subaltern.

Theater Theory: W. B. Worthen, Eli Rozik, Erika Fischer-Lichte, Elin Diamond, and Hans Robert Jauss

An element that is of the utmost importance in understanding these works is the fact that they are theatrical works, not novels. The study of theater should not be compared to the study of other literary works, because theater is not meant to be read. Theater is meant to be performed, and that must be taken into account when it is considered. The investigation of theatrical texts can be revealing, but even a close reading cannot allow for a full understanding of theater, performance and reception have to be taken into account.

In his article “Drama, Performativity, and Performance,” W.B. Worthen studies the links between text and performance and the distance between the two. Worthen mentions that performance is considered by several critics to be no more than an utterance of a text. In his

view, this is incorrect because performance is more than simply vocalizing the text: “Performing reconstitutes text: it does not echo, give voice to, or translate the text” (1097). According to Worthen, the text is also not what gives meaning to the performance: “It is not the text that prescribes the meanings of the performance: it is the construction of the text within the specific apparatus of the ceremony that creates performative force. The performance is not a citation of the text” (1097). A performance may cite textual origins, but it is not simply a reproduction of the text. Thus, even though the words pronounced by the actors on the stage may be the same in different performances of a dramatic work, the performance is not the same. The staging, the actors, the direction and the audiences are all different; in fact, the script may be the only thing that two performances have in common.⁸ There are an abundance of elements involved in a performance that do not figure into a dramatic text.

In order to understand a drama, it is necessary to leave behind the notion that a close reading will suffice. Dramas were meant to be performed, not read. To illustrate the difference between a dramatic text and a performance, Eli Rozik compares the dramatic script and the performance as the same side of two different coins. Though the two are related, they are not the same. He analyzes the difference between playscript (dramatic text) and performance, explaining the main difference between the analysis of the script and the performance:

Play analysis from a theatrical viewpoint must reflect awareness of the fundamental ambiguity of such a text. Therefore, whereas play interpretation (first sense) can only end in no more than vague conjectures of authorial intention

⁸ As an example, Lorca’s interpretation of *Bodas de sangre* was almost certainly different from Carlos Saura’s version, which is a strictly flamenco performance.

and purposes, performance analysis, which relies on definite directorial choice for ambiguous components, work on more firm ground. (Playscript 20)

Thus, the actual performance of a drama and not just the script must be taken into consideration in order to understand a dramatic work.

In order to comprehend drama, the script and performance are not sufficient, the reception of the play is also crucial. The production of the dramatic script, the performance of the play, and the reception of that performance by the audience create a circle of influence. The script clearly impacts the choices of the director in the staging of the play (particularly if the playwright is directing the play). The performance of the play and those choices by the director and the actors sway the way in which the audience receives the play. Finally, the audience's reception of the play guides the way in which that play's author as well as other playwrights produce drama in the future.

The first element of this circle of influence is the performance. The performance of a play is a spectacle. It is also very flexible. A variety of directors and a myriad of choices by those directors can change the meaning of the play entirely. Butler suggests that gender is formed by performance, the meaning of a play is formed much in the same manner. Erika Fischer-Lichte talks about the importance of the moment of the performance in drama:

Puesto que el artefacto material del teatro, es decir, el texto espectacular o representación, no tiene una existencia autónoma separada del actor, (contrariamente a los que sucede con una pintura, una estatua o el texto de un poema) el espectáculo existe sólo en el momento mismo de su creación, es decir, en su transmisión. Su producción permanece, por lo tanto, ligada a su creador, su existencia es intransferible. De este modo específico de existencia del

espectáculo proviene una característica esencial del teatro: su fijación absoluta al momento actual, a un 'ahora'. Mientras que uno puede contemplar cuadros pintados siglos atrás o leer novelas escritas en un pasado lejano, los espectáculos teatrales pueden ser vistos sólo en un 'hoy', en una 'ahora', en este mismo momento.(8)

The moment is crucial to the understanding of a play because each moment changes the meaning of elements of the play. All of those involved in the production of a drama have only that one moment in time to have the effect they desire on the audience. Careful choices have to be made to ensure not only the acceptance of the audience in that time, but the identification with the characters and the furthering of the aims of the director or the playwright.

A director must be conscious of the moment and of the meaning of all of the elements placed on the stage and costuming the actors. In the United States, the appearance of two characters wearing red and blue could be conceived as a patriotic statement while in Spain, after the Civil War, those same two colors could be signs of discord. Similarly, in the 1950's a woman on stage with a beehive hairdo would be considered normal, but that same hairdo on a modern stage would single that woman out as an oddity. Every element on stage carries significance because every element has meaning to the spectator. Fiscer-Lichte notes what can be divined about a character simply from dress: "El conocimiento, por ejemplo, de las reglas del vestuario de una cultura determinada, le permitirá al espectador identificar el *dramatis persona* en relación al vestuario, maquillaje y peinado según una cultura, época, clase social, edad, sexo, profesión, modales, etc" (12). Thus, a director must be careful to assure that the elements on stage only carry the desired association for the culture of the time and place. This is another moment when close reading will not suffice. Dramas that were written about the current times in

the early twentieth century may contain suggestions for wardrobe, staging, and other elements of the performance. If those elements are observed by the director in a modern staging, it can create confusion in the audience. The director must choose between maintaining the feel of a contemporary drama that was originally intended and staging a historical drama. The original choices made by the playwright cannot necessarily be faithfully maintained in order to communicate the same message.

The performance of a play can also be directed to have different meanings. The director, by knowing the anticipated audience, can adjust the performance to either support or challenge their views. This requires, as noted by Fischer-Lichte, at least relative homogeneity within the audience and between the audience and a director (12). If the director is unable to think like the audience, subtle cues meant to affirm or challenge beliefs can be missed entirely. An awareness of contemporary culture can be seen in each of the plays in this study. The playwrights were aware of the meaning of every element that they conveyed. The director had the responsibility to maintain that awareness with every audience, in every age and every location.

Elin Diamond explains how performance can be used to challenge gender roles. In her article “Brechtian Theory/Feminist Theory: Toward a Gestic Feminist Criticism” she points out, by using Brechtian theory, the ways in which theater and performance can be used to explore gender roles. She notes how the use of Brecht’s Alienation Effect (which prevents the audience from losing itself in the character created by the actor) is often used in feminist theater performances that want to expose or mock gender structures. She remarks: “[...] by alienating (not simply rejecting) iconicity, by foregrounding the expectation of resemblance, the ideology of gender is exposed and thrown back on the spectator” (84). Casting women on the margin of marriage in a place of power and dominance allows the playwrights studied here to expose the

ideology of gender. Diamond believes this leads to a reevaluation of gender: [...] gender is exposed as a sexual costume, a sign of a role, not evidence of identity” (85). Thus, a performance can lead the audience to question many deep seated ideas.

Diamond also references Brecht’s theory of “not, but,” which requires an actor to show the alternative to the action as it is performed. She says: “The audience is invited to look beyond the representation—beyond what is authoritatively put into view—to the possibilities of as yet unarticulated actions or judgments” (86). In that way the director can lead the audience to see multiple possibilities in one performance. The plays examined here can be seen as doing nearly the opposite of the “not, but” effect. They foreground the unarticulated actions of judgments of their society and its traditional myths. In all four plays, the actions taken by the protagonists are those that society or accepted versions of myths would consider wrong: the Novia running away from her wedding celebration with another man instead of staying with her “appropriate” husband, Penélope sending Ulises away when he finally returns home, Jimena placing her love over the importance of maintaining her identity as the wife of El Cid, Eulalia deciding to refuse two different men to remain alone. These plays are a performance of the “not, but.” The possible variation shown in the traditional play is carried out in these performances.

The meaning of a play is partially determined by the director and how he or she decides to stage the performance. Directors interpret authorial intention, but do not necessarily remain true to it. To a great extent, the anticipated audience affects the choices of the director and the symbols employed. The director must be intimately acquainted with the culture of the audience in order to achieve success and the intended goals. The director’s interpretation of a dramatic text impacts the audience’s reception of a play; the study of this is called reception theory. This theory is most clearly articulated by Hans Robert Jauss. Jauss does not speak specifically about

drama, but about literary works in general. Nonetheless, his theories about intended readers of literary works also function in regard to an anticipated audience. He posits that the public is crucial in the formation of the meaning of a work: “In the triangle of author, work, and public, the last is no passive part, no chain of mere reactions, but rather itself an energy formative of history” (19). Thus, no matter what a director chooses to present on stage, there is no certainty that the audience will interpret the performance in the way the director intended. Thus, in order to assure that a performance conveys the intended message, a director must consider the horizon of expectation.

The horizon of expectation is a fundamental part of Jauss’ theory. The theory of the horizon of expectation is laid out in his second thesis:

The analysis of the literary experience of the reader avoids the threatening pitfalls of psychology if it describes the reception and the influence of a work, within the objectifiable system of expectations that arises from each work in the historical moment of its appearance, from a pre-understanding of the genre, from the form and themes of already familiar work, and from the opposition between poetic and practical language. (22)

No audience is the same, but all audiences do have something in common: preconceived notions. As Jauss suggests, no new work, no matter how original, exists in an information vacuum (23). Every audience will come to a performance with some, at least general, preconceived notions. By tailoring the performance of a drama to the common expectations of the audience, the director can be more certain that it will be understood.

By meeting the horizon of expectation, a director is more likely to achieve full audience understanding, but little else. By meeting, and then slightly surpassing the horizon of

expectation, a director can maintain fundamental comprehension of his or her ideas, but also assure the evolution of drama. If the surpassing of the horizon of expectation results in a performance that is incomprehensible or very poorly received by the audience, future performances and future works can be produced to specifically avoid that pitfall. In the same way, if the unexpected portion of the performance yields positive results, similar themes can be explored confidently by that, and other playwrights and directors.

The use of upper-class women as protagonists in plays in twentieth-century Spain was an example of the horizon of expectation. The audience anticipated by the directors, particularly in the first two thirds of the century, was primarily bourgeois. Although the women presented were in non-traditional marriage situations, their social class bore enough similarity to that of the spectators as to allow identification with the character. This identification was what allowed the plays to be particularly subversive. A subaltern character could be instantly discarded by the audience as unimportant and unacceptable. However, once the audience has identified with the protagonist, when she reacts in a non-standard and non-accepted way, it is too late for her character to be rejected as unacceptable. The acceptance of Lorca's characters such as the Novia, Yerma, and Adela allowed Buero Vallejo, Gala, and Pedrero to create such characters as Penélope, Jimena, and Eulalia.

Through a specific tailoring of dramatic texts and dramatic performances, playwrights and directors could challenge the assumptions of the audience without offending their sensibilities. Throughout the twentieth century, Spanish drama consistently pushed the horizon of expectation farther and farther, despite the nearly forty-year interference of censorship. The result was that each new generation of playwrights could explore new themes without fear of

alienating the audience. Through their reactions, the audience, in turn, was able to determine the evolutionary path of drama.

Marginality in Hegemony

Although different from women with a colonial past, it seems that Spanish women fit into the category of Guha's subaltern figures based on gender, because they are clearly subordinate to men. While they are subaltern due to gender, the female characters studied here also fit into the dominant group in terms of social class. Women of high social class, as well as their theatrical representations fit into the group that Guha would describe as "elite." The Madre and the Novia from *Bodas of sangre* are both from wealthy families. Buero Vallejo's Penélope is the queen of Ithaca. Gala's Jimena is the duchess of Valencia. Pedrero's Eulalia is, at worst, upper-middle class. Because of their high social standing, these women complicate their subaltern status. Although they are part of the subaltern group due to sex, these women are also included in hegemonic classification because of their financial standing.

During the twentieth century, women who had economic power in Spain also had certain strength, influence, and power which had been allotted to them by their financial means. Nonetheless, they were marginalized to the central power which, in twentieth-century Spanish society, was men. Though women could gain some influence, and even make the occasional bid for power, they were never able to achieve complete power because of their marginalization when compared to men. Thus, in twentieth-century Spain, women of high social class simultaneously occupied subaltern and hegemonic places.

Women of the upper-middle economic class and higher cannot be simply defined as subaltern or hegemonic, another term is necessary to describe them. A more appropriate term for the situation of these women is "marginality in hegemony." Through subaltern studies, it can be

seen that their social class makes them hegemonic while their gender makes them subaltern. The term marginality, as opposed to subalternity, is employed to avoid the associations with colonialism that are now tied to the term subaltern.⁹ Marginality also better explains the logic of the Spanish State, where the other important term is periphery. Although the high social standing of these women makes them hegemonic in terms of social class, the social system of Spain in the twentieth century prioritized the lives and goals of men and pushed those of women to the margin. This marginalization kept women out of all public arenas: the workplace, politics, and essentially any position of power.¹⁰

Women on the margin of marriage are those able to represent marginality in hegemony because of the absence of the dominant male force in their lives. During much of the twentieth century, the only way for a woman to have any power was to be a widow. They could own property and had control over their children: “Una mujer casada recuperaba algunos de sus derechos en caso de incapacidad de su marido y a la muerte de éste. Se la daba la *patria potestas*

⁹ The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines the word marginalize as: “to relegate to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group.”

¹⁰ Marginality in hegemony should not be considered as a different name for feminism. It does not attempt to signal women’s marginalization in order to change it. Rather, this term needed to be created because there are a startling number of women in twentieth-century Spanish literature who exist in this state. They are financially secure but still find themselves pushed aside to make room for the goals and laws of men. They cannot fit entirely into the subaltern group, but they are simultaneously not entirely hegemonic. Thus, a term needed to be found to describe their position in their society. This theory does not attempt to judge or change their position, merely to define it.

sobre sus hijos a la viuda; ésta la perdía, sin embargo, si se volvía a casar, lo que no sucedía con el viudo” (Scanlon 136). The power that is returned to her and the power over her children that is now hers is only allotted to her due to the absence of a husband. Not all women on the margin of marriage had these rights, because they were not widowed. Nonetheless, a prolonged absence (such as that of Ulysses) or abandonment by the husband (such as that suffered by Eulalia) allowed these women the same rights that a widow had in practice, if not in law. For all of these women, their financial power belongs to them, and not to their husbands, something that is not the case with traditionally married women. Thus, it is only women on the margin of marriage that are fully able to express the idea of marginality in hegemony.

Women on the margin of marriage who existed in marginality in hegemony were allotted a certain level of power due to their social standing. Nonetheless, even when the dominant male presence in their lives was missing, the patriarchal influence continued. This influence was often propagated by women themselves. Beauvoir, Rubin, Butler, and Silverman aid in understanding this repetition of patriarchal dominance, which supported an unnatural male/female divide. This division, however, felt natural to many women. In Spain, a woman’s marginality continued in the absence of the central male figure in her life. This position was propagated by a culture that, through the century-wide repetition of rituals that cast women in a subordinate role, considered the marginalization of women as something natural, even deigned by God. Through much of the twentieth century in Spain, equality between men and women was considered by many as unnatural. Geraldine Scanlon comments on this, citing Father Delgado Capeáns:

La igualdad absoluta, decía el padre Delgado Capeáns, era ‘una aberración y un absurdo manifiesto,’ porque existía un perfecto equilibrio entre los sexos: la

naturaleza activa y creadora del hombre le destinaba al mundo exterior, la naturaleza tierna y sacrificada de la mujer la destinaba al hogar. (330)

This male/female divide was particularly unnatural for women on the margin of marriage, because, while being denied the position of “women”, they had no place in the traditional binary around which their society was organized. These women had to occupy and represent the position of masculinity in the hegemonic fiction of the State; they were marginal, yet, central through their occupation of the (traditionally masculine) role as the head of the family.

The marginalization of women had its spatial representation in the home. The home was considered the *esfera natural* of women; the place where they could best carry out their natural duties as wives and mothers. It was also the place that kept them from finding solidarity with other women, from the public arena, from the workforce, and thus from financial independence. The marginalization of women in the home left men free to carry out their goals in the world without interruption. Women on the margin of marriage, however, had the power to become a disruption. Thus, these women, though still marginalized, were able to question male dominance.

Despite the power of men in twentieth-century Spanish culture, their power and control was not absolute. The theater studied here does not present males as hysterical, though it sustains the ideas of a crisis in masculinity because of its representation of men. Men are historically the head of the family, the site of the phallus, and the representation of the patriarchy. Although these plays recognize male power, they also delegitimize it. If widows (both literal and figurative) and divorcees can survive for years without their husbands, if they are able to occupy the role as the head of the family, the male domination enforced by society cannot be justifiably deserved. By questioning the passive female role, these plays also

destabilize the dominant masculine role. The result is a type of theater that not only supports the feminist agenda (overtly or covertly, intentionally or unintentionally), but also questions systems of dominance throughout society. Thus these women on the margin of marriage represent all women, and other marginalized groups as well.

Although women on the margin of marriage were denied, or lost a position as traditional women in society, this does not mean that the rules of the patriarchy did not apply to them. Though they did not live under the direct influence of a husband, these women were expected to enforce the traditional values of the patriarchy, even if their own lives did not currently bear out those values. Thus, if a widowed woman chose to remarry,¹¹ she had to seek the proper permission to do so. Also, if the patriarchal influence returned to a woman who had been abandoned by her husband in some way, she was expected to return to her duties as a wife as quickly as possible. A woman's position on the margin of marriage was not absolute. One could once again become a "woman" by following culturally accepted rituals. It is the refusal to support the patriarchy, to fulfill one's duties upon her husband's return, or to follow the cultural ritual of marriage that makes the women in these plays subversive.

The idea that the identity of woman was based essentially on the presence of a man in her life, recalls Judith Butler's idea of performativity. Her definition of performativity shows how repetition and ritual forge gender and identity. Through the repetition and ritual of marital acts and through inclusion and exclusion based on male presence and absence, Spanish women were forced into their identities as natural women defined by social class and also by the binarism of

¹¹ This applies to women actually widowed and women who are only presumed widowed. It does not apply to divorced women, because by the time divorce was legalized with any degree of permanence, this degree of permission was not necessary.

sex and gender. One of those identities belongs to women on the margin of marriage. A culture that privileged the elite class and was based on the unit of the family was faced with a new figure that did not fit into that paradigm. A woman with an absent husband became common.

Hegemonic widows, figurative widows, and divorcees were forced into marginality in hegemony by a culture that privileged them, but that also expected them to be subordinate to men. In the increasingly common absence of those men, a new identity was forged.

By denying the rituals and repetition that had for many years forged their gender and identity, the women on the margin of marriage in twentieth-century Spanish theater began to create a new identity for themselves. By accounting for all of the cultural forces that went into creating the identity of the woman lacking a dominant male presence in her life, we see that women without men represent more than just women. They symbolize all marginalized groups. The repetition of female identity as a woman on the margin of marriage also shows the repetition of other subordinate groups seeking to change their role in society. The woman on the margin of marriage is an important element in twentieth-century Spanish theater.

The importance of theater to the study of marginality in hegemony is due to the representational nature of theater. The presentation of characters who shared the social class of the audience members greatly facilitated audience identification with those characters. Playwrights and directors were careful to use appropriate costuming, speech patterns, and mannerisms to indicate the high social class of the protagonists. Once the audience had identified with the high-class female protagonists of the plays, the suffering of the women due to their sex would be exposed and elaborated. By seeing and hearing their social equals and equating those characters' situations to their own, the female audience members could easily sense the injustice in the circumstances of their daily lives. Males would not be as easily

affected as women, as they would identify more strongly with the male characters. They would, however, be made aware that the behaviors that they considered natural were harmful to women. The increased awareness is made possible in theater because the audience members were faced with characters. The nature of the theater blocks out distractions and involves the senses in a way that no other medium can equal. Through the shared experience of the performance, spectators were able to identify more strongly with the characters, and feel a greater outrage at their unjust situations. Marginality in hegemony can be presented easily in multiple art forms, but never is its impact as great as in the theater.

By combining an understanding of the many ways to interpret gender and social status with a consciousness of how twentieth-century theater evolved, a new way of perceiving the works studied here can be achieved. The behaviors repeated and avoided must be considered in the context not only of their formation of gender, but of their reception by a potential audience. It is only through a consciousness of the roles of women both as subaltern and simultaneously hegemonic that a willing audience can comprehend the ways in which Lorca, Buero Vallejo, Gala, and Pedrero were able to fully achieve their subversive goals.

Counterpoint: Jacinto Benavente's *La malquerida*

Though many Spanish plays written in the twentieth century included females protagonists, not all were women on the margin of marriage. The experiences of the “traditional” woman, a woman who was married and a mother, were very different from those of women in less conventional marriages. Marginality in hegemony may apply to women that are married, but it does not mean the same thing for them that it does for women on the margin of marriage. Women on the margin of marriage use their financial means to carry out their own aims without the interference of a husband. These women possessed rights and financial means that were unavailable to women whose husband remained with them. Married women during first three-quarters of the twentieth century, with a brief exception during the Second Republic, automatically legally ceded all of their rights and property to their husbands when they married. Also, much of their identity as women was based upon their marital status. This is true of Raimunda, the protagonist of Jacinto Benavente's *La malquerida* (1913). She was widowed, but unlike the other female characters studied here, she is not financially stable and chooses to remarry. This play presents women who rely on the presence of men instead of displaying self-reliance. The traditional nature of this play and its treatment of women makes it an ideal counterpoint to the *Bodas de sangre*, *La tejedora de sueños*, *Anillos para una dama*, and *Locas de amar*.

The mainstream theater of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, though stylistically innovative, was commonly thematically cautious as it was tailored to an audience that wanted nothing thought-provoking or challenging. According to Gwynne Edwards, the theater-going public of Spain before the civil war had a “[...]craving for superficial entertainment[...].” and a “[...]determination to bury its head in the sand[...].” (4). She explains

that this desire was filled by various playwrights such as Serafín and Joaquín Álvarez Quintero, Manuel Linares Rivas, Gregorio Martínez Sierra, and Pedro Muñoz Seca. The theater of these playwrights, known as *teatro de salon*, did not awaken or enlighten the spectator, but provided simple entertainment to a bourgeois audience: “Their theatre was, in short, one which appealed to a bourgeois public seeking a pleasant, escapist, after-dinner entertainment – a public unwilling to be confronted in the theatre with unpleasantness of controversial matters” (Edwards 3). This desire was filled by the dramas of early realism, which, in many cases, were lacking in subversive or thought-provoking elements.

Despite the opportunities provided by the extensive venues, and great infrastructure built up for Spanish theater in the early twentieth century, it was lacking in vitality and innovation. Realism had overtaken Romanticism to become the dominant style, but many playwrights still included romantic elements in their dramas. This inclusion of older themes and ideas in new works allowed spectators to know what to expect in terms of plots and resolutions. The horizon of expectation was firmly established and by relying on the same conventions and the same basic storylines, the majority of playwrights of the era did not challenge that horizon. Thus, although they did not risk the alienation of the spectators, they also did not contribute extensively to the evolution of theater.

On the cusp of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Jacinto Benavente differed from his contemporaries to become the great innovator in the theater. He based his dramas primarily on dialogue, a technique new to the Spain of his time. Francisco Ruíz Ramón comments not only on the quantity and style of the dialogue in Benavente’s theater, but also on its importance: “Toda esa palabra, en tanto que palabra-en-el-teatro, es absolutamente nueva en los escenarios españoles del último decenio del XIX y el primero del XX: significa la ruptura definitiva con la

herencia romántica [...]” (24). This departure from the romantic styles that characterized the theater of his contemporaries made Benavente’s works not only original but modern in comparison. It also signified Benavente’s refusal to accept the status quo and create theater that did not challenge its audience.

Benavente and other innovators of his generation departed from the romanticism that dominated the theater of their time to introduce the style of realism. This innovation presented believable characters and situations instead of the impossible romances and intense emotions prevalent in romanticism. As the theme of *La malquerida* suggests, however, playwrights were not able to deviate entirely from the romantic themes that had been the basis of their literary education. Thus, the realism of the early twentieth century differed greatly from the social realism practiced by authors such as Buero Vallejo during the dictatorship. Although it still contained elements of romanticism, the theater of Benavente took a great step for the advancement of his art by beginning to employ realism.

Benavente created one hundred seventy-two works throughout his career and his work has been extensively studied. All of his plays focused on dialogue, but the central themes varied substantially. Because of the extensive quantity and thematic variety of his dramas, Benavente’s work has been hard to categorize. Eduardo Juliá proposed a classification in 1944. He divides Benavente’s works into three main categories: Comedias-acción, “a noticia”; Comedias-diálogo, “a fantasía”; and Traducciones. The first two are divided into multiple subgroups. *La*

malquerida fits into the group of “comedias-acción” in the subgroup dubbed “de costumbres rurales” (Montero Padilla 33).¹²

La malquerida premiered at the Princesa theater in Madrid on December 12, 1913, to thunderous applause. Benavente was called out to receive that ovation between the second and third acts as well as at the end of the play. A number of other renowned artists played roles in the play, making it a popular choice for spectators.¹³

Despite its positive reviews and regular attendance, the play is not as extensively studied as many of Benavente’s other plays. George Kritzman notes that the play has not captured the attention of theater scholars, despite its public appeal: “Benavente’s *La malquerida*, though quite popular, has not always received due appreciation. Some critics are content to categorize it as a ‘rural melodrama’ and overlook its fine structural qualities” (96). Though it is not the most extensively studied of Benavente’s works, its 1913 premiere places *La malquerida* near the height of Benavente’s theatrical production and its extensive use of dialogue makes it a representative example of his work.

La malquerida is the story of a wealthy family in southern Spain. Raimunda, the protagonist was widowed when her daughter, Acacia was very young. While Acacia was still a small child, Raimunda married Esteban. At the beginning of the drama, Acacia has just become

¹² The other plays classified in this category and subgroup with *La malquerida* are *De cerca* and *Señora ama*.

¹³ The role of the protagonist, Raimunda, was performed by the popular María Guerrero, a favorite actress of Benavente. The role Raimunda’s daughter, Acacia, was filled by María Fernanda Ladrón de Guevara, a young actress at the time.

engaged to Faustino, who is shot and killed on his way home from the engagement. Throughout the course of the play it is revealed that Esteban, due to his obsession with his stepdaughter, paid to have her fiancé killed. Acacia admits that she returns her stepfather's love and Raimunda is placed in the untenable position of having to choose between the love of her husband and the love of her daughter. Meanwhile, Faustino's family is outside Raimunda's house, intending to kill Esteban in retribution. At the climax of the drama, Faustino's family comes for Esteban and in the confusion, Raimunda is shot and killed by accident.

Although Benavente's writing technique was revolutionary, the female characters that he created were very traditional. The traditional nature of these female characters is what makes this play an ideal counterpoint to the other works to be studied. Unlike the other women considered in this study, after being widowed Raimunda chooses to return to the status of a married woman for financial reason. This is a crucial difference because, as Scanlon points out, a woman's rights disappeared after marrying, and a widow was the only type of woman during this time period that had any form of rights. Unlike La Madre, Penélope, Jimena, and Eulalia, Raimunda was not financially independent, and was unable to provide for her daughter by herself. During Acacia's engagement celebration, Raimunda and the other women discuss the position of an unmarried woman in their society:

RAIMUNDA. Yo bien hubiera querido no volverme a casar. . . Y si mis hermanos hubieran sido otros. . . Pero digo, si no entran aquí unos pantalones a poner orden, a pedir limosna andaríamos mi hija y yo a estas horas; bien lo saben todos.

DOÑA ISABEL. Eso es verdad. Una mujer sola no es nada en el mundo. (149)

By suggesting that she needed a man, Raimunda presents herself as a typical subordinate woman: “Al principio de la obra, cuando les explica a las amigas la razón por la cual se casó de nuevo en contra de la voluntad de Acacia, Raimunda proyecta la visión convencional de la mujer, la de la mujer indefensa y subordinada al hombre” (Glaze 197). Raimunda does not object to the subservient aspect of her role in her marriage because she has been raised to expect to be little more than a servant to her husband and because she relies upon Esteban to provide for her and her daughter. Now, as a married woman, Raimunda (although she may not have originally wanted to remarry) is happy. She is so devoted to her husband that Acacia questions whether she would choose her child over her new husband: “¡Qué sé yo! Está muy ciega por él. No sé yo si tuviera que elegir entre mí y ese hombre...” (158). This blindness and devotion on Raimunda’s part makes her oblivious to her husband’s ardent desire for her daughter. In addition to being content, Raimunda is financially secure. Her house is described, in Benavente’s stage directions, as belonging to “unos labradores ricos” (147). Raimunda is, through her second marriage, of a high social class. Though she was poor as a widow, once remarried she exists in marginality in hegemony. She is also, as all women that exist in marginality in hegemony, subordinate to a man. She differs from the other women in this study because she chooses to remarry instead of remaining on the margin of marriage after the death of her first husband. She also lacked the means to support herself after becoming a widow. Although she wed out of need, Raimunda’s position as a traditionally married, happy woman prevents her from playing a subversive role in the drama.

Marriage was one of the few options open to women in the early twentieth-century and it was expected that women would marry as soon as they could find a suitable husband.¹⁴ By choosing to marry again, Raimunda follows a ritual that her culture assigns to her sex while she simultaneously performs her gender identity. The marriage ceremony was a ritual followed by nearly every woman in early twentieth-century Spain. The roles within a marital relationship were based entirely on sex, with society assigning the subordinate role to women. A woman's gender role, then, was determined by the repetition of rituals and roles that were prescribed to her by her society.

Raimunda is subordinate to and financially dependent on her husband, but she cannot be seen as a passive character. It is she who tries most actively to encounter the truth about the murder of her future son-in-law, Faustino. Glaze sees the actions that Raimunda carries out as determining her place in the familial hierarchy: "A pesar de sugerir lo contrario, Raimunda es el miembro dominante de la familia" (197). Raimunda is unquestionably a strong character who is more active than any other character in the play. However, by choosing to remarry she has also, contrary to Glaze's suggestion, chosen to allow someone else to dominate the family. In 1913, a woman's role in the familial hierarchy was predetermined. No matter the strength of her character, society dictated that she be subordinate to the head of the household, the man of the family.

Acacia shows a negative attitude toward marriage. She did not want her mother to marry Esteban. Although the play begins with her engagement to Faustino, his death upsets her only

¹⁴ The determination of a suitable husband was very subjective and depended heavily on the social class of families of the prospective bride and groom.

mildly. After his death she claims that she does not wish to marry: “Yo ya no he de casarme. Si me alegro de lo que ha sucedido, es por no haberme casao” (193). Acacia’s reluctance to bind herself to a man is not because of the death of her fiancé. Despite her engagement to Faustino, she has never wished for marriage. She cites “por desesperarle” Esteban as the only reason that she was going to marry at all (193). Even while Faustino is still alive, she confides in her friend Milagros that if her mother had not remarried, she would have chosen to remain single:

ACACIA. Pero ¿tú crees y que yo me hubiera casao si me hubiera estao sola con mi madre?

MILAGROS. ¡Anda! ¿No te habías de haber casao? Lo mismo que ahora.

ACACIA. No lo creas. ¿Ande iba yo haber estao más ricamente que con mi madre en esta casa? (158)

Acacia’s negative opinion of marriage initially makes Acacia seem more modern than her mother. However, as the action of the play progresses it becomes clear that Acacia’s obsession for her stepfather parallels his for her. Her desire is not to avoid marriage, but to pursue an incestuous relationship with her mother’s husband. This type of longing is neither modern nor traditional, but an indication of the reasoning that prevents Acacia from embracing the role her society prescribes for her. Benavente reinforces the idea that a woman should aspire to become a wife and nothing more by presenting Acacia’s reluctance to marry as the result of an unhealthy desire. Because they are not well-developed characters, it is difficult to establish whether Acacia’s views on marriage approximate or diverge from those of her mother.

The characters of Raimunda and Acacia are more developed than their male counterparts in the play, but they are also subordinated to the plot. The greater development of females is characteristic of Benavente’s theater. Joseph Zdenek explains: “Without exception, his feminine

characters are more sharply defined than his men” (189). Even the more developed women in this play lack a fully developed personality and originality. Kriztman notes that this lack of originality keeps the characters and images from overshadowing that which is truly important to Benavente, the central conflict: “[...] a strikingly original image, or a new variation of a basic archetype, would stand out and distract us” (97). Because Benavente wanted his audience to focus on his plot, he avoided developing his characters enough to fully explain all of their motivations and beliefs with regard to marriage and the role of women.

Benavente’s work often involves traditional, archetypal characters. The central conflict of this play, a forbidden love between a woman’s husband and her daughter, does not allow for completely conventional characters. Nonetheless, the figures presented here are surprisingly traditional. Even the most developed characters have very little originality. They are not only unoriginal, they are underdeveloped: “Even the characters themselves are subordinated to the central conflict; none of them has a fully developed personality” (Kritzman 96). In Benavente’s work, characters were treated as necessary in order to develop the action of the play, but secondary to his plot, that which was truly important in his theater. Thus, the creation of a character that defies the archetypal roles, such as the other women in this study, would not be suitable to achieve Benavente’s primary aim.

The lack of character development in favor of plot advancement is another point in which *La malquerida* differs from later dramas in the century. Although many later playwrights did not subordinate the plot to the characters, the characters played an essential role in determining the meaning and the reception of the play. The use of conventional characters allowed Benavente to push the horizon of expectation through the use of extensive dialogue without surpassing the audience’s tolerance for innovation. Lorca, Buero Vallejo, Gala, and Pedrero created characters

that pushed the horizon of expectation by drawing the audience to identify with women who intentionally deviated from societally acceptable roles. It is the presence of a character that diverges from what society deemed acceptable for the female sex that makes the dramatic works created after Benavente's more compelling, if less financially successful.

Unlike the other works studied here, *La malquerida* does not have a subversive aim. Although the theme of an incestuous relationship between a stepfather and stepdaughter defies conventional morality, it is not a traditional situation being critiqued. *Bodas de sangre*, *La tejedora de sueños*, *Anillos para una dama*, and *Locas de amar* all achieve their subversive nature by critically assessing modern society and traditional marriage roles. Raimunda is happy in her marriage and the marital union is not questioned. In fact, the importance of marriage and the impotence of single women are highlighted throughout the play. In order to achieve the same rebellious aims of the other plays, Benavente would have had to make Raimunda very unhappy in her marriage to Esteban and repentant of her decision to remarry. The lack of a subversive nature does not change Raimunda's status as a woman that exists in marginality in hegemony, but it does make the play differ greatly from those written later in the century that had overt or covert subversive aims.

Benavente's drama maintained its popularity for many years. His final play premiered in the same year that he died. Throughout his entire career, his style remained constant, despite the arrival and departure of the avant-garde in his country. Audiences continued to choose Benavente's plays because they were, unlike the drama of the avant-garde, predictable. Due to the lack of controversial themes, Benavente's plays were also allowed during the dictatorship, unlike many plays produced during the late 1920's and 1930's. All of these elements lead to the sustained popularity of Benavente. According to a survey in the magazine *Espectáculo*,

Benavente was still the preferred playwright of the time in 1952 (Reproduced in Huerta Calvo 2604). The reliability and predictability of Benavente's themes and characters made him popular. These same features make his theater, and especially *La malquerida*, a counterpoint to the subversive and innovative nature of *Bodas de sangre*, *La tejedora de sueños*, *Anillos para una dama*, and *Locas de amar*.

The Avant-Garde

Federico García Lorca's *Bodas de sangre*

As Spain entered the twentieth century, it suffered a crippling loss, but it still resembled, in many ways, the same country that it had been for centuries. The first third of the century was politically tumultuous and artistically innovative, but the Second Republic, declared in 1931 changed the country in ways that made it more advanced than nearly any other society in the world. Artists took advantage of their freedom and the government's support of artists to challenge the limits of their arts. The avant-garde movement embraced by young artists throughout the country produced new and daring productions. It also inspired the theater, in particular, Federico García Lorca whose productions were some of the most famous of the entire country before and after his untimely death. His avant-garde techniques created poetry and theater that pushed and questioned his public and his addition of traditional styles prevented him from driving them away. The result was an art that continues to inspire audiences a century later.

Lorca was born in 1898, which was a tumultuous year not just in Spain, but worldwide. The *desastre* of 1898, which resulted in the loss of Spain's last remaining colonies, caused not just an economic but a spiritual crisis in a country that based so much of its national identity on the glory of its imperial past. This loss influenced the writing of an entire generation of Spanish authors; it also colored Lorca's life. His literary creation was also affected by the social and governmental changes during his short lifespan, not only in his country but abroad as well: World War I, Primo de Rivera's dictatorship, the crash of the New York Stock Exchange in 1929, the beginning of the Second Spanish Republic in 1931 and the outbreak of civil war in his

country in 1936. Social and political upheaval characterized the first third of the twentieth century worldwide, accompanied by radical changes in culture.

There is no question that the Second Republic (1931-1936) signaled a great number of political and social adjustments and advances. Enrique Montero comments on the political life of the Republic and its two main components:

The political life of the Republic would thus be shaped by this fixation with legal forms known as 'juridicidad', and also by the constitution which embodied liberal and social principles such as the separation of the Church and State, a divorce law, female enfranchisement, the investigation of paternity, free and compulsory primary education, the possibility of expropriating property according to its 'social usefulness', state intervention in industry, the protection of agricultural workers, and comprehensive social legislation. (129)

The new constitution presented clear and remarkable changes from principles under the monarchy and the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera and signaled a new direction for the country. As Julianne Burton said: "Reform and revolution were in the air" (259).

Education was changing as well. The schools were secularized as just one step in the overhaul of the educational system. In the new government schools had a very important task: "The school was to be the ideological arm of the democratic revolution: it would be the transmission belt, carrying 'modern', civic values to the furthest corner of rural Spain" (Cobb 133). Unfortunately, the shortage of teachers and schools, along with what Christopher Cobb calls "the unmitigated hostility of a Church opposed to any form of social progress" prevented the desired educational reform (137). These three factors (the two shortages and the Church's

hostility) combined to make the desired educational reform through schools impossible in the short duration of the Republic.

Schools, however, were not the only form of education employed by the Republic; they were joined by the *Misiones Pedagógicas* [Pedagogical Missions]. The objective of these missions was, according to the ministerial decree, “the diffusion of general culture, a modern approach to teaching and civic education in small towns, villages and hamlets with special attention to the needs of the rural population.” Montero calls these missions “[...] the initiative most frequently regarded as the Republic’s most significant cultural creation [...] (136). These missions included meetings with the adults of each community to educate them about the new political context and the rights and responsibilities of the people within the Republic. In addition to the informational meetings, libraries were set up, paintings were exhibited, movies were shown and theater and music were performed. These missions worked toward civic education, organized lectures and readings for the adults, and oversaw the creation of over 5,000 small libraries. However, one of these achievements is most remembered. According to Cobb, “It may be the charismatic presence of García Lorca that has focused attention almost exclusively on the Missions’ theatrical presentations, at the expense of their work in the area of civic education which, in many ways, made a more significant contribution to the government’s objective of instilling Republican values” (137). As one of the so-called missionaries, Lorca toured with the La Barraca, a university theater company that he co-founded with Eduardo Ugarte. The mobile character of these missions demanded that the presentation of plays be carried out on simple stages, with a minimum of props and costumes. While participating in the productions of the missions, Lorca both directed and acted in interpretations of classic Spanish plays. In 1933,

when a more conservative government was voted into power, the budget for these missions was dramatically reduced, effectively ending their theatrical performances.

In addition to reforming education, the Republic made great strides in the area of women's rights. The cultural norm during Lorca's life allowed socially for two basic roles for women: wife and mother or nun. During the early the 1920's much of Europe was moving to reinforce traditional gender roles: "Whether overtly articulated or not, the reinforcing of traditional gender divisions was clearly felt to be one of the keys to stabilizing societies in flux, along socially and economically traditional lines" (Graham 100). Spain was moving in the opposite direction, giving women more rights than they had ever had before. However, even when the laws of the Second Republic provided equal rights for men and women, the equality was only conditional. Although women were able to join the workforce and the world of politics they were only favorably depicted in their new roles if these new positions did not conflict with their true callings as wives and mothers. As Helen Graham notes: "[...] formal equality was, inevitably, to be a far cry from real, lived equality [. . .]" (101). Thus, although the laws of the Republic made Spain politically progressive, its social policies regarding the place of women in society were still conservative.

Before and after the installation of the Republic, marriage was seen as the only appropriate avenue for women. Although, during much of the first third of the twentieth century, a woman's rights disappeared completely when she married, marriage was still seen as an attractive option:

La mayor parte de los derechos que asistían a la mujer soltera desaparecían inmediatamente con el matrimonio. Las presiones sociales y psicológicas ejercidas sobre la mujer para que cumpliese su destino matrimonial, que abocaban

a una caza del marido casi universal, crearon la irónica situación de que un número enorme de mujeres se entregaran voluntaria e incluso entusiásticamente a la esclavitud legal. Cualquiera habría imaginado que la sociedad estaría dispuesta a llegar muy lejos para hacer que la resultara atractiva la proposición, de manera que las mujeres no tuviesen nunca ocasión de lamentar que todos los demás caminos estuviesen cerrados para ellas. (Scanlon 126)

Single women were not the only females who lost their rights through marriage; widows who remarried also forfeited the privileges that they had gained through their husbands' deaths.

Widows were the only women in early twentieth-century Spain that had rights. They could own property and they were granted official power over their children, rights that they did not have while married: “Una mujer casada recuperaba algunos de sus derechos en caso de incapacidad de su marido y a la muerte de éste. Se la daba la *patria potestas* sobre sus hijos a la viuda; ésta la perdía, sin embargo, si se volvía a casar, lo que no sucedía con el viudo” (Scanlon 136). Once a widow remarried, all of those rights disappeared again and she returned to the state of legalized slavery.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, due in part to Spain's 1898 losses of the colonies, women were having trouble marrying, despite their desire. This inability to marry gave rise to two social phenomena: a *crisis de matrimonio* and a stronger feeling of feminism in Spanish women. In the first two decades of the twentieth century in Spain, the first led unintentionally to the second:

Una de las explicaciones más corrientes de la crisis era que, con el fuerte aumento del coste de la vida, los hombres encontraban que era imposible mantener una familia, y o no se casaban o lo hacían a una edad madura. El resultado directo de

la crisis del matrimonio, se decía, era la crisis de la mujer, esto es, el feminismo; las mujeres se veían obligadas a buscar un trabajo a causa de la escasez de posibles maridos. (Scanlon 143)

The view of feminism as a crisis of women supports the socially dominant belief that the only positive role for a woman was that of a wife. Having to seek work because they were not married was not seen as a natural course of events. From a modern point of view, the idea of a woman seeking a job is perfectly normal. In the first two decades of twentieth-century Spain, however, women were trained to work in the home, not in the factory. Needing a job because they could not find a husband to support them was a crisis at the time. The new laws of the Second Republic did not change the view of working women entirely, but they took a positive step toward the liberation of an entire sex.¹⁵ For the first time, all women had the right to have a voice in their society, government, and industry. They were able to pursue education and fulfillment outside of the home.

While the government reformed education and women's rights, a necessary cultural reform was also happening in theater. According to Gwynne Edwards, the theater-going public of Spain before the Civil War had a "craving for superficial entertainment" as well as a "determination to bury its head in the sand" (4). This craving was filled by various playwrights such as Serafín and Joaquín Álvarez Quintero, Manuel Linares Rivas, Gerogrio Martínez Sierra, and Pedro Muñoz Seca, whose goal was not to awaken or enlighten the spectator, but to provide simple entertainment to a bourgeois audience. When commenting specifically on the theater of the Quintero brothers, Edwards says it was exactly what the theater-goers of the day wanted:

¹⁵ The only socially accepted working women were those that maintained their traditional duties.

“Their theatre was, in short, one which appealed to a bourgeois public seeking a pleasant, escapist, after-dinner entertainment—a public unwilling to be confronted in the theatre with unpleasantness or controversial matters” (3). The theater-goers of this era had a firmly defined horizon of expectation, and they lacked a desire for theater that would push them beyond it.

Spanish theater, despite the great infrastructure built up for it and the many venues and shows that were available in the early twentieth century, was lacking in vitality and innovation. Sue Frenk, Chris Perriam and Mike Thompson describe the social horizons of bourgeois drama and comedy as “limited” and their dramatic conventions as “stale” (65). They later go on to add: “The Spanish theatre seemed hopelessly mediocre and old-fashioned in comparison with developments elsewhere in Europe” (65). In the dearth of quality theatrical productions, many authors already known for their work as novelists, poets, and essayists began to write for the theater in the 1920’s. According to Frenk, Perriam, and Thompson, the most interesting theater of this period came from authors such as Miguel de Unamuno, Ramón de Valle-Inclán, Manuel Machado, Antonio Machado and Azorín (65).

Although theater in Spain was not as progressive as in the rest of Europe,¹⁶ some younger writers, part of the avant-garde movement that was sweeping Europe, began to make an impact in the theater. Among them were Rafael Alberti, Pedro Salinas, Miguel Hernández, Max Aub, and, most notably, Federico García Lorca. Though these playwrights were not as well-known or as popular as their older counterparts, they were united in their mission:

Although these names, old and new, represent a great diversity of artistic practices, they were united by a passionate belief in the cultural importance of

¹⁶ Most notably, in this period the work of Bertolt Brecht was revolutionizing theater throughout Europe.

theatre and an awareness of working within a problematic space between the ambition to address, new, wider audiences and the reality of appealing to an intellectual minority. In place of an institution that reflected the political agenda of the Restoration bourgeoisie by peddling complacency and nostalgia, they proposed radically unsettling kinds of theatre: aggressively satirical, philosophically anguished, or enigmatically poetic, and almost always self-consciously theatrical. (Frenk, Perriam, and Thompson 65)

Lorca's theater was not only self-consciously theatrical, it was also openly poetic. Like many playwrights of his day, Lorca began his career as a poet and he continued to write poetry even while his theater became famous. While his early poetic production was traditional in form and theme, (specifically *Romancero Gitano* in 1928) he displayed a far more adventuresome nature in his later poetry and in his theatrical works, challenging the styles that were common in his society.

Lorca recognized a need in his country to revolutionize theater. Although touring with Teatro de las Misiones Pedagógicas afforded him time to work on his theater while honing his skills as a director he appreciated the classical works that he was presenting, but not the modern Spanish theater. When he was interviewed in 1933 regarding his beliefs about contemporary Spanish theater, he was asked: “¿Qué opina usted, en general, del actual teatro español?” He responded: “Que es un teatro de y para puercos. Así, un teatro hecho por puercos y para puercos” (Interview 188). Lorca was not alone in critiquing the Spanish theater of his day. Ramón de Valle Inclán is on record as having said that he refused to write for Spanish actors (Sánchez

22).¹⁷ Along with writers such as Valle-Inclán and directors that were willing to present non-traditional works, notably Cipriano Rivas Cherif, Lorca made attempts at revolutionizing the Spanish stage.

The theatrical reformation attempted by Lorca and other intellectuals of his day was sporadic, due mainly to financial problems but also owing to the extremely low popularity of some of the new styles of plays. For example, despite including the work of renowned set designer Fernando Mignoni and costumer Pérez Barradas, Lorca's first play and first attempt at an innovative Spanish drama failed. His play, *El maleficio de la mariposa* (1920), was only staged four times.¹⁸ The theater-going public of the time did not appreciate actors dressed as insects dancing on stage. Other modern works faced a similarly mediocre reception from a bourgeoisie audience that appreciated the realism that was currently prevalent. Despite their initial failures, avant-garde playwrights continued their work.

Lorca continued as the director of La Barraca, which did not end with the termination of the theatrical presence in the Pedagogical Missions. The goal of this group, now based in Madrid, was to give students theatrical practice with classical plays without the need to travel far from home to present them. As director, Lorca welcomed new interpretations of these classics.

¹⁷ José Antonio Sánchez mentions Valle-Inclán's "furious rejection of Spanish actors, whom he insulted on several occasions" (22). Sánchez also states: "What most annoyed Valle-Inclán was the way actors spoke. According to him, they either screamed or stammered, with no middle ground" (23).

¹⁸ Although the theater of La Barraca was initially transient, due to its work in the Misiones Pedagógicas, when *El maleficio de la mariposa* premiered, the theatrical portion of the missions no longer existed and La Barraca performed on a permanent basis in Madrid.

Lorca's direction of the group was educational while avoiding the strictly traditional and political: "As a paid up member of the avant-garde, Lorca, who repeatedly declared himself apolitical, made his social preoccupation into an educational objective, and moved the political component from the theme into the plays' form and organization" (Sánchez 18). Lorca's own theater was still being produced during his tenure as director of La Barraca. Working with the university group gave him the advantage of exploring new techniques without risking great commercial failures similar to that of *El maleficio de la mariposa*.

While Jacinto Benavente's generation of writers introduced realism into Spanish writing, Lorca's generation introduced the avant-garde, which rebelled against realism. Realism was seen by many playwrights of the time as lacking in imagination. José Antonio Sánchez refers to the "elegant but empty 'well-made' plays of Benavente" as an example of the realism that was popular in Spain and that the writers of the avant-garde attempted to displace (8). In order to renovate the theater, Lorca's generation began to introduce new, symbolic, and surreal elements into theatrical productions. Lorca was one of the fundamental contributors to the literary movement known as the Generation of 1927.¹⁹ This generation's characteristics were not well-defined, but experimentation mixed with traditional styles is typical of the artistic techniques used by these artists.

¹⁹ In addition to Lorca, there are nine other authors that make up the group habitually known as the Generation of 1927: Jorge Guillén, Rafael Alberti, Dámaso Alonso, Gerardo Diego, Luis Cernuda, Vicente Aleixandre, Manuel Altolguirre and Emilio Prados. This generation is also believed by some to be comprised of other artists and other art forms.

Mixing of the traditional with experimental techniques was used in some of Lorca's works, but some of his works were also devoid of traditional elements. This disparity provokes Antonio Sánchez Trigueros to refer to two Lorcas:

[...] Hay que distinguir también entre dos Lorcas: uno experimentador vanguardista, absolutamente crítico desde la escena y contra la escena tradicional, y otro realista de neta inspiración popular, cuya tradición enriquece; son dos teatros que coexisten, porque el proceso de aprendizaje, desarrollo y éxito teatral del genio granadino no obedeció precisamente a un objetivo de depuración estética lineal y progresiva desde el realismo a la vanguardia [...] (21)

Lorca was unable to be strictly modern and unwilling to be solely traditional. He was capable of adhering to rigorously traditional forms and being at the cutting edge of the Vanguard. Some of his best works combined the two elements.

Like many other artists of the time, Lorca was involved with the surrealist movement. At the Residencia de Estudiantes de Madrid he became fast friends with Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí, both of which encouraged his surrealist creations. None of Lorca's truly surrealist dramas were staged during his life. The premiere of *Así que pasen cinco años* was scheduled for 1936 but was cancelled due to Lorca's assassination. It was first staged in New York in 1945 and was not presented in Spain until the September of 1976 premiere at Teatro Eslava in Madrid, where it received positive reviews. Lorca's most remarkable surrealist drama, *El público* was seen as too extreme for the theater of the day, even by his peers. There were no plans to stage that play during Lorca's lifetime and the original manuscript is lost. Nonetheless, the portion of the play

that was able to be recovered was published in 1978 and was presented beginning in the same year, with its first production occurring on February 15, 1978 at the University of Puerto Rico.²⁰

Although the surrealist plays presented after his death received positive reviews, surrealism is not the art form in which Lorca reached his greatest success. His most successful works were characterized neither by pure surrealism nor realism but by the incorporation of fantastic elements into realist theater. Lorca's greatest examples of the mixture of the avant-garde with realism is the first of the three plays that make up his rural trilogy: *Bodas de sangre*, *Yerma* (1934), and *La casa de Bernarda Alba* (1936).²¹ Each of these plays received acclaim and they are the best-known among all of Lorca's dramatic work.

The first play of the trilogy, *Bodas de sangre* was Lorca's first attempt at bridging the traditional with the avant-garde. The play premiered in the Teatro Beatriz in Madrid on March 8, 1933. The initial staging of this play did not use Margarita Xirgu's company, as most of Lorca's

²⁰ Despite the performances of the play in other Puerto Rico, *El público* was not presented in Spain until 1986. The University of Puerto Rico also presented *Así que pasen cinco años* before the play was staged in Spain.

²¹ Francisco Rico disagrees with the commonly held belief that *La casa de Bernarda Alba* is the third play in this trilogy, believing instead that the third play was never written. In Volume seven of his *Historia y crítica de la literatura española* he says: "La vocación de Lorca por la tragedia en su más puro sentido clásico se plasma en *Bodas de sangre* (1933) y *Yerma* (1934). No llegó a escribir la tragedia –posiblemente *La sangre no tiene voz* –que cerraría esta trilogía [...]" (7: 543) Despite Francisco Rico's exclusion of *La casa de Bernarda Alba* from the trilogy, it is most frequently included with the other two plays and the three are thought to share many common characteristics.

previous plays. As a result, the premiere of *Bodas de sangre* with actress Josefina de Artigas and co-director Eduardo Marquina was only moderately successful. Part of Lorca's reform of the Spanish stage included his dedication to discipline; he demanded constant rehearsal and near perfection from his performers (Walsh 56). This was not the situation he encountered in the first staging of *Bodas de sangre*. Sánchez Trigueros describes the difficulties Lorca encountered in the direction and acting of the play:

According to Francisco García Lorca's testimony, the poet personally directed the actors, who were used to a very different type of theatre: struggling against them, without them really approaching his objectives. Critics mentioned the difficult co-existence of literary values with emotiveness on stage, the relationship between the tones of the set and the dramatic emotion of the text, and the anti-realism of the stage discourse that showed "an Andalusia that did not speak Andalusian."²² (15)

The conflicts with the actors and the lack of understanding of Lorca's vision of the play proved that it had been unwise to use a company other than Margarita Xirgu's. Xirgu was far more accustomed to Lorca's theatrical style and artistic vision. Despite the relative lack of success of the play's first staging, it was presented frequently after its tenure in Madrid. Subsequent representations were staged by Lorca himself, both in Latin America and in Spain.

Although the struggles between the actors and the director caused problems in the play's original representation, other interpretations were more successful. The play was presented 180

²² The final quote here can be found on page 75 in: María Francisca Vilches y Dru Dougherty. *Los estrenos teatrales de Federico García Lorca, (1920-1945)*. Madrid: Tabapress, 1992.

times in Argentina but success in Spain evaded it until its second premiere there on November 22, 1935 in the Principal Palace of Barcelona. In this representation, the role of the mother was played by Margarita Xirgu. Rivas Cherif functioned as the co-director. Working with two artists committed to the avant-garde, Lorca brought his vision to the stage and the play was a resounding success. The eventual triumph of *Bodas de sangre* secured Lorca's place among the great playwrights of the century.

The original inspiration for this play came from reality, but it was Lorca's interpretation that made it into a powerful tragedy. In 1928, a murder that would come to be known as *el crimen de Níjar*, was published in newspapers throughout Spain. A woman in Níjar escaped from her wedding with a cousin, whom she claimed to truly love. That same day, the cousin was shot four times by a masked assassin who, it was later revealed, was the brother of the spurned groom. Allen Josephs and Juan Caballero explain how Lorca wove his play out of pieces of the real event while adding much more: "Como todo gran artista, Lorca siempre eleva la realidad— aunque jamás se inspira en un principio fuera de ella—a esferas poéticas y míticas no perceptible en esa realidad a primera vista" (31). Lorca was able to take a very real event and add his own twists to make the story more compelling and poetic. Even with Lorca's distinct version of the story, it would have been realist drama had Lorca not chosen to add surrealist elements to bring the avant-garde to his work.

Another element that includes both realism and Lorca's distinct vision is the choice of characters in the play. Lorca's other plays incorporate characters with individual, often symbolic, names. In contrast, with one exception, the characters of *Bodas de sangre* are named with the specific purpose of evading individuality. Each of the characters is archetypal, contributing to Lorca's use of Andalusia as a microcosm of Spain. The actions of the characters,

with the exception of the Novia and Leonardo's wedding escape, are typical for the role they fill in society. The spectators had doubtless seen those types of people in their daily lives. Thus, the audience was able not just to identify the individuals, but to identify with them. The use of archetypal characters was doubly useful for Lorca's theater. Only one person was necessary to achieve identification with a large group of people. Similarly, only one character was necessary to critique a large group of people. By presenting a relatively small group of people in a village in Southern Spain, Lorca was able to critique the entirety of Spanish society.

By using a historical event and archetypal characters as protagonists in *Bodas de sangre* Lorca showed that he understood the audience and their desire for something familiar.

Reception theory as developed by Hans Robert Jauss explains why an insight into the audience and their preconceived notions and understanding of the genre is necessary to achieving the desired effect on the audience. Lorca's understanding of Spanish society allowed him to manipulate what Jauss termed the horizon of expectation. As Jauss explains:

The analysis of the literary experience of the reader avoids the threatening pitfalls of psychology if it describes the reception and the influence of a work, within the objectifiable system of expectations that arises from each work in the historical moment of its appearance, from a pre-understanding of the genre, from the form and themes of already familiar work, and from the opposition between poetic and practical language. (22)

Lorca knew what his spectators expected and was able to comprehend their motivations and the historical events that had informed their understanding of the world. He created characters formed by the same experiences. By creating individuals to whom the spectators could easily relate, Lorca was able to assure that the audience could empathize with them, and thus,

experience similar emotions to that each character. Even when Lorca pushed the horizon of expectation and allowed his protagonists to step outside of the socially acceptable, the audience's identification with those characters assured recognition of the circumstances that motivated the fall from grace and acceptance of its outcomes.

The creation of characters that were relatable also allowed Lorca to subvert social norms. Spectators were able to relate to figures on the stage because they watched those characters follow through the same rituals that they had followed. These rituals formed, as Judith Butler suggests, their identities (XV). They saw people that were like themselves, their friends, and their neighbors. Lorca had lived in a bourgeois Spanish society and knew how to use their experiences, their horizon of expectation, to make them feel his desired emotions toward the figures he created and their actions. When a spectator empathizes with a character it becomes hard to condemn that figure when and if he or she does something considered unacceptable. Empathy with the Novia would make spectators leave the theater questioning the role of women in their society without Lorca having to overtly question that role during the play.

Lorca also showed knowledge of his audience in his design of the set. He was intimately aware of his country's customs and that allowed him to create a set that reflected those traditions. Through set design and clothing he was able to indicate the time period and the social class that he wanted without the necessity of the characters explaining them. The artists he employed for set design and costuming were people that he trusted, not only to know Spanish customs (or Latin American, for the presentations of *Bodas de Sangre* in Argentina) but to also share his avant-garde artistic vision. Lorca was conscious of the explicit and metaphorical meanings of each prop on the stage and each costume worn by the characters. He used staging and costuming to further the meaning of his plays.

By using a real event as the basis for his play, Lorca did not risk alienating his audience.²³ The basic premise of the play was based in reality. If he had left the play as a stylistic recreation of a real event, however, Lorca would have betrayed the avant-garde goals of progress and revolution in the theater. Concepción Argente del Castillo Ocaña notes: “Federico cuenta con la complicidad del espectador que contrasta aquello que sucede en el escenario con el relato o la palabra de los que procede, que él puede conocer pero que tiene delante hábilmente incluidos en un abanico o juego de posibilidades, lo que le permite percibir todo lo que presenta el texto lorquiano de ruptura y diferencia en la manera de interpretar la realidad” (241). The spectator had to be able to see something in Lorca’s theater that differentiated it from reality and traditional theater. In order to stay true to his mission as a member of the avant-garde, Lorca had to include something more in the drama. He chose to incorporate surrealist elements into the play. In addition to the traditional, archetypal characters that comprise the majority of the cast, Lorca also gave roles to the moon and death. By including these surrealist characters the playwright was able to push the horizon of expectation, but still create a drama that would not alienate the spectators.

While the surrealist elements of Lorca’s theater were important to the advancement of theater, the realist aspects provided ample criticism of societal norms, such as the subservient role of women in society. Women were the focus of his theatrical creation. As José Alberich notes: “Del mundo predominantemente masculino de su poesía, García Lorca pasa a otro mundo, primordialmente femenino, en su teatro, dando así a su creación artística un doble ángulo

²³ Allen Josephs and Juan Caballero mention that what became known as “El crimen de Níjar” was, during more than a week, present in newspapers not only in Andalusia, but Madrid as well. It was not merely a regional story.

humano, que se resuelve en insospechada riqueza y profundidad” (9). His three most studied plays, *Bodas de sangre*, *Yerma*, and *La casa de Bernarda Alba*, all feature strong female protagonists, and showcase the female role in modern Spanish society, while showing that even formidable women are dominated by men.²⁴ This recognition of male dominance shows how Lorca was attuned to the gender divisions enforced by his society. Even during the Second Republic, sex was still the primary factor in determining the possibilities for a woman. Julianne Burton notes: “These plays present a vision of what some anthropologists now call the sex-gender system of southern Spanish society” (260). By using southern Spain as the setting for his drama Lorca created a small-scale model of the social apparatus of Spain.²⁵ This is the apparatus identified by Gayle Rubin that was used to translate sex into gender. The women in this play are faced with a social code that determines for their sex a gender identity as wives and mothers. By viewing the trilogy as a whole, it becomes evident that defying this identity (as in *Bodas de sangre* and *La casa de Bernarda Alba*), or devoting life to adhering to it (as in *Yerma*), could only end in tragedy for women. Lorca could see that his society offered no good options

²⁴ Robert Lima suggests that (particularly based on the total lack of male characters in *Bernarda Alba*) the dominance of female characters in Lorca’s late plays suggests that the playwright was moving toward the abandonment of heterosexual male characters in his theater. The article is as follows: Lima, Robert. “Missing in Action: Invisible males in *La casa de Bernarda Alba*.” *Bucknell Review* 45 (2001) N. pag. Literature Online. Web. 5 June 2009.

²⁵ By focusing on social customs in these plays and avoiding political tendencies, Lorca was able to use Andalusia as a microcosm of Spain. Every part of the country could identify with the social traditions which meant that the critique of those traditions could be applied country-wide.

for women and that a governmental change to remedy that situation did not result in a social change.

Lorca's life was influenced by many elements that had an effect on his writing. Julianne Burton explains:

His experiences abroad and the circumstances at home sensitized him to the social realities of the Spain of his day: an archaic, hypocritical, and crippling morality; a hierarchical, even tyrannical family structure; extreme social stratification and exploitation of the humbler sectors; and a social-sexual code which privileged men at the expense of women's autonomy, participation, and self-realization. His perception of these social ills, combined with other personal factors, such as his mother's repeated protests against the senseless waste of Spanish womanhood and his own perception of women as the transmitters of culture, led him to present the female experience as the core of the three tragedies he wrote toward the end of his life (160).

Lorca's sexual orientation was taboo in his country and he was unable to express his frustration at his inability to live his lifestyle openly on the stage. Instead, he explored the plight of women and he focused on those women that experienced, if slightly more socially acceptable, a similar ostracism to that which he experienced. Sandra Roberston explains it thus: "[...] Lorca describe a la mujer no para defenderla, sino para escribirse, para encontrarse y conocerse, a sí mismo. La articulación del deseo, a través de la mujer, le abre un espacio en donde puede explorar el secreto y el misterio y la intensidad de su propia sexualidad, no enunciada" (77). Lorca's own situation sensitized him to the plight of women in his society. As María Cristina Mabrey explains: "[...] Lorca sabía muy bien que la situación de la mujer era precaria, social y sexualmente, y por esta

causa su feminidad sufría grandes reglamentaciones, no siéndole posible expresar abiertamente sus necesidades” (43). Lorca’s inability to express his needs was reflected in his female protagonists.

When the sex of the women of Lorca’s generation was added to the current social apparatus, the result was one gender identity: that of a subservient wife. The women in *Bodas de sangre* were on the margin of marriage, defying the gender identity established for all women. Outside the confines of a marital relationship or a convent, society had no way to define women. This resulted in extensive pressure to marry, a pressure acutely felt by the Novia in *Bodas de sangre*.²⁶ Marriage was a crucial, gender-defining ritual in Spain, and *Bodas de sangre* presents a great variety of marital situations to examine. There is a traditional married couple (Leonardo and La Mujer de Leonardo), two widows (La Madre and La Suegra), each of which lives with one of their children, a single man who becomes engaged and married (El Novio), a single woman who becomes engaged, married, and widowed (La Novia), and a widower (El Padre de La Novia) who lives with his daughter. The importance of the social rite of marriage is evident in the play due to the names of the characters. With exception to Leonardo, each of the main characters is identified by their part of, or relation to, the married couple, the bride, or the groom. Burton suggests that this lack of individual names is an indication of their subordination to specific social roles (160-61). Only Leonardo steps out of the specific social role into which his

²⁶ The Novia experienced a dual life much like that of Lorca. Lorca’s dual life was, on the public side, a successful playwright, and on the private side, a lack of happy personal relationships. The Novia’s public face is that of a woman marrying appropriately, and her private side is that of a tortured woman not allowed to marry the man she passionately loves.

society forces him and avoids repeating the mistakes of his father.²⁷ This effort to differentiate himself from the rest of his family and defy social and marital norms is what sets Leonardo apart from the remainder of the cast. It is also what prompted Lorca to give him, and only him, an individual name.

The multiple marital situations in this drama make it ideal for the study of women on the margin of marriage. The first example of this type of woman in *Bodas de sangre* is the Madre. The Madre was widowed long before the events of the play. She describes her late husband as the perfect spouse. Hers is the only marriage that seems to have been happy. The happiness of that union, however, cannot be proved; it is only remembered by the Madre. Terrence MacMullan notes: “The trouble is that the Madre is married not to a man, but to a memory. Ironically, the one perfect spouse in *Bodas de sangre* is unreal: at best extinct and at worst notional” (62). The Madre would be happy to still be married to her late husband. Her position on the margin of marriage is neither a comfortable nor chosen situation. She believes that each woman should marry one man and no more. She tells her son: “Miré a tu padre, y cuando lo mataron miré a la pared de enfrente. Una mujer con un hombre, y ya está” (96). When her husband dies, the Madre dedicates herself to her son, the only man left in her life.

The relationship between the Madre and the Novio portrays the widowed woman as a clear bearer of tradition. José Ortega observes her role in a society reluctant to change: “El autoritarismo intransigente lo encarna el personaje de la Madre, defensora de la organización

²⁷ When the Madre learns from the Vecina that the Novia had a relationship with Leonardo and that Leonardo is from the Félix family she becomes very upset. The Vecina questions: “Mujer, ¿qué culpa tiene Leonardo de nada? Él tenía ocho años cuando las cuestiones” (99).

social, del orden, que prohíbe toda libre expresión instintiva que no esté dirigida a la producción” (69). The Madre defends the type of marriage that she had and expects that her son will maintain the same values. In the absence of her husband, it is her responsibility to prepare her son for marriage. Burton notes: “Woman’s only autonomy comes when the dominant male figure in her life disappears. The bridegroom’s widowed mother arranges his wedding, and since she tells him how many gifts he can buy, it is clear that the family finances are in her hands. In the absence of her husband, it falls to her to maintain tradition and prepare her son for his new role” (264). Although her son is mainly independent, he turns to his mother to instruct him about the ritual of marriage. The Madre, having completed this ritual herself, knows his role, and the role of the Novia. It is the repetition of this ceremony that forms the identity of both the bride and the groom as they pass through it. The first indication of this is in the Madre’s questioning of the Novia in the formalization of the marriage plans:

MADRE: ¿Tú sabes lo que es casarse, criatura?

NOVIA. Lo sé.

MADRE. Un hombre, unos hijos y una pared de dos varas de ancho para todo lo demás. (112)

This exchange with the Novia suggests how marriage formed the identity of the Madre. Now, in the absence of her husband the Madre teaches her son how to become the husband that the ceremony will make him. Part of that instruction includes a lesson on how to make it clear that he is the dominant person in the relationship. She advises him: “Con tu mujer procura ser cariñoso, y si la notaras infatuada o arisca, hazle una caricia que le produzca un poco de daño, un abrazo fuerte, un mordisco y luego un beso suave. Que ella no pueda disgustarse, pero que sienta que tú eres el macho, el amo, el que manda. Así aprendí de tu padre. Y como no lo tienes,

tengo que ser yo la que te enseñe estas fortalezas” (138). These conversations prove that not only is the Madre the bearer of tradition, she is a staunch supporter of the patriarchal system that subordinates women to men.

In addition to the Madre, the Suegra can also be seen as passing on traditional, patriarchal values. She lives with her daughter (La Mujer de Leonardo) and her son-in-law (Leonardo). In her relationship with Leonardo, she shows deference to him because he is a man. When Leonardo enters and his horse seems to have come back from the end of the world, she questions who has been riding it so hard. Upon hearing that it was Leonardo, she apologizes, noting that the horse is his. She stays out of the tense arguments between her daughter and son-in-law but when her daughter continues to speak to Leonardo even after he has ordered her silence, the Suegra steps in and tells her daughter to be quiet. Although she never specifically admonishes her daughter for her behavior toward her Leonardo, the Suegra has a clear sense of the subordinate position of women in relation to men and she urges her daughter to tend to her child, instead of worrying about the whereabouts of her husband.

La Mujer de Leonardo learns from her mother not only how to submit to a man, but also to tolerate an unhappy marriage. When she urges Leonardo to ride with her to the church instead of going alone on his horse it results in another argument. Finally, she comments: “No sé lo que pasa. Pero pienso y no quiero pensar. Una cosa sé. Yo ya estoy despachada. Pero tengo un hijo. Y otro que viene. Vamos andando. El mismo sino tuvo mi madre. Pero de aquí no me muevo” (129). Although she claims not to know what is happening, her own situation is one that is not new to the Mujer. She saw the same thing happening to her mother. Her comment to Leonardo is an indication of the role of repetition in the formation of identity.

The Mujer is not the only character that experiences repetition; the Novia's marriage to a man whom she presumably does not love is another instance. When the Madre discusses with a neighbor the local gossip about the family of her future daughter-in-law, she hears that the Novia's mother was attractive but not well liked. The Vecina says: "A su madre la conocí. Hermosa. Le relucía la cara como a un santo; pero a mí no me gustó nunca. No quería a su marido" (99). This comment suggests that a woman being married to a man with whom she is not in love makes her somehow distasteful to other women. Nonetheless, the tradition of fathers marrying their daughters to men who are appropriate, if not loved, continued for years.²⁸ It is reasonable to believe that the Madre, the Suegra, and the Vecina were married in accordance with the choices of their fathers, not of their hearts. The Novia is facing the same sort of loveless marriage that her mother endured, despite her best efforts to put aside her love for Leonardo and be faithful to the Novio.

The repetition of unhappy marriage is a constant theme throughout the play. Lorca's goal was not to present a panorama of blissful marriages, but a more accurate version of the unhappiness that social customs forced women to endure. The view of marriage as the only option for women led to pressure to marry. The patriarchal dominant system led to matches based on a father's choice, not a daughter's love. The combination of these two elements led to general unhappiness. The lack of happy marriages prompts MacMullan to suggest that an appropriate subtitle for *Bodas de sangre* would be *Six Misuses of Marriage* (70).

²⁸ This does not suggest that a father would only marry his daughter to a man that she did not love. If she were to fall in love with a man who was considered appropriate, her father would likely approve the match.

Lorca was very conscious of the role of repetition in his society and how the repeating of traditions frequently led women to share the same fate as their mothers.²⁹ The older generation served as the bearers and propagators of traditional values, including specific ideas about appropriate behaviors within a marital relationship. Both the Mother and the Suegra reinforce the repetition present in male/female relationship traditions. The repetition and ritual mentioned by Butler are present throughout the play. The unhappy marriage of the Suegra and of the Novia's mother, repeated by their daughters and the Mother's advice on marriage given to the Novio are repetitions that both result in unhappiness for women. Ritual is also present in every element of the wedding: the proposal, the ceremony, and the songs. These repetitions and rituals support Butler's view of the role of ritual and repetition in the forging of gender identity. Generations of repetition have clearly defined the traditions regarding the role of both women and men in arranging and participating in a marriage. Each entered into married life with clear understanding and expectations of what was expected for a man and a woman. As the repetition of the rituals of marriage and of married life continued, both participants became more deeply set in their roles. Married women followed in the footsteps of their mothers and became subservient wives. Because marriage was considered the only appropriate goal for a woman, those traditions defined her inevitable identity.

The Novia spends most of the play on the margin of marriage, going from engaged to widowed in the course of one day. Her role in the play, extending even to her character's name,

²⁹ In *La casa de Bernarda Alba* Lorca expresses this awareness through the voice of Martirio commenting on the dishonored Adelaida: "Pero las cosas se repiten. Y veo que todo es una terrible repetición. Y ella tiene el mismo sino de su madre y de su abuela [...]"

is based on her role in the impending marriage. Her future husband is not the man that she passionately loves. She is, nonetheless, eager to marry him:

NOVIA. ¡Vámonos pronto a la iglesia!

NOVIO. ¿Tienes prisa?

NOVIA. Sí. Estoy deseando ser tu mujer y quedarme sola contigo, y no oír más voz que la tuya.

NOVIO. ¡Eso quiero yo!

NOVIA. Y no ver más que tus ojos. Y que me abrazaras tan fuerte, que aunque me llamara mi madre, que está muerta, no me pudiera despegar de ti. (127)

This exchange reinforces Scanlon's comment on women's voluntary and enthusiastic entrance into a situation that amounted to legal slavery. This conversation with the Novio, however, is not based on any aspirations of marriage to a man she does not love, but on the desire to belong to someone other than Leonardo. She will attempt to devote herself to her new husband in order to overcome her passion for Leonardo.³⁰

The desire to marry the Novio as soon as possible, as expressed by the Novia, stands in stark contrast to the conversation that she had with Leonardo minutes before:

NOVIA. Pero yo tengo orgullo. Por eso me caso. Y me encerraré con mi marido, a quien tengo que querer por encima de todo.

LEONARDO. El orgullo no te servirá de nada. (*Se acerca*).

NOVIA. ¡No te acerques!

³⁰ Falling back to traditional marriage expectations to avoid an inappropriate love seems to support the patriarchal system, and the Novia is attempting to do just that. She wants to be able to devote herself to the Novio, but her overwhelming passion for Leonardo is too strong.

LEONARDO. Callar y quemarse es el castigo más grande que nos podemos echar encima. ¿De qué me sirvió a mí el orgullo y el no mirarte y dejarte despierta noches y noches? ¡De nada! ¡Sirvió para echarme fuego encima! Porque tú crees que el tiempo cura y que las paredes tapan, y no es verdad, no es verdad. ¡Cuando las cosas llegan a los centros no hay quien las arranque!

NOVIA. (*temblando*). No puedo oírte. No puedo oír tu voz. Es como si me bebiera una botella de anís y me durmiera en una colcha de rosas. Y me arrastra, y sé que me ahogo, pero voy detrás. (119-20)

The Novia's love for Leonardo is an overpowering emotion that she has tried to forget, while her love for the Novio exists only because she sees it as compulsory. Generations of repetition of the ritual of matrimony have made marriage to a parentally-approved man both obligatory and inevitable. By marrying the Novio, the Novia is repeating what her mother is said to have done, that is, marrying a man that she does not love.

The involvement of multiple generations in this play makes it ideal for the study of Butler's theories on repetition. The understanding of marriage exists for the Novio and Novia because it was passed on by their parents. The older generation educates their offspring about the roles of the bride and groom in the nuptials and subsequent relationship. The role of repetition in an identity-forming milestone is reinforced by the Madre and the Padre, who pass on what they learned from their own parents. Repetition informs the ritual of marriage, and marriage dictates a woman's identity. Love is not part of the equation. By depicting a recurrence of loveless marriages, Lorca casts repetition in a negative light.

Because she did not have the right to choose to marry for love, the Novia also illustrates Rubin's theory. The right of a man to choose the future husband of his daughter illustrates what

Rubin says about men having rights over women: “As long as men have rights in women which women do not have in themselves, the phallus also carries the meaning of the difference between ‘exchanger’ and ‘exchanged,’ gift and giver” (130). Although the man that she marries will determine the course of her life and her identity, she is not allowed to choose that man. She does not have as many rights over her future as her father does. The Novia has no power to overrule her father’s choice. The simple fact that he is a man gives him the phallus and thus gives her father all of the power. The Novia must accept her father’s choice, because although it has negative consequences, attempting to refuse would not have positive results, even her father did not force the marriage. Accepting her father’s choice ends in a marriage to someone she does not love. Attempting to refuse his choice still does not allow her to marry Leonardo and it simultaneously makes her a social pariah, having dated two men and not married either.

The Novia’s marriage shows the two forces in conflict mentioned by María Rosa Cabo Martínez: “[...] se debaten dos fuerzas en conflicto: por un lado el peso de la tradición y por otro, las ansias de libertad” (9). For women in general, freedom and independence were not readily available. Women legally came of age at twenty-three. Despite being legal adults, the law prevented them from leaving the house of their parents, unless approved, until they turned twenty-five. Before that age, they could only leave the power of their fathers to submit to the power of a husband. As Scanlon notes: “El artículo [321 del código civil] refleja muy claramente la opinión general de que las chicas no debían abandonar el hogar paterno a no ser para casarse, es decir, pasar de la tutela del padre a la del marido. La ley desalentaba efectivamente cualquier manifestación de independencia por parte de la mujer” (125). The independence to defy her father and achieve liberty from her father’s desires did not belong to the Novia, as her twenty-second birthday is the day of the wedding. She is still forced to live

under the rule of her father. The law dictates that a woman's independence, liberty, is at the discretion of her father. Thus the law, tradition, and by extension the patriarchy, dictate that a woman must marry the man that her father chooses for her. Although the play never explicitly states that the Novio is chosen by the Padre for the Novia, it is clear that she is marrying the Novio because she was not permitted to marry Leonardo. Her passion for Leonardo would not be problematic if she were allowed to marry him. The fact that she marries the Novio, instead of the man that she loves, shows that even love is not strong enough to overcome generations of social conditioning. The desire for freedom is not a desire to be alone, but to be free to love who and how she wants.

The Novia's marriage to the Novio instead of to Leonardo is due to the latter's lower socioeconomic class. This is never explicitly stated, but the wealth of the families of the bridal couple is mentioned in multiple situations. When the young girl relays that the Novio and the Madre came to buy presents for the Novia, the Suegra comments twice on financial situations. The first time she says, of the Novio's family: "Ellos tienen dinero" (105). Later in the same conversation, she remarks on the wealth of both families in the planned marriage: "Se van a juntar dos buenos capitales" (105). The Suegra's awareness of finances suggests that both families are known as being wealthy.

It also becomes evident in the conversation between the Madre and the Padre that the primary consideration in the match between the Novio and Novia is financial. The first thing discussed between the parents of the bride and groom (after small talk about the trip) is the crop of esparto on the Padre's land and how lucrative it appears. The discussion of the father's land leads to a further financial dialogue:

PADRE. En mi tiempo, ni esparto daba esta tierra. Ha sido necesario castigarla y hasta llorarla, para que nos dé algo provechoso.

MADRE. Pero ahora da. No te quejes. No vengo a pedirte nada.

PADRE. Tú eres más rica que yo. Las viñas valen un capital. Cada pámpano una moneda de plata. (110)

This conversation establishes a level of compatibility between the Novio and the Novia in the eyes of their parents. From a monetary standpoint, they are well matched. This shows that the marriage between the Novio and Novia is not a love match but a financial move leading to disastrous results. MacMullan notes:

As the formulaic ritual of the betrothal scene underlines, neither the Madre or the Padre seriously questions the authenticity of their children's mutual commitment. [...]. Taking the bride and groom's love for granted (a large assumption) they focus instead on marginal issues. Thus the Padre, more materialistic, views the wedding, above all, as an amalgamation of property. [...]. Less mercenary, the Madre, for her part, sees only the eventual arrival of grandchildren (especially girls) to keep her company. (64)

None of the reasons given for the marriage between the Novio and Novia is love. The parents approve of the match because it will provide something desired for each of them. The compatibility of their children is a much lesser concern.

Both the comments made by the Suegra and the conversation between the Madre and the Padre prove that both the Madre and the Novia come from a hegemonic social class. The high social class that these women belong to gives them certain renown in their society. As shown in the Novia's inability to marry Leonardo, this social class also affects the group of men that are

considered acceptable suitors. The Madre's strong role in her family and in the life of her son show that such women have both the ability to influence their society and power that often goes unrecognized. As is true almost everywhere, money is power, and the hegemonic social standing of these women makes them a source of power in their society.

Later in the conversation held between the Madre and the Padre, when the matter of the desired marriage is reached, Lorca explicitly expresses the qualities that his society desired in both men and women. The comments of the parents to arrange the marriage further prove that the match between the Novio and Novia is based neither on love nor even personal compatibility. The parents discuss the qualities of their children without mentioning mutual affect, much less love:

MADRE. Mi hijo tiene y puede.

PADRE. Mi hija también.

MADRE. Mi hijo es hermoso. No ha conocido mujer. La honra más limpia que una sábana puesta al sol.

PADRE. Qué te digo de la mía. Hace las migas a las tres, cuando el lucero. No habla nunca; suave como la lana, borda toda clase de bordados, y puede cortar una maroma con los dientes. (111)

This conversation shows two very important points: the strength of the Madre and the traditionally desired characteristics of a man and a woman in twentieth-century Spanish society.

By being the one to speak about the characteristics of her son and to arrange his marriage, the Madre's strength is displayed. She functions as well as any man would in this situation, and her lengthy widowhood has made that capacity necessary. Although she is acting in a role that would normally be occupied by a man, the Madre knows the rite and ritual of marriage, and she

understands fully what is expected in this process. The absence of her husband has not proved her weak and helpless but shrewd and strong. The Padre's description of his daughter stands in contrast to the strong woman presented by the Madre. It shows the expected subservience of women to men. In addition to possessing that traditional sewing and cooking skills that are expected of her sex, the Novia is considered noteworthy for her silence. She knows not to respond to her husband with insolence, but to accept his word as law.

Despite the strength of the character that Lorca creates in the Novia, she does not receive the phallus from her father. This power passes over her to her husband, and would also pass to their son, if they were to procreate. As noted by Rubin, the phallus, the site of male power, cannot be conferred to women, only to men. As a result, the Novia cannot assume a dominant role in her society, or in her relationship. The role that her society assigns to the Novia is that of a subordinate wife. When her sex is applied to the social apparatus of twentieth-century Spain, the result is an inescapable gender role as a wife and a mother who keeps the house clean and her mouth shut.

The Novia's expected subordination to her husband shows what Guha proves about subalternity being possible in an entire sex. Lorca clearly displays that the Novia is from the elite social class. Her subordination is not due to financial class, caste or age, Guha's other categories. However, as Guha says, "The same class or element that was dominant in one area [...] could be among the dominated in another" (*Selected* 44). She is subordinate to her father, and plans to later be subordinate to her husband, strictly because of her sex. This characteristic is not unique to the Novia. Her society privileged men at the expense of women's autonomy.

Although the Madre is not subordinate to a husband and she takes an active role in her son's life, her role of relative power is only allowable due to the absence of her husband. Her

husband passed the phallus to her son, not to her. In the death of a husband, many rights returned to women, they received the *patria potestas* over their children and they could own property, but they were still not equal to men, and they were still not men. Widowed women, though taking the place at the head of the household, were not the equivalent to the male head of the family. Twentieth-century Spain fits into what Silverman refers to as the dominant fiction that placed the man at the head of the family. Although widows were a very real part of society, they did not fit into the ideal of the family that their society used to determine female roles. Even during the Second Republic, when men and women were legal equals, the submission of women to men was socially mandated, if not legally. Society did not have a way to rationalize the position of widows because they did not have a specific male individual to whom they could submit. Widows had to be given certain rights, but occupying the vacated role as the head of the household was not the same as possessing the phallus, the symbol of male power. Spanish society used the dominant fiction of the family led by a man to legitimize the dominance of men and subordination of women. Widows did not fit into this paradigm, but to avoid total social disruption, they were still forced to submit to the patriarchal influence, and to propagate its legitimacy to future generations.

Thus, although the Novia behaves in a patently unacceptable fashion, she is more comprehensible than the Madre because she is following socially accepted rituals.³¹ They are not rituals in which she desires to participate, at least not with her male counterpart in

³¹ If the Madre were to act in an unacceptable manner, similar to the Novia, there would be no specific recourse to deal with this behavior because the man to whom she owes submission is no longer alive.

matrimony. Nonetheless, she is initially following one of the acceptable paths for women. Her engagement is the transition from one acceptable role, that of seeking a suitable husband, to the other, that of a married woman. Even as an unfaithful wife, society is able to categorize the Novia, because she is married. There is a man to whom she owes her submission. Through the marriage ceremony the Novia accepted the Novio as her husband, and thus acknowledged his power over her. The Novio is contractually owed his wife's loyalty and fidelity. The fact that she abandons her husband to be with someone else does not delegitimize his claim. Her escape with Leonardo has a corresponding action that is required of the Novio.³² Her society has specific roles that a wife is expected to fill, and similarly explicit consequences for failure to fulfill the duties required by that role.

Despite their initial difference in marital (and thus societal) status, both the Novia and the Madre are on the margin of marriage, and both are privileged. Both women are part of the elite social class, a point that Lorca emphasizes throughout the play. Their financial standing allows them to exert a certain amount of influence in their society. They are known as wealthy and this affords them certain social status within their community. This wealth also allows them to live as widows without the need to remarry out of economic necessity.

The *Mujer de Leonardo* stands in contrast to the two female protagonists, despite their many similarities. She is also on the margin of marriage. She becomes widowed at the same time that the Novia loses her husband. Her situation, however, is markedly different from that of the Novia and the Madre. The *Mujer de Leonardo* does not have the hegemonic social class to

³² The action that corresponds to the Novia's escape is not only recognized by the Novio but by everyone present at the wedding. Even the Madre, who abhors knives and anything that is able to "cortar el cuerpo de un hombre," presses the knife into her son's hand.

offset her marginality. Her lack of financial means combined with her sex makes her marginalized financially and socially. Unlike the Madre and the Novia, she is a truly subaltern figure. By including her, and developing her character, Lorca highlights the power, however incomplete, of the wealthy women in the play.

Although the wealth of the Madre and the Novia places them in a more powerful situation than other females in the play, they are still not completely hegemonic figures. Their society requires that they be subordinate to men. This subordination, though not obviously portrayed in the Madre's life, is evident in the instructions she passes on to her son about how to dominate, to train, his wife.³³ Subordination is evident in the Novia's life through her inability to marry the man that she loves and her expected subservience to her future husband. Their society not only expects, but reinforces this systematic subordination of women.

Because of their simultaneous hegemonic social class and societal subordination, both the Madre and the Novia exist in marginality in hegemony. Lorca emphasizes their social class and their marginalization throughout the play without overtly mentioning either. There are clear indications of socioeconomic position, such as in the negotiation of the marriage. The evidence of marginalization, though not explicitly stated, is also present. Lorca counted on his contemporary audience to be aware of the role of women in society. The Novia's inability to marry Leonardo is the clearest indication of female subordination. Although both women experience marginality in hegemony, Lorca chose to focus on the Novia to prove his point. She is too financially powerful to marry the man that she loves, but simultaneously too weak to override social convention. Despite her wealth and engagement to a suitable husband that cares

³³ This is one of many examples of the way in which women themselves propagate the appropriateness of male domination of women.

for her, Lorca places the Novia in a situation where she simply cannot win. Instead of offsetting one another, her marginality and hegemony combine to prevent her from fulfilling her desires. Because the audience has long been led to identify with the Novia, they are also drawn to empathize with her untenable position and recognize the social norms that caused it.

Although the Novia's dissatisfaction with her groom is visible in the play, it is not Lorca's point of greatest significance. Instead of emphasizing the Novia's dissatisfaction in her inability to choose her husband and in the man that her father has chosen for her, Lorca chose instead to foreground her forced denial of her burning passion for Leonardo. He believed that his audience would be moved by the passion and desperation of the Novia. He also counted on the audience's horizon of expectation to assure that they would understand the reason that prevented the Novia from marrying the man that she clearly loved. By giving her all of the trappings that her privileged background entailed, Lorca also ensured that his bourgeois audience would identify with her. This ability to create a character that resembles the spectator highlights W. B. Worthen and Eli Rozik's differentiation between a close reading and a performance. Lorca utilized the ability to physically show his audience a character that could belong to their society in order to heighten their level of identification and empathy.

As a result of Lorca's portrayal more of passion than dissatisfaction, the play reveals much more subversive aims than its surface seems to indicate. On the surface it is a play based on a real event, which portrays the crime of Níjar in a stylized version. This relationship to a highly-publicized factual incident gave the audience a frame of reference to understand the play. Lorca was known as an avant-garde artist, but the continued popularity of other playwrights such as Benavente did not encourage an audience to look for more than a dramatized rendering of that actual occurrence. The horizon of expectation was clearly established both by popular

playwrights and by Lorca's limited previous success on the stage. Lorca pushed the limits of the spectators' preconceived notions in such a subtle way that his audience was likely to leave the theater perplexed by the sympathy they felt for a woman who had acted in such a reproachable manner.

Lorca shows knowledge of the power of characters existing in marginality in hegemony as a tool of subversion by the manner in which he organizes the play. To the spectator, the scenes flow naturally; the major characters are introduced, either directly or indirectly in their family groups during the first scenes and then the mixture of families begins.³⁴ Upon further consideration, it appears peculiar that although the Novia is mentioned multiple times in the first scenes, she does not appear on stage until the marriage negotiation.

By presenting the Novia for the first time as a financially secure bride-to-be in a traditional pre-marriage ritual, Lorca ensures that the audience will identify with her. Butler mentions the role of ritual and repetition in the formation of identity; Lorca proves their usefulness in establishing audience identification. The play depicts the same rituals in which an audience of the same social class would have very likely participated. The audience of Lorca's day would have been presented with a character that shared their mode of dress, their social class, and many of their traditions. These commonalities, when united to the Novia's first appearance during an important ritual ensured that the members of the audience would identify with this character.

³⁴ The Padre does not appear until the third *cuadro* of the first act, but he also cannot be considered a major character in the play. This is significant because although he was undoubtedly the primary influence in the Novia's choice of a husband, by the time the action of the play commences, he is preparing to transfer the control of his daughter to her husband.

Strong identification with a character is much more possible in a theatrical setting than in a novel or other literary medium. Although it is possible to identify with the protagonist in any work, the theater has the advantage of not just description, but presentation. Novels and poetry often include context to lead to identification, but the theater supplies that context in a physical manner. The ability to visually and aurally recognize elements of their own lives allowed the audience to recognize commonalities between their own lives and that of the protagonist, and thus to identify with her. Even those who could not identify with the Novia would be able to recognize someone of their own social class and sympathize with her plight. Written art forms require the imagination of the receiver to create the image of the character. When physical senses are invoked, such as in the theater, those images are readily available and the effect on the receiver much more profound level. With Lorca's careful use of images and rituals, the spectator could not help but identify with the characters.

Once the audience has been led to identify with the Novia, Lorca was able to use her character as a tool of subversion. The audience would recognize their lives reflected in the Novia. Foregrounding the passion for Leonardo and expressing it in such ardent and eloquent terms made the audience that identified with this protagonist able to understand her desire for an inappropriate man.³⁵ Though Lorca's audience could not formally condone it, they would empathize with her decision to abandon her husband. This empathy with a wrongdoer would

³⁵ The effectiveness of the foregrounding of the passion between Leonardo and the Novia is heavily influenced by the delivery of the dialogue by the actors. All actors and directors are different, consequently all representations of this play can give a different level of intensity to the relationship between Leonardo and the Novia. Nonetheless, Lorca's dialogue does much on its own to display the ardent nature of their desire for one another.

lead a spectator to question the societal rules that led to the unhappiness. Planting the impetus to question deeply-held societal beliefs without overtly questioning them in the play is evidence of Lorca's talent.

Subversion is also achieved by the very fact that this play is a tragedy. Existing in marginality in hegemony means that the women are both too elite and too marginalized to choose the man they wish to marry.³⁶ The protagonist's happiness is unattainable. This is highly subversive because it suggests that for a woman to achieve true happiness, one of two conditions must be met. She can either be poor, subaltern, so that men of all classes are acceptable mates, or she can be empowered to choose the spouse she desires. Both of these conditions went against the very fabric of Lorca's society. The bourgeoisie should be the content class because they have wealth and power. Women should not desire anyone but whom they are told to marry by their fathers. In the 1920's and 1930's in Spain, this was how society worked. To suggest that this could only lead to unhappiness is highly subversive and to make it evident without directly saying it is one of Lorca's great achievements.

If this were simply viewed from the high class, hegemonic point of view, the subversion would not be evident. If they merely concentrated on subaltern or marginalized figures, there would not be subversion. It is the combination of these two elements, marginality in hegemony that allows Lorca to question the social norms of his society and subvert them without stepping outside the acceptable bounds of presentable drama. Through the use of marginality in

³⁶ Although the Novia is the clearest example of a woman who is marrying due to financial considerations over love, it is not only true of her. All women in her society that were financially hegemonic would be faced with many concerns before love in their quest to marry.

hegemony he was able to critique his primarily elite audience and their marginalizing tendencies, all while presenting a play they would happily watch.

The Early Franco Dictatorship

Antonio Buero Vallejo's *La tejedora de sueños*

Spain suffered through three years of violent civil war that ended in a dictatorship that did more than the war to cripple the spirit of the country. Strict censorship prevented artists from expressing their frustration and disdain for the government openly, but it did not stop them from communicating their intended points to their audience. The strict rules enforced by the dictatorship forced artists to find a new way to convey their ideas. The result in the theater was an innovative style that made frequent use of the past to critique the present. Antonio Buero Vallejo experimented with style and form, but his drama during the dictatorship never failed to leave the audience considering more than that which had been openly conveyed.

Buero Vallejo was born in Guadalajara in 1916. He was, from an early age, very interested in arts and literature. This artistic fascination was nurtured in the Escuela de Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid, where his family moved in 1934. Buero Vallejo's life in Spain encompassed many periods. He lived through the declaration of the Second Republic, the outbreak of civil war, the installation of a dictatorship, a transition, and finally the development of a democracy. For much of his literary career, the entire country of Spain was in a state of repression. The freedom that was provided to writers in the generation before his was denied to him and his cohorts. The repression enforced during the decades of the dictatorship influenced both Buero Vallejo and an entire generation of Spanish artists.

Between the years of 1936 and 1939 the country of Spain was in turmoil. The civil war tore apart families, friendships, and the country as a whole. When the war ended, Spain's troubles were not at an end. What had been torn asunder needed to be reunited. Historians suggest that approximately 500,000 people died as a result of the civil war in Spain. The country

needed to be rebuilt in many ways. In addition to rebuilding Spain's population, it was necessary to reconstruct many of its physical structures and, perhaps most importantly, to reestablish its national identity.

During the early years of the dictatorship of Francisco Franco, financial troubles plagued Spain. The financial reconstruction of his country was a priority for Franco, but so was the continued happiness of the wealthy upper classes. To reach these ends, and to reestablish the conquering of the lower classes, Franco chose to rebuild his country on the backs of the poor.³⁷ He did this through the system of autarky. The autarky imposed by the dictator, while protecting the economic interests of the *élite*, simultaneously overburdened and repressed the working class. Mike Richards explains how the new economic system, burdening the working class, was expected to function:

The chosen strategy of autarky—in theory, industrialization through the exploitation of purely national resources—in practice promised a reconciliation of several demands. It was seen as allowing for industrial growth without the need for a structural reform which would damage existing interests and coincided with a desire to confirm the subjugation of the defeated. In the process, Spain's social *élites* would both support and participate in various forms of repression. (174)

The intention to industrialize the country while protecting the interests of the *élite* resulted in slow progress. The shift to an industrialized country was slow and painful and the burden was, as a form of repression, borne disproportionately by the working class.

³⁷ Although not all lower class individuals supported the communist side of the war, and vice versa, the nature of the Second Republic made it more common for the lower classes to support that side and for the upper classes to support the Falange.

Another of the forms of repression involved in industrialization of Spain was the State's control of labor. This control made it possible to enforce the compulsory re-application for jobs by workers in industrial areas. Workers that were unable to prove their allegiance to the new government, or those that had proven ties to unions would be denied their old jobs and either be in a state of forced unemployment or imprisonment. Thus, those who had suffered a defeat in the Civil War suffered a second defeat in the work force.

Defeat was a word that explained the times for many during the first years of the dictatorship. As Richards explains: "Defeat defined the reality of everyday life for much of the population. Social control was based upon the distribution and manipulation of the most fundamental necessities for survival: food and work" (180). There was official ration of food but it was inadequate. There were "supplementary rations" but their availability was based on political and behavioral considerations. These extra rations were unavailable to certain people whose suffering was considered appropriate, such as families of prisoners or exiled people.

In a time when basic human necessities were in question and the voices of artists were being censored, it is understandable that culture suffered. One of the cultures that was hit the hardest by the politics of the new regime was feminism. Feminism had been on the rise prior to the Civil War. The legal equality and suffrage provided by the Republic had nurtured the movement and given many women the opportunity to participate in the workforce and in political arena. Though, as we have seen, this equality granted by the law was not necessarily practiced by the people, it at least afforded women a chance to begin to make their voices heard. Geraldine Scanlon explains what the nationalist victory at the end of the Civil War meant for the rights of women:

La derrota de la República en 1939 destruyó toda esperanza de emancipación para la mujer en un futuro próximo. A pesar de sus diferencias políticas, los partidos que habían apoyado a la República habían incluido todos en sus programas el principio de igualdad jurídica. Aunque los prejuicios de ningún modo habían desaparecido, la mujer había logrado un grado de independencia económica, legal y sexual mayor que nunca. Si no había conseguido completa igualdad una victoria republicana le hubiese dado por lo menos la oportunidad de seguir luchando por ella. (320)

Any headway made toward equality between the sexes during the Republic was destroyed with the new laws of the dictatorship. Scanlon notes: “La mujer de la «nueva España» iba a parecerse, sorprendentemente, a la mujer de la vieja España, y la legislación del nuevo Estado hizo lo posible por acentuar este parecido” (320). Women that had ventured into the public sphere during the Republic were moved firmly back into the home. Politics were again considered the realm of men only. As Helen Graham explains: “After 1939 women were deprived of the very legal political arena in which to mobilize. They could not even reach the starting line” (114-15).

A firm goal under the new regime was to rebuild the nation, and this required, in the eyes of the dictator, women to be in the home instead of the workforce. This need to rebuild the country prompts John London to comment that the image of women lying on their backs was an: “[...] apt image of the role Spanish women were called upon to play in construction the New State” (205).³⁸ Laws were established beginning in 1938 to encourage large families and make

³⁸ The image that London notes is during a 1941 gymnastics presentation of the Sección Femenina. Hundreds of women lying on their backs are forming the imperial eagle, the national emblem of Spain.

it economically possible for these families to make ends meet with only one income. A 1946 law denied this subsidy to men with working wives. Labor laws in general during the Franco era concentrated on removing women from the work force and returning them to the home to rebuild the population and educate the next generation of Spaniards. Married women were either strongly encouraged or compelled to leave their jobs. Scanlon explains: “La mayor parte de la normativa laboral contenía la estipulación de que las mujeres abandonasen su trabajo al casarse. El nuevo Estado no sólo se preocupaba de liberar a la mujer proletaria de la esclavitud de la fábrica; también se preocupó de «liberar» a la mujer educada de un trabajo prestigioso y lucrativo” (321). Regardless of her social class, education, or job, a married Spanish woman was expected to be in the home, not the workplace. As Estrella Casero explains: “Todos los partidos e instituciones que derrocó a la República y encumbró al general Francisco Franco en la cúspide del poder coincidían en un punto: ‘el lugar de la mujer está en la casa’” (14).

Women did have one obligation outside of the home during the dictatorship, that of the *Sección Femenina* (Feminine Section). Pilar Primo de Rivera, the sister of José Antonio Primo de Rivera, the leader of the Falange, led this organization. When the Falange was formed in 1933 women attempted to join but were not allowed: “Varias mujeres acudieron a inscribirse, entre ellas Pilar Primo de Rivera, hermana de José Antonio pero fueron rechazadas con el argumento de ‘la violencia que rodearía al Movimiento’ [. . .]” (Casero 15) The Feminine Section officially began in 1934. The early organization was essentially the Falange for women, but it worked to dedicate the efforts of women to “feminine” pursuits that still helped the Falangist movement.

After the war when the movement was strong the Feminine Section took on a new role in society. Instead of assisting soldiers on the front lines, the women of the Feminine Section

began to educate and assist other women. This group was officially put in charge of the formation of the women of Spain: “Con el fin de asegurar que la realidad social estuviera en armonía con el concepto de mujer inherente a la ley, se confió la tarea de formar a las mujeres de España a la Sección Femenina” (Scanlon 322).

Some women (mostly upper-class) voluntarily joined the organization, but the goal of the organization was not just to educate these women. They wanted to educate all of the women of Spain. This goal was supported by the government, as shown by Scanlon:

El propósito de la Sección Femenina, sin embargo, no era meramente el de educar a las muchachas y mujeres que habían ingresado voluntariamente en la organización y aceptaban su programa; éstas constituían la élite cuya tarea era adoctrinar al resto de la población femenina. Las pretensiones de la Sección Femenina recibieron la sanción legal por parte del Estado. El Decreto de 28 de diciembre de 1939 hizo asignatura obligatoria para todas las muchachas españolas la ciencia doméstica, confiando su enseñanza a la Sección Femenina. La Orden de 16 de octubre de 1941 unificó las asignaturas bajo el título general de Hogar, que era obligatoria en todas las escuelas primarias y secundarias tanto oficiales como privadas. (326)

In addition to the teaching provided in schools, the Feminine Section provided training to the women who chose to work for this group in order to fulfill their requisite six months of social service.

During the dictatorship, the Feminine Section was fundamental to the return of women to domestic sphere. In their mission to discredit feminism and convince women to return to their “misión natural en la vida” they had the support of the government and a general campaign of

propaganda (Scanlon 329). The step backwards in women's rights was evident in the pamphlets, as they bore a clear resemblance to those of the previous century: "Los libros y folletos relativos al papel de la mujer publicados durante los años cuarenta y cincuenta con [sic] casi indistinguibles de los del siglo XIX. Todos los viejos mitos cobraron nueva vida y fueron objeto de una manoseada retórica" (Scanlon 329). The old ways became once again the only way for women during the dictatorship.

In addition to repressing the lower class and women, the Franco government also repressed artistic voices nationwide with the implementation of censorship. The censoring of all media, publications, and presentations was an effective way to make sure that the country was only exposed to what the dictator considered appropriate. Franco was very committed to this form of control over his people and although its stringency changed throughout the years of the dictatorship, fluctuating between extremely strict and slightly lax, censorship was never fully relaxed or eliminated.³⁹ Such was Franco's dedication that if censors were unable to make a determination on some work, he himself would preview it to determine its acceptability. Regardless of the many changes in what was allowable, artists of all types had to be aware of the current policies in order to avoid mentioning a prohibited topic. A theme that was allowable at one point during the dictatorship could result in imprisonment in subsequent years. The result was a radical shift in the art of twentieth-century Spain.

³⁹ For a full and accurate account of all of the changes that censorship underwent during the Franco years, see Javier Tusell's account of Spain during the dictatorship. The citation is as follows: Tusell, Javier. *Spain: From Dictatorship to Democracy 1939 to the Present*. Trans. Rosemary Clark. Malden: Blackwell. 2007.

One of the art forms hardest hit by the Franco dictatorship was theater. With the outbreak of civil war, the end of the Republic, and the installation of Francisco Franco's dictatorship in 1939, the production of theater in Spain took something of a hiatus. There were some plays written during the civil war, but they were mostly propaganda. The lack of new plays, however, does not mean that theatrical presentations ceased. Presentations of popular plays continued and were well-attended, particularly in the post-war period:

A lo largo del siglo se había producido cierta disminución del espectador popular que caracterizó durante mucho tiempo al teatro, en parte por la constante elevación de precios, y también por la competencia que el cine había creado, sobre todo desde el establecimiento del sonoro. Pero eso no quiere decir que la gente no acudiera a las taquillas, ni mucho menos. Ni siquiera durante la Guerra Civil los niveles de afluencia disminuyeron, y mucho menos en la posguerra, período en el que el teatro se constituyó en uno de los lugares de evasión preferidos. (César Oliva 2604)

One of the aspects that complicated the production of new theater was the imposition of censorship. Beginning in 1936, any play that was written would have to pass through the censors. Censors had the power to do much more than hold back texts: "The censors did not just cut and suppress texts; they rewrote texts, added to texts, issued their own texts" (Labanyi 207). The performing arts, such as theater, suffered double censorship. Scripts were censored, as were performances: "In the performing arts, local delegates attended dress rehearsals and first nights, making later spot checks. Their reports took audience response into account when deciding what was risky" (Labanyi 210). Plays could be held up for years before being allowed to premier and even then the audiences' reactions to the performances could give the censors sufficient reason to

revoke the play's approval and ban it from the stage, sometimes prohibiting print editions as well.

Censorship severely limited the ability of authors and playwrights to critique the modern government as well as comment upon the war that had recently devastated their country. Any direct mention of the civil war or of censorship was prohibited. Also forbidden were any critical remarks about the dictatorship and any statements that suggested that Spain was not the "one, great and free" country that Franco promised. Through a strict managing of published material and performances and through a total control of the media, the dictatorship was able to present a vision of a united Spain that had overcome the failures of the early twentieth century and was returning to the glorious country it had been in the past.

The old ways that Franco endorsed were evident in many arts; they remained popular in theater at the beginning of the dictatorship. Censorship complicated every aspect of theatrical production, and the rising popularity of cinema, especially since the advent of movies with sound, was lessening the audiences. According to a survey in 1952, Jacinto Benavente was still the preferred playwright of the time. The same survey showed that one of the main priorities for the bettering of the floundering Spanish theater was improvement of subjects.

The avant-garde movement that had begun to flourish in Spain in the early 1930's could not continue in the dictatorship. Lorca's assassination in 1936 was a blow to the movement, as he had produced avant-garde works and supported the movement. Franco's repression of all that was considered revolutionary, even in the arts, made the continuation of the movement impossible. The traditional and comfortable plays of Benavente's generation were venerated by the new regime, pushing the style of realism to modern writers.

Beginning in the 1940's a new generation of writers, among which Antonio Buero Vallejo (1916-2000), Alfonso Sastre and Lauro Olmo stand out, began to write realist drama. Instead of using the theater as a means of merely distracting the people, as earlier generations had done, these playwrights began to use it as a medium to reflect the social reality of the time. This type of drama was as much an ethics as dramatic style, as explained by Javier Huerta Calvo:

A partir de los años cuarenta, como respuesta a un contexto histórico de depresión económica y social, se replantea la necesidad de una poética de carácter realista opuesta a un teatro de evasión que se debatía entre los géneros cómicos y líricos y la alta comedia de ambiente burgués. Al igual que el resto de las artes, la escena manifiesta una necesidad de acercamiento a la realidad social inmediata, dando entrada a personajes y temáticas desconocidos desde el final de la Guerra Civil. Esta vocación realista, origen del realismo de corte simbólico de Buero Vallejo o el costumbrismo social de la generación posterior, evolucionó durante los años sesenta hacia posturas más complejas. Fue entonces, ante la creciente diversidad de posturas, cuando el realismo empezó a desvelarse como una posición ética antes que formal, una actitud de desenmascaramiento y denuncia social, pero que, sin embargo, en sí misma no llegaba a definir una poética concreta. (2648-49)

Though the realists may not have had a defined poetics, they did begin to change the face of Spanish drama. The arrival in Spain of the theater of Bertolt Brecht in the 1960's gave further impulse to this type of theater which began to gain greater popularity, in part due to the increasing popularity and success of the dramas of Antonio Buero Vallejo.

Buero Vallejo was one of the most productive dramatists in postwar Spain. In all, he wrote over twenty-five plays during his career. His themes are consistent and serious but his

technique has been a source of constant experimentation. His theatrical styles range from more traditional plays to those that directly address to the audience (*El tragaluz*, 1967), and others that involve the technique of immersion where the audience experiences what the characters experience, such as blindness or deafness (*En la ardiente oscuridad* (1946) and *El sueño de la razón* (1970)). Gwynne Edwards explains how Buero Vallejo created a new type of theater that was not just Spanish but European: “[. . .] Buero Vallejo has fashioned a post-war theatre that has restored to the Spanish stage a note of true seriousness and dignity and simultaneously invested it with a truly European dimension” (172).

Unlike many of the playwrights of his day, Buero Vallejo confronted his audience with the moral and social problems that were faced by their society. He did not use theater as a form of evasion of reality. As much as society was an important topic for him, however, the ultimate issue was not societal problems but how *people* dealt with them. Humans were his primary subject of interest: “The here and now of the dramatic action consistently opens out to reveal that Buero’s real concern is man himself, in relation both to his social problems and his ultimate destiny. The issues of his plays are, in short, those that have preoccupied truly serious dramatists throughout the ages” (Edwards 173).

The play that will be our primary subject of concern does not deal with man and his ultimate destiny, but a woman, and her destiny. In *La tejedora de sueños* (1952) Buero Vallejo takes up the myth of Ulysses. The use of Hellenic myths was popular during this era, as a method of critiquing modern society without mentioning it directly. Buero Vallejo himself explained why such myths were still very relevant to his modern spectators:

Sería innecesario hablar aquí de la plena justificación que puede asistirle a un dramaturgo de hoy para escribir obras basadas en los mitos helénicos, si no fuese

porque muchas personas suelen entender que, cuando un autor pone en escena gentes vestida con otros trajes que los nuestros, ha vuelto la espalda a los problemas de su tiempo. Pero nadie puede, aunque quiera, dejar de tratar de los problemas de su tiempo; y, desde luego, no fue esa mi intención. Si la expresé a través del mito de Penélope en lugar de escribir la historia de cualquier mujer de nuestros días que tenga al marido en un frente de lucha, fue porque ese mito ejemplariza a tales historias con una intensidad acendrada por los siglos, y porque las seguirá representando en el futuro mejor que cualquiera de ellas.⁴⁰ (Buero Vallejo 75)

Buero Vallejo used the myth to portray the present by employing the past. He provides another version of this myth, presenting another possibility for what may have occurred. By doing this he proves that what Aristotle said about poets also true holds true for playwrights. As Elizabeth Rogers explains:

In *La tejedora de sueños* not only has Buero offered a reinterpretation of the myth, but also he has exposed to us another plausible reality. Aristotle has stated that the poet should depict not what has happened but what might have happened according to probability and necessity. By shifting his dramatic focus, Buero brings a new view to the Ulysses myth. (Archetypes 346)

The particular new view presented by Buero Vallejo is Penelope's side of the myth of Ulysses. She is presented in this work, while not the faithful wife that the myth describes, as still a decent

⁴⁰ This edition of *La tejedora de sueños* is only used here. All other citations of *La tejedora de sueños* come from the Iglesias Feijoo edition.

woman, in contrast to a less than heroic husband. While describing the general tendency to demythify⁴¹ heroes in postwar myths, María Francisca Vilches explains:

Los autores presentan así la cara oculta de las historias y sentimientos de los personajes, aquello que no ha sido impreso en letra escrita, pero que pudo o debió ocurrir en la realidad, aquello que pone de relieve las raíces humanas de los héroes, sus valores positivos y negativos, en definitiva, su Humanidad asumida. De esta manera, Penélope no aparece como una mujer fiel y sumisa, sino como un ser abandonado en plena juventud. Ulises se convierte en un hombre cansado, egoísta, cruel y ambicioso. (84-85)

Just as those whom the government proclaimed as modern heroes, the heroes of old could be shown to not merit their heroic status.

The use of myths or historical dramas was also a powerful tool to critique government and society without the open criticism that would not be approved by the censors. It is for this reason that reception theory is paramount in understanding the theater of the Franco dictatorship. Playwrights knew that the people that comprised their intended Spanish audience had passed through the civil war, but not necessarily on the same side. Regardless of affiliations to red or blue, the collective psyche of Spain held the scars of the war that tore the country in two.

⁴¹ Although the word “demythify” does not exist in the English language, the closest translation of “desmitificar” is demystify, which does not adequately relate the idea of the destruction of a myth. Thus, I have chosen here to use a word which does not technically exist in the English language, but has been used by other authors (notably Phyllis Zatlin in reference to *Anillos para una dama*) who also find “demystify” to be inadequate.

Censorship prevented playwrights from directly mentioning the war in their works, but the civil war was so much a part of the lives of the audience that mention of any conflict between conservative and liberal or right and left, any clash of the colors red and blue, and any mention of a war would evoke the memories that the playwright sought to foreground in the spectators' minds.

The stage was ideal for commenting on the civil war and the dictatorship without directly mentioning either one. Costumes could show opposing colors. Actors could enter the stage from opposite sides, one from the right and the other from the left.⁴² Ancient wars, both mythical and real could be mentioned. All of these techniques allowed playwrights to present the conflict without fear of censorship. In *La tejedora de sueños* the mention of the Trojan War, although clearly unrelated to the political foundations of the Spanish civil war, was sufficient to lead the spectator to be alert to parallels between the wars, the characters, and the aftermath.⁴³

⁴² In Buero Vallejo's *Historia de una escalera* two actors enter into a disagreement that argues progress from both a liberal and conservative point of view. This argument, that originally explicitly argued from the right and left points of view, was edited by the censors. To keep his intentions clear, Buero Vallejo added stage directions that called for the actors portraying Fernando and Urbano to enter from opposite sides of the stage, the conservative Urbano from the right and the liberal Fernando from the left. The set of this drama did not allow such entrances, but made the implications of the playwright clear to any who read the play in print form.

⁴³ Although playwrights could consciously use these techniques to evoke specific memories in the audience, they had to tread a fine line. Spot checks were made by the censors

The use of well-known myths simplified the creation of parallels by the exploitation of what Jauss calls the "horizon of expectation." The presentation of a myth and of characters whose general attributes were known to the audience ensured a specific horizon of expectation in the spectators. That horizon of expectation could lead the audience to a comparison with previous and current social/governmental situations. Buero Vallejo's most celebrated example of this is the play *El sueño de la razón*. This play presents a version of the life of Francisco Goya. Fernando the 7th, the king of Spain during Goya's life, is presented in such a way as to make the parallels between the despotic king and the current dictator clear to the spectator. Such parallels would have been clear to the censors also, but they could not condemn the play for criticizing the dictatorship without admitting that Franco's regime was like that of a despotic tyrant. The other manner in which Buero Vallejo uses the clearly defined horizon of expectation is to tear down heroes. Because his audience was already familiar with the myth of Ulysses, Buero Vallejo did not have to first establish a hero figure and then destroy that character. By using a clearly established mythical figure, the playwright could compare him to a well-known war hero (Franco) and then concentrate on his protagonist without having to deviate from that focus to frame the character of her husband.

Although certain attention is given to Ulysses, in order to show him as less than the hero portrayed by the myth, Penélope is, without a doubt, the protagonist of the play. In order to show a very different heroine than that of the traditional myth, it was necessary for Buero Vallejo to devote his artistic development to her character almost exclusively. This Penélope, so different from that of Homer, resulted in criticism of the play by some at its premiere. Critics

during the length of the performance, and if the audience's reaction to the parallels drawn was too strong, future performances of the play could be stopped.

from the publications *Ya* and *ABC* reproached Buero Vallejo for having deviated so much from Homer's Penelope. The traditional wife of the hero was surely, in the eyes of modern society (or at least the society that the dictatorship was fighting to create), a more appropriate wife.⁴⁴

Homer's Penelope lives for her husband and his honor, as Iride Lamartin-Lens notes: Part of the reason that Ulysses can «have it all» is the important role that Penelope plays in his life. The Homeric heroine was a woman whose unquestionable loyalty to her husband and kingdom could only be equaled by her intelligence and astuteness at deceiving her pretentious suitors" (31).

Although Buero Vallejo's Penélope is still intelligent and astute with regard to her suitors, she is more loyal to her dreams than self-sacrificing. This notion defies the image of a woman's proper role in Franco's society.

In addition to the criticism that the play received at its premiere, some positive reviews were received. Although the occasional critic gave it rave reviews, it is regarded by those who study Buero Vallejo as inferior to his greatest works. Although it shows neither his greatest level of social or historical realism, nor the height of his stylistic experimentation, it does display with clarity his thoughts about what he called "la mejor mitad del género humano." Because of his attention to a female protagonist and queen as a person, and not just the wife of a hero, in *La tejedora de sueños* Buero Vallejo presented an ideal work for the study of marginality in hegemony.

Penélope showcases strength and power throughout the play, even though she cannot, as María Jesús Franco Durán notes, take control of her life (67). She manages her kingdom and her

⁴⁴ It is important to remember that the dictatorship completely controlled the press and thus reviews were likely to present a conservative point of view, whether or not the review truly supported that perspective.

servants while maintaining her suitors, if not entirely at bay, at least at a respectable distance. She accepts the death of her husband and has risen to the challenge of ruling over Ithaca without a king by her side. She has found what she truly desires and shows the patience and cleverness to continue to deceive her suitors until that desire can be fulfilled. Although she wants a man, and is not reluctant to remarry, if she is able to marry Anfino, she proves throughout the play that she does not need a man. She is fully able to reign by herself.

Penélope is not just a strong woman, but a wealthy one as well. Although it is true that due to her maneuvering her kingdom is near ruin, she is still a valuable perspective spouse. Any suitor that she chooses to marry would be elevated to the status of king. Her twenty-year delay and the destruction of her kingdom's wealth have been sufficient to cause most of her suitors to abandon their pursuit of her. Nonetheless, five suitors remain. For four of those suitors, the prospect of having the title of king is more important to them than the financial status of their land. The humble position of the fifth suitor, Anfino, would gain the most by a marriage to the queen, yet he is the only suitor that is not seeking rank or riches.

Penélope clearly understands that it is not her, but her ability to make a man a wealthy monarch that draws her suitors to her. In the early years of her husband's absence, her beauty would have also been a draw, but twenty years have passed since her husband left and she is no longer a young and beautiful queen. Because she understands the motivations of her suitors, she also knows how best to rid herself of them. Her weapon is patience. By simply biding her time, weaving by day and unweaving by night she is able to lose some suitors to their impatience. Also, the longer suitors remain, the more the assets of her kingdom are drained to provide for them. If she continues to be patient, her kingdom will eventually fall to rack and ruin and will

not be worth possessing, even to a suitor who desires mostly rank, not fortune. It is this virtue of patience that makes Buero Vallejo's Penélope most resemble her Homeric namesake.

Penélope's strength, riches, astuteness, and patience give her power over her suitors. She is able to force them to either wait for her to name them the new king of an increasingly less impressive kingdom, or abandon their hope of becoming her husband. The project that she has set herself to weave, the burial shroud for Laertes, is so appropriate a work for a woman and for such a noble cause that her prolonged and continued weaving cannot be questioned. Her wisdom is also visible in the choice of Laertes. The undertaking of such a task for someone less noble, no matter how gender-appropriate the task of weaving, would be insufficient to cause the delay Penélope needs to achieve her goals. She uses her astuteness to keep from making a decision, waiting for the last of her suitors to give up and leave Ithaca.

Although her astute mind and her patience give her power over her suitors, Penélope recognizes that they are the only powers that she has and that her strength is insufficient to protect the suitor she wants if she chooses him. Although each suitor claims he would leave peacefully if Penélope were to choose another, she suspects that they would not give up so easily. These final suitors have waited decades for her, and thus are not likely to step away without a fight. When they pressure her to make a decision, she proves her theories correct:

LEÓCRITO. Debes elegir.

PENÉLOPE. ¿Ahora?

ANTINOO. Sí. Ahora.

(Penélope se adelanta mirándolos. Su expresión cambia; a la desesperación se une un cierto gesto de intriga.)

PENÉLOPE. ¿Y qué harán los rechazados?

ANTINOO. Marcharse. (*Galleando.*) Si, por ejemplo, me eliges a mí. . .

PISANDRO. ¿Eh? Poco a poco.

LEÓCRITO. ¡Guarda tu lengua!

PENÉLOPE. (*Lenta.*) Estoy pensando que sí; que, tal vez, te elegiría a ti, Antinoo. (*ANTINOO se esponja, petulante. Los demás pretendientes aguzan los oídos y se acercan.*) Pero, ¡míralos! Ya los conoces: nada bueno dicen esas caras. No estoy segura de que. . . te perdonasen mi elección. (*Los pretendientes se miran y se agrupan instintivamente, dejando a ANTINOO aislado frente a PENÉLOPE.*) Acaso te matarían. (169)

The initial desperation of Penélope proves that she knows that her power over the suitors is tenuous. The response of the suitors to a possible selection on her part proves that she is right in waiting for all of them to leave before choosing Anfino as her husband.

Penélope's power over her suitors is fragile, but her power in other matters is far more absolute. She does not require the presence of her husband to run Ithaca. She is consulted by the servants on all of the issues of importance and does not need to solicit male input to make decisions regarding her kingdom. She exerts total control over her slaves and all of the servants of the household. In the absence of her husband, she has assumed control. The twenty years of his absence have given her ample time to develop into the competent, capable queen that Buero Vallejo portrays.

Although the absence of Ulises has forced Penélope to develop into a leader, Buero Vallejo also makes it clear that she has long directed her own destiny. The management of Ithaca is only a more visible means of identifying her strength. A conversation that she holds with Anfino proves that she was a formidable woman before she became the wife of the

renowned hero, and that Ulises owes some of his success to her. The debt that Ulises owes to his wife is revealed when the suitors look for an objective way for Penélope to choose a new husband.

When her suitors decide to choose her second husband in the same way that her first was chosen, Ulises' bow is to be the deciding tool. Telémaco, eager to prove that no suitor can fill the role of his father, thinks the use of the bow an excellent way to discourage his mother's election of another man: "¡El arco de mi padre! ¡No podréis con él, nadie puede tenderlo! ¡Él solo es fuerte como un roble entero! (171) Despite Telémaco's insistence on the bow as a proof of his father's strength, there is a trick to drawing the bow. Penélope knows it and tries to show to Anfino. In the process, she reveals how that trick became known to Ulises. She says to Anfino: "Este arco se tiende de un modo especial... Primero hay que tirar suave, y luego... el envite. Pero la mano debe ponerse aquí, algo más abajo del centro..., y además... ¡Oh, no lo recuerdo! Yo misma se lo dije a Ulises para que me ganase con él, y lo he olvidado. ¡Envejezco!" (176)

By admitting that it was not the strength of Ulises but her own knowledge that led to the victory of Ulises and the subsequent marriage, Penélope shows her unwillingness to submit to destiny. It is in this, perhaps, that she differs most from Homer's Penelope. She does not rely on the gods and fate to determine the course of her life. Buero Vallejo's Penélope chose Ulises as the man she wanted and did what was necessary to achieve that outcome. She does the same with Anfino. This revelation proves that Penélope's greatest strength is not her wealth or title, but her willingness to create her own destiny.

Despite all of her strengths, Penélope is a woman, and her sex determines her possibilities. She cannot choose the mate that she wants and move on with her life. Although

the choice of her husband presumably belongs to her, the reality of the situation prohibits her from choosing Anfino. Her only possibilities for achieving her goals include delaying her decision by doing work that is considered appropriate for her sex. Gender-appropriate tasks must serve to meet her goals, because her sex does not allow her to achieve them in a different fashion.

Penélope's sex makes weaving necessary; and this weaving provides a compelling example of repetition. Penélope's predominant activity, the focus of her life takes place at the loom. Every day she labors over the same section of the burial shroud, creating and destroying. Penélope's life contains multiple levels of repetition. Not only does she dedicate herself the same activity every day, she repeats the very same activity day after day, night after night. Just as Homer's Penelope is known for weaving by day and unweaving by night, Buero Vallejo's Penélope does the same with her days and nights. She spends twenty years working over the same section of her loom.

This repetition and ritual of weaving and unweaving creates the protagonist's identity. Penélope the weaver, not the queen, not the hero's figurative widow, not Telémaco's mother, informs the title of the play. Her continual presence at the loom is a necessity to fulfill her dreams, but the fact remains that weaving is not her only option. By choosing to weave and bide her time, Penélope displays her true identity. She performs work appropriate to her sex, but more importantly she embodies patience and virtue. Weaving and unweaving prove these characteristics to be core of Penélope's identity. Choosing to weave and unweave instead of choosing a new husband reveals something more.

Penélope's daily and nightly work reveals that something more lies beneath the identity that Penélope shows openly. She has long accepted the death of her husband. Even when she

asks Euriclea if Ulises will return, she sadly shakes her head no, even before hearing the nursemaid's reply (142). Penélope believes her husband dead, so choosing an appropriate suitor and marrying would be an easy decision. Nonetheless, she chooses a harder and lengthier course with the potential to lead to eventual happiness. Penélope does not weave her dreams; she weaves because she has dreams. Her repetition, from which she will not break to take a new husband, shows a woman with the unfailing determination to create her own identity. That identity is not that of a weaver, a queen, a hero's wife, or a mother. She creates the identity of a woman who loves and is loved, and an individual who possesses the immense strength required to make her dreams a reality.

Despite the strength of Penélope, emphasized by Buero Vallejo throughout the play, she is a woman and her power is incomplete. Buero Vallejo does not concentrate on the role of women in ancient Greece, but limits Penélope's possibilities to those allowable to women in his own, modern society. She is not weak, but nor is she as formidable as a man. The societal role of women, as promoted by the Franco dictatorship, was based on what Kaja Silverman calls the dominant fiction. This dominant fiction relies on the fundamental unit of the family and the legitimacy of the male subject as the head of the family. Strong women such as Penélope that survive and thrive without their husbands defy the idea of the dominant fiction and the importance of the male subject as the head of the family. Although Franco's society did not have a defined role for this type of women, it did have roles that applied to all women.

Penélope's role has certain responsibilities that she is called upon to uphold, even in the apparent death of her husband. Although Buero has tried to change the figure of Penelope to that of a more capable, independent woman, some of the insecurity in the ability of women is still evident in her character. Just as she still upholds the figure of her heroic husband, she also

continues to espouse various patriarchal codes: “Penelope still acts and reacts according to certain patriarchal codes of behavior that divide abilities according to sex” (“Myth”, Lamartina-Lens 32). These actions and reactions are the result of Penélope’s sex when applied to the social apparatus of her society. The society in which she lived allowed two gender roles for women: those of a submissive wife and mother. Because she is unable to submit to an absent husband, she cannot fulfill those roles. However, because the social apparatus does not allow for someone of her sex to rule over a family, her attempts to live on her own terms and rule her own life must necessarily end in failure. She is unable to actively seek out what she wants and must passively wait for men to make her desires possible.

The patriarchal codes that govern the actions of Penélope have an impact on more than just her. As Rubin explains, the absence of Penélope’s husband does not mean that the phallus transfers to her. Her sex makes it impossible for her to possess the phallus. Her son, however, having received the phallus from his father, believes himself to have power over his mother by virtue of his sex alone. Throughout the play, Buero Vallejo makes a point of showing Telémaco as unworthy of that power. During the test with the bow, when Telémaco claims to be regulating the challenge, Penélope proves that he does not have her respect. Ella dice: “Tú no puedes regular nada. Tú eres un niño” (184). In other moments, Anfino has to defend him from the other suitors. Telémaco provokes all of the suitors, including Anfino, and at one point, the two are fighting with swords on the patio. Although Anfino has stepped up to defend Telémaco against the others, and, for his love of Penélope has no desire to kill her son, Telémaco calls him a coward.⁴⁵ In the struggle between Anfino and Telémaco, the other suitors support the boy, but

⁴⁵ Although Anfino is, in fact, backing away from the fight with Telémaco, he is not a coward. When Ulises returns and begins to kill the suitors, Anfino is the only one who does not

only because if he were to win it would eliminate one of the suitors. In general, Telémaco is presented as a child, angry and petulant because his father is not there to be head of the household and he is unable to control the circumstances that allow men to compete over his mother.

Although his mother is more powerful than him due to rank and age, Telémaco's sex legitimizes his claim to authority in modern society.⁴⁶ He is less powerful than his mother's suitors, but he feels himself stronger than any woman. Because he possesses the phallus, he believes that the decision of whom his mother will marry must ultimately be approved by him. He takes for granted that he has the power to disallow potential husbands and to veto his mother's decision if he feels it necessary. For Telémaco, the power to "give away the bride" belongs to him. This also illustrates Rubin's point about men having rights in women that women do not have in themselves. Penélope is an intelligent and capable woman, but her sex prevents her from choosing one man without the approval of another. Ulises was approved by her father to enter into the challenge to win her, and now her son seeks to perform the same approval process that was undertaken by his grandfather decades earlier.

Although he is younger and less powerful than Penélope, assuming the phallus allows Telémaco to at least attempt to take control of his mother's life. Until the return of his father, he must fill the role as the male head of the family. His assumed authority is most evident when, at one moment, while raging at Anfino he says: "¿Cuántas veces te he dicho que no quiero que me

flee, proving that it is respect and love for Penélope, not cowardice that makes him run from a fight with Telémaco.

⁴⁶ As mentioned, modern society here does not indicate the society of ancient Greece, but that of Spain during the dictatorship.

defiendas? Sé lo que pretendes con eso. ¡Pero te juro que antes daría mi madre a cualquiera de estos bandidos que a ti!” (132-33) As much as Telémaco despises all of his mother’s suitors and is confident that his father is still alive, he considers Anfino the most unacceptable of the potential husbands to the queen of Ithaca. By assuming that he has the right to control whom his mother marries, Telémaco proves that he has assumed the phallus.

Telémaco’s dismissal of Anfino as a potential husband for his mother is not based on Anfino’s merit as a man, but on his social class. Anfino, unlike the other suitors, is not wealthy. He is a vassal of Ulises. Ulises and Anfino’s father were close friends, and although society allowed a friendship between two people of very distinct social classes, a marriage between two people of such disparate social standings was not considered an acceptable practice. In addition to proving that he has assumed the phallus, Telémaco’s statement to Anfino attests that for Penélope to marry someone who is not of an equally high class is unacceptable.

Penélope possesses many strengths, but there are certain social norms that she is not able to disregard. She is able to manage her servants and even exercise certain control over the behavior of her suitors. Just as the women during the dictatorship, however, she is not able to completely disregard the role constraints placed upon women. Rogers explains:

Yet it is this official version of History (with its capital H) which sets the standards of behavior and thus becomes the basis of role definition in society, as much in the past as in the present. Through tradition and repetition it determines what is expected of a woman: what limits are placed on the woman in assuming the role; how the roles are determined by political, economic, and social motives; and to what extent a woman may deviate from the assigned role. (“Constraints” 311)

Penélope is strong, but society has standards of behavior for her sex, and she cannot depart from those entirely. Franco made it clear that a woman belonged in the home, submitting to the will of her husband.

Penélope had to submit to more than the role of a woman in society, she also had to fulfill the role of the wife of Ulysses, the hero. Elizabeth Rogers explains what is expected of the wife of a hero and what will come of trying to leave that role:

The role of the wife of a hero comprises total loyalty, respect, purity, and high morality, obedience, undaunting support, admiration, service, passivity, and the security of *his* honor and *his* image as a loving husband, a responsible father, and a heroic warrior and just ruler. Should the wife not adjust her personal needs to this role, and should she refuse to lose her self-identity in assuming this role, she condemns herself to a futile struggle for self-fulfillment. (“Constraints” 312)

Penélope must, above all, be faithful. The self-sacrificing, unswerving, loyalty and commitment, however, are not required of her husband. Homer’s Ulysses spends ample time with Nausicaa in Phaeacia, and although the myth does not imply a carnal relationship between the two, it is also apparent that Ulysses does not suffer in his time in her kingdom.⁴⁷ The burden of upholding the image of the hero rests on his wife, weighing down Penélope with double yoke. She must bear the weight of her sex and of her husband’s status. The spectator is led to see this difficulty for Penélope, because she is portrayed as less than mythical: “En *La tejedora de sueños* Buero humaniza a Penélope, la esposa fiel del poema homérico. Ya no es una figura mítica, sino una

⁴⁷ Although Homer does not imply that Ulysses and Nausicaa engage in a sexual relationship, Antonio Gala’s version of the myth, *¿Por qué corres, Ulises?* (1974) presents the two as lovers from the moment that Ulysses staggers to shore from his wrecked ship.

mujer de muchas y variadas dimensiones, que incluyen ciertos defectos humanos” (Harris 250). By presenting a humanized heroine, Buero Vallejo encourages identification with Penélope and outrage at what is expected of her but not reciprocated by her husband.

The identification with Penélope is troublesome, because her perspective is not the only one presented in the work. Carolyn Harris explains:

La estructura dramática de la pieza hace que el espectador se identifique con el punto de vista masculino dominante, que se considera universal. Pero a la vez se identifica con Penélope y su lucha personal por imponer sus [sic] propia visión y sus sueños de un mundo mejor. El espectador, como Penélope misma, se identifica en contra de si mismo porque se ve obligado como ella a aceptar la perspectiva masculina de los eventos. (250)

By showing two points of view and encouraging a dual identification in his spectators, Buero Vallejo is able to show the difficulties experienced by women in his modern society. The dictatorship raised generations of women to accept the dominant, masculine perspective. When the deeply ingrained masculine point of view was applied by women to their own goals and dreams, the resulting cognitive dissonance belittled their aspirations. This made the realization of their dreams nearly impossible.

When the dominant male perspective that creates the social apparatus is applied to Penélope, the end result is her inability to find fulfillment due to her sex. A grown man would not have to stand for suitors in his home, slowly ruining his kingdom by abusing his

hospitality.⁴⁸ As a woman, Penélope has no choice. Her sex makes her marginal to the desires and needs of men. Society assigns her a lesser role, unequal to a man, even when she is required to fill her absent husband's role as the head of the household. As Kaja Silverman notes: "[...] our 'dominant fiction' or ideological 'reality' solicits our faith above all else in the unity of the family, and the adequacy of the male subject" (16). The absence of that male subject forces Penélope to defy the dominant fiction, without the proper tools. Harris notes: "Los personajes femeninos de Buero se han visto limitados por el papel que les impone la sociedad" (247). The society that Franco designed during the dictatorship forced women to the margin to be subordinate to men and to serve the needs of these men before their own. Ranajit Guha identifies gender as one of the groups that can experience the subordination that he defines as subalternity.⁴⁹ Penélope's sex, and the gender role society assigns to her because of it, makes her a subaltern figure.

Due to her hegemonic social class and her marginalization due to sex, Penélope exists in marginality in hegemony. This state of being prevents her from achieving her dreams of a relationship with Anfino. For her, marginality is a double-edged sword. Her high social class makes her too powerful to marry a servant such as Anfino. This power, however, is insufficient. Her power comes from her social class, not society. It leaves her unable to overcome societal

⁴⁸ Note that this is only true of a *grown* man, as Telémaco, as previously mentioned, is unable to rid his home of his mother's suitors. Ulises, however, has no trouble killing all of them upon his return home.

⁴⁹ Guha uses the word gender in his description of the subaltern. Following gender theory and the differing definitions of sex and gender, it would be more appropriate to signal that people are subordinated due to sex, not gender.

prejudice and marry a man of a lower class. Her existence in marginality in hegemony makes her simultaneously form part of the elite and the marginalized without fully belonging to either group. If she were merely marginalized, a marriage to Anfino would not be problematic because they would be equals. Conversely, if she were sufficiently powerful to live by her own rules and desires, she would be free to marry any man that she desired. Penélope straddles the two situations, too powerful to marry a weak man, and too weak to overcome the societal rules established by men.

Her position of marginality in hegemony prevents Penélope from achieving happiness, but also is the impetus to her final rebellion against her society's restrictions. For her, the wrongs of society take physical form in her husband. Rather than lash out at the social codes that prevent her from marrying Anfino, she rages at Ulises. When Ulises returns and makes his presence known to the suitors, they run, aware that he has the right and the will to kill them. Initially, Penélope is glad of his return, encouraging him to kill the suitors and urging him on once he begins. However, once he kills Anfino, and as a result, Penélope's dreams of love, she finds the strength to let loose her anger at a man that, as society decrees, has the right to be there:

PENÉLOPE. ¡Cállate! Ahora debo hablar yo. [. . .] si tú me hubieses ofrecido con sencillez y valor tus canas ennoblecidas por la guerra y los azares, ¡tal vez! Yo habría reaccionado a tiempo. Hubieras sido, a pesar de todo, el hombre de corazón con quien toda mujer sueña. . . El Ulises con quien yo soñé ahí, los primeros años. . . ¡Y no este astuto patán, hipócrita y temeroso que se me presenta como un viejo ruin para acabar de destruirme toda ilusión posible! (202)

Ulises' return and subsequent assassination of Anfino destroys Penélope's chance for happiness. Her anger at Ulises is not the warm welcome that a long-absent husband may have expected, but

nor is it rebellious. It is that anger, however, that fuels her next reply in the conversation with her husband. Instead of accepting her husband and returning to the role of his subservient wife, as her sex would demand, she ridicules their marriage:

Yo habría vuelto a encontrar en ti, de golpe, al hombre de mis sueños. Pero, ¡qué!
Tú no lo eras; no podías serlo, ni aun admirándome con tu astucia, ni aun
barriéndome el palacio de pretendientes. Y eres tú, tú solamente, quien ha
perdido la partida. [...] Y ahora te queda tu mujer, sí, a los ojos de todos; pero
teniéndome no tienes ya nada, ¿me oyes? ¡Nada! [...] Una apariencia; una
risible. . . cáscara de matrimonio te queda. ¡Tú eres el culpable! Tú, por no
hablar a tiempo, por no haber sido valiente nunca. Te detesto. (203)

Rather than remain with a wife who despises him, Ulises invents a pilgrimage that will take him from home. Penélope bids him to go, openly defying her gender role.

Penélope refuses to return to the role of a faithful and subservient wife, and by allowing her to continue in a role that society deems inappropriate, Buero Vallejo refashions Homer's ideal woman into source of subversion. In Franco's Spain, a woman whose husband returned from the war should be elated to be able to resume her appropriate place in the home. With the male returned as the head of the household, the family could again be the place of balance that the dominant fiction requires. The choice to be a wife to Ulises only in appearance allows Penélope to triumph over the role society assigns her. This win, however, is empty because it does not grant her happiness. Penélope's inability to find happiness in the presence or absence of her husband showcases the difficult position in which society placed women. At every turn, a woman's attempt at happiness is thwarted by men. An audience that had been led to identify

with Penélope would not leave the theater questioning why Penélope refused Ulises, but why she was denied Anfino.

The subversion in Buero Vallejo's work is much more covert than that of Lorca's works. Buero Vallejo did not have the advantage that Lorca did of a society that was allowed to question gender and societal roles. Censorship prevented all art during the dictatorship from being too openly subversive. Playwrights had to walk a fine line in order to criticize covertly. Open condemnation of the dictatorship or mention of a forbidden theme could have negative consequences beyond a banned performance. For this reason, although clearly a more feminist version of the traditional myth of Ulysses, *La tejedora de sueños* is not openly subversive. This does not mean, however, that it lacks subversion.

The interplay of three major points creates the base of the subversive character of *La tejedora de sueños*: the deviation from the traditional myth, and the roles of Penélope and Ulises. The traditional myth presented the same characters as the play, but in a very different manner. Homer's version presented the daring adventures of a hero and mentioned the cunningness of a wife that awaited him. No consideration is given to Penélope's years of solitude, other than to praise her for her faithfulness to her absent husband. By presenting the female point of view, Buero Vallejo changes the entire focus of the myth. He shows that there is more to enduring the twenty-year absence of a husband than merely faithfully awaiting his return while deceiving some dedicated suitors. The presentation of Ulises' journeys and exploits is missing entirely, and the focus is shifted to the absence and its effects on his home. Buero Vallejo omits everything before Ulises' return home, completely deemphasizing the heroic escapades. By showing what might have happened at home while Ulises was away, and by suggesting an alternative for what precipitated his second absence, Buero Vallejo deviates from

the Homeric myth and underscores that what is traditionally held to be true is only one version of the story. This variation on the well-known myth critiqued the dictatorship by bringing to light that the government's official version of events omitted many other (more likely) possibilities.

The second point of subversion is the character of Penélope, who subverts the traditional role of women assigned by the dictatorship. The dictatorship moved women firmly back into the home and under the rule of either fathers or husbands. Women were presented as weak, and in need of the protection of men. During Franco's regime, women were not allowed to leave the home of their fathers without permission until they turned twenty-five, despite coming of age at twenty-three. Marriage was the primary reason for abandoning the paternal home before the age of twenty-five. In the event of her husband's death, a woman was not expected to continue without a spouse; she was expected to remarry. Buero Vallejo's Penélope, having accepted the death of her husband, had to deny her suitors for twenty years. This directly contradicts the goals that the dictatorship set for her sex. To fit with the model of the ideal woman, she should have chosen a suitor, married, and produced more children. Instead, she chose to remain alone as a single mother and queen of Ithaca.

In addition to presenting a humanized version of the wife of the hero, Buero Vallejo shows Penélope as a competent, intelligent, and strong woman. Although it is clear that her life would be easier without suitors monitoring her every move, she does not need a man to solve her problems. The wife of a mythical hero existed only for him. Penélope is not just the wife of a hero, but a strong woman that is capable of surviving without her husband.⁵⁰ The system of society denies her many privileges, but she maneuvers nimbly around the impediments designed

⁵⁰ Although Penélope allows the kingdom to fall into ruin, it is not because she is incapable of managing it, but because it is the only means available to her to reach her goal.

by a culture that favors men. She uses what she is allowed as a means to achieve what she desires. The cognitive dissonance that Penélope feels toward her aspirations is felt by the audience when evaluating her attempts to achieve her goals. Throughout the play women are criticized as weak and vain. Euriclea describes the slaves as “débiles mujeres” who are unable to resist the suitors (198). Ulises’ opinion of women is even more telling, and more indicative of the esteem in which modern society held women. Reminding Penélope that it was Helen of Troy who caused the war, Ulises says: “Fue Helena, una mujer. Un ser loco, frívolo, peligroso...como tú. Como tú, que la has envidiado, y que te has dedicado a sonar y tejer estérilmente ahí dentro, en vez de cuidar de los ganados y las viñas; en lugar de convertirte en la fiel esposa que aguarda el regreso del marido y que aumenta durante su ausencia las riquezas de los dos” (197). In this statement, Ulises conveys a commonly held idea of women, but when he continues to berate Penélope, he also begins to lose the faith of the audience. The spectators cannot support a man who expects his wife to do the work of a man in the absence of her husband. Penélope did what her sex allowed her to do and was prevented from doing more. Ulises expects that she serve him as a subservient wife when he is present, but also that she manages his kingdom to increase his wealth in his absence. Essentially, he wants two different wives. This unfair desire from Ulises drives the spectators to identify even more with Penélope. When her desires are thwarted, an audience that has been lead to identify with her, and with her struggles, is indignant on her behalf. Even though she openly defies what society expects of a woman, the spectators want her to triumph in her unconventional role.

The character of Ulises is the third point of subversion, but it is, in itself, not subversive. Indeed, Ulises of *La tejedora de sueños* deviates very little from Ulysses of Homer’s myth. He returns home from a twenty-year absence, disguises himself initially, kills the suitors that have

been abusing the hospitality required of his wife and servants, and briefly returns to ruling his household. The moment in which Buero Vallejo begins the play, however, is very important when considering the character of Ulises. The valiant deeds and heroic adventures of Ulises are not shown. The spectator finds him as Penélope does, after an absence of twenty years, without an explanation of his whereabouts, with an insufficient trust of his wife (as he returns disguised), and totally lacking in gratitude for what Penélope has suffered on his behalf for the last twenty years.

When Ulises makes his presence known, he is not received as a hero, but as a man who disappeared for twenty years and abandoned a young wife to an intensely difficult situation. Penélope sees all of the facets of his character that would be considered advantageous for a man as defects. Instead of commending his prudence, she calls it cowardice. Instead of noting his use of logic rather than emotion, she calls him a “mezquino razonador” (202). The admirable hero returns under less than estimable conditions, but feels within his rights to complain about the state of his kingdom. Between the criticisms of Penélope and his evident cruelty where compassion would have been more appropriate, Ulises loses his right to the respect of the spectators.

For Buero Vallejo, the character of Ulises is not that of a hero, but of a tool for critiquing modern heroes. The figure of a well-known war hero has powerful connotations, particularly at a time when images of the Spanish civil war were still fresh in the minds of spectators. The playwright counted upon the audience’s knowledge of the myth of Ulysses, as well as their experiences with heroes and war to achieve his subversive goals. Upon examining the demythification of the traditional hero the resistance to modern society and government becomes evident. The “one, great, and free” Spain that Franco promised was built on the idea that Spain

had been a great empire and could return to the old greatness by returning to the former desires for heroic characteristics. Buero Vallejo, through the use of a Penélope that exposed her heroic husband as a coward, shows that the time-honored heroes of old did not merit their heroic status. This suggested that perhaps the same was true of those that the dictator was imposing as modern heroes.

By critiquing a traditional hero and showing him to be less than heroic and by humanizing his wife and her plight, Buero Vallejo brings to the lights of the stage several of the drastic faults of his society. He does so covertly, in order to avoid having his play censored, but uses the horizon of expectation of the audience to assure that the intended parallels will be drawn. By presenting the masculine point of view, he avoided alienating spectators that lived and thrived in a male-dominated society. He also made his audience empathize with Penélope, making them feel the pain of a strong woman in an impossible position. Although the dominance of men and the impossibility of happiness for Penélope keep the play from pushing excessively against a repressive government, it takes a solid step to the vindication of the woman on the margin of marriage.

The Late Franco Dictatorship

Antonio Gala's *Anillos para una dama*

The Franco dictatorship was unique in many ways. Although it endured for nearly four decades, the ideologies that prevailed shifted multiple times. Although the laws remained primarily static during this time, the degree to which they were enforced changed with frequency. The less stringent monitoring of the censors during the late years of the dictatorship allowed artists a greater freedom to explore themes that were considered taboo during the first decades of Franco's regime. Artists like Antonio Gala used this greater freedom to great advantage to challenge their nation's notions of myths, women, traditions, and its new openness to all things American. Through *Anillos para una dama*, Gala explores the myth of El Cid and its relations to modern-day Spain.

Gala, playwright, poet, essayist, and novelist, was born on October 2, 1936, just months after the beginning of the Spanish civil war. His first publication was *El enemigo íntimo* in 1959 and his first play, *Los verdes campos del Edén*, premiered in 1963. He was educated under the Franco regime and the works of his first decades of publications were subject, as all production during the dictatorship, to censorship. The standards that governed his writing, however, were not as strict as those faced by such authors as Buero Vallejo earlier in the dictatorship. Gala wrote during the period known as *tardofranquismo* and did not face many of the restrictions that the dictatorship enforced in the early years. Nigel Townson explains:

In most respects, the increasingly prosperous and pluralistic Spain of the 1960s and 1970s was a far cry from the impoverished, grimly conformist society of the two decades earlier. Moreover, regime ideology, now shaped to an important degree by the modernizing lexicon of 'development', had become so diffuse that

the dictatorial elites were no longer effectively welded together by a Francoist orthodoxy. Another sign of the times was that the repression had become much more selective and, in many respects, more lenient. (4)

The more relaxed governmental policies allowed increased freedom to artists and people in general.

The governmental shifts during this period are important to the study of theater, because they dramatically affected censorship and the possibilities for artist. Historians use consistent dates to refer to the period of *tardofranquismo*, but different dates to refer to transition. The start date of *tardofranquismo* is considered as 1969, the year in which Franco designated Juan Carlos Borbón as his successor. The beginning of the transition is also uniformly regarded as beginning with the end of *tardofranquismo* and the death of Franco. It is the end of the transition, however, that is debated. Many consider the transition to have ended with the signing of the new constitution in 1978. Some, however, believe that Spain was in transition until it joined the European Union in 1986. The different dates are not of critical importance. It is the effect that the laws of a particular period had on artists that are significant for the purpose of this study.

Late Francoism merits its own discussion because of the extensive change that the regime underwent over the course of nearly forty years. As Townson mentions: “[...] the Franco dictatorship was not a static construction cast in concrete, but one that evolved between its foundation in the 1930s and its fall in the 1970s” (8). Edward Malefakis further explains: “The durability of the Franco dictatorship is historically exceptional, especially within the context of Europe but also within that of the world in its entirety. A second and even more important characteristic of the regime is that it changed radically over the course of its long career”

(249).⁵¹ This evolution is responsible for the great disparity among historians in their classification of Franco's government. It cannot be classified as strictly fascist, although it began that way. In fact, the association of Francoism with fascism was so strong that it was not until the 1960's that alternative visions of the dictatorship began to emerge. The most popular of these is that of Juan Linz, who describes the Franco dictatorship as an authoritarian regime:

According to Linz:

Authoritarian regimes are political systems with limited, not responsible, pluralism: without elaborate and guiding ideology (but with distinctive mentalities); without intensive or extensive political mobilization (except at some points in their development); and in which a leader (or occasionally a small group) exercises power within formally ill-defined limits but actually quite predictable ones. (297)

Linz's description of authoritarian regimes fits the Franco dictatorship well and is widely accepted by historians. Nonetheless, other scholars, notably sociologists and political scientists criticize Linz's contentions for allowing the dictatorship a certain democratic legitimacy that it did not deserve and for focusing too heavily on politics to the detriment of social and class

Notes

⁵¹ Malefakis notes that the many changes of the Franco dictatorship are unusual. He cites the Salazar regime in Europe and Castro's dictatorship in Cuba as examples of similarly durable dictatorships, but comments that neither experienced near as much evolution as the Franco dictatorship. He states: "[...] the correlation between longevity and innovation is not so straightforward, and at times may not exist at all" (249).

issues. The wide range of views on the dictatorship lends credibility to the idea that the regime was not constant, but in flux throughout its decades.

One of the most important aspects that differentiated the early years of the dictatorship from the final decade and a half is the economy. Between 1959 and 1974, Spain experienced what is known as the “Economic Miracle.” During these years, Japan was the only developed country that underwent greater economic growth. This period followed one of moderate economic growth as Spain left the autarky. As Townson explains: “At the outset of the 1950s the Spanish economy began to crawl out from the protectionist shell of the autarkic regime that had characterized – and inhibited – it ever since 1939” (11). It took nine years for the Spanish economy to recuperate and to begin a period of true prosperity. This recovery was the final step from Spain in becoming an industrialized country. Townson explains: “In short, Spain took a mere 15 years to make the leap from a largely agrarian-based economy to an industrial one” (12). As an industrial country, Spain was more able to participate in the world market and a country that had spent recent decades closed off from the rest of the world began to welcome outside money and people.

There were three main components that made Spain’s vast economic growth possible: foreign investment, emigration, and tourism. The foreign investment came primarily from Western Europe and the United States. Spain benefitted from a geographical proximity to the flourishing economies of Western Europe. Its anti-communist government placed it on the side of the United States in the Cold War. Massive foreign investment came from both of these areas. Western Europe also suffered from a huge labor shortage, which resulted in Spanish emigration to these countries for the employment that was readily available. Between 1960 and 1972, 1.5 million Spanish workers emigrated abroad. The end result of the emigration was a lowering of

the domestic unemployment rate in Spain and an influx of money that covered fifty percent of the foreign debt. Finally, tourism resulted in not only foreign, but domestic investment in Spain.

It became one of the most powerful forces of change in the country. Sasha Pack explains:

Few cases illustrate the potency of tourism as a form of international relations better than the experience of Franco's Spain. Historically shunned by all but the most intrepid travelers, Spain became a major hub of postwar European leisure, absorbing a massive current of vacationers in search of seaside pleasures and an escape from staid routine. The consequences for Spain were at once economic, cultural, and political. (47)

The timely coincidence of these three elements, foreign investment, emigration, and tourism, created the pillars that supported economic growth. This increase in foreign interest, however, was not limited to the economy.

Spain's contact, through tourism and emigration, with the progressive countries of Western Europe and the United States had a profound effect on the nation's political circumstances. Shortly after the end of World War II, tourism was not seen as desirable by the dictatorship. As Pack explains:

Foreign tourism apparently fitted nowhere in this [Franco's] agenda. Accommodating it would require relatively more open borders and would compromise the regime's control over the international exchange value of the Spanish currency, a requirement of its chosen industrial policy. Tourists were recognized, moreover, to be an uncomfortably liberal social force. (52)

Despite the regime's worries, however, Spain experienced a boom of tourism beginning in 1949 and accelerating through the 1950s and 1960s.⁵² The economic boon that tourism supplied for Spain resulted in the relaxation of many laws and policies, to accommodate tourists. The goal of this was to make Spain seem more liberal and pluralistic. Over time, this practice unintentionally led to Spain actually becoming more liberal and pluralistic. The worry that tourists were a liberalizing social force turned out to be unfounded. It was the adjustments made by the government in order to appear more legitimate and less backward in the eyes of those tourists that resulted in more liberal practices.

In addition to the more liberal policies that resulted in an effort to promote tourism, and the general reformation undertaken by the government in the 1960s, the contact between Spaniards and the outside world also encouraged a questioning of their governmental system. Despite the more liberal policies brought about by the policies created for tourism, Spain was, in many ways, still politically backward into the 1970s. Tom Buchanan explains:

Indeed, it was precisely in the early 1970s that, in political terms, the gulf between Franco's Spain and democratic Western Europe became unbridgeable. For, just as the short-lived and largely cosmetic reforms of the mid-1960s were being abandoned in Spain, elsewhere in Western Europe the student and working class unrest of the later 1960s precipitated a very significant tranche of political and social reforms. (88)

⁵² The trade and military alliance beginning with "El pacto de Madrid" in 1953 cemented a friendly relationship between Spain and the United States and began a period of U.S. tourism in Spain and Spanish interest in all things related to the United States.

These political and social reforms went against the ideals of the regime. This was especially true because in Western Europe in the early 1970s there were many social reforms relating to divorce, birth control, and abortion. In a government that so closely allied itself with the Catholic Church, such reforms could not be considered.

In other ways, however, the Franco regime changed greatly to accommodate the outside world and to prove itself more modern. The steps taken to show Spain as a modernized country had a destabilizing effect on the dictatorship. A prime example of this is the 1966 Press Law that unintentionally relaxed the stranglehold that the regime attempted to retain on Spanish culture. Elisa Chuliá explains the law as follows:

The 1966 Press Law, which is recorded in the history of Franco's regime as the most far-reaching liberalizing measure, gave a strong boost to the audience logic to the detriment of the logic of orthodoxy. It favoured actions focused on winning audiences, either as consumers of information and entertainment or as sympathizers and supports of the opposition to the Francoist political system. Its erosive effect on the legitimacy of the regime and its impact as a driving force of political and cultural development in Spanish society is beyond question. (174)

For a government that based so much of its legitimacy on orthodoxy, this law was a dramatic change. It encouraged progress in order to show that the country had advanced. This provided a more liberal climate for cultural producers of all types and supported non-traditional works.

Chuliá explains: "In the 1960s the political culture of the regime showed a clear predilection for publications, programmes, films and plays which expressed the idea that Spain had modernized unrecognizably and offered a relatively unhampered, entertaining life for anyone who strove for progress, although not without the risk of losing human values such as social solidarity" (173).

The Franco regime had based much of its identity on a glorified imperial past, and this law took a solid step away from the past to a more liberated future.

While the severity of censorship diminished, allowing artists more liberties, the situation of women remained severely restricted. The Franco dictatorship changed and evolved greatly over its tenure but its position on the role of women remained much the same from start to finish. The *Sección femenina* remained charged with educating women for their proper roles in the home. The functions of a wife and mother were, for much of the dictatorship, thought to be the only appropriate tasks for women. Women who pursued an education outside of that necessary for being a good housewife found that benefits of that education were matched with serious drawbacks. Geraldine Scanlon explains: “Aunque era cierto que la mujer profesional podría desarrollar una confianza en sí misma, una independencia de criterio y una capacidad para tomar decisiones, estas cosas se lograban al precio de renunciar a sus posibilidades matrimoniales [...]” (338). The average man raised under the Franco dictatorship had a clear view of what to expect from a proper woman, and did not want a wife who did not rely on him. Independence and an ability to think for herself were not desirable characteristics in the eyes of potential husbands.

Some slight revisions of the female role were accomplished, not out of a desire to liberate women, but out of economic necessity. Scanlon notes: “Las fuentes de redefinición del papel de la mujer en la sociedad española no se encuentran principalmente in la ideología del Movimiento para la Liberación de la Mujer, sino en la situación económica de España” (342). The economic crisis in which Spain found itself at the end of the 1950s led to an economic plan that involved increasing the workforce. Because it was nearly impossible for more men to be involved in labor (those who could work were already working), the only option was to recruit women. The increase of women in the workforce also created more “gender appropriate” jobs for women

working in daycare to care for the children of working mothers. Spain's image of a working woman was no longer that of a woman forced to participate in the workforce due to economic necessity, but that of a woman recruited to help rebuild her country's economy. Scanlon explains why this change of image is so surprising:

La característica más sorprendente del cambio de actitud respecto al papel de la mujer ha sido la sanción legal de la noción de la mujer trabajadora por un régimen que desde sus comienzos ha estado dedicado a «liberar» a la mujer del trabajo. El peor aspecto de este sacrificio de la pureza ideológica en aras de la conveniencia económica es que, en su preocupación por mantener una fachada hipócrita de consistencia, el Estado ha dado una seudolibertad a la mujer que le permite explotar su potencial económico al mismo tiempo que le niega toda libertad real y preserva de este modo la base fundamental del Estado: la familia. (344)

Thus, although women were allowed to form part of the workforce, it only gave the appearance of bettering their situation while keeping them subordinate in the role of a mother.

Some reforms, though small, helped to genuinely improve the situation of women. In April of 1958 various articles of the *Código Civil* were changed. Women were given slightly more control of financial matters, as onerous financial obligations taken on by the husband required the consent of the wife. Women were allowed to be tutors, though married women needed the consent of their husbands. Women were also allowed to be a witness in wills. Most significantly, this change in law allowed widowed women to retain the *patria potestas* over their children, even if they remarried. These small concessions on the part of the law, though beneficial to women, were far from liberating. It took the end of the dictatorship for women to again be able to advance meaningfully.

Theater advanced, during *tardofranquismo*, only as much as was allowed by censorship. Even after Spain began to have increased contact with outside world, the theatrical styles that had gained great popularity in the rest of Europe were not incorporated into Spanish theater. For example, when Bertolt Brecht's works and theories gained entrance into Spain in the early 1960s, they were poorly understood by most of the country and only performed by independent troupes in independent theaters. César Oliva notes: "No obstante, los actores que experimentaban algunas de las teorías antes mencionadas [las de Brecht y Stanislavski], a la hora de la verdad, es decir, cuando se enfrentaban con un texto convencional, poco podían aportar de novedad. Sólo en el seno de los teatros independientes se pudieron conversar las esencias de las nuevas ideas sobre interpretación [...] (2623). Although the modern styles and works were present in major cities, they were unable to, for many years, gain sufficient appreciation to move into major theaters and to have their techniques adopted by Spanish playwrights.

During the last decades of the Franco dictatorship there was a significant change in the popular style and in the preferred theatrical environment. Realism joined the *comedia de evasión* as a popular style of production.⁵³ The most important playwrights of the realist generation were Buero Vallejo, Sastre, and Olmo. Realism was accompanied in the theaters of Spain, later, by "*teatro nuevo*" by playwrights such as Francisco Nieva and Fernando Arrabal. The new theater gained some popularity, particularly that of Nieva, but many authors also encountered significant resistance to the change that their style embodied. In the theatrical environment, independent and university theaters became popular venues because they offered representations of newer, more thought-provoking theater. Thus, the theater of the last decades

⁵³ This type of theater was poetic with a style that was humoristic, sentimental, fantastic, or trivial. It was not exempt, however, to certain grace, ingenuity and literary quality.

of Francoism was torn between adherence to the tradition supported by the regime during its first decades and the tendency toward innovation that came in the 1960s.

The 1966 Press Law provided the definitive impulse for one of the greatest steps toward progress in the theater. The preference given to art that made it seem as though the “new” Francoism was indistinguishable from the regime of the past allowed playwrights to take more chances with their art and to explore more modern themes. This opportunity to question more than previous censorship had allowed was accompanied by an increase in spectators due in great part to the rising popularity of independent theater. Oliva explains:

Una nueva manera de concebir, hacer y vender los espectáculos escénicos, procedente de ese teatro independiente, haría posible la entrada de aire fresco tanto en producción como en exhibición. De ser mero artículo de consumo, buena parte del teatro español pasó a simbolizar el mensaje de un país que quería salir del régimen de Franco. Los últimos diez años de la Dictadura supusieron un espectacular ascenso del número de espectadores, que encontraban en los nuevos montajes los mensajes que permitía una censura cada vez más amenazada por aires aperturistas. Fue un momento de desarrollo escénico en el que nuevos directores, actores y escenógrafos, junto a los autores, quisieron hacer lo que no se veía en los escenarios convencionales. (2605)

Theater became another destabilizing force in the last decade of Franco’s dictatorship. It became a venue both for questioning the current regime and for imagining a world free of the dictator’s repression.

One author who took full advantage of his art as a destabilizing force is Antonio Gala. Gala, though popular, does not receive as much critical attention as many of his

contemporaries.⁵⁴ The reason for this slight is not explicitly stated; it is possible that Gala's relative lack of subversive theater makes him less stimulating to critics. Gala also participates in many artistic outlets in addition to theater, making him less unique to the stage. Perhaps the most important element in the formation of critical opinion of him is the role that Gala plays in Spanish society. He is a flamboyant and irreverent celebrity whose image does not encourage being classified as a serious man. Martha Halsey and Phyllis Zatlin provide a description of Gala and his work that sums up the way that he and his theater are considered:

The Andalusian Gala, who enjoys celebrity status in Spain, does not consider himself a playwright *per se*; he has written and appeared in television series, has a regular weekly newspaper column, and is also a novelist and poet. His fame as a dramatist dates from the triumphant première in 1963 of his first play, *Los verdes campos del Edén* (*The Green Fields of Eden*). Following the relative failure of other productions in the 1960s, Gala has had a long string of box office hits. His theatre generally blends sparkling surface humour with an underlying tragic reality and tends to function metaphorically. His protagonists typically seek a paradise of political and personal freedom. They champion the cause of the disempowered: women, Jews, homosexuals. Almost invariably Gala's idealists are doomed to failure [...] (75).

⁵⁴ Throughout works that give a panoramic view of post-civil war theater, Gala receives very little mention (such as a paragraph) while authors like Francisco Nieva receive pages of commentary and playwrights such as Antonio Buero Vallejo receive entire chapters dedicated to their works.

What Halsey and Zatlin fail to mention is that Gala achieves substantial acclaim and success in all of the genres in which he applies his considerable talent.⁵⁵

Anillos para una dama premiered to critical and audience acclaim in Madrid in the Teatro Eslava on September 28, 1973. The moment was long-anticipated, because the play was originally written years earlier and had been held up by the censors for two years. Gala explains the situation with the censors:

Si alguien se tomase el trabajo de estudiar la labor de la censura burocrática—no hablo de otras, más hondas y sutiles—descubriría que *Anillos para una dama* fue una pieza tratada de una forma especial. No llegó a prohibirse: sencillamente, desapareció. Carrero Blanco había inventado de hecho—creo que ni siquiera a través del *Boletín Oficial*—una especie de Junta Interministerial de Medios de Comunicación de Masas. Supongo que la inventó, sobre todo, para decidir si se retransmitiría un partido de fútbol Rusia-España, o algo por el estilo. Porque, por desdicha, nadie puede imaginar, ni en el colmo de optimismo, que el Teatro en España sea un *mass media*. Sin embargo, a esa extraña Junta, por cesión de la censura habitual, llegó *Anillos*. (El hecho de hablarse de anillos-collares-damas-bodas de Oviedo-caudillos-muertes-cambios había producido un verdadero escalofrío en la Dirección General de Teatro, y Antolín de Santiago se lavaba las

⁵⁵ *Los verdes campos del Edén* was awarded the National Theatre Prize “Calderón de la Barca” in 1963. His poem “Enemigo íntimo” received the Adonais Prize in 1959. His first novel, *El manuscrito carmesí* won the Planeta prize in 1990.

manos). O sea, ya no se trataba de resolver si se estrenaba o no—era claro—, sino de si se fusilaba o no a su autor. (*Propia* 260-61).⁵⁶

Despite Gala's fear of being shot, the play was rescued from the oblivion into which it had disappeared and was approved.

Such was the success of *Anillos para una dama*, that it was performed nonstop from its premiere in 1973 until November of 1976. Part of the popularity of the play was due to Gala's understanding of the audience and appropriate adjustment of the horizon of expectation. Buero Vallejo used the myth of Ulysses because he was assured of audience understanding of the original myth. By using the myth of El Cid, Gala guaranteed that a Spanish audience would be familiar with the characters and the situation that surrounded them. An audience raised in Spain, especially those raised during the Franco era which glorified the heroes of the past, would have assuredly been acquainted with the *Cantar de mio Cid*. Thus the use of the story of the national hero was a firmly understood point of departure.

The use of El Cid, because it held clear expectations for the spectators, was a dangerous choice on the part of Gala, and it also displayed the substantial relaxation of censorship that took place in late Francoism. El Cid is known, even by people outside of the country, as Spain's national hero.⁵⁷ In a time when national heroes were being glorified by the regime and modern heroes were less deserving of their status, tarnishing the image of the man who is a hero and a legend to an entire country could easily ensure the failure of a drama. The fact that *Anillos para*

⁵⁶ Gala adds that through the help of Aldolfo Suárez, the play later was returned to “la censura ordinaria” and was eventually allowed.

⁵⁷ In the U.S.A., the knowledge of the national hero is largely due to the 1961 movie *El Cid* starring Charlton Heston and Sophia Loren.

una dama was allowed to be presented, despite its humanization and demythification of a hero, shows that the standards of censorship were not as strict as in earlier decades. The fact that the audience appreciated the play instead of condemning it for its critique of El Cid is a testament to Gala's understanding of his audience. He pushed the horizon of expectation, but not so far as to alienate his spectators.

A key asset to Gala's drama is that he did not rewrite the myth, rather expanded on it to consider what might have occurred after the death of the hero. This allows the hero's image to remain largely as it is remembered by the audience. Jimena does not portray her late husband as undeserving of praise; she simply describes a man that is more human than legend. In the play she states: "El Cid era el ápice de España: eso lo sé yo mejor que nadie. Y lo quise. Los demás quisisteis el bla-bla-bla y el yelmo, y la coraza, y el poderío, y el gesto. Yo quise sus ronquidos, su asma de última hora, su cansancio y su miedo..."(237). Gala does not put in doubt the legend; he confirms that after the legend dies, for some, life must still continue. He does not question the heroism of El Cid; he casts doubt on the appropriateness of the way in which his widow is treated. He critiques how Jimena is not a person unto herself, but the widow of the hero. He leads the audience to examine a situation that might have happened centuries earlier and compare it to a situation that had occurred in more recent history.

The use of a myth to shed light on a modern situation is a common theatrical device, but instead of using Jimena to illuminate the role of modern widows in general, Gala focused his critique on one particular woman. *Anillos para una dama* premiered five years after the marriage of Jacquelyn Kennedy to Aristotle Onassis. Gala admitted that the widow's remarriage and the considerable criticism that she received from the Spanish people as a result inspired the play. The audience would have been familiar with the story of the former first lady and many,

outraged at her remarriage, would have clearly felt the criticism intended by Gala. By comparing a modern famous widow to a historical famous widow Gala allowed the audience to see that nearly five hundred years had been insufficient to increase society's understanding towards the wife of the hero.

To further his comparison between past and present, Gala employs both in the wardrobe and the language used by the cast. He instructs the following: "Vestuario: El vestuario, que al principio es de época, aunque no muy marcado, luego va modernizándose. Pero no se debe hacer rabiosamente. Que suceda como con el lenguaje: es de hoy, lo entendemos, pero tiene no sé qué aroma ajeno al lenguaje estrictamente de hoy" (202). He begins with dress appropriate to the timeframe of the drama to assure the proper association with the myth. Once his audience has achieved an understanding of the characters, Gala modernizes the dress to establish the relevance to the present. Even if done with subtlety, this change of dress is a more overt connection to the present than what is seen in other plays of the time. In Brechtian style, Gala ensured that his audience members were unable to lose themselves into the past to the detriment of understanding the connection to the present.

Gala often employs historical themes, not to deepen understanding of the past, but to shed light on the present and the future. In fact, he sometimes manipulates the facts surrounding mythical or historical figures to make the past situation more similar to the present, in order to further his plot or make his metaphor easier to understand.⁵⁸ The change in the myth of El Cid

⁵⁸ Another example of the manipulation of a myth is in his 1974 work, *¿Por qué corres, Ulises?*. Gala makes Ulysses' relationship with Naussica sexual from the first moment that Ulysses arrives in her country. Homer's original myth does not suggest a sexual relationship

orchestrated by Gala is necessary to make his metaphor more comprehensible to his audience. Minaya, the love interest of Jimena, serves a different role in *Anillos para una dama* than that of historical record or the account in *Cantar de mio Cid*.⁵⁹ In the drama, Minaya and Jimena have a long-established cordial relationship, but it is also clear that Jimena has entertained romantic feelings toward her late husband's second-in-command for years. Minaya also proclaims that he was in love with Jimena from the first time that he saw her: "Cualquier destino, por extraño que sea, se define en un solo momento: el momento en que el hombre sabe para siempre quién es. Yo, entonces, en aquella mañana [de la boda de el Cid y Jimena], supe que no iba a ser nunca jamás otra cosa que el fiel enamorado de Jimena... (220). Neither history nor the stylized account of the life of El Cid suggest a possible attraction between the two. Gala attributes a different role to Minaya, one that he did not play, but this serves multiple purposes. First, Minaya is a character that would be familiar to a Spanish audience. Many of the spectators would have read the *Cantar de mio Cid*, and this would eliminate the need to fully develop the character. The audience's familiarity with Minaya would also ensure that the character was understood to be a faithful, trustworthy man. Allowing Jimena to nurture dreams of marriage to an unworthy man would destroy Gala's metaphor.

The myth of El Cid was also useful to Gala to illustrate more than the situation of Jacqueline Kennedy. It was also used as a cautionary statement to the people of his country.

between the two at any point. It is necessary, however, for the assassination attempt and the fight with Penelope over the infidelity of her husband that are essential to Gala's plot.

⁵⁹ Minaya in the play is Álvar Fáñez who was a Castilian nobleman and military leader, but who was transformed in *Cantar de mio Cid* into Álvar Fáñez Minaya, trusted nephew of El Cid.

When *Anillos para una dama* premiered, and during the years in which it was being written by Gala, it was clear that Franco's death would not long be delayed. The dictator suffered from Parkinson's, and during the last years of his life his failing health made it evident to anyone who saw him that his condition was severe and his life span would not continue for much longer. Gala saw his country on the brink of a great change. He understood the peril involved for everyone and the ability of the country to fall into chaos if Spain chose to treat the dictatorship as though it had not impacted their country. Through the figure of Jimena, Gala attempted to show that seeking to leave the past behind, while not negative in itself, can have deleterious effects.

Jimena was used as an analogy for Jacqueline Kennedy, but also for Spain. Hazel Cazorla notes: "Aunque este drama se justifica plenamente en el sentido artístico como obra de análisis pasional y sentimental (el sentimiento amoroso y la pasión de mandar), creemos que Gala insinúa algo más para los que quieran verlo: un paralelismo entre la vida de Jimena y el destino de España (13). Her desire to break free of the past and live for her own happiness parallels the desires of a country about to see the end of a dictatorship. Even in the absence of the man who ruled her life, after his death, Jimena cannot ignore his impact. Franco was to Spain what El Cid was to Jimena. Just as Jimena did not choose El Cid as her husband, Franco was not voted into power by his countrymen. Both Jimena and Spain had to submit to the power of one unchosen man. Their desire to live differently after the death of that man seems reasonable, but can also prove dangerous. In both cases, the decisions that come after the death of the powerful man have far-reaching effects. For that reason, Jimena is not allowed to fulfill her dreams, and Gala suggests that Spain may fall victim to the same problem.

Despite Jimena's failure to achieve what she ardently wishes for, Gala still has hope for Spain. He does not condemn the desires of the widow, but instead signals the difficulties

inherent in achieving those wishes. Similarly, he cannot denounce the Spanish people for wanting something new. Cazorla notes: “La obra cobra una vitalidad contemporánea si la consideramos como una alegoría de la España actual que intenta sacudir los mitos que la mantienen atada e inmóvil, reclamando una libertad de acción para buscar la verdad íntima de su ser, para conocerse y darse a conocer de una vez para siempre” (13). Jimena’s hopes are Spain’s hopes, and the audience feels those needs as acutely as the character.⁶⁰

The character of Jimena is one of Gala’s most compelling characters because of her strength and conviction in the face of adversity. She does not take life for granted and knows that it is a struggle. She also recognizes that the life that one desires will not come without effort. She says to Minaya: “La vida hay que ganarla, Minaya... Como una fortaleza” (220). She is willing to win the life that she wants, although she has to face both the king and the bishop in order to achieve her desires.

Jimena knows exactly what she wants and she does not hesitate when she informs the king and the bishop of her desires. King Alfonso misunderstands Jimena at first, believing her desire to wed is based on an attempt to strengthen the position of Valencia, which is threatened by Mazdalí. To make certain that Alfonso understands her completely, she informs him of his error and clearly states exactly what she wants: “Me has entendido mal, Alfonso, como siempre. Esta vez Jimena no está en venta... Yo no quiero casarme por política. Quiero casarme, pero por amor. Lo que te pido es que otorgues mi mano, si él la acepta, a Minaya Álvar Háñez”

⁶⁰ During this time period, the primary audience in the theater was still of a high social class. They had survived the Franco dictatorship with far less sacrifice than those of the lower classes. Thus, leading these audience members to desire a different Spain was a great accomplishment for Gala.

(230). To further clarify, she adds a moment later: “Y si no la aceptara [mi mano] me da igual. En todo caso, quiero casarme con Minaya” (230). In this moment Jimena is not preoccupied with the forces amassed outside of Valencia, nor is she experiencing guilt at the thought of replacing the hero, her husband, El Cid, in order to find her own happiness.

Although Jimena is certain of what she wants, she is marginalized due to her sex and cannot simply follow through with the necessary actions to achieve happiness; she must first receive permission from a king and a bishop. Following through without permission, however, as Hazel Cazorla explains, is exactly what she wants: “Aislada, encadenada por la fuerza invisible de la tradición, busca desesperadamente la salida en éste su único intento rebelde de establecer su identidad como mujer, como persona libre y digna de escoger su propio camino” (14). Although the bishop and king approve initially of her idea of marriage as a means of fortifying her position, the revelation that she wants to marry for love results in a firm denial. Above all, the myth of El Cid, of which she forms a part, must remain intact. Alfonso explains to Jimena:

El pueblo y sus pastores piensan que el Cid es insustituible. Y quieren que lo sea... Como viuda desconsolada, por motivos históricos, te tolerarían contraer nuevas nupcias. Pero como mujer enamorada de otro hombre, no. Para ellos el Cid es insustituible hasta en brazos de Jimena. [...]De un héroe, hasta la intimidad debe estar limpia. Y el lugar del Cid Campeador nadie debe ocuparlo. Ni en la cama... En la cama menos que en otros sitios. (210)

In addition to being controlled by the king and the bishop, the widow is controlled by the legacy of her dead husband. As Cazorla explains: “El Cid, o su vivo recuerdo, es el héroe ‘insustituible’ para todos menos para Jimena. Es el hombre convertido en mito que sostiene con sus sueños a

todo el pueblo” (14). After being forced to marry a man that she did not love, Jimena finds herself unable to wed a man she loves. Even death cannot kill her husband’s importance among the people.

Jimena, as a woman, and as the niece of King Alfonso, has been subjugated to men her entire life. She was only fourteen when she was given to El Cid as his bride. She asks her uncle why he arranged her marriage to a man that he routinely banished:

JIMENA. ¿Por qué, entonces, me casaste con él?

ALFONSO. Razón de Estado, hija. En la familia todos hemos hecho cosas muy raras por razones de Estado; prefiero no acordarme... Convenía tocar el lado *snob* del Cid [...] (228)

As the wife of El Cid, she was compelled to act in a way befitting a hero’s wife. Those duties are described by Elizabeth Rogers: “The role of the wife of a hero comprises total loyalty, respect, purity and high morality, obedience, undaunting support, admiration, service, passivity, and security of *his* honor and *his* image as a loving father, and a heroic warrior and just ruler” (“Constraints” 312). Even after fulfilling the role of the wife of the hero, and meeting the needs of her husband during his life, she is not freed by his death. In addition to being subject to the decisions of the king and the bishop, she is subject to the legend of which she forms an integral part.

Jimena is part of the myth of El Cid, having been part of the life of the man that has become a myth. Because she was the supportive wife, not the hero, however, she also has the ability to destroy the myth. To an extent, she does that by humanizing El Cid and presenting a man who got tired, who felt fear and sadness, and who snored. The power to totally destroy the myth by remarrying is not in her hands. Her sex requires that she seek permission from men to

marry, despite her position of relative strength and power. Tradition dictates that marriage, at least for those of her social class, is not meant to be arranged based on love, but on the wishes of an elder male relative (as Jimena's first marriage) or for a politically advantageous position. Jimena's daughter María⁶¹ explains why love is not is not requisite for marriage in those of her class: "Las mujeres de mi clase tienen otro que hacer mejor que enamorarse. Enamorarse es cosa de criados, el consuelo de la gente menuda... El amor no es necesario para nada importante. Mantener una casa, un nombre, un reino, tener un heredero... Todo eso puede hacerse sin amor. Incluso te diría que sin amor se hace más fácilmente" (213). Love is not considered a prerequisite for marriage in the hegemonic class; indeed, it is often seen as an obstacle to achieving higher goals.

Judith Butler explains the role of repetition and ritual in the formation of identity: "[...] performativity is not a singular act, but a repetition and a ritual, which achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of a body, understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration" (XV). Although the repetition and ritual that form Jimena's identity are not as clear as those which form the identity of Buero Vallejo's Penélope, they are present and made evident by Gala through the discussion of matrimony. The repetition is evident through the ritual in Gala's work. Every aspect of Jimena's possible second marriage is an echo of her first marriage to El Cid. The kind of man that she is able to marry, the approval which she must achieve in order to marry, and the denial of her desires are all similar in Jimena's desire to wed a second time, as they were present in her first marriage. Gala also adds another level of

⁶¹ In Gala's version of the myth, María is one of El Cid's two daughters, married to Ramón Berenguer, the count of Barcelona.

repetition, that of modern widows (and women in general) that must endure the same process as Jimena in order to wed.

The first repetition is that of the type of man that is considered as an eligible husband for Jimena. Because of Jimena's elite social class as the duchess of Valencia and the niece of the king, she must marry a man that is considered appropriate to her class. It is partially for this reason that King Alfonso concludes that she wants to marry a king. The thought that Jimena would marry for love, regardless of class seems inconceivable to someone like Alfonso. Jimena also admits that such a marriage is unusual: "Las pastoras se enamoran de las estrellas, pero se suelen casar con los pastores" (226). Thus, if a second marriage is to happen for Jimena, it must happen for the proper motivations. It must be a match to a man of high social class.

A second level of repetition in Jimena's potential marriage is the role of King Alfonso in the consent of the spouse and the arrangement of the marriage. This process of approval by a male relative is as much a part of the ritual of marriage as the ceremony itself. Society in general did not have a role for an unmarried woman, and the average widow felt pressure to remarry. In order to again become a "woman" in the eyes of her society, a widowed woman had to remarry after an acceptable period of mourning. In order to do this properly, she had to seek the permission of a male relative. Although widowed women possessed more rights than married women, they were still subject to male authority.⁶² It was King Alfonso that originally arranged the marriage between El Cid and Jimena. She had not even met her future husband, as Minaya

⁶² Widowed women consistently had more rights than married women, though the specific nature of those rights changed throughout the century. The most important and debated point was that of the *patria potestas* that widowed women had over their children. Other rights included ownership of property and the ability to serve as witnesses in legal documents.

notes: “Tú bajabas la escalera de los condes de Oviedo el día de tu boda. No sabías ni quien era Rodrigo, aún no lo conocías” (220). It is the same man, the man that married her as a child to someone she did not know for “razones de estado,” that Jimena has to approach to have her second marriage approved.

The third level of repetition with the theme of marriage is the lack of importance afforded to Jimena’s desires. When her first marriage occurred, Jimena was a child of only fourteen. She did not want to marry Rodrigo; she had never even met him. He was chosen for her by the king and her desire, or lack thereof, was not a concern. Her wish to marry Minaya is also not a concern to those who have the power to approve a second wedding. It is allowable, in the eyes of the king and the bishop, who have the power to approve a second wedding, for Jimena to remarry. This wedding, however, must be for the same reasons as her first marriage, the “razones de estado” mentioned by the king. Alfonso specifically identifies the circumstances under which Jimena’s desires would be considered: “Cuando tú el otro día hablaste de volver a casarte, yo no me opuse. Tú eres muy libre de decidir tu vida..., siempre que se trate de una decisión sabia y meditada. Un matrimonio oportunamente ventajoso, con alguien fuerte, que pueda resolver la situación en que nos encontramos... Un matrimonio cauto, razonado y político” (239). Essentially, Jimena is free to decide for herself, given that she chooses to proceed in a manner of which the King approves. Her aspirations play no role in an allowable marriage.

The final level of repetition that Gala illuminates through the theme of marriage is that all women must, even in the 1970s, go through the same process that Jimena had to endure. The culture that Franco imposed on his people, even in the more liberal years toward the end of his dictatorship, was very conservative. Rules regarding marriage and matrimonial relationships

during the Franco years were almost identical to those from the eighteenth century. Women existed as a man's helpmate and little more. She could do very little without male approval, severely limiting her abilities to attain her goals, matrimonial or otherwise.

By specifically identifying her desired husband and her reason for wanting the marriage, Jimena breaks from the repetition that has created her identity. Previously, she abided by the decisions made for her by others, never breaking from her assigned role. By taking the steps necessary to have a marriage to Minaya approved, she is proactive for the first time. She cannot wait for the king to choose another husband for her. She knows that the men who manage her life would never conceive of such a marriage without being forced to confront her desire. When she first broaches the subject of wishing to marry again, it is clear from the reaction of the king that he had not considered the idea. His further reaction to the specific mention of Minaya makes it evident that the king would never have considered a match between the hero's wife and his most loyal comrade. This obliviousness on the part of the king forces Jimena to take an active role in determining her future. She chooses to no longer be a passive pawn that receives the orders of the king and follows through as expected. By breaking from the repetition that previously determined her identity, she creates a new Jimena who does what is necessary to achieve her own fulfillment.

Although she is able to break the repetition that created her identity, Jimena is not able to avoid the necessary rituals, and this prevents her from fulfilling her desires. If all that was necessary for her to marry the man she loves was the assent of that future spouse, she and Minaya would have been able marry one another as soon as they openly recognized their love for one another. Instead of moving from their recognition of mutual love directly to a marriage and subsequent wedded bliss, Jimena and Minaya must achieve consent from the king and bishop in

order for marriage to become a possibility. This approval is denied, not because Minaya is an unacceptable man, but because he is an unacceptable replacement for El Cid.

When Jimena's sex is applied to the social apparatus, as presented by Gayle Rubin, it should result in her gender role. In her society, however, Jimena's sex is not her most identifying feature. The way that her society views her is made evident in the manner in which the bishop Jerónimo responds to learning that she wishes to marry. He reacts with a gesture of horror and voices his shock: "¡Si es la viuda del Cid!" (229). In her society Jimena is not merely a woman, she is the widow of the national hero. She had to fight to be referred to as Jimena by the king instead of "la del marido envidiado" (266).

As a result of her atypical marriage, the social apparatus can use her sex to determine her gender role, but that gender role cannot be the only factor that determines her responsibilities in her society. She is obligated to society to uphold the image of her departed husband and that society is obligated to treat her with the reverence owed to the widow of a hero. As Rogers notes: "They [Penélope and Jimena] are victims of a role and society's obligation to that role, and ultimately both are psychologically and emotionally destroyed" ("Constraints" 316). Jimena must protect the image of her departed husband. It must hold a place of much higher importance than that of the happiness of one woman. As long as she is seen as the widow of the hero, society has a frame of reference to understand and accept Jimena. If she departs from that role to achieve personal fulfillment, she loses the obligation that her society ascribed to her.

The importance granted to Jimena by her society stems from two important facets of her life: her relationship to the king and her marriage to El Cid. As the niece of the king she is not given the importance of royalty, but power and respect are awarded to her as a courtesy to the monarch. She is able to seek a personal audience with the king and the bishop because her

personal life is important to the king, as well as to the entire country. Her relationship to the king also allows Jimena to address him with much more freedom than a common citizen, a right which she exercises to its limits. The national standing of her late husband is not why Jimena has to seek the approval of the king to remarry; he is the relative that would have to approve her marriage, even if her previous husband had no particular importance to the country. Jimena and her society recognize her position in the royal family. This relationship entails obligations from both sides. Society must give Jimena the respect owed the niece of their king and Jimena must comport herself with the dignity and propriety required for the same role. This also means that Jimena must marry into the class appropriate for someone of the upper nobility.

Jimena's marriage to El Cid was deemed appropriate by the king and gave her status among the people of her country; her marriage to a national hero was of greater significance in establishing her as a figure important to the people. Not only was Jimena more visible as the wife of El Cid, she became part of the myth that was created around his life. Although she was aware of the real man that was elevated to mythical proportions, she was unable to maintain her status as a real woman once she became part of his life. When her husband died, instead of ending the myth that surrounded Jimena, the myth was glorified to encourage those continuing the Reconquest. After the death El Cid, having a tangible link to the dead hero served to animate the troops. Jimena serves as that link. From the window of the tower, she calls out to the soldiers, rousing them to fight with her husband still beside them:

¡A cabalgar! ¡En nombre de Dios y de Santiago! Sobre Babieca, el caballo que fue de Almotamid, aún cabalga Mío Cid Rodrigo entre vosotros. Cabe el arzón, en cruz, lleva sus dos espadas: Tizona, que la ganó al rey Búcar, y Colada, que la ganó a Ramón el catalán. Ya se acercan los moros por la huerta. ¡Adelante!

Mejor será matarlos antes de que se lleven nuestro pan. Mesnadas de Ruy Díaz, salid de la ciudad por las Torres de Cuarte. Que el Señor os proteja. Yo me quedo implorando la victoria... ¡Adelante! ¡Adelante! (222)

It is not Jimena who spurs the soldiers to action, but the memory of her husband. With the hold on Valencia slipping each day, the man who once was a great leader in battle becomes a battle cry. Only Jimena, the hero's widow and part of the myth, is able to use the memory of El Cid to the desired effect.

With El Cid dead, Jimena became the live figure upon which the myth could rest. She did not return to being Jimena again when her husband died. She turned into the widow of the hero. Her identity was still inextricably associated with the myth of her husband and that link was necessary to her country. She maintained morale and served as proof that Spain's champion had been real. As a wife of the national hero, Jimena's status in the country was elevated-- as his widow, she became indispensable.

It is her importance after the death of her husband that truly separates Jimena from other widows. Society had no place for widows, as they could not be identified by their relationship to a man, but Jimena was still defined by her former marriage. Because the myth of her husband lived on, the importance of Jimena also survived. A remarriage, however, would separate her from that myth, destroying not only the myth, but also her continued importance in society. A marriage to Minaya would define her in terms of her new husband, and, in so doing, would end society's only link to the dead hero.⁶³ Thus, in a society that defines women by their

⁶³ Although El Cid also had daughters, both are married (for a second time) and are defined by their relationships to their husbands, not by their link to their dead father.

relationship to men, Jimena stands apart from the others because it is her continued status as a widow that brings her honor and defines her in the eyes of the people.

Jimena's relationship to the king, her marriage to El Cid, and her role in sustaining the myth of her late husband (if not maintaining his hold on Valencia) all contribute to her importance in her country. As a woman, she achieves an incredible level of power within her society. She is truly a member of the hegemonic class. She is the duchess of Valencia, the niece of a king, and the living representation of a myth that sustained an entire country. She is strong in the face of adversity, and is willing to do what is necessary to realize her desires.

Despite her strength and power, Jimena is still a woman. Her society, like the society enforced by Franco, made even the most powerful of women subject to the will of men. As Ranajit Guha defines subalternity, subordination can be due to sex, allowing Jimena to be subaltern due alone to the fact that she is a woman. She is the niece of a king, but she is also subordinate to the king. She is the living representation of a myth, but she is still subordinate, even after his death, to the man who was the foundation of that myth. The king has exercised control over Jimena for her entire life. El Cid controlled Jimena's life for decades and her subordination to him must continue in order for the myth to remain intact. Jimena is powerful, but her sex makes her subaltern.⁶⁴

The power that Jimena is allowed to exercise makes her position of marginality in hegemony more acutely felt. As one of the most powerful women in the country, she is still

⁶⁴ It is important to note the Guha also points out that someone who is subaltern can also be dominant: "The same class or element that was dominant in one area [...] could be among the dominated in another" (*Selected* 44). Jimena is dominant with regard to her social status, but dominated due to her sex.

insufficiently powerful to decide the course of her own life. Her hegemonic background and her link to a king and national hero make her desires relevant to that king. The same upbringing and relationships prevent her from entering into a marriage with Minaya. She describes herself to María saying: “Yo siempre me he encontrado perdida en esa Historia grande. Me ha sobrado Historia por todos lados... El muerto era mayor... (212). This “History” is not hers, but that of the king, and more so that of her husband. Nonetheless, she is overcome by it and it controls her life. As Minaya explains: “Hay cosas que la viuda del Cid no puede hacer, Jimena. Menos aún que la esposa del Cid” (221). Jimena is more important to society after the death of her husband, but his death also limits her in new ways. Every step in Jimena’s life leads her to greater hegemony but also to a greater marginality. Her increased power is never sufficient to overcome her increased subordination, which is why the play ends not in a marriage, but in Jimena returning to the convent to live out her days as the hero’s widow.

Because Jimena’s desires are ultimately denied and the hero’s image remains paramount, this play may, on the surface, appear less subversive than other works studied here. This is not the case. There are multiple levels of subversion in the play. Some of the levels are apparent in the very subject matter of the play. Others, due to the continued need to adhere to the rules enforced by the censors, are less evident.

The use of the myth of El Cid is not unique to Gala’s work, but his deconstruction of the myth makes *Anillos para una dama* distinctive. Isabel Torres comments on this and what she considers the inherent difficulty and danger in deconstructing a national myth:

Despite the various adaptations and distortions of the central legend, every version of the tale turns upon the indefatigable heroism of the male protagonist. In the echo chamber of official history, the patriarchal qualities of this medieval

Christian warrior have resounded for centuries. The imposing, larger than life figure of El Cid has been systematically constructed and reconstructed in diverse literary genres; but until Antonio Gala wrote his play *Anillos para una dama*, Spain's most pliable and yet most static national hero seemed to exist on a mythical plane which defied deconstruction. (77)

The unprecedented attack on the myth is an exceptionally subversive step for Gala. In order to avoid alienating his audience by excessively criticizing a national hero, Gala keeps his assault indirect. He uses the character of Jimena to deconstruct the hero's image instead of using an open critique.

A second point of subversion in Gala's version of the myth is the long-standing acknowledgement of Minaya's love for Jimena. As the trusted nephew and confidant of El Cid, Minaya was often entrusted with the care of Jimena. What is seen in the legend as Minaya taking on the task of escorting Jimena as a favor to El Cid is transformed by Gala into the image of two people inappropriately attracted to one another, travelling together, unaccompanied, on multiple occasions. Although Gala is careful to leave Jimena's character untarnished by the idea that something improper happened on those journeys, he does make it clear that El Cid was not foremost in the mind of either traveler. Instead of sustaining the idea of a painful separation between husband and wife, he transforms the absences into journeys where Jimena and Minaya became increasingly aware of their love for one another. This further deconstructs the image of the hero by allowing his wife to exist for something beyond his image and his importance.

A final step in the deconstruction of the hero is the suggestion that, not only did Jimena love her husband's most trusted soldier, she did not love her husband. While María elevates her

father in a manner appropriate to his status in the myth, Minaya reveals Jimena's feelings, suggesting that the ardently loving wife of the myth was nothing but a false construction:

MINAYA. Tú estuviste siempre enamorada de tu padre, ¿no es cierto?

MARÍA. De alguna forma, si... ¿Qué mujer hubiera podido no estar enamorada del Cid?

MINAYA. Quizá la suya... (214)

By suggesting that Jimena never loved her husband, Gala takes the final step in deconstructing the identity of the hero. Jimena never openly echoes the sentiment suggested by Minaya, indeed, she affirms that she loved her husband. Jimena's affirmation of love, however, is even more destructive to the myth than the suggestion that she did not love El Cid. She suggests that she did not love the hero, she loved a man who was nothing more than a mortal human: "El Cid era el ápice de España: eso lo sé yo mejor que nadie. Y lo quise. Los demás quisisteis el bla-bla-bla, y el yelmo, y la coraza, y el poderío, y el gesto. Yo quise sus ronquidos, su asma de última hora, su cansancio y su miedo" (237). It is Jimena's humanization of the myth that is most able to destroy it.

Jimena is able to destroy the myth and, if her efforts to marry Minaya had met with success, the myth of El Cid would have been, if not utterly extinguished, at the very least significantly diminished. Jimena is unsuccessful, however, and instead of acting on her love for Minaya, she spends the remainder of her days in a convent. Jimena's dreams are destroyed and the status quo is upheld, suggesting that Gala supports the importance of upholding the myth. Ending the drama in this fashion, however, is perhaps the most subversive aspect of the play. The audience has been led to identify with Jimena; to understand her desires, if not to completely support them. Her inability to experience happiness because society demands something else

from her, rather than affirming the legitimacy of the subjugation of women, leaves the audiences questioning what their society demands of women. Torres explains the effect that the play would have had, at least on the female spectator:

I would suggest that few women in the audience in Spain in 1973 would have been able to sit impassively through this play without seeing the need for a change in their own circumstance; without identifying the wider implications of the love scenes; without recognizing the need to forge a relevant and assertive future; and without Jimena's words to María ringing in their ears: "Tu vida es sólo tuya. Que no te la destrocen. Nadie. Ni rey ni roque. . . Con una mujer sacrificada basta en una familia" (211). In this speech at least there is an eloquent harmonization of purpose. (93)

Jimena may have sacrificed her own happiness for the good of her country, but she expresses her desire that future generations do not have to suffer her same fate. By leaving at least the female members of the audience questioning the fact that centuries have not changed the sacrificing role of women, Gala motivates a questioning of societal norms and encourages women to seek the necessary changes to realize their potential.

While Franco's dictatorship endured, the changes necessary for women to achieve their dreams and fulfill their potential would not occur. Even weakened, the dictator supported the role of women in the home, as the helpmate of the man. With Franco's death imminent, however, the options for women could possibly be facing a change. The governmental changes made by Juan Carlos Borbón could not have been anticipated, but the very idea of a new leader opened up the possibilities of change. Although none of the female protagonists in the first three

works studied achieved their goals, each one took a solid step toward empowering women, so that when their chance arrived, they would seize it.

The Democracy

Paloma Pedrero's *Locas de amar*

As Spain entered the last quarter of the twentieth century, many important changes were taking place. The new, democratic system allowed freedoms of content and style that artists had fought for during the Franco years. Women were given equal rights and the necessary time and support to begin to exercise their ability to be something more than housewives. Censorship was abolished and the freedom of expression allowed for new themes and less need for subtlety. Spain quickly modernized, overcoming the backward notions of Francoism and topics of the theater did the same. Playwrights, in particular women, began to explore the idea of female solidarity and the role of women in traditional marriage.

Paloma Pedrero (1957-) was born into a Spain that was still controlled by the dictator. Franco's regulations controlled the format of her education and supported very specific views on marriage and the role of women in society. The arrival of the democracy in 1978 changed the possibilities for women and they began to break into the previously masculine sphere of theater. The democratic theater in the late twentieth century allowed women to question the roles that they had been raised to accept and to suggest new opportunities for women.

At the end of the dictatorship times changed greatly and quickly for Spain. As the dictatorial regime was replaced by a monarchy that instituted a democracy, the people were able to adjust to having more rights. Censorship was abolished and a new constitution gave women back the rights that they had lost under Franco. As was the case during the Second Republic of the 1930s, society did not adjust instantaneously to the provisions of the new constitution. The extreme nature of some of the changes required changes in viewpoints, actions, legal enforcement, or even infrastructure. Because of the uninterrupted nature of the new government,

however, the people of Spain were able to take the time to make the necessary modifications and enjoy the freedoms provided by the democracy.

Not every aspect of life was drastically changed by the installation of the democracy. Some of the changes had already begun in the late years of the dictatorship. Policies on censorship had begun adjusting with the liberalizing effects of the 1966 Press Law. Many conservative regulations were also relaxed during the late dictatorship to accommodate encourage foreign tourists. Spain in the 1970s was extensively less repressed than it had been decades earlier, but it still lagged behind much of Europe.

Although Spain had become less inhibited during the final years of Franco's regime, it still required extensive development to reach the level of modernization of other European countries. This progress was achieved very quickly and with minimal cultural fallout. Rosa Montero explains:

[...] the changes that have taken place in Spain in the last twenty years are staggering. We have moved successfully, without bloodshed, from a dictatorship to a democracy. With four official languages and a variety of regional cultures, we have managed to free ourselves from totalitarian rule without breaking up the nation-state. We have made the long journey from underdevelopment to development in a short space of time, without too many casualties. In twenty years we have experienced in concentrated form what for other nations has been a century of social change. [...] Spain has successfully extricated itself from centuries of isolation and boarded the train of history. ("Transition" 315)

After decades of stifling totalitarian rule, Spain was ready to advance to a level of cultural modernity long embraced by other European countries. The modernization in nearly every facet

of life that Spain underwent in the space of approximately twenty years was staggering. Equally important was the relative lack of resistance to this rapid development.

The most easily quantifiable level of advancement occurred in the Spanish government. This progress transpired in four basic stages. The first change shifted from a dictatorship to a parliamentary democracy. The second step implemented the new constitution, and with it, the reform of statutes and administrative codes of practice. This stage confused the people because for a time, new democratic laws were implemented before rescinding the policies established during the Francoist government. Thus, a person could engage in an activity allowable under the new laws and be prosecuted for it by old laws that were still in place. Montero cites the issue with the Catalan theater group Els Joglars who presented a satirical play in 1978 that was in accordance with the new freedoms provided by the democracy. The group was subsequently tried for disrespect using a Francoist-era law and convicted (“Transition” 316). The third stage was generational: political parties and trade unions became infused with younger blood as the generation of younger people who had not participated in the Civil War began to occupy higher ranks. The final change was primarily economic. A new elite social class that was backed by the more liberal Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) government was created and brought with it a social change as the last vestiges of Franco’s power structure were eradicated.

Governmental changes during this era also led to alterations in other facets of Spanish life. The end of governmental censorship allowed for one of the greatest steps forward in culture. Voices that had long been forced to speak in codes to avoid having their works prohibited (and possibly facing time in prison) were permitted to freely speak their views. Without fearing repercussions for their efforts, artists began to explore new styles and push the limits that had been firmly imposed during the last nearly four decades. Although censorship

had relaxed during the last years of the dictatorship, the total freedom allowed during the democracy created a completely different artistic atmosphere. One of the most daring, and popular examples of unfettered artistic expression is Pedro Almodóvar. His films openly examine relationships and topics that were long considered taboo. His international fame made Almodóvar a representative of the movida, the hedonistic movement that began in Madrid and celebrated the emergence of a new Spanish culture. The popularity of Almodóvar's films and other countercultural aspects of the movida shows a country that was prepared to step away from the past and confront the future.

Another step forward taken by the new democratic system was the return to the equality of men and women that was established by the Republic and abolished by the dictatorship. As was the case with the equality established in 1931, legal equality did not immediately result in women's equal participation in society. Very few women who were raised under the Franco dictatorship had the educational background or skill set necessary to work outside of the home. In 2014, the democratic government will have survived as long as the dictatorship, allowing the time for the necessary change of behavior and mindsets to allow women to explore and make use of the opportunities allowed to them by the new constitution.

In her article on the evolution of women rights, María Telo refers to a number of civil codes that specifically affected the rights of women as Spain transitioned from a dictatorship to a democracy. These codes are summarized in the table below:

TABLE 1: New Codes and Their Effects on Spanish Women

Code	Effects on Women's Rights
Article 411	This article declares superior values to be liberty, justice, equality, and political pluralism. This is the first step toward equal rights for women.
Article 9.2	This article deals with the removal of obstacles for equality in order for that equality to be realized. This is important when one considers the difficulties encountered during the first Republic with regard to achieving equality in action and not merely in word.
Article 14	This article specifically declares all Spaniards to be equal. Discrimination for reasons of birth, race, sex, religion, opinion, or any other reason is prohibited. This is where women are specifically granted equal rights.
Article 18	In this article all Spaniards are granted the rights to honor, personal and family privacy, and on their own image. This is an important first step in removing the all-encompassing control that man had over their wives and daughters.
Article 27.1	This article guarantees rights to education. Although it does not specifically address equal rights and equal education it is clear that women are guaranteed the same education as men.
Article 32.1	This article grants equality with regard to marriage. This is especially important because women are now allowed to enter into marriage without the express approval of their fathers or other male authorities. This would have prevented the problems that prevented the happiness of the protagonists of <i>Bodas de sangre</i> , <i>La tejedora de sueños</i> , and <i>Anillos para una dama</i> .
Article 35.1	This article guarantees the right to work in the profession that one elects. It also specifically prohibits discrimination due to sex. This is an important step because the dictatorship had very clearly defined roles appropriate for women. These roles did not involve work outside the home. The ability to work in the profession that they chose was incredibly important to the achievement of equality and fulfillment for women.

As the many changes gave women a greater role in society, the new Democratic policy regarding education (Article 27.1) was a very important first step in realizing a true equality between men and women. As the *Sección Femenina* had taken an active role in much of the education of young girls and women during the dictatorship, females raised during that era had been taught the necessary skills to become wives and mothers. Although these capabilities prepared a

woman to fulfill the role that Franco's government established for her, it did not prepare her to participate in the workforce. Boys and girls were educated separately until 1970 when it was made legal for the two sexes to be educated together, both in schools and classrooms. Under the democracy, coeducation became the norm, allowing boys and girls the same ability to continue their schooling after high school.⁶⁵ As college education became equally available to women, they began to receive the same education levels their male counterparts. Many began pursuing higher levels of education. Montero comments the following with regard to the social and cultural advances in Modern Spain: "In Spain today, there are more female than male students at all levels of education, and they do better" ("Revolution" 381). Women also began to branch out from traditional fields of study (nursing, childhood education, and the humanities) and concentrate their college studies in traditionally male fields such as architecture. Although many fields and jobs were still considered primarily male or female, the equality of education strongly encouraged a greater equality between the sexes.

Feminism during the democracy in Spain is not as simple to describe as it was during the Franco dictatorship and the early twentieth century. The frequent interruptions in the growth of feminism and its decimation under the Franco regime allowed for easily definable parameters before the democracy. Under the new government, the growth of feminism was, for the first time, allowed to continue uninterrupted, flourishing in a number of areas. The possibilities for women continue to increase as does their participation in all areas of society. This is due in large part to the first generations of women who were raised free of the direct influence of Franco's government coming of age at the end of the century.

⁶⁵ Inés Alberdi notes that although coeducation was the norm in all newly created schools beginning in 1970, many families still viewed it with skepticism (77).

The adult women that began to enter the workforce in the 1980s made advances in two major fields: media and literature. Outside of the control of the dictatorship, media in Spain had its first real chance in decades to advance and to explore new ideas and viewpoints. Women began to participate heavily in television, film and other arts. For the first time, women were participating as heavily in the arts as men, and with this movement feminism was strengthened and female viewpoints became visible to a wide audience. Involvement in the arts, especially in those relating to the media played an important part in achieving the equality promised by the new constitution.

The heightened female contribution to the arts extended to the theater because, like the role of women, theater experienced great changes in the new democratic Spain. Art boomed under the new government and theater was no exception. Along with the many new female novelists that emerged during this time, women also began to publish and perform drama. This is important because, in more than any other field, the writing of dramas (as can be seen in the first two thirds of the century) was a masculine occupation. Patricia O'Connor explains the lack of female playwrights in Spain: "Prior to the twentieth century, there were almost no women dramatists in Spain. Even today, they constitute a small minority in Spanish theater. The absence of women writers in theater, however, is not unique to Spain. The cultural imperatives to be docile, domestic, and silent underlie the paucity of women in professional dramaturgy, an art that rewards aggressiveness and verbal virtuosity" (376). Although Spain is not the only country with the cultural imperatives mentioned by O'Connor, it is a country that reinforced social requirements with governmental mandates. For decades, the dictatorship was responsible for governmental policies that promoted and enforced submissive roles for women. This prevented women from participating in fields that required aggressiveness. The increased

participation of women in theater pointed to a clear change in the role women played not only in the arts but in society as a whole.

During the last quarter of the twentieth century, the few women authors and playwrights that had been producing work since as early as the 1960s were joined in success by a new generation. Some of these famed playwrights include: Ana Diosdado, Lidia Falcón, Lourdes Ortiz, Carmen Resino, Concha Romero, Itziar Pascual, and, most notably, Paloma Pedrero.⁶⁶

The new generation brought the now flourishing themes of feminism into the theater to question the roles of women and to examine female relationships. These playwrights, although including male/female relationships, also stepped beyond the conventional topics to explore the relationships that women form with each other as friends, lovers, mothers, and daughters. Men are not excluded from this type of theater, but there is a consciousness of the new opportunities available to women, and the possibilities of meaningful lives not organized around the needs of a man. As a result, men are included, but are not seen as necessary to the life of the competent, self-aware, and content woman.

The increased participation of women is not the only change that occurred in the field of theater in the late decades of the twentieth century. Theater lost popularity as television and cinema increased in accessibility and quality. Even playwrights with as much acclaim and popularity as Pedrero encounter numerous obstacles in the production of a play. The difficulties encountered by Pedrero while bringing *Locas de amar* to the stage are similar to those faced by many in the modern theater. In the 1997 published version of the play, Pedrero included a section which she entitled “En honor a la verdad.” In these pages preceding the play, Pedrero

⁶⁶ Some of these women were born even before the end of the civil war, but all of them published works of considerable importance after the end of the dictatorship.

herself details the complications she faced, and those that are encountered by all who participate in theater.

Pedrero's comments detail the trials of bringing *Locas de amar* to the stage and give the reader an excellent understanding of the state of theater in late twentieth-century Spain. Unlike critics, Pedrero does not attempt to compare modern theater to modern cinema or television. She accepts that the two genres are not meant to compete with one another. Thus, she addresses only the challenges encountered by playwrights in the late twentieth century.⁶⁷ In the path to the premiere of *Locas de amar*, Pedrero encountered a producer who had not read the work but who wanted to cast the play himself, a director who disappeared, difficulties in finding theater space, and a shortage of willing male actors. What can be seen in these difficulties is the danger, encountered by modern playwrights, of losing sight of the creative and artistic elements of a drama in the trials of bringing it to the stage.

Theater does not and cannot compete with film or television, but even as an art unto itself, its quality is diminishing. Pedrero speaks of the forces that can contaminate the work and objectives of a playwright and create a reduced audience:

Nuestro teatro, las gentes del teatro de hoy estamos contaminados de voces extrañas a nuestro arte. No sé bien a qué se debe. Tal vez a una suma de factores desgraciados sobre los que habría que reflexionar sin demora. Pasan por mi pensamiento algunas circunstancias históricas: el materialismo actual, el auge de

⁶⁷ Pedrero does not compare the staging of a play with television or film, but she does mention the difficulty of finding male actors, citing that most actors prefer television:

“Descubrimos, con pena, que la mayoría de los actores preferían la televisión; más rentable, popular y cómoda” (11).

la supertecnología, el acoso de la información, la tendencia al aislamiento personal o familiar, la apatía hacia la política, el descreimiento en el otro, la relación patológica con la televisión, el alejamiento de los ritos espirituales... Estas, entre otras tantas cosas, quizá más concretas, han hecho que el teatro se haya ido alejando del pueblo. O mejor dicho, del pueblo como público. Se ha perdido la vocación de espectador, sin disminuir, sin embargo, la de actor u otros oficios de las tablas. Este fenómeno nos ha llevado a un desequilibrio peligroso para el propio teatro: Demasiados para el escenario, pocos enfrente. Así no se produce el milagro del teatro. (12)

Theater requires an audience and modern theater has encountered difficulties with attracting it. Drama no longer has what Pedrero calls the “gloria” that it had in past generations. In her belief, what needs to be done is a “profundo acto de sinceridad” in order to recover the trust of the audience (13).

Pedrero suggests that a variety of factors contribute to the modern problems faced by theater and its retinue and patrons. Audiences are dwindling and those who participate in the miracle of theater are prevented from wholly investing themselves in their art by being forced to contend with the bureaucratic aspects of production. Playwrights are divorced from their work by the need to become businesspeople, losing much of what drew them to theater. They are still dedicated to their art, however, and are willing to sacrifice to see it brought to an audience. Pedrero explains that she sacrificed a great deal to see this play brought to stage: “Poner en escena este texto me costó salud, inocencia, dinero y desengaño” (9). Despite the many obstacles faced in the creation and production of a theatrical work, playwrights like Pedrero

continue to labor at their art, working to recover the trust of the audience and the magic of the theater.

Pedrero is considered to be the foremost female playwright in modern Spain and her works have gained significant recognition. She participated in the theater from a young age, and in 1978 founded the theater group, Cachivache, where she began her first professional work as an actress and playwright. Her first play, *La llamada de Lauren* (1984) cemented her place as a successful modern playwright. A number of her successful plays consisted of only one act and they were eventually published in a critical edition by Cátedra with the name *Juego de noches: nueve dramas en un acto*. Many of these dramas (most notably *Resguardo personal* and *El color de agosto*) have been included in anthologies of modern Spanish literature.

Although many of Pedrero's dramas have received substantial acclaim, some of the works dearest to her heart have been poorly received, including *Locas de amar*. The "problems" critics encountered with the play are some of its most notable aspects and reveal why this work is important in the present study. The two characteristics criticized are the feminism and the treatment of male characters in the play. Regarding the negative reaction to the feminism in the play, Pedrero remarks the following: "La visión del mundo de una mujer, su universo íntimo, el protagonismo de sus conflictos, continua pereciéndoles [sic] algo sin valor, un asunto de segunda categoría" (14). Although women are becoming more active in the theater, feminism on stage is still not appreciated. This perhaps explains why the depiction of the male characters of *Locas de amar* was also poorly received. As Pedrero explains:

Tampoco parece agradarles mucho ver en escena hombres corrientes de hoy, con sus problemas de calvicie o impotencia, sus dependencias emocionales, sus crisis de identidad. Aunque todo ello sea tratado con humor y ternura, sin acritud ni

dogmatismo. La mayoría de nuestros [sic] hombres mayores siguen queriendo ver en el espejo del escenario al varón mitificado que se debate entre los “grandes” conflictos de la vida. Siempre desde el poder, desde su papel de protagonista histórico. (14)

Portraying the modern man as human and fallible may be disagreeable to the notably all male critics that reviewed *Locas de amar*, but it reveals the crisis of masculinity in modern Spain. Kaja Silverman writes about male subjectivity and her references to the typical male role in society elucidate why a male who is no longer the hero and provider for his family makes the audience uncomfortable. The joining of two opposing figures, male and female, forms the essential unit of the family and legitimizes masculinity. According to Silverman, this image of the family is critical to society’s definitions of its relationships and the legitimization of masculinity: “[T]he dominant fiction presents the social formation with its most fundamental image of unity, the family. The collectives of community, town, and nation have all traditionally defined themselves through reference to that image” (42). The family, seen as a unified group, headed by the male subject is considered essential to our reality: “[...] our ‘dominant fiction’ or ideological ‘reality’ solicits our faith above all else in the unity of the family, and the adequacy of the male subject” (Silverman 16). *Locas de amar*, from the outset, presents a broken family and an adulterous husband who has abandoned his wife and child for a relationship with a model barely older than his child. The fundamental reality of society that defines itself through the family has been defied. The modern man and woman need to learn to redefine themselves in order to survive in a society that no longer demands that their marriage can only end in the death of one of its participants.

The play begins when Eulalia has already been abandoned by her husband. Fearing for her mother's health, her daughter, Rocío contacts a psychologist to help her transition to single life. Eulalia forms a relationship with Carlos, her psychologist, unwittingly forming a love triangle and sharing a man with her daughter. As Eulalia slowly recovers and discovers the many wonderful possibilities that exist for her but that she was denied throughout her marriage, she finds that she can be something more than a wife and a mother. When Paco wishes to return to her and Carlos wants to marry her, she chooses instead to learn to live alone for the first time.

Though Pedrero is feminist and the feminist tone of the play is unmistakable, Eulalia, the protagonist, is clearly not in favor of her own liberation from the enslaving yoke of marriage. When her husband, Paco, leaves her for a model from his agency, rather than try to learn to live her life without him, she chooses to starve herself to death. She explains to her daughter: "Ya me han matado el corazón y el alma. Ahora soy yo la que va a acabar con el cuerpo" (24). In this same scene, the manner in which Eulalia faces the abandonment is juxtaposed with her daughter Rocío's interpretation of the situation:

EULALIA. La vida se acabó para mí. El canalla de tu padre me asesinó.

ROCÍO. Pero, mamá, no seas tan trágica. Papá no te ha asesinado, te ha dejado.

EULALIA. ¿Y qué es peor?

ROCÍO. Pero si ahora es lo normal. Todo el mundo deja a todo el mundo. Dicen que es hasta más divertido, que así se puede conocer muchos hombres, muchas formas de hacer el amor. (24)

For Eulalia, who was raised during the dictatorship, the prospect of having to orient her life around something other than her husband makes her want to die. Her youth and education prepared her to be a married housewife, not a divorcée in search of new men to show her new

ways of making love. Rocío, raised primarily during the democracy, sees divorce as normal and unremarkable, and is able to see the opportunities available to her mother in the absence of her father.

This initial interplay between mother and daughter clearly establishes the generational differences between women raised under two very different systems of government. Eulalia is a symbol for the dictatorship and Rocío for the democracy. In Eulalia's life, the equal rights granted by the government have little significance. She neither wants nor needs to work outside the home. She has no desire for sexual freedom, and she certainly does not wish for her husband to consult her in all things. She wants to live with her husband and care for him and her daughter. She was raised to be a wife and a mother. The government changed abruptly, but society and its norms and roles cannot shift so quickly. Eulalia is a prime example of this generation of people. She has been given rights but has chosen not to embrace all of the possibilities that they entail. Her husband has abandoned her, however, forcing her not to continue with her accustomed role, but to confront the reality of a society that allows her husband to divorce her.

Eulalia is forced to face the idea of divorce, but her financial status allows her to take the time to attempt to starve herself to death instead of immediately seeking work in order to support herself. Pedrero establishes her as living in "casa rica en las afueras de Madrid" (23). Eulalia also hints to the wealth of her husband when she refers to the trials that the mistress of Paco will have to suffer: "Ya, pues, ya verá ella, porque para volar por el cielo con sus millones va a tener que arrastrarse mucho por la tierra con su persona" (25). Eulalia lives in marginality in hegemony. Her marginality, however, unlike that of the previous protagonists studied in this

dissertation, is self-imposed. Her government has made her equal to her husband, but her comfort zone denies that equality vehemently.⁶⁸

The initial refusal of Eulalia to accept the betrayal of her husband and move on with her life proves her desire to remain subordinate to a patriarchal system. In the absence of Paco, however, it comes as no shock that she would quickly allow Carlos to fill that role in her life. He allows her to be dominated by a man in the accustomed way, but also inadvertently fulfills her desire for revenge. Eulalia admits that she wants to die in order to force her estranged husband to live with the weight of her death on his back. Having a sexually fulfilling relationship with a much younger man who professes to adore her is an equally effective revenge.⁶⁹ The desertion of Paco left a hole in Eulalia's life, and Carlos is able to easily step into that void. Thus, while conserving her hegemonic financial status, Eulalia opts, by subordinating herself to Carlos, to renew her marginalized position.

When, as a psychologist, Carlos becomes involved with Eulalia, he attempts to convince his patient of the value of being an educated woman. At the behest of Carlos, Eulalia reads *Don*

⁶⁸ The female protagonist that is willing to accept a philandering husband because the dictatorship educated her to serve him faithfully regardless of his proclivities is by no means unique to Pedrero. One notable example is the character of Sofia Montalvo in Carmen Martín Gaité's 1993 novel *Nubosidad variable*. She discovers her husband's infidelity, but does not attempt to confront him, or the situation.

⁶⁹ Although Eulalia may not see her relationship with Carlos as a means of achieving revenge on her husband, this "therapy" with Carlos has two effects on her relationship with her husband. First, it proves the adage that living well is the best revenge. Second, being content and adored by one man (Carlos) makes her more appealing to another (Paco).

Quijote and an unspecified work by Shakespeare. Carlos sees education as an important tool for Eulalia to rebuild her life in the absence of her husband. Eulalia's desire to remain subordinate to men renders this education useless for her. She does not need to be educated to find a new man; indeed, she is told that men do not want an educated woman. She relates to Carlos a conversation that she had with her friend Pilar:

EULALIA. Vino a visitarme mi amiga Pilar. Me encontró muy bien, muy delgada. Y le conté nuestro proyecto de que yo tuviera una vida propia.

CARLOS. ¿Y qué? ¿Qué te dijo?

EULALIA. Le pareció una tontería. Y me dijo que yo todavía podía conseguir un hombre, que no tirara la toalla, que las intelectuales y todas esas luego no encuentran un hombre que las soporte. (40)

Eulalia is not alone in her feeling that her worth is related to her marital status. Pilar represents the same idea that rather than attempt to create a life of her own, Eulalia should seek a new husband. Educated, modern women are seen as unappealing to potential husbands.

Rocío, in her preparations for the future and in her relationship with Carlos represents the type of educated, modern woman that is seen by Eulalia and Pilar as unappealing.⁷⁰ This modern young woman is again used ably by Pedrero as a way of demonstrating the drastic difference between the two generations of women. She is studying to become a doctor, an ambitious goal for anyone. This clearly shows her ability to embrace the rights and education available to her as a modern woman. She is open in her pursuit of Carlos and unabashedly

⁷⁰ The love triangle between Eulalia, Rocío, and Carlos is not addressed here, but it is considered to be one of the more unique and interesting aspects of an otherwise unremarkable work.

sexual.⁷¹ Although she is not promiscuous, neither is she willing to wait for marriage to experience sexual fulfillment. She repeatedly seduces Carlos and even does a striptease for him one afternoon after her mother's therapy session. She is clear about her desire for him and does what is necessary to attract his attention and arouse him. Her seduction is effective and, apparently, fulfilling.

Rocío finds sexual and intellectual fulfillment through her studies and her relationship with Carlos; her mother has encountered a very different situation. When Carlos speaks of letting a sensation fill her like an orgasm, she reaches the painful conclusion that in twenty years of marriage, she has never experienced sexual pleasure. This is another form of marginalization faced by Eulalia. She spent twenty years prioritizing the needs of her husband over her own. Her admission to Rocío regarding the lack of pleasure in the marriage bed shows that she was marginalized due to her sex in all aspects of her marriage. Not only did the needs of her husband come first, his pleasure was the only one that was achieved.

Eulalia mourns for a marriage that consistently pushed her needs and desires to the margin in order to care for her husband as a wife should. Her needs and desires are not the only things denied, as she finds in early sessions with Carlos. Eulalia also feels an intense rage that she has never allowed herself to express. Carlos encourages her to give that rage a physical outlet by venting her frustrations and her anger at her husband by repeatedly hitting a photo of Paco with a baseball bat. As Eulalia tries to quit because she feels weakness, he goads her by saying how much energy Carlos has for his relationship with Mónica. As her fervor increases

⁷¹ Though Rocío openly pursues Carlos, this romance is hidden from her mother. Carlos says that he fears Eulalia's knowledge of the relationship would interfere with her therapy (although that is not the only reason that he does not want to reveal the relationship).

she nearly hits Carlos with the bat and in her last few moments of energy she trembles as she pursues Carlos with the bat saying: “Toma, canalla, traidor, adúltero, impotente, ciático, obeso, muermo, muermo, muermo...” (38).⁷² After this she gives up completely and embraces the photo of Paco. Then she cries and kisses it saying: “Paco... Paquito...” (38). Eulalia clearly feels rage, but also misses her husband terribly. The ability to express her anger toward her husband does not change the fact that she has organized her life around him for two decades and does not know how to face life with herself at the center.

By chasing Carlos with a bat as she vents her rage toward Paco, Eulalia is transferring her emotions. This is not the only situation in which Eulalia transfers her emotions for Paco to Carlos. The initial attraction that she feels toward him, which Carlos calls love, he describes, in conversation with Rocío, as transference:

CARLOS. [...] podría estar... enamorada de mí.

ROCÍO. ¿Cómo? ¿Qué has dicho?

CARLOS. Es... es un enamoramiento irreal. Una transferencia. Rocío, ¿no me digas que no sabes que todos los pacientes se enamoran de su psicólogo? (37)

In the emotional void left by the desertion of her husband, Eulalia shifts the feelings of love and devotion that she is accustomed to feeling toward her husband to Carlos. While their relationship remains professional, Eulalia's apparent love can be easily explained as transference.

⁷² Although Eulalia is pursuing Carlos with the bat at this point, the words are for Paco, not for Carlos. She is simply pursuing him because she wants to direct her rage at something alive, instead of the picture of her husband.

When the relationship between Eulalia and Carlos becomes intimate, the idea of transference is no longer a viable explanation for Eulalia's feelings toward Carlos. Although "terapia sexual" is the term that Carlos uses to describe the intimate relationship that he begins with Eulalia, he realizes that it is something more than therapy. Carlos is no longer filling the role that Paco used to fill in Eulalia's life. He has passed beyond that and is now providing her with pleasure that was never given to her by her husband in twenty years of marriage. He has put forth the necessary effort to understand and fulfill her sexual desires. This intimate, and, according to Rocío, very vocal sexual therapy changes the relationship between Carlos and Eulalia, but also affects many people in different ways, creating many different kinds of tension.

First, the sexual relationship with Carlos changes Eulalia's perceptions of relationships between men and women. Although she still feels the need to have a man in her life, Eulalia realizes that it is possible for women to enjoy the physical aspect of the relationship. This also leads to the conclusion that her relationship with Paco, though she initially wanted to return to it, was lacking. Paco was selfish, and Eulalia grasps this because she becomes aware that reciprocity is a possibility, raising her expectations for a happy relationship and increasing her displeasure with Paco.

The sexual therapy also creates an emotional attachment between Carlos and Eulalia which in turn creates greater tension between Eulalia and Rocío, a strained relationship from the beginning. When Carlos becomes sexually involved with Eulalia, Rocío understandably feels jealous. She and Carlos have been meeting after each of Eulalia's therapy sessions. When she faces the truth that she is sharing her lover with her mother, she calls her father to try to convince him to return and end the possibility of her mother interfering in her relationship. When Carlos asks her why she called her father she explains: "[...] para que arregle la locura que se ha

apoderado de esta casa” (68). Rocío does not care about the happiness of her mother as long as it affects her relationship with Carlos. She also hides this relationship, preventing Eulalia from ending her sexual therapy with Carlos for the sake of her daughter. The continued secrecy that Rocío and Carlos maintain, at the insistence of Carlos, assures that Eulalia will remain blissfully unaware that she is hurting her daughter. Nonetheless, Rocío feels betrayed and deceived. She says to Carlos: “Mi madre está interfiriendo demasiado en nuestra relación” (68). She sees the closeness of the relationship between Carlos and her mother as an obstacle to her possible happiness.

The tension created between Eulalia and Rocío heightens the strain in the relationship between Carlos and Rocío. Rocío is content to allow her mother to believe she is a virgin, so she agrees to the demands of Carlos to keep the relationship secret from Eulalia. Carlos intended to keep his therapy methods from Rocío, but she has been listening at the door during the sexual therapy sessions and eventually realizes what has been happening:

ROCÍO. Al principio creí que ella gemía de pena, o que gritaba por los ejercicios esos que hace...Eran sólo sospechas pero...

CARLOS. ¿Has estado espiándonos?

ROCÍO. Pero ayer... ¡Dios mío, ayer os lo pasasteis bomba! (68)

Upon discovering the methods of therapy that Carlos has been using with her mother, Rocío decides that the best way to deal with the situation is to reunite her parents so that Carlos is free to be with her. She wants Carlos to convince her father to come home: “Habla con mi padre, intenta convencerle para que vuelva. De esa manera, tú y yo podremos estar tranquilos, confesarle a mi madre la verdad de nuestra relación, incluso...casarnos” (69). In order to make sure that Carlos follows her directive, she gives him an ultimatum. If he does not resolve his

doubts about his relationship with Rocío (and her mother), she will reveal their affair to Eulalia. She felt confident with Carlos before his sexual therapy began, but now she fears being replaced by her mother.

Rocío's fears are valid because Carlos feels increased care toward Eulalia, which creates animosity toward Paco. The first encounter between these two men was mostly cordial. The second encounter is much less friendly. Paco explains that he believes that Eulalia has no capacity for sexual enjoyment and that she has aged interiorly. This enrages Carlos, who knows the situation to be different. He defends Eulalia:

CARLOS. Que se equivoca.

PACO. ¿Cómo? Entonces, ¿por qué cree que me fui? ¿O acaso piensa que no conozco a Eulalia?

Carlos. No la conoce en absoluto. Y se fue de su lado porque es usted un gilipollas. (70)

He refuses to take the comment back and he and Paco eventually come to blows. Rocío separates the two, but the discord is not resolved and continues to grow as the drama progresses.

Carlos not only has a conflict with Rocío and Paco, but with himself. He was against the relationship with Rocío since the beginning, but he allows himself to be routinely seduced by her.⁷³ He knows that he should not attempt to develop a sexual relationship with Eulalia, but as Rocío confirms, he and Eulalia clearly have an enjoyable sexual experience together. He knows what he must do ethically, but he also finds himself unable to overcome his desires. When Eulalia faints during their session, he says to her: “¿Qué voy a hacer contigo? ¿Qué voy a hacer

⁷³ By assuming the role of the aggressor in their relationship, Rocío adds to her hegemony, but by being forced to pursue Carlos, she contributes to her marginality.

conmigo? Creí que era cierto” (67). Carlos has realized that he loves Eulalia, and that he wants her to love him. This realization leaves him feeling protective of her, but confused. By displaying a man who allows his emotions and his libido to overrule his judgment, Pedrero calls into question the legitimacy of male dominance.

All of these new tensions created in the sexual therapy with Carlos are brought to a head with a single gunshot. Eulalia was already faint before the conversation that Carlos had with Rocío and the fight that he had with Paco. While the argument with Paco is happening and during the subsequent conversation between Rocío and Carlos, Eulalia takes out a gun and begins to point it. Eventually, she points it at her wedding photo and shoots at the image of Paco. Immediately afterward she loses consciousness. While she is unconscious, she has a revelation and comes to the realization that she needs to live, and that she has a mission in life. She tells Rocío: “Vi un besugo al horno y un chuletón de ternera. Sí, se movían, bailaban para mí y me llamaban. Era como si quisieran transmitirme un mensaje. Algo así como...come, vive, todos tenemos una misión en la vida...” (75). After this experience, Eulalia begins to eat again, and to think about what she wants from life.

The revelation that Eulalia has while she is unconscious affects her relationship with the three principal people in her life; Rocío, Carlos, and Paco. All three of these people were concerned when Eulalia lost consciousness, but a few days later order has been restored to the lives of all four major characters. Eulalia has been eating long enough that, although not completely recovered, she feels much restored. Rocío has returned to pressuring Carlos to reveal their relationship to her mother, and Paco has returned to Mónica. Although they have returned to their lives, happy that Eulalia is doing better, these three major players are unaware of her revelation and its implications for their lives.

It is not the decision of Eulalia to live that has the greatest effect on the lives of the people close to her, but the conclusions she reaches with regard to the idea of having a mission in life.⁷⁴ She realizes that she can offer more than the services that she has provided in her decades as a wife and a mother. She has the capacity to be something more than a wife and mother. These are options that are now available to her, options that the democracy has provided. She recognizes that changes will be difficult but unavoidable. She is willing to make the necessary effort to be something more in order to fulfill her mission in life. By choosing to take the steps necessary to make use of the opportunities granted by the new constitution, Eulalia transitions from a traditional, submissive wife to an ambitious, liberated woman. This allows her to improve her relationship with her daughter, due to their increased similarities in goals, and to prove that a woman does not need a marriage to define herself.

In order to move on with her life and become something more, Eulalia first has to make definitive decisions about the three primary relationships in her life. Although she has reached a conclusion with regard to her plans for herself, she has not yet revealed her decisions to the people who will be most affected by them. Rocío, Carlos, and Paco all play important roles in Eulalia's life, and she is very important in their lives as well. All of these relationships hang in the balance. Carlos loves Eulalia but has not confessed his love because he needs to reveal his relationship with Rocío and his lack of a degree. Rocío loves her mother, but fears revealing the relationship that she has been having with Carlos. Paco wants his faithful, subservient wife back, and thinks that revealing Carlos will win his cause. Rather than gather all of these people

⁷⁴ Eulalia's decision to live is not disruptive to the lives of her family, indeed, it could be argued as the first rational decision she makes after Paco leaves her.

together and reveal her decisions, Eulalia hears their revelations and tells them of her own, one by one.

Although both Carlos and Paco are waiting to speak to her, and it has already been made clear that leaving the two of them alone together results in violence, Eulalia heeds her daughter, and attends to Rocío first. The fact that Eulalia leaves the two men alone in order to speak with her daughter evidences the shift in her priorities. Rocío does not need her in any vital sense, so it is her role as a mother that makes Eulalia prioritize her daughter's bid for attention. The ensuing conversation between Eulalia and Rocío is likely the most revealing and honest conversation that mother and daughter have shared in years. Rocío reveals that she has been having sex with Carlos since the third time he came to see Eulalia. She also admits that she was not a virgin when she met him. Eulalia is not angry about this relationship with Carlos, but instead with Rocío's lack of confidence in her which made her keep this a secret. When Eulalia asks about love, Rocío turns the conversation instead toward a discussion of the sexual performance of Carlos. When Eulalia protests this, Rocío reminds her that she wanted the truth: "¿No querías sinceridad? Pues vamos a ser sinceras. Nunca es tarde para empezar" (88).

In this discussion of their relationship with the same man, Eulalia and Rocío move beyond their current conflict, and beyond the relationship that they have shared for years. Now in addition to being mother and daughter, they are becoming friends. They share closeness and a level of honesty that is only possible between two women. Although it is difficult for Eulalia to discuss sexual relationships with her daughter, she sees it as necessary. She remarks to Rocío: "Me cuesta, me cuesta hablar así contigo. Pero tienes razón, nunca es tarde para empezar a ser amigas" (8). This conversation ends with Rocío's plea to her mother that she not give up her relationship with either man for the sake of her daughter and the declaration that she wants her

mother to be happy. Eulalia responds that she will clarify everything and, as a friend, tell Rocío later about everything that happens. This renewed and improved relationship with Rocío highlights the common theme in *Pedrero* of the importance of relationships between women.⁷⁵ When two women are able to form close relationships and find solidarity with one another, the need for a dominant male presence is nearly eradicated. Women can be strong alone, and other women can help them to maintain that strength.

The next step that Eulalia must take in revealing her decisions is a conversation with Paco. During the early days of her therapy with Carlos, Eulalia wanted nothing more than to return to her previous life with Paco, or at the very least, to have her vengeance upon him. Paco, abandoned by Mónica, returns to her and offers her exactly what she wished for during those early days. She can return to their marriage, and humiliate him in the process. As Paco grovels like a dog, begging for her to take him back, she realizes that her revelations have changed not just her goals but much more:

EUALALIA. Esto es una ridiculez. ¡Dios mío qué tragedia! Ahora que tengo la venganza en la palma de la mano me parece todo una gillipollez.

PACO. Eulalia, ¿dices tacos?

EUALALIA. Sí Paco, digo tacos, escribo poemas, leo obras de teatro, como sémola de trigo, y voy a estudiar una carrera universitaria.

PACO. (*Asustado*) ¡No!

EUALALIA. ¿Qué pasa? ¿Te parece tan horrible?

⁷⁵ The prioritizing of relationships between women is not unique to *Pedrero*. The relationship between the two protagonists in Carmen Martín Gaité's *Nubosidad Variable* shows a similar emphasis, drawing another parallel between these two works.

PACO. ¿Quién te ha metido todas esas ideas en la cabeza?

EULALIA. No son ideas. Yo soy una nueva realidad.

PACO. Pero..., yo te quiero como antes. Te necesito. [...]

EULALIA. ¡Eso se acabó, Paco! Yo ahora opino y disiento.

PACO. ¡Eh!

EULALIA. Sí. Y disiento de ser un cero a la izquierda, un mueble sin voz.

Ahora tomo y doy. Tomo y doy. (82-83)

In this exchange with Paco, Eulalia accepts, and even embraces the changes that she has experienced. Paco's reaction shows how distant the new reality that is Eulalia is from the woman that was his faithful wife. The submissive, Francoist wife has gone, replaced by a liberated woman of the democracy.

There are two very important points in this conversation. The first is Eulalia's desire to pursue a university education.⁷⁶ She recognizes that she was educated for the role that she has played thus far in her life and that to change her abilities she must also change her level of education. In order to pursue this goal, she has decided that, due to having worked for Paco for twenty years, she deserves to have her half of their finances. This will allow her to live comfortably on her own as she learns to become a new woman.

The second important point in this conversation is Eulalia's discovery of her own voice. For years Eulalia was no more than a reflection of the needs, desires, goals, and opinions of her husband. She gave everything and expected nothing in return. She did not voice her needs or desires and to voice her dissent would have been unthinkable. Now that she has found her voice,

⁷⁶ Although she does not mention a specific specialization in this conversation with Paco, Eulalia earlier mentioned to Carlos that she wishes to study psychology.

she voices her desires and her dissent. She refuses to be a reflection and a servant. Now she gives voice to her need to give and take.

Eulalia's choice to pursue a divorce from Paco instead of taking him back leaves the position of the man in Eulalia's life open for Carlos. This possibility of a life with Carlos is the final thing that Eulalia must address in her series of conversations. Compared to the lengthy discussion with Paco, this dialogue is brief, as most of the necessary admissions have already been made. The brevity can also be partially explained by the simple fact that Carlos understands Eulalia's character better than Paco. Carlos does not doubt or question her resolution.

With the fact that he is not an actual psychologist revealed, and his relationship with Rocío likewise acknowledged, Carlos has one more admission to make to Eulalia. He calls it a request: "Quiero vivir contigo, Eulalia, te juro que lucharé sin tregua para dejar de ser un desastre, serte fiel y hacerte feliz" (92). Here Eulalia has the option to be with the type of man that wants nothing more than her happiness. Carlos excels in all of the categories where Eulalia found Paco lacking and lackluster. Eulalia, however, has also changed and moved beyond a desire for Carlos, so she answers him in the negative: "No, Carlos. Quiero vivir sola por primera vez. Acabo de darme cuenta de que necesito empezar a mirar el mundo con mis propios ojos. [...] Ahora me toca continuar sola el viaje" (93). Strong in her resolution to be more independent, Eulalia bids Carlos farewell. In the course of one afternoon, she has heard declarations of love from two men, and sent both of those men away in favor of a life lived on her own terms. In so doing, she lays the foundation for a new type of life, more suited to new roles that women are allowed to occupy.

With the basis for her new life established, one more man waits for Eulalia, her lawyer.⁷⁷ Instead of meeting with him to proceed with the necessary steps toward her divorce, however, Eulalia asks him to reschedule, choosing instead to go for a walk on the beautiful afternoon. This should not be seen as an avoidance of pursuing her future. Eulalia no longer fears separating herself from Paco. Instead, it is a chance for Eulalia to enjoy the moment and to take a little time to come to terms with the significant changes that her life has undertaken in the course of one afternoon.

Eulalia's choice of companions on her walk is very significant. Rather than walk alone as a symbol of her new life, or with a man as a symbol of her old life, she chooses to walk with her daughter. This afternoon of contending with difficult personal relationships begins and ends with the solidifying of a relationship between mother and daughter. The renewal and strengthening of relationships between women is a common theme used by modern playwrights to acknowledge acceptance of the new democratic options. Both women have chosen to be with one another instead of with a man, proving that they have the ability to define themselves without reference to men. In fact, they are able to be relevant in and of themselves, without the need to be something to someone. In a modern interpretation of this idea, The Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women (ARROW) shows the following message: "She's someone's sister/mother/daughter/wife." Women can exist for themselves, and friendship with other women can assist in making this possible.

⁷⁷ The character of the lawyer in this drama is unusual. He is not of vital importance, and the one occasion on which he is there to meet with Eulalia for reasons which the audience understands, he is sent away until another day. It is this lawyer, however, who provided Eulalia with the gun that she used earlier in the play. The reason for this is never provided.

The emphasis on relationships between women shows more than just an acceptance of democratic options offered to modern Spanish women. It is also the sign of a shift of the definition of women's roles in society. Gayle Rubin offers an explanation of the social apparatus and its role in the formation of gender identity. She defines the role of this apparatus as follows: "[...] systematic social apparatus which takes up females as raw materials and fashions domesticated women as products" (106). Eulalia was formed by the social apparatus of the Franco dictatorship. She was taught to be docile, obedient, and subservient. However, when a woman's sex was subjected to the current, democratic social apparatus, a different sort of gender identity was produced. The new gender role for women was not based on men. A woman's validity was not based on her relationship to a man. The dominant fiction mentioned by Silverman, that all-important family structured around the man as the head of the household, could not be the only basis that a woman used to find her role in society. In this new environment of female empowerment, relationships between women can be elevated in importance to compare with or even supersede male/female relationships.

When women are allowed to form and determine their own identities, and not forced to look to relationships with men in order to define themselves, they are able to see other women as allies and not competition. While Eulalia is not sharing Paco's attention with Rocío, she is able to establish a more open and affectionate relationship with her daughter. Rocío is also better able to form an honest and open relationship with her mother when she does not see her as competition for the love of Carlos. When the men are removed from the mother/daughter relationship, they find a closeness and honesty that was impossible when they defined themselves and each other based on their relationships with men.

The manner in which the man-based society that raised Eulalia forged her identity also fits with Judith Butler's ideas on performativity. She provides a definition of performativity in the preface to the 1999 edition of her book, *Gender Trouble*:

In the first instance, then, the performativity of gender revolves around this metalepsis, the way in which the anticipation of gendered essence produces that which it posits as outside itself. Secondly, performativity is not a singular act, but a repetition and a ritual, which achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of a body, understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration (XV).

For Butler, gender is produced by performativity. Eulalia lived and breathed the rituals and the repetition that formed her identity as a servant to her husband. She repeated the rites in which all women participated. She was courted, she married and she bore a child, just as generations of women before her had done, and she did it in the same, ritualistic manner.

Although Rocío was raised under a governmental system that afforded her options beyond those that were possible for her mother, the rituals that formed the gender identity of Eulalia are still evident in the life of her daughter. Rocío is still looking for a man whom she wishes to marry. She will likely repeat the same ritual of marriage that her mother participated in decades before and she will also likely bear and raise a child. The difference between Eulalia and Rocío is that the latter will be able to define herself as more than a wife and mother. Her studies will lead her to a career as a doctor. In a governmental system that allows and even encourages women to learn skills beyond those needed to serve their husbands and children, women can also base part of their identity on what they do with those skills. Instead of being

titled señora, which would identify her based on her relationship to a man, she will be called doctora, identifying her by her education and profession.

Rocío will be a member of the first generation of Spanish women that is able to fully take advantage of equality to men. She will forge an identity in the same way that men have done throughout history. Although the rituals that formed her mother's identity will still be present in her life, it is the social apparatus that will allow the admittance of ritual while preventing the repetition mentioned by Butler. Similar to the state of the new democracy in Spain, Rocío does not have to give up everything that was good about the old traditions (those that formed her mother's life), but nor is she forced to repeat that which was negative. Thus the democracy in Spain did not signify a rupture, but an opening to allow more than repetition.

The democratic system allowed women new options, but it did not guarantee that all women would be able to use those options equally. The drama primarily focuses on the options allowed to women and the difficulty or ease with which women were able to make use of them. Because of that, financial considerations receive very little mention. Because of her financial situation, however, Eulalia is able to make the changes she wishes to achieve in her life and move onto the life that she desires. Although she initially thought to leave Paco all of his money, she decides that she earned, through twenty years of servitude, what a divorce would normally accord to her. Because Paco earns a very good salary, half of the assets of the marriage will allow Eulalia to live comfortably and pursue an education instead of having to find employment in order to support herself. Without her hegemonic social class, a divorce for Eulalia would mean the necessity of finding employment and, due to her relative lack of education, the need to take a low-paying, menial job. The freedom that Eulalia finds in her separation from her husband would be unavailable to a woman of a low socioeconomic class. This is not to imply

that Eulalia will find it easy to begin her life anew, but to point out that her social class makes the transition less daunting than it would be for someone without her financial means.

By showing the difficulty Eulalia encounters in the departure from the life that she has known, and the relative ease with which Rocío navigates her limitless options in her society, Pedrero seems to lack, at least in this drama, the subversive aspect that has been integral to the previous dramas studied. The basic elements of the drama are not even unique to Pedrero, as pointed out by Iride Lamartina-Lens who compares *Locas de amar* to *Camino de plata* (1990), a similar play by Ana Diosdado: “[. . .] These plays examine the full range of the women’s progression from the initial stage of anger and confusion, to the second stage of resignation and acceptance of their divorce—which is temporarily interrupted by a failed attempt at reconciliation with their prodigal husbands—to the final stage of emotional stability and economic self-reliance” (“Rage” 65). However, *Locas de amar* is a drama, and is thus not meant to be read, but performed. It is this performance in which the subversive nature of the work becomes revealed.

The first element that must be examined to understand why *Locas de amar* is subversive as a drama, not as a text, is W. B. Worthen’s explanation of the importance of not viewing drama as literature. Worthen says: “It is not the text that prescribes the meanings of the performance: it is the construction of the text within the specific apparatus of the ceremony that creates performative force. The performance is not a citation of the text.” (1097) Drama is much more than a text that is read to an audience. It includes the original words of the author, but also

settings, costuming, actors and an abundance of directorial decisions.⁷⁸ All of these factors change the way the message of a particular drama is received. A director's choices and the delivery of the actors can dramatically change the meaning of an entire drama.

Because the audience has an important role in determining the meaning of the drama based on its performance, the second theory that must be considered is reception theory. Hans Robert Jauss proposes the theory of the horizon of expectation:

The analysis of the literary experience of the reader avoids the threatening pitfalls of psychology if it describes the reception and the influence of a work, within the objectifiable system of expectations that arises from each work in the historical moment of its appearance, from a pre-understanding of the genre, from the form and themes of already familiar work, and from the opposition between poetic and practical language. (22)

Jauss deals with literature as a whole, and not drama, but the system of expectations applies perfectly to drama. Because each individual in the audience of this play will arrive with different experiences, each will view the message of the drama in a slightly different way. However, because the majority of the audience will be similar in age and socioeconomic class, the general message conveyed will be similar to entire audience. Although younger generations have become increasingly involved in theater in recent years, when this play premiered in 1996, the audience was primarily upper-middle-class and middle-aged. These people had both age and socioeconomic class in common with Eulalia and Paco. Many of them had children who, like

⁷⁸ Even in the premiere of *Locas de amar* when Pedrero was intimately involved with the performance, she did not direct the play herself. A director was hired, and his decisions affected the way in which the play was presented.

Rocío, grew up during the democracy and had drastically different views about the role of women in society.⁷⁹

Men and women would be able to identify with their counterparts in the drama, seeing characters whose lives were like their own. Women would encounter a woman who spent her best years working for others, just as they had done in their own lives. Men would see a man who worked to provide for his family, just as they had done for their own families. But women would also perceive the struggle in Eulalia and how learning to break free provides hope. Men would also see that women have more potential than their upbringing allowed them to realize, and would hopefully be moved to support fulfillment of that potential. In short, this mimetic situation would move them to reexamine their own lives and their own notions about appropriate roles for men and women.

Upon examining their own beliefs, both men and women in the audience would be led by the characters in this drama to see their roles as either chauvinistic men or pathetic women. This self-examination and the way in which the audience members viewed themselves as a result are what make this drama subversive. It tells an audience of middle-aged, middle-class people that they have been living their lives wrong. The way that they have lived has placed them into roles which they have passively accepted. Pedrero challenges the acceptance of those roles and promotes the idea that women (and men) can change their way of thinking to adapt to the change in their opportunities. Eulalia and her modern counterparts have the opportunity to take advantage of their hegemonic social status while simultaneously overcoming the marginalization that has long held women back from realizing their potential. Because they are no longer

⁷⁹ Because the dictatorship banned contraceptives, it is safe to assume that the vast majority of married couples would have produced offspring.

required to exist in a situation of marginality in hegemony, they are able to redefine themselves within their society.

Conclusions

The examination of *Bodas de sangre*, *La tejedora de sueños*, *Anillos para una dama*, and *Locas de amar* in this study leads to multiple conclusions. The first is that although these dramas have been studied and discussed at length, there is still more to discover in each one. It is also important to note that although gender, social status, and theater have previously been used to interpret these dramas, they have been used separately, not as a cohesive system of investigation. This study combines each of these theories in marginality in hegemony. Although marital status has been included in studies of these and similar dramas, women on the margin of marriage as a group are not recognized, despite their frequency as characters in twentieth-century Spanish drama. Women who are wealthy have a special status because they are marginalized due to sex but powerful due to social status. Finally, these women are ideal as subversive characters throughout the many changes that occurred in twentieth-century Spain.

The first chapter establishes that in order to fully understand the dramas of twentieth-century Spain and the presentations of women therein, one must use multiple theories. Gender theory explains the role of women in society and the way that gender identity is determined. Theories of masculinity complement gender theory, focusing on the importance of the male subject in the organization and understanding of society. Although not traditionally present in studies of gender, subaltern theory establishes the possibility of considering an entire sex as a subaltern group. It also suggests the ability to be subordinate in one aspect of life, while dominant in another. The importance of not interpreting a drama as a written work is the focus of theater theory. Plays are meant to be presented, and their interpretation and meaning can change significantly due to directorial decisions and actor delivery. The theory of marginality in hegemony combines elements of theories of gender, masculinity, subalternity and theater to

establish a new way of interpreting the role of women on the margin of marriage who are simultaneously marginalized due to sex and hegemonic due to social class. It establishes that these characters are subversive and are used by twentieth-century playwrights in order to question government and societal norms.

The first chapter also introduces the counterpoint of Jacinto Benavente's *La malquerida*. This drama, from the early twentieth-century, presents a woman who is currently marginalized and hegemonic, but who does not exist on the margin of marriage. She was forced, unlike the protagonists of the other dramas, to remarry after the death of her husband due to an inability to support herself financially. Her straitened fiscal condition made her, prior to her second marriage, a part of the low social class, allowing her to marry a man that she wanted, because no men were unavailable to her as a result of financial considerations. When pressed, she also initially chooses to sacrifice her daughter in order to preserve her relationship with her husband. Each of these considerations juxtaposes this drama to those of Federico García Lorca, Antonio Buero Vallejo, Antonio Gala, and Paloma Pedrero, considered in the remainder of the study. Each of the four following chapters is devoted to the investigation of one drama. Every chapter follows a similar format. Initially the governmental and social circumstances that affect women and the theater in the time period of that play are established. The woman or women on the margin of marriage in each of the plays are then introduced and described. Next, proof is offered that the female protagonists are marginalized due to sex and financially secure. Complications from the status of marginality in hegemony are identified and shown to be used in order to criticize society and question and subvert cultural norms.

Federico García Lorca wrote *Bodas de sangre* during the Second Spanish Republic. This era provided unprecedented freedom of expression and experimentation for the artistic

community while allowing women, for the first time, rights equal to men. The two protagonists of this work, the Novia and the Madre prove to both be on the margin of marriage. The Novia is engaged and the Madre is widowed. Lorca provides the necessary information to establish that each of the women is financially secure. The Novia's love for another man and her inability to pursue that love because her father forbids her to marry a man of lower social class supplies the difficulties involved for women who exist in marginality in hegemony. Because this play ends in tragedy, it critiques the manner in which society dominates women and forces them to marry in accordance with the wishes of men.

The first half of the Franco dictatorship is represented by Antonio Buero Vallejo's *La tejedora de sueños*. During this period, the many rights given to women during the Second Republic were rescinded and the freedom allowed to artists was replaced by strict censorship. Buero Vallejo utilizes the mythical figure of Penélope. By using a well-known character, the playwright eliminated the need to supply a background to establish the motivations and general characteristics of his protagonist. Her hegemony is evident in the fact that she is the queen of Ithaca, while her marginality is established by detailing her interactions with both her suitors and her son. Marginality in hegemony prevents Penélope from marrying a humble servant whom she loves. Her husband's return does not result in her happiness, but in the death of her dreams. By concentrating on the trials of the wife left behind and deconstructing the mythical image of the wandering hero, Buero Vallejo questions the validity of the heroes of the new Franco regime and the dictator's desire to rewrite national history.

The late Franco dictatorship—tardofranquismo—is the time period associated with Gala's *Anillos para una dama*. Although censorship laws were relaxed during the last decade of the dictatorship, due in large part on the 1966 Press Law, artists still had to be cautious about the

themes that they chose to address. Women were allowed to be educated in the same classes as men, but they were still expected to spend their adult years as wives and mothers. Like Buero Vallejo, Gala chooses to use a myth as the basis for his drama. He elects a fundamental Spanish myth, and the fact that it was passed by the censors gives evidence of the level to which censorship had diminished in severity. Gala focuses on the life of Jimena, after the death of her husband El Cid. She is the niece of the king and the duchess of Valencia, both of which are positions that afford her hegemonic status. Because she must seek permission to remarry, however, she is also subordinate to men. Unlike other widows, Jimena is denied the opportunity to remarry only in part because of the lower socioeconomic class of her intended husband. The importance of El Cid to the people of Spain and the ongoing resistance to Muslim forces requires that the tangible link to the national hero, his widow, remain faithful to his memory. Rather than fulfilling her own desires for the first time in her life, Jimena is denied a marriage to the man that she loves and spends the rest of her days in a convent. By drawing many parallels between Jimena and modern-day women, Gala questions why, centuries later, women are still treated in the same fashion.

The final play in this study is Paloma Pedrero's *Locas de amar*. This drama is situated during the democracy. The rights of both women and artists were restored to the level of the Second Republic at the start of the democracy, and the decades-long duration that the democratic system has now experienced has allowed those rights to be accepted and utilized. This drama has two central female characters: Eulalia, the protagonist, and her daughter Rocío. Eulalia is a traditional wife raised during the Franco era. Rocío is a modern woman, raised during the democracy with the full expectation of being able to fulfill her ambitions. Faced with the abandonment of her husband, Eulalia chooses to starve herself to death. Rocío engages the

services of a psychologist to help her mother and Eulalia shifts from obeying her husband to submitting to Carlos, her therapist. With Carlos, Eulalia experiences sexual fulfillment for the first time, learns to express her rage, and finds the desire for education. Because she is financially able to live without the support of a man, when faced with choosing her estranged husband or her therapist, she decides to reject both men and learn to live alone. Eulalia's marginality in hegemony does not prevent her happiness, because she learns to throw off the marginality that was instilled in her as a child and accept the equal status allotted to her by the democracy. Eulalia's rejection of two men and the solidification of her relationship with her daughter show the women of the audience that being raised to expect certain outcomes from life does not mean that one does not deserve to find more fulfillment. Men and women alike are encouraged by Pedrero to examine their lifestyles to see if they truly allow women to reach their full potential.

Each of these women is strong and financially secure but they are also subordinate to the men that surround them. This is not due to weakness, but to the fact that their society routinely privileged men to the detriment of women's autonomy. By creating women in non-traditional marriage situations that utilize their strength while fighting against their impotence, these playwrights created characters that challenge society's view of what is acceptable both for men and women. They tailored their works to the audience to ensure that the spectators would understand the message. They made use of the changes in laws that encouraged and discouraged freedom of expression and they led each member of their audiences to question their acceptance of the subordination of women and the importance of financial parity in relationships.

By examining plays of twentieth-century Spain using theories of gender, masculinity, subalternity, theater, and marginality in hegemony, it becomes clear that women on the margin

of marriage are an ideal vehicle for the questioning of social norms. Their ability to occupy a space that traditionally married women could not inhabit allowed them the capacity to examine the roles of women and of men and point out the flaws in their society's divisions. Each of these plays provides a protagonist that pushes to find fulfillment in her life, paving the path for the next generation to achieve more and expect more.

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