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Protesting Between the Lines: Carmen Martín Gaité's Frustration in Writing vis-à-vis 1950s Francoist Censorship

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**PROTESTING BETWEEN THE LINES: CARMEN MARTÍN GAITE'S FRUSTRATION
IN WRITING VIS-À-VIS 1950s FRANCOIST CENSORSHIP**

A Thesis Presented

by

EMILY ROSE SPRING

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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Hispanic Literatures and Linguistics

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DEDICATION

To my loving and supportive fiancé and to my encouraging parents.

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ABSTRACT

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MAY 2013

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This thesis considered the impact of censorship and authoritarian rule by dictator Francisco Franco on two novels by 20th century Spanish author Carmen Martín Gaité: *El balneario*, (1955) and *Entre visillos* (1958). The two works utilize a “discourse of censorship” to express complaints about life as a young woman deprived of fulfilling relationships and self-determination. These novels were analyzed through a search for subtexts and hidden meanings to argue for their status as texts that contain a subversive message.

This investigation was accomplished through historical research on Francoist censorship and repression; use of Michel Foucault’s theories about panopticism; and feminist criticism of both novels. In the exploration of *El balneario* it was determined that a very strange dream sequence revealed psychological trauma from the Spanish Civil War, an anxiety-provoking sense of voicelessness, and an overwhelming isolation from the outside world. In the inquiry into *Entre visillos*, it was found that provincial and traditionalist social structures prevented meaningful communication and promoted unquestioned obedience to social norms. Martín Gaité achieved this look into society through her detailed depictions of the characters’ experiences and by viewing their social interactions through the lens of an outsider – a German teacher, Pablo Klein.

The conclusion of this study was that, despite censorship’s silencing effects, Martín Gaité’s novels do expose the difficulties of daily life under authoritarian rule and are subversive in their implication that Franco’s insistence on maintaining 19th century social and political structures is harmful, and that change is possible if freer communication were allowed.

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CHAPTER I
AN INTRODUCTION TO FRANCOIST CENSORSHIP AND ITS IMPACT ON THE
EARLY NOVELS OF CARMEN MARTIN GAITE

Introduction

Most people desire the freedom to do as they wish, speak their minds, and move freely, so they chafe at rules and constrictions on their expression and behavior. In every civil uprising over the course of history, some segment of the population has wished to think and live in a manner incompatible with the laws of the land or dominant ideology. Some societies, such as modern-day Europe and the United States, make people believe that they tolerate the right of these objectors to express their points of view. In others, like the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or Syria in 2012, opposition is forbidden, repressed, and punished. Importantly, this dissent, and this feeling of dissatisfaction, continues to exist despite official attempts to erase it. Censorship, which occurs everywhere and in many forms, can comprise part of the legal system and is devoted to controlling the creation and content of the messages that reach the masses. These techniques are a popular tool of many totalitarian regimes; however, no government can effectively keep all protest from reaching its intended audiences.

A classic example of an authoritarian power that employed censorship as a tool of social control was General Francisco Franco's fascist regime in Spain. Franco aimed to create a society that promoted traditional values and to remove all traces of leftist political influences from the early part of the 20th century (Neuschäfer 46). Since so many literary works were censored, attempts to understand the effects of

censorship on mid-20th century Spanish literature are indispensable components of any study of these texts. In a survey of Spanish authors active during the Franco era, critic Manuel L. Abellán found that many of the respondents reported that censorship had negative effects on their writing careers (83). Yet notwithstanding the negative impact of censorship, he and other critics maintain that the quality of literary production remained high, in part because writers whose ideas were counter to the regime's discovered creative ways to circumvent the system. In the prologue to the collection of his complete works, published in 2005, Juan Goytisolo claims that individual nonconformity and dissent existed, even if it was hidden and poorly interpreted by most readers, including, sometimes, the censors (46).

In this thesis, I will show how Carmen Martín Gaité, an author who began her career during Franco's dictatorship, expressed her frustrations with the restrictions she endured in spite of the censorship imposed upon her work by focusing on two early novels: *El balneario* (1953) and *Entre visillos* (1958). I will analyze Martín Gaité's novels as works affected by censorship, and search for subtexts and hidden meanings in order to argue for their status as texts that contain a subversive message. Because these novels were subject to prior censorship, an analysis that fails to consider the impact of that process on the published work also fails to delve sufficiently into their emotional complexity and meaning. In his analysis on Martín Gaité's writing, Sancho Sanz Villanueva asserts that critics of her work and the genre in which she wrote, social realism, must incorporate an awareness of its historical and social aspects and not focus solely on a work's aesthetic characteristics (9). Despite the censorship imposed upon her works, Martín Gaité managed to criticize

postwar Spanish society and Franco's government in her own way, employing techniques such as the narration of dreams and reframing certain arguments, in order to condemn the oppressive social and political conditions of the time period. These novels form part of the discourse of censorship; however, no comprehensive study of Martín Gaité's works exists in which the analysis is concentrated on the censorship under which she wrote. Moreover, these novels are marked by their having been created under certain psychological constraints in addition to the effects of government-mandated censorship; namely, the self-censorship their authors likely employed during the creative process.

I will also explore this self-censorship, as well as other types of repression, in regard to their effect on these works. Works conceived, composed, and written in the midst of "great psychological violence" are by necessity permanently marked by these conditions, even if published abroad to avoid external censors (Abellán 68). In fact, self-censorship grows more prevalent when the self-censor lives under a society in which people are persecuted for their ideas, such as a dictatorship; while state censorship that causes more direct obstacles to free expression promotes the development of literary tropes that try to subvert it (Neuschäfer 56). Due to the impact of these factors, a lack of historical perspective in questions of cultural criticism, especially when discussing social realism, is dangerous (Sanz Villanueva 1).

I will address the issues discussed in this introduction using a theoretical base consisting of Hans-Jörg Neuschäfer's theory of the "discourse of censorship," Abellán's discussion of literary criticism during the era, historical information about

20th century Spanish novelistic trends, and Michel Foucault's observations about the nature of surveillance and punishment in modern times. While Neuschäfer briefly touches upon the effects of censorship on *Entre visillos* and Abellán ignores Martín Gaité's work. As I argue, censorship as a form of surveillance fits into Foucault's schema, with some caveats outlined in this paper. Since many of the extant analyses of these novels employ a feminist lens, I will also turn to feminist theory; although state-mandated patriarchy and repression of women was just one of the many ways Franco and his representatives stunted the freedom of all Spaniards.

The Carceral Society and Self-Policing

Michel Foucault's most significant idea regarding societal repression is the assertion that living in modern society is like being an inmate of the "Panopticon," a circular prison proposed by the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham in which the cells face inwards along the circumference of a round building with a solitary tower in the center from which a single guard may watch all of the prisoners simultaneously (Foucault 200).¹ The key functions of the Panopticon are its ability to require prisoners to be on their best behavior at all times – lest the omnipotent guard spy any resistance – and to keep prisoners apart from each other in order to prevent group efforts against imprisonment. Since the incarcerated individuals cannot tell whether or not they are being observed, they must act as if they are under surveillance at all times in order to avoid punishment for misbehavior. In addition, Bentham's proposed prison design ensures that prisoners remain separate from one another; housed within individual cells rather than being contained in

group quarters. Separating people from one another is the key function of this prison model in which the institutional design is specifically intended to inhibit the transmission of undesirable political and social beliefs and behaviors. This carceral system, as it termed by Foucault, both legitimizes and naturalizes the power to punish and makes discipline homogenous (Foucault 297, 301). It is a model for how discipline works, and it is also a technique for maintaining peoples' souls and subjecting their bodies to standards of appropriateness (295).

Foucault refers to this phenomenon as “panopticism,” and states that it works primarily by “induc[ing] in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power” (201). Rather than a specific architectural plan, the Panopticon is a diagram for ideal power relations that can function with or without the building itself (Foucault 205). In modern society, power is no longer a privilege used to violently and swiftly kill opposition with a show of force, but rather a preemptive effect aimed at preventing opposition from manifesting in the first place. Power becomes ever-present, even when there are breaks in its implementation, and force is never necessary (Foucault 201). Eventually, society itself becomes so “disciplinary” that the need to control citizens becomes less of a concern (209). Disciplinary institutions become part of the mechanisms that keep people in line. In fact, Foucault argues that discipline becomes such an intrinsic part of life that it converts itself into a technique that strengthens groups (such as the military) through enforced unity (201).¹

¹ The 20th century governmental style most defined by mandatory unity in thought and behavior is fascism, “a political philosophy, movement, or regime... that exalts [the group] above the individual and that stands for a centralized autocratic

Although Foucault intended his treatise as an explication of power relationships in modern democratic and capitalist societies, it also clearly relates to fascism as the idea of a disciplinary society undergoes a logical progression in which more and more behaviors and thoughts are deemed socially unacceptable. The “minute social observations” (211) that together may constitute constant surveillance may also ensure that an entire country follow a dictator who demands a single, orthodox way of living from all citizens.

In a disciplinary society, extravagant punishments are avoided because they are deemed too wasteful and inefficient. The “subtle, calculated technology of subjection,” made possible by the constant probability of surveillance, is far more effective as a means of control and preventing misbehavior in the first place is infinitely more economical than punishing it after the damage has already been done (Foucault 221). Since the goal of dictatorship is to maintain power with minimal effort, it prefers that which maximizes its strength while still inhibiting rebellion. If all people must always be in a specific place, and engaged in specific tasks, then it is much easier to keep them from forming opposition groups, much less taking action against those in power (Foucault 219). Strict hierarchies and divisions in society aid in the creation and maintenance of panoptic power; therefore, powerful individuals seeking to build an authoritarian empire are likely to favor social structures that emphasize discipline and regulations.

government... severe economic and social regimentation, and forcible suppression of opposition.” Fascism - Definition and More from the Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary,<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fascism>

It is crucial to understand that Foucault's argument, much like the prison design by which it is inspired, is an entirely theoretical way to understand modern discipline and punishment. In practice, most prisons operate in an arbitrary fashion, where surveillance and consequences are applied unevenly. A clear case is Franco-era Spain; even more so in regard to women's prisons. Lidia Falcón, one of the most prominent Spanish feminists of the Transition, asserts that the women's prisons and their inmates were forgotten by almost everyone during the Francoist period. Even if incarcerated women had fought Franco's regime just as bravely as their male counterparts, they, and their personal sacrifices, were not part of the public discourse (Gould-Levine 77). Falcón herself spent time in a provincial jail in Barcelona because her dissenting voice was problematic to the regime. Her experience as an inmate does not match the structure of Bentham's Panopticon; rather she describes being guarded by nuns without access to activities or visitors during her indefinite stay (Gould-Levine 78). Lola Ferriera, another of Gould Levine and Feiman Waldman's interviewees, spent two and a half years in the women's prison of Alcalá de Henares for political reasons. She has stated that the women's prisons tended to be the oldest, dirtiest, and unhealthiest of all (Gould-Levine 86), in stark contrast to the idea of a clean, well-regulated panoptic institution.

Historical Background on Repressive Fascism

Perhaps the strongest possible criticism against reliance on *Discipline and Punish* as one of the foundations of this thesis's theoretical base is that Foucault wrote in democratic mid-20th century France, which enjoyed a much less restricted reality than the fascist dictatorship that shaped the lives of mid-20th century

Spaniards. Foucault writes about a perceived system of coercion and consequences that keeps people in line; in Franco-era Spain, dissenters risked actual physical violence and loss of freedom. As much as Foucault argues otherwise, there is a significant difference between physical forces that restrict bodily movement through imprisonment and societal forces that may punish dissent through physical harm. However, Foucault's ideas about the various underlying methods by which modern society coerces people and their bodies into submission grows even more clearly focused by moving from a democratic society to one in which the ruling hegemony is increasingly powerful. Foucault himself points to Napoleon's rule over his empire as an apex of both kinds of power: the disciplinary society backed up by the Crown's history of punitive spectacles (217). This combination of internalized watchfulness on the part of the citizens and the certainty of swift, undesirable consequences for misbehavior is profoundly effective at maintaining control over a whole country.

Much like Napoleon, Franco claimed to be acting in place of a king until the country could be returned to monarchy in the future. Francoist historiography espoused a very specific view of Spanish history in which the country was bound to the divine. God, the Church, and the monarchy worked together to grant Spain its greatness (Herzberger 29). Juan Goytisolo rejects this version of events, and characterizes Franco's totalitarianism as a product of a history that included both Habsburg and Bourbon-style monarchy and Inquisition-style religious dogmatism (Goytisolo 46). In fact, 1950s Spain combines some of the worst aspects of the pre-penal reform era and the 20th century: namely, Spaniards lived in a psychological

environment promoting constant self-surveillance and under the rule of an authoritarian figure as powerful as any king claiming divine rights to the throne. According to Foucault, a system in which punishment is extremely crime-specific, corporal, and public serves to reinforce the current social class system. He also admits that, frequently, punishments during the era about which we wrote were much lighter for nobles than they were for commoners accused of the same crime. While punishments in Franco-era Spain were more modern than in pre-Enlightenment Europe (or at least less public), the goal of law enforcement was still to maintain the power of the aristocracy and of the Church. This class-based power structure is no accident, as discipline superseded punishment largely as a result of the economic changes wrought by the expansion of capitalism (Foucault 219). Punishment for the expression of anti-fascist ideals in Francoist Spain was one facet of a political environment that deeply entwined itself in the psyches of all Spanish people. Spanish writers grew up affected in different ways not only by hunger, poverty, and death, but also by the psychological damages caused by the Civil War and the regime itself. Antonio Vilanova points out that anyone between the ages six and ten when the war began experienced the conflict from a child's perspective (295), and that those who became teenagers during that time were powerless witnesses, spectators, and victims of the war – so writers from this age group tended to make sense of their background using either testimonials or criticism, showing the first stages of social protest (Vilanova 175). In addition, Santos Sanz Villanueva states that these Spaniards born between 1924 and 1936 were also the first generation to not have had direct involvement with the war (9).

Not only did members of this age bracket not have any decision-making power during the war, experiencing it from a position of impotence, but their violent and totalitarian environment was also “normal” to them. They came of age with the regime’s message internalized in their psyches, profoundly aware that conformity was necessary to their survival.² The psychological effect of dictatorial societies is significant since nonconforming individuals are isolated from the community, and dissidence is associated with mental illness (Neuschäfer 41). This pathologization of disagreement has a negative effect on those who oppose their leaders’ ideology and frustrates attempts to communicate dissatisfaction. Vilanova also points out that writers do not produce literature merely to reproduce their contemporary social realities, but rather write in search of the essential reality of people and the world in which they live. It is through this search that authors convert literature into testimonials of the social and human problems they face (22). The additional difficulties inherent in carving out a meaningful existence within a totalitarian society, and expressing the parts of their existence that are deemed pathological, combine to form a significant influence on literary creation.

These effects on individuals are crucial to understanding the milieu in which Carmen Martín Gaité and other writers worked, but it is also important to consider Spain’s position in the larger world. A combination of Franco’s policies and an international embargo sealed Spain off from the rest of the world during a period of autarky toward the beginning of his dictatorship. Exchange with other countries

² While the regime’s message of conformity and traditionalism was most certainly omnipresent among this generation, Spanish people from families opposed to the regime did learn other points of view at home. Nonetheless, public expression of these ideas remained risky.

was nonexistent, and the country experienced severe economic difficulties while the government promoted an idealized, unified Spanish culture. In the 1950s, when Spain opened up international relations, the reasons were primarily economic; creating a tourism-based economy and accepting financial help in exchange for the establishment of foreign military bases on Spanish soil allowed the country to grow richer and gain important allies. However, none of this new openness granted ordinary Spaniards any significant increase in freedom of expression. In fact, the growing contrast between Spain's economic growth and its government's stubborn support for outdated cultural practices became one of the central problems of late Francoism (Neuschäfer 53). Access to a greater range of foreign books was precarious and limited to an underground exchange of texts translated (poorly, according to Sanz Villanueva) in Latin America (62). Additionally, intellectuals still risked imprisonment and other consequences for speaking out, and a single national "Spanish" culture was still promoted while international influence on public discourse was discouraged. After 1939, culture was directed by the government, all intellectual pursuits were institutionalized, and a general lack of freedom was more or less absolute; authors had their political and ideological positions made for them, whether they liked it or not (Ferrerias 71, 72).

A Brief History of Franco-era Censorship

Towards the end of his book, *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault backtracks slightly to say that prisons and panopticism, like the violent punishments before them, fail to eliminate crime entirely. Instead these concepts restrict crime to the margins of society and keep "delinquency" to an acceptable level (277). Dictators,

like the rulers of post-industrial France, also know that they cannot prevent people from disagreeing with them and their ideologies. Rather than seeking to abolish dissent, they sequester it and discourage it so that it remains at a level where it cannot “infect” the rest of society. Making opposition difficult, forcing it underground, and limiting its spread to others via media all help to marginalize it and regulate it, thereby neutralizing its potential threat. According to this theory, regulating rather than eliminating delinquency allows it to be properly supervised and separated from “good” society (278). Furthermore, it allows rulers the ability to occasionally use delinquents for political purposes (280). Instead of dissent being punished swiftly, it is a quality that may be managed, controlled, and used in a twisted fashion to perpetuate the status quo. Fascism by definition requires the existence of a “them” opposed to the unified bulk of the country’s citizens, because without an outside threat, no reason exists to band together at the cost of personal liberty. A fascist dictator might very well group all dissent under the umbrella of illegal activities and regulate the most outspoken objectors to the most marginal, isolated fringes of society, occasionally making a public example of someone for their vocal disagreement. According to Foucault’s “discipline-penalty-delinquency” model, imprisoning people for illegal activity contains criminals and criminality in facilities operated with extreme discipline, giving these elements order so inmates retain their newly internalized self-organization and the consciousness of their abnormality following their release, and remain both isolated from properly behaved citizens as well as tied to their past crimes in such a way that makes recidivism likely (190).

Shirley Mangini's characterization of Spain's postwar intellectual community as a ghetto of misfits on the periphery of society (10) is consistent with this model, as is her assertion that at the end of the war, almost all republican-allied intellectuals were either dead, imprisoned, in exile, or in hiding, with only a few booksellers remaining who were brave enough to distribute banned books from their stores' back rooms (14). This statement reveals the combined effects of the fascist disciplinary machine on anti-regime activity; because many outspoken –and not so outspoken-- individuals had been killed or jailed, the threat of punishment affected dissenters. If they did not want to be silenced by death or bars, they either fled the country or existed at the edges of normal society. However, Foucault's model of a system in which delinquents are produced in prisons for the purpose of allowing illegal activity to exist in small quantities on the outside is somewhat problematic for my purposes; he mistakes the cause for the effect. Delinquency and the marginalization of abnormality may be products of time in prison, but they exist as larger forces in society regardless of incarceration; prisons may condense and harden people on the fringes but they do not create the undesirability of their actions, and members of prison staffs do not seek to encourage any criminal behavior, within prison walls or without. In fact, Lola Ferreira's report of jail's strict fascist ideology along with rewards for compliance with directions and improving in the prison's re-education classes show that prison itself was probably not intended to concentrate political rebellion but rather to enforce the preferred ideology (Gould-Levine 86-88). The accounts of life in Spanish women's jails during Franco's dictatorship help clarify my use of Foucault's ideas as models for how society

enforces behavior and thought, and my concentration on the idea of discipline instead of punishment itself. For this project, the important factor is not how dissent is punished, but rather how dissent is suppressed and prevented by mechanisms in society and how individuals circumvent these rules in order to speak out.

In post-1939 Spain, the state directed, selected, and corrected all aspects of national culture – everything from university teaching to the press was affected. While Juan Ignacio Ferreras argues that state power inserting itself into all areas of people’s lives is the worst thing that can happen when the state governs culture, and not censorship (71) it certainly formed an important part of Franco’s regime from the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. Francoist censorship has its roots in the Press and Propaganda Office that was established at the Nationalist military headquarters at Salamanca in 1936 (Labanyi, *Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture* 208). It became part of Spain’s legal code in April 1938, when Minister of the Interior Ramón Serrano Súñer introduced a new press law on behalf of Franco’s government that established a rigid system of control and prior censorship on the press and literary establishment (Payne 292), with the goal of ensuring that the media served the state (Labanyi, *Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture* 208). This law was vague and flexible, specifying only that ideas contravening the state’s principles (whatever those may be at the moment) should not be expressed (Labanyi, *Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture* 209). Under this first Press Law, and each novel or other literary work had to pass through a “prior consultation” before it was allowed to be published (Neuschäfer 47). Works of greater public dissemination such as film and popular novels were censored more strictly than

literary ones, but the latter was still affected. Censors blocked some novels from being published, changed others, and allowed even more to remain unpublished. For this reason, some novels were not published at all, some were changed so severely that they no longer made sense, and the ones that were published more or less unchanged had to follow certain rules.

While at first the Press and Propaganda Office was organized under the Ministry of the Interior, showing a concern for promoting national solidarity through state control of the media, in 1941 the office was transferred to the Falange and renamed. Now called the Vice-Secretariat for Popular Education, the bureau's focus shifted from its military background to civilian popular culture (Labanyi, *Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture* 208). This change underscored a preoccupation with controlling the public dialogue in order to promote Francoist ideals and prohibit the spread of incendiary, demoralizing, or immoral messages. Franco aimed to regulate the information allowed into the public sphere precisely because he understood that exercising authority over the public discussion solidified his power by creating the illusion of popular consent to his rule (Monleón 263). Spain's period of autarky ended around 1950. With Franco's increased interest in appealing to the international community, responsibility for censorship was transferred again, this time to the new Ministry of Information and Tourism (Labanyi, *Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture* 209). Further reforms continued: in March 1966, Manuel Fraga Iribarne issued an updated press law that reduced the extent of censorship, resulting in an increase in the availability of published material about current affairs and in a more informed population. Criticism of Franco and his

regime remained forbidden under this new law, but Fraga's reforms opened up space for debate on individual laws and policies (Payne 434). The prior consultation became voluntary, but if a work made it to the market and the government decided that it violated the rules, it could be pulled from bookstores (or cinemas or theaters). The primary requirement was that a copy of the work be deposited with the Ministry of Information and Tourism (Labanyi, *Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture* 213). Fraga's law, in addition to allowing a small amount of public debate, also put the burden of ensuring that texts were acceptable on the writers and publishers. In order to avoid losing their audiences, authors had to censor themselves and anticipate what they could say and what they could not. These changes did not lighten penalties, which ranged from confiscation to prosecution. Because confiscation could ruin a company's fortunes, many continued to submit new works to the censors (Labanyi, *Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture* 213).

In addition to understanding the chronological history of Francoist censorship, it is also necessary to understand its aims, implementation, and effects. Censorship, at its most basic level, uses the idea that the media influences people's behaviors and attitudes as a rationale for controlling communication. By limiting communication to government-sanctioned messages, the prevalence of desired behaviors and attitudes should increase, and the incidence of dissenting views and undesired actions can be decreased or eliminated. Franco's goal was to eliminate all traces of early 20th century liberalism and pluralism and revert the country to a 17th century view of morality. Additionally, Franco wanted to reinforce the importance of God, country, and family: forming a paternal Spain (Neuschäfer 46). Manuel L.

Abellán lists the following themes the censors sought to eliminate: attacks on Catholic dogma, traditional morals, the Church and its ministers, the government and its institutions, and people who collaborate or have collaborated with the regime. Additionally, if a work was not going to be coherent without the censorable passages, it could not be published at all (Abellán 19).

Under Franco's system of censorship, dissenting writers had to fear very palpable legal threats: as of 1940 there had been between 10,000 and 40,000 political killings and about 250,000 people imprisoned for their politics (Carr 258). Authors also risked time in prison for speaking out or including too much obscenity in their works.³ Social poet José Hierro, for example, spent five years from 1939-1944 as a political prisoner of the regime (Mangini 66). In 1950, Alfonso Sastre and José María del Quinto published a manifesto for their political theater group, *Teatro de agitación social*, and the group was subsequently suppressed and therefore unable to complete its underground projects. This did not necessarily calm Sastre's anti-government sentiments; rather it fueled his anger and caused him to be in constant conflict with both the censors and the police (Mangini 75). Film director Juan Antonio Bardem spent time in jail for the more regime-critical aspects of his film *Muerte de un ciclista* (1955) even after the censors made him change the ending. That ending already had a moral consistent with the regime's ideology, in

³ While these examples, and this thesis, concentrate exclusively on the effects of censorship on active writers working within Spain's borders during Franco's regime, their texts were not the only ones affected: censors also controlled, banned, and confiscated works by foreign authors and Spanish writers who predated the regime. Books by Galdós and Unamuno, for example, could not be found in any library.

order to make the film less offensive (Mangini 80). These examples illustrate the real dangers to intellectuals' lives and liberty, showing that expressing opposition in writing, theater, or film was risky not only politically and commercially, but also legally and personally. Federico García Lorca is one of the earliest and best-known Spanish writers to be killed because his ideas and/or texts were considered offensive to traditional values. Although his execution occurred two years before censorship was codified, many of his plays anticipate censorship and the tropes he uses form the beginnings of the discourse of censorship (Neuschäfer 42). Neuschäfer further opines that Lorca's work places traditionalism between a rock and a hard place, which was unacceptable to a regime devoted to a return to 19th century values. After his death, Franco did everything he could to erase Lorca's existence from Spanish collective memory (16,17). These are only a few examples of a phenomenon that cost many writers their lives, freedom, and careers over the course of Franco's four decades in power.

While the examples above demonstrate some of the worst penalties for authoring a dissenting text, writing something that the censors deemed unacceptable also had very concrete intellectual consequences, such as delays in publishing (Abellán 61). At the least, an offending work could be subjected to administrative silence, and later, be completely forgotten. Since a writer submits works for publication to share ideas, the threat of having them relegated to obscurity can frustrate the desire to write. Despite these difficulties, some writers managed to persevere through the hardships of the censor's office to give their work an audience. For example, singer/songwriter Julia León faced a series of obstacles

whenever she planned a recital; getting the required approval took two months, and the censors rejected lyrics to more songs than they accepted (Gould-Levine 126). Recording, with its potentially larger audience, was even more strictly monitored, with each step of the process subject to a separate decision. Could the song even be recorded? Was it considered suitable for radio? Finally, could it be played on television? After approval was granted for the recordings, they could still be pulled from circulation for any reason (Gould-Levine 127).

In addition to the struggles that writers faced in the initial distribution of their work among the public, materials could also be pulled from circulation or banned after the fact. A notable example of this type of continued control on literature even after publication is Camilo José Cela's novel, *La familia de Pascual Duarte*. It was published at the end of 1942 with the full support of the regime. However, just one year later, censors denied permission to publish a second run of the book, banning it (Monleón 257). According to Labanyi, censorship's very existence was the most unprintable subject (209), so it is unsurprising that José B. Monleón points to Cela's discussion of censorship within the novel (in the form of a voice belonging to the "transcriber" of Duarte's story) as the overriding reason for the regime's change of heart. It was not enough that Cela refrained from outright criticism in his text, or that he had close ties with the censorship office.⁴ Cela's work was also not safe merely because it had passed through the process without much difficulty; the "private reading" done by the censor did not anticipate the dialogue

⁴ Cela himself was a censor: from 1941-1945 he censored magazines. Jo Labanyi, "Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture," Jo and Helen Graham, Eds. Labanyi, *Spanish Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995) 207-214.

the book would provoke among its readers. Keeping in mind historian Juan J. Linz's categorization of Francoism as an authoritarian regime that, once stabilized, relied on citizens' passive acceptance of the regime for maintenance of its power (170), Monleón's assertions about the reasons Cela's book was banned make sense. Franco depended on the masses' assumption that there was no viable alternative to his rule. Because Cela's novel questioned the "political construction of the literary sphere" and intimated that discussion of "matters of public concern" should be a part of public life, Cela's novel suggested that even people on the periphery should have a voice and was therefore overly subversive (Monleón 269-270).

Likewise, many of the Franco-era authors surveyed by Manuel L. Abellán (in a process Abellán admits was unscientific) reported that the censors had retained or otherwise frustrated publication of their novels (65). While that proportion of unpublished works varies widely, the frustration of putting intellectual energy into a novel that would be read only by people seeking to destroy it, limit its distribution, or impose fines and prison terms upon authors of "problematic" texts surely had an effect on literary creation. One author, Ana María Matute, expresses her anger at having been censored in the prologue to her complete works. After stating she has loved writing since the age of five, she describes the creation of one of her earliest stories as a delightful exercise in creativity. Matute describes the teacher who takes her paper and chastises her for wasting her time as having a looming shadow. "... [c]uando más apasionada cubría de tinta los ofendidos y cuadriculados papeles, una sombra larga, opaca, casi mineral – sombra que, a lo largo de mi vida, ha regresado y se ha repetido con

frecuencia – detuvo en seco mis locos goces creativos” (12). That shadowy, foreboding presence of the teacher can be read as both an allusion to the oppressive presence of censorship as a negative factor in her writing life and as a reference to the censor who altered one of her novels beyond recognition, leaving behind a work that failed to correspond to the inspiration that led her to write it. Because this prologue was published in Spain before Franco’s death, her reference to censorship is veiled in a metaphor. Another author from the same time period, Juan Goytisolo, expresses similar feelings in the prologue to his complete works. Of all the work he wrote between 1953 and 1964, Goytisolo indicates satisfaction with only the two novels that he had published abroad in order to circumvent Franco’s censors. The remainder of his work from that period, he says, should be read as testimonies to the oppression and backwardness experienced by most Spaniards during that time (12, 13).

The “Discourse of Censorship”: How Does it Affect Writing?

One popular strategy employed in analyzing literary works written under Francoism is the search for meanings related to Franco’s government and Spain’s place *vis-à-vis* the rest of the world. Another is the search for critiques of the authors’ society. In this process, many readers forget that the works were censored and that there are elements that the authors perhaps wanted to include but were not able to because of the censorship. Hans-Jörg Neuschäfer, one of the first critics to explore the effects of Franco-era censorship on literary production in depth, opines that it is time to change that: “Me parece que es hora ya de valorar lo que significa tener que escribir cuando no se puede decir lo que se quiere decir” (9). It is

especially important to keep in mind that any representation of acts that violated Catholic sexual mores, or any criticism of the government or the Church and their representatives was prohibited and censored, causing writers who wanted to include these elements to do so in the least obvious way possible in order to surpass censorship and be able to publish their works. Additionally anyone wishing to present any view of history contradicting Franco's historiographic narrative also had to employ a certain creativity, relying, as did Camilo José Cela in *La colmena*, on the mere implication that past events that shape the present are "little more than a debased version of what the regime holds as historically noble and authentic" (33).

Neuschäfer aimed to establish a way of discussing censorship's effect on literature that would consider the various influences that dictatorship, totalitarianism, controls on communication, and generalized oppression exercised on written works. Because these forces collude to form a specific manner of interaction between writers, censors, and the public, literary creation and reception necessarily involves a level of communication beyond that of just the words on the page. Writers have to know how to write so that the majority of their ideas reach the public intact, and the public needs to know how to read between the lines so that they can understand meanings that lurk beneath the surface. While the censors may keep any overtly critical messages from influencing readers, they cannot put a stop to all dissent. Shirley Mangini confirms that a group of intellectuals opposed to the regime came to actively criticize the regime in their works, stating that they were soldiers in the deaf postwar battle that generated a culture of opposition (9). While cultural dissidence was limited between 1939 and 1949, the abandonment of

autarky led to an increase of “social poetry” or protest poems (10). Importantly, the censors were inconsistent, and modified works with a wider audience more severely, leaving works on less popular or less “important” subjects more similar to their original form. The press was more strictly monitored than poetry because censors cared above all about the number of people in the affected audience. Poetry was the first genre to show signs of social critique because its smaller audience meant that it was the least scrutinized form of writing. Censors also paid less attention to it because proper comprehension of poetry requires the reader to employ a higher level of analysis than that available to most people. Because higher art forms, like poetry and literary prose, relied heavily on allusions and other poetic techniques, they appealed primarily to an educated minority. As such, they were not perceived to be a threat to the regime’s propagandistic goals (Labanyi, *Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture* 214).

It is clear that dissent in Spanish literature existed, but that its expression was affected by the lack of complete freedom of expression, as in the previous example of choosing to express discontent in poetry rather than in popular novels. Neuschäfer argues that pre-market censorship invariably influences the writing process; first, by making authors anticipate the censor’s reaction and avoid including censorable ideas in the first place, and second, by requiring a certain amount of creativity out of writers who wanted to dissent (49, 9). These thoughts form the basis for his theory that there is a “discourse of censorship” in trying to say what one wants when one cannot. Neuschäfer presents several faces of this dialectic, which involves concealing protest in code. Without clues to this code, it is

impossible to understand many literary works from the period (61). This code consists of the use of varying tropes: allusions, “moderation” of the discourse, and treating communication as if it were contraband and disguising the message (56).

Knowledge of this code is indispensable to any proper understanding of these works. Mangini also points out several features of this code, indicating the use of over-the-top melodrama or use of confusingly inept techniques in poetry and poetic language in order to disguise dissidence enough; the appropriation of the regime’s tendency towards extreme military and religious fervor for their own ends, (60) and the use of understatement and irony as poetic techniques as did Blas de Otero (64, 65).⁵ Santos Sanz Villanueva adds that words are not the only important part, noting that the formatting of those words can have quite an impact on reception; manipulation of typographical resources such as line breaks and the use (or not) of punctuation can influence how the reader interprets the words on the page (278, 275).

I argue that later writers of novels also employed some of these tools for their own ends. Mangini states that the novel developed slowly in the early 1950s (which might have to do with the fact that the new generation of writers was coming of age during this time), but novelists frequently use poetic language in their works (72). For example, the use of lyricism is sometimes intended to weaken the power of a criticism, which is helpful when the writer does not wish to complain too explicitly

⁵ Mangini emphasizes that de Otero’s unusual popularity gave the poet unprecedented influence in the works of other writers and dissidents. Poetry, as the most elite and least censored form of literary production, usually expressed the harshest criticisms of society but were allowed to press because they were expected to have a small audience. This clearly backfired for the regime in de Otero’s case.

(Gil Casado 40). In either case, the novelistic trend that emerged from this milieu in the mid 1950s was social realism (Mangini 105). This term was a euphemism for any artistic creation that criticized the regime (Mangini 10). Pablo Gil Casado categorizes novels with content that is collective in character, and that signal social injustice and inequality with the intent to contribute to social change as social novels (19). However, in Juan Ignacio Ferreras' opinion, Gil Casado seems to view most manifestations of social writing as works denouncing the socio-economic structures of Western capitalism and as windows into the problems within certain groups of society⁶ without discussing how class struggle negatively impacts people's lives (20). Ferreras sees class struggle as Spain's primary problem; and, he maintains, society is a producer of novels (and novels are social products) and authors are the interpreters of the society in which they live and write (21). Thus, failure to discuss the clash of interests between the haves and the have-nots is a serious impediment to accurately describing the wider range of social novels. However, Ferreras isn't completely correct – Gil Casado dedicates a chapter to novels about workers and their employers in which he states that the working class protagonists blame their employers for their unjust treatment (29), which may be the exception that proves Ferreras' point. In Gil Casado's view, a boss' mistreatment of his employees is a distinct subtype of oppression. To Ferreras, it is indicative of a larger power imbalance that underlies all other categories of civil rights abuses.

⁶ Specifically, he indicates the working class's poor work conditions and the "mediocrity" of bourgeois life. Pablo Gil Casado, La novela social española (1920-1971) (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1973).

Understanding the relative privilege between characters and the types of people they represent is important, because their circumstances and how they are described shed light on their positions within society. Both social realism and social poems share the tendency to eschew form over function while also being constructed in a way that allows the writer to express emotions and beliefs contrary to the Francoist agenda. Because the press was censored so vigilantly, literary creation became the main vehicle for the expression of ugly realities. The novel took on the same testimonial function in Spain that the press had in countries like France (Mangini 119, 120). Because novelists, especially the social realists, aimed to describe Spain's problems objectively through fictionalized accounts of real phenomena, their accounts of daily life are more accurate than those of a press that was more closely censored and monitored than any literary work. By describing apparent reality clearly, novelists gave testimonial details about concrete injustices in society to authorize the truth they saw in order to denounce or criticize the situation (Gil Casado 47). The goal of the social realist novel, according to Gil Casado, is to make readers gain consciousness of a certain problem and convince them to change it (143). David K. Herzberger notes that social realism is both a successful attempt to "co-opt" the past; countering Franco's narrative of Spain and its epic past with the "sphere of the horrible," which contrasts the heroism of yore with the present's "poverty, isolation, alienation, and oppressed collectivity" (37, 31). By making the reader identify with the protagonist's problems, a novelist can lead him/her to see his or her own difficulties in the same light (Gil Casado 47). Through self-identification with fictional characters, a reader might conclude that

discomforting aspects of life are obstacles that could be surmounted, and are not necessarily inevitable. Social novels exist primarily to expose those problems.⁷ The combined effects of choosing a social topic for the plot of a novel and structuring it in a conservatively formal style,⁸ while also employing poetic devices, are entirely consistent with Neuschäfer's discourse of censorship because they allow for the moderation of the conversation and because they reduce the amount of overly critical content that could be redacted or modified by the censors.

Chicas Raras: Feminism in Franco's Spain

An understanding of women's lives and their special restrictions during the dictatorship is an indispensable component to this work. Under Franco, feminism was illegal, so it operated clandestinely. Feminists worked in secret, isolated from one another, and risked their lives and reputations in order to work for women's rights. Linda Gould Levine and Gloria Feiman Waldman define feminism as a self-definition corresponding to a global political vision (14). Before and during the Spanish Republic, feminists had made some gains in Spanish society such as the ability for women to pursue careers and the right to divorce (Martín Gaité, *Usos amorosos* 49, 26), but the Civil War stopped feminism in its tracks, with women returning from jobs outside the home to their traditional domestic tasks afterward (Gould-Levine 14). If, as Foucault alleges, the aim of the carceral society is to force

⁷ Gil Casado, writing from exile in the United States near the end of Franco's life, has a little more freedom to express his ideas than literary historians living within Spain's borders, so he could point out that the Spanish novel from 1950-1970 has many references to certain aspects of national life that could be called unfair, or at least unwarranted to anyone concerned with social equity. 17

⁸ Many writers of the "Generation of '54" who were among the first to produce truly critical social realism also relied on a formalized style. Pablo Gil Casado, *La novela social española (1920-1971)* (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1973). 118.

people and their bodies into disciplined behavior (138), and women were expected to be asexual and to fit into a very specific “angel of the hearth” role under Franco, then the limitations placed on women’s bodies is of special interest to this study. Like in Foucault’s analysis of the juvenile prison colony at Mettray,⁹ where the young inmates were trained into certain sets of useful skills and steered away from misbehavior by the power structure over them, in Franco’s Spain, the entire system functioned to guide women into conventional modes of behavior and being.

Specifically, they were expected to grow into and pursue a wife and mother role, being the best caretaker of their husbands, homes, and children. As Helen Graham states, “[t]he regime promoted an ‘ideal’ image of womanhood as ‘eternal,’ passive, pious pure, submissive woman-as-mother for whom self-denial was the only road to self-fulfillment (184). Even the women’s wing, or *Sección Femenina*, of the Falange existed primarily to teach women childrearing and homemaking skills (Martín Gaité, *Usos amorosos* 59). A return of women to their traditional role at home was politicized during the Civil War as a result of the worldwide economic depression: traditional cultural patterns and gender roles were attractive to average people as a “comforting way of living” (Graham, *Sexual Politics* 100). Not all women were complacent with this arrangement, and during a series of interviews, many expressed their frustrations to Linda Gould Levine and Gloria Feiman Waldman. Lawyer Carmen Rodríguez realized at age 22 (around 1960) that she was not supposed to want more out of life than taking care of her two daughters and

⁹ Foucault also mentions the existence of similar institutions for young, wayward girls. Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Random House, 1977). 298.

accompanying her husband wherever he went (Gould-Levine 135). Liberal Catholic activist Elisa Lamas reported that when she studied at a university in the late 1950s and early 1960s, it was very strange for a woman to study out of a desire for knowledge – most would leave school upon marriage (Gould-Levine 115). Very few socially acceptable alternatives to this life existed, and those that did were simply variations on the theme; devoting oneself to the memory of a fiancé killed in the Civil War or becoming a nun (Martín Gaité, *Usos amorosos* 43, 37).

In order to discourage female independence, social service was mandatory¹⁰ for all young, unmarried women, and the only way for a middle-class woman to avoid having to complete this required work with the *Sección Femenina* was to acquire a husband (Martín Gaité, *Usos amorosos* 60). The *Sección Femenina* was, in many ways, crucial to the success of the Franco regime. Namely, the free labor provided by these women helped meet the basic needs of a country suffering from poverty (Graham, *Gender and the State: Women in the 1940s* 187). In addition, the social service allowed the state access to the home, ensuring that the family unit would support the state. If Franco aimed to return Spain to its past glory and traditions, he also sought to maintain his own power; and blurring the lines between public and private spheres helped him to reach both goals. Women were allowed into the public arena to support Falangist and Francoist mentalities, and bringing social service workers into people's homes inserted state power into the private sphere (Graham, *Sexual Politics* 110-111). Barbara Zecchi argues that many Francoist women experienced ambiguity in their true feelings regarding their

¹⁰ In practice, enforcement of this requirement was spotty and most women in the social service were from the middle class.

prescribed role at home: many articles in early issues of *El ventanal*, a magazine of the *Sección Femenina* that existed from 1946-1948, display a keen fascination with modernity and internationalism (206). Like Cela's novel, portions of *El ventanal* that originally faced no resistance from the government (a legal advice column, a feature directed at men, and a society section) were later determined to be problematic. After a three-month hiatus officially attributed to a lack of paper, the magazine returned in a new format lacking the troublesome sections and with the addition of a column written by a priest and guidance on how women should write and what they should read (207). The regime's increased oversight on the magazine published by its women's division both aimed to limit women's imaginations in order to keep them from dreaming outside of their role and silenced women's voices when their experience deviated from the standard promoted by Franco (Zecchi 212).

While there existed many complications for women wishing to lead nontraditional lives during Franco's regime, no one clear solution to their troubles was apparent. One of the primary problems with Spanish feminism in the mid-20th century was the attempt to incorporate it into other leftist ideologies, especially since many leftist groups also maintained traditional gender roles (Gould-Levine 54), and many leftist men treated their imprisoned sisters with sentimentality, declining to give them any useful information about their organizations' political activities (Gould-Levine 87). Journalist and author Carmen Alcalde views feminism as the original "class struggle," and maintains that bourgeois women are too financially comfortable to fight for equality while working-class women are too busy working. According to Alcalde, leftist groups have been just as complicit in the

oppression of women as more conservative forces (Gould-Levine 32, 33). The then Vice-President of the Association of University Women, Charo Ema, stated independently from Alcalde that there were two groups of politicized, anti-Franco women: feminists and members of the *Movimiento Democrático de Mujeres*, which wanted to oust Franco before fighting for women's rights. The former group thought the latter was too partisan, and the latter believed the former to be too petite bourgeoisie; Ema allows that both groups are right (Gould-Levine 51). In either case, this tension requires a careful balance between Franco's sexist oppression of women and his politically motivated punishment of dissenters.

Justification for my Choice of the Two Novels

Martín Gaité wrote much more than the two novels studied in this thesis, but they were carefully chosen. Originally, I wanted to study four novels in order to develop an analysis displaying an evolution of Martín Gaité's works, and I wanted my argument to be as balanced as possible, especially in regard to the different Press Laws. *El balneario* and *Entre visillos* were written during the first Press Law, which was in effect from 1938 to 1966. Given that this is the longest stage of Francoist censorship, it made sense to choose two novels from this period. *El balneario*, as the first of her works longer than a short story, serves as an excellent jumping-off point for many reasons; it lets us see the author's unique style in its infancy and it also gives us a baseline to compare the differences between this first novel and those that follow it. *Entre visillos* presents a similar advantage – it is her first long novel.

Additionally, by dealing with similar themes as the previous work, it allows us to see an evolution in her treatment of enclosure, of the “chicas raras,” and the (false) impression that certain spaces are completely isolated. At the beginning of this project, I also intended to analyze *Retahílas*, published after the passage of the second Press Law, and *El cuarto de atrás*, published after the dictatorship ended (and during the period referred to by Neuschäfer as post-censorship).

Unfortunately, the scope of that study was much too large for this thesis and will have to wait for another project.

Notes

¹ Any study of the effects of oppression on creative production would be incomplete without an understanding of Michel Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Foucault’s treatise begins as a history of the use of punitive imprisonment as an alternative to grisly executions in Western Europe and North America, and then expands into a discussion on the mechanisms that have caused human bodies to become controlled by society along with people’s minds. One of his fundamental arguments is that the penal reforms of the 17th and 18th centuries, which supposedly aimed to shift the effects of punishment from the body to the soul of the offender (Foucault 74), merely changed the way in which human bodies were punished (17). Subsequently, punishments restricted the body’s usefulness, encouraged its (continued) submission to those in power, and limited its movement instead of causing direct physical pain (25). The possibility of punishment also served several other useful functions in the post-Enlightenment society, such as maintaining property rights and convincing most people to behave within prescribed parameters. Foucault concludes that the nature of “reformed” punishment creates a society in which people are always on their best behavior, in case someone else might be watching them for signs of deviance. Supervisors of behavior in this new system constantly exercise knowledge and power over individuals who resist disciplinary normalization (Foucault 296). In Franco-era Spain, for example, those who did not fervently support the regime were seen as deserving moral extermination, if not physical death (Mangini 25). This is easily reconciled with the reformed system’s purported aims at rehabilitating the souls of offenders and conducting observations to gauge a person’s moral standing. Even the definition of crime changed: illegal acts used to be those that posed a direct challenge to the power structure, while all others were legal; whereas afterward the idea of “legality” grew to encompass normal thoughts and behavior. Conversely, all actions that deviated from that norm were placed on the illegal end of the legality/illegality spectrum (Foucault 298). A criminal in the pre-Enlightenment era was an adversary of the sovereign. In contrast, a modern criminal is a social deviant

(Foucault 299). Therefore, if criminals are deviants, then anyone straying from the norm must be understood as a criminal. This definition is especially useful to a totalitarian ruler who wishes to limit dissent. Deviance and criminality are frequently linked, both in statistics and the public imagination, to mental illness. For this reason, categorizing dissent as an irregularity like mental illness allows the dictator to discredit and criminalize it (Neuschäfer 41).

CHAPTER II

EL BALNEARIO: A DREAMED SOCIO-POLITICAL CRITIQUE

In the previous chapter, I stated my intention to explore the effects of censorship on two novels that Carmen Martín Gaité wrote and published during Francisco Franco's dictatorship. Because Martín Gaité was a young girl during the Spanish Civil War, all of the texts that she published during the early part of her career were subject to censorship, and because the war took place during her early adolescence, her impressions of it likely evolved from a childlike perception to that of a powerless bystander (Sanz Villanueva 275), causing her to experience great psychological violence (Abellán 68). This perspective on recent history inspired many writers of Martín Gaité's generation to create literature as testimonials and criticism of the hardships they endured (Vilanova 175). This chapter focuses on an early work of prose by Martín Gaité, *El balneario*, which she wrote in 1953 and published as part of a collection of short narrative titled *Cuentos completos* in 1955.

That year, she won the Café Gijón literary prize, primarily for the work's technical and structural achievements (Olson Buck 113), including the novella's unique structure. The first part of *El balneario* differs from the second in both content and structure: the first part is narrated in first person; the second employs a third person omniscient voice. Both sections take place at a spa resort, and tell the story chronologically, but the two stories are different. In the first part, the protagonist is a woman of unspecified age who does not belong in the society she finds herself in, given that all of the resort guests are rich tourists who know each

other, and she is not. In the second part, the protagonist is a rich woman named Matilde, approximately thirty years of age, with many important social connections. Perhaps the most salient difference between the novella's first and second sections is in the love life of the protagonist. In the first part, she travels with Carlos, whom she introduces as her husband. In the second part we immediately realize that the first was just a dream: her husband Carlos was part of her dream, and she is single with no apparent boyfriend or lover. Additionally, the second section of the novella is presented in a manner that appears to diminish the importance of the first; however, a careful reading shows that the first part is the most important.

The novella begins with a woman traveling by bus to a hotel near a healing spring accompanied by a man named Carlos. The first thing the reader notices about the protagonist, who is also the narrator, is that she is very nervous. She does not want to look at either her companion or the bus attendant. Her internal monologue does not reveal why she doesn't want to look at anybody, but the way she describes herself indicates that her mental state is one of pure terror. She reacts to the world around her like a child or an animal. For example, her pulse beats like an oppressed fish: "[b]atía – pumba, pumba – igual que un pez oprimido" (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 192). She exists without a voice and is powerless in front of the outside world. She cannot even bring herself to discuss Carlos' unacceptable behavior with him – she wants to, but she knows she will not be capable of beginning that conversation (193). At the same time, she is very worried about the opinion others have of her and does not want anyone to think badly of her and Carlos. This *mîse-en-scene* both prepares the reader for the soon-to-increase paranoia of the main

character and raises doubts about the cause of her extreme anxiety. From the beginning of the story, she embodies the sort of powerless voicelessness of a teen who came of age during the Spanish Civil War to an adult life under Franco in which she is oppressed by patriarchal society (Vilanova 22). In addition to any possible influence of psychological violence the author may have experienced during her youth (Abellán 68) and young adulthood, this short novella composed of two parts is also marked by having undergone the same censorship process as all literary works of the time; a “prior consultation.” For that reason, the text could not contain any ideas or language that, to the eyes of the censor, undermined the institutions and morals of the regime (Labanyi, *Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture* 209). In spite of this, strong criticisms of Spanish society and the brutality of life under a dictatorship can be found camouflaged within the first section of the novella. These criticisms seem to lose importance upon reading the latter half of the story, in which the speaker reveals that the first part is a dream. The first section is widely seen as most important part of the novella, despite being a dream, although critical opinion is divided regarding the reason. Liliana Trevizan and Carla Olson Buck, develop a feminist analysis of this section, Julian Palley reads it from a Freudian perspective, Joan Lipman Brown maintains that the structure of the novella makes it “strange,” as in Tzvetan Todorov’s use of the term, which will be discussed in more detail shortly, Mirella Servodidio links the novella directly to Martín Gaité’s 1978 novel *El cuarto de atrás/The Back Room*, Gregorio C. Martin argues the fantastic elements are the most outstanding part of the story, and Gonzalo Sobejano analyzes the plot’s

denouement in an effort to discover whether true reality lies in the dream or the dreamer's real world.

None of the existent critiques of this work pay enough attention to the fact that it was censored by the Francoist regime, however, and none specifically analyze the political criticism within the novella. In the earliest article to appear in the U.S. about *El balneario*, which was published in 1978, Lipman Brown argues that the fantastical aspects of the novella coincide with Todorov's theories about "pure strangeness," *l'étrange pur*, a genre he defined in *Introduction à la littérature fantastique* as depicting "inexplicable" events that are explained rationally, in contrast to the marvelous and the fantastic, in which explanations are irrational or nonexistent (Lipman Brown 168). She concentrates her analysis on the structure of the novella, including uses of space and time, in order to praise Martín Gaité's narrative technique, stating that the novella's structure conditions the reaction and interpretation of the reader (166). Lipman Brown's analysis provides a window into the mental processes of a reader encountering *El balneario* for the first time; he does not know that he is reading about a dream; however, he will recognize that he is reading about something out of the ordinary. According to Todorov's theory, Lipman Brown says, the second half of the novella functions as an explanation for the first part, and makes it seem less strange (168).

However, upon encountering this work for the first time, I was not satisfied by the explanation that everything that happened in the first part was due to a nightmare induced by food-poisoning, or "[l]a mala digestión, el bacalao al pil-pil." (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 236). Why is the protagonist of the dream traveling with

a man who later abandons her? Why does he then disappear and die? While Lipman Brown argues the strange aspect of the dream is explained by it being dreamed, no satisfactory explanation exists for the content of the dream, which is too violent to ignore. Why did she dream that she had an inconsiderate and *machista* partner, and that he had died? If dreams are influenced by experiences during our waking lives (Freud 12), something should exist in Matilde's experience that better explains her very odd dream. In the latter half of the novella, Matilde describes the red busses full of tourists who come to the spa resort for the day, and the stories about the nearby old mill told by a doctor staying at the hotel (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 249). Yet the horrifying combination of these elements suggests that something more than the mere details of the hotel guests' daily lives are being represented in Matilde's dream. Perhaps the dream serves to express ideas that normally are not permitted given Neuschäfer's argument that censorship and dreams are related (Neuschäfer 45). This chapter will explore which lacunae in our understanding of the novella can be explained by thinking about this relationship. It will attempt to unravel, from the clues available, what the author felt compelled to refrain from saying.

Analyses published after Lipman Brown's also contribute important insights into the novella, but they also neglect to, or stop short of, discussing the effects of government censorship. In 1983, Servodidio and Welles published a collection of essays about Martín Gaité's novellas, including three that analyze *El balneario*. The first two essays, by Palley and Servodidio, compare the short novel with a longer one written decades later: *El cuarto de atrás* (1978). While both focus on the more recent novel, and concentrate to a lesser extent on the first one, the last article, by

Gonzalo Sobejano, attempts to summarize the characteristics present in all of Martín Gaité's novels, including a few pages on *El balneario*. By contrasting the communicative aspect of the dream with the incommunicative nature of real life, Sobejano touches on, but does not explicitly name, what I argue is the most important aspect of the novella: censorship.

Palley, who analyzes the novella from a Freudian perspective, maintains that the dream symbolizes the rebirth the protagonist wants to experience, and is also a sign of the anxiety that Matilde suffers in her real life. The worst problem about this life, according to Palley, is that it is boring. Aside from underestimating Matilde's problems, this analysis also completely ignores the social context and feminist content in the novella, stating that in the patriarchal society in which it takes place, a woman is "almost an object, an entity that desires to be possessed by man" (108). Palley's perception of women's sexuality is false. According to Maria-Antoinetta Macchiocchi, fascism requires an environment wherein healthy and free sexuality cannot exist. In addition to erasing female sexuality under the banner of chaste motherhood, it "castrates" all people and turns their sexual energies towards fervor for their dictator (80). Within fascist ideology, a woman is a second-class citizen limited to a few specific roles: a wife and mother, a nun (Macchiocchi 69), or a single woman who plays cards with her friends. Additionally, it does not make sense for Palley to discuss the desires of a woman living within this society without also mentioning the severe restrictions on both free speech and women's self-determination, given that both women's activities and all representations of female sexuality were tightly controlled. In order to voice her complaints, Martín Gaité

needed to disguise her frustrations in coded language to circumvent both restrictions on her self-expression, by couching her complaints in literary subterfuge.

Palley's comment is rooted in a citation from the beginning of the first part of the novella, which directly follows a description of the protagonist's admiration of Carlos' handsomeness, "[s]eguramente, Carlos podría detenerme y besarme en mitad de la avenida con un beso terriblemente largo, y ninguno se mezclaría. 'Será que le pertenece' dirían, 'será que tendría derechos sobre ella'" (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 202). This passage does not indicate a desire on the part of the woman to be possessed by Carlos, or identified as his wife, as both Palley and Olson Buck suggest (116). On the contrary, she expresses in other parts of the dream that she feels trapped in her relationship. What the dream protagonist wants is to enjoy a man's body without being punished for it, otherwise she would not have expressed her appreciation for Carlos' attractiveness right before imagining a possible public display of affection. It is for that reason that she specifies that she wants a "terribly long" kiss, a kiss that she can enjoy. I agree with Servodidio's claim that this passage highlights the protagonist's erotic desires (119). This excerpt from the novella contrasts the dream woman's erotic longings with Matilde's own romantic inexperience. Like many perennially single women, Matilde's understanding of what arouses her is conditioned not by events she has lived, but by what she has internalized from the culture around her: a man kissing a woman, the object of his desire, is a frequent image in film. Matilde wants a fulfilling life so badly that her dream includes the passionate embrace she has seen in movies but never had. She

wants not only to enjoy the kiss freely, but also to be desirable to men. The reader should never forget that Martín Gaité couldn't write explicitly about a woman's sexual appetite; in Francoist society, the official image of woman was that of the "angel of the hearth," and images of female-centered sexuality were censored entirely. Taking this censorship into account, Palley's allegation that men in this society perceived women as wanting to be possessed, in that their identity became subsumed with a husband's, is ridiculous. Wives, according to Martín Gaité herself, were absolved from everything besides supporting and/or putting up with their husbands (Martín Gaité, *Usos amorosos* 60), and at other points in the novel, the protagonist explicitly states a desire to do what she wishes and be free of Carlos' influence (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 193). These factors lead me to believe that the wish to be seen as Carlos' wife is not so overwhelming that it surpasses the protagonist's sexual imagination. As Trevizan points out, self-censorship (and official censorship) prevented Martín Gaité from writing too much about the physical relationship between her characters (98), but the clues in the text show that the protagonist both admires Carlos' body (in fact, this is about the only positive thing she has to say about him, the rest of the time she is either stressed by his power over her, annoyed with him, or worried about him) and has a nervous attitude towards everything, including being kissed by him.

Furthermore, a female author who attempted to undermine the idealized image of the Angel of the Hearth would need to do it in a much less obvious way—which is exactly what Martín Gaité does. Since it would not be appropriate under Francoist society to make a direct reference to her protagonist's sexual desires,

Martín Gaité disguises this idea by causing her character to express a “desire” to be a wife. Martín Gaité criticizes many aspects of Spanish society under Franco in this novella, a feat she accomplishes precisely because Palley’s is the most obvious reading; in other words, a story about the protagonist’s boredom and fear that that she will never achieve what she most wants—for others to consider her an ideal woman. Palley’s analysis is a good example of the official, superficial reading of the novella. By appearing to support Francoist ideals, Martín Gaité expresses the feelings of a woman who could not make her dreams reality, making a satisfying life for herself, but in fact she is criticizing these same ideals between the lines.

In contrast to Palley, Servodidio states that although many readers may be tempted to interpret the novella through a Freudian lens, this is not possible. In fact, she argues the novella doesn’t allow the reader to take any definitive answers from the text (120). Servodidio maintains that *El balneario* and *El cuarto de atrás* are exceptions to the exploration of the tensions between social forces and individual lives present throughout Martín Gaité’s work, and notes the two novellas focus on “dreamscapes and internal landscapes” rather than social problems (117). The novella “determines itself largely as a refusal of information,” she says, positing that the text raises questions that it does not answer (121). According to her interpretation of the text, the second part of the novella does not adequately solve the mysteries of the first part. In other words, it might seem that the ending offers a compelling interpretation for the previous passages, but because the novel leaves problems unsolved, the reader cannot find definitive answers to his questions within the text. Although she devotes much of her argument to what is absent in the

text, Servodidio also asserts the novella explains the effect of social conditioning on the protagonist's sexuality, which is characterized by elements of fear and desire (122). If the unsaid relates to the protagonist's sexuality, then there may be some truth to this assertion, as female sexuality was taboo under the Francoist regime. The unsaid *is* important; however, it's important because the reason *why* it remains unsaid must be taken into account.

Servodidio concludes that the use of dreams is an effective way to question what the protagonist felt could not be changed in the waking world, and to sublimate deception and self-deception, both of which are required to survive in an oppressive society:

...because dreams draw on elements from actual reality, combining them in disjointed and disconnecting ways, they also prove an effective vehicle for commenting on the real world, for questioning what is alleged to be inalterable, and for disclosing self-deceptions as well as the hoaxes and inanities of conventional beliefs (125). This conclusion undermines the article's introduction by suggesting the dream is utilized as a method to criticize the same oppression explored in Martín Gaité's other novels. It's contradictory to assert that Martín Gaité distanced herself from social criticism in these two novellas while also claiming she used dreams as a way to question society. I argue it would be more accurate to state that these two novellas are not obvious criticisms, but rather examples of a type of criticism meant for a reader who can understand the work at a deeper level than what is said on the surface.

One literary style that depends on an absence of narrative authority is social realism, a genre that, as I stated in Chapter 1, can be seen as a common mode of

dissent through literature. According to a scholar contemporary to Martín Gaité, J. M. Castellet, the progressive disappearance of explicit textual references to a work's author was one of the more important features of Spanish realist narrative in the 20th century. This substitution of cold, wholly objective narrative for editorial comment on the content by the author, the author argues, is not unintentional (Castellet 19). Rather, Castellet argues, the change has been in how authors approach their work, and the question is why they have disappeared as vocal agents within the worlds they have created (20). This process encompassed several transitions; from the editorialized third-person narrative of the 19th century, to a preference for first-person narration, to inner monologues, to objective narration (Castellet 19). In *El balneario*, Martín Gaité employs all of those, in roughly that order. Matilde's dream is narrated in first person from the perspective of the woman in the dream, she undergoes a brief inner monologue when Santi, the bellboy, wakes her up, and the entire end of the novella is narrated quite objectively, in the third person, with an entirely imperceptible narrator (236).

A clear advantage of an author's self-removal from his text is that he can claim that his role has been reduced from writer to describer, he is only committing what happens to paper as a camcorder records video of events, not forming opinions about those events (Castellet 35). If the author omits his or her opinions about this novel's plot, then he cannot be accused of harboring any; a feature that would be helpful if he were writing without the benefit of complete freedom of expression, such as did writers in Franco-era Spain. Castellet also outlines several characteristics shared by these new novels, specifying that nonlinear plot structure

and intentionally confusing language as examples (39). The purpose of these structural and linguistic choices, he argues, is to allow the reader unparalleled abilities to interpret the meaning of the work himself (40). If the interpretation is the reader's own, the author also cannot be held accountable for the creations of the readers' imagination, even if he has chosen the "nonobjective" nature of his writing intentionally to steer readers towards the conclusion he desires from them, driving him, for example, to feel the author's dissatisfaction with life (Castellet 43).

Importantly, the reader needs to expend considerable effort in order to understand the meaning of a text. Much as Lipman Brown signaled the self-identification of the first-time reader of *El balneario* with the dreamer's literal awakening and reconciliation with reality as part of Todorov's *l'étrange pur*, Castellet affirms the intentionality of a creative act as architecturally designed to guide the reader's ability to come to the correct conclusion about the novel. Castellet's theoretical work, like Martín Gaité's fictional one, was also written under the influence of censorship, and it is not unreasonable to suggest that his volume *La hora del lector* is at least partially intended as an instructional manual for writers wishing to express their discontents in a more legally permissible manner. Martín Gaité's erasure of her vocal self from her novella (the entirety of which is told in the narrative styles Castellet identifies as crucial components of reader-directed interpretive work) ensures that her readers (including her censors) either take ownership of their interpretation or read it so superficially as to miss the point.

In another article on the novella, "Carmen Martín Gaité y María Luisa Bombal: una misma estrategia subversiva," Lilliana Trevizan presents an analysis

that comes closer to my interpretation of the story. Trevizan compares *El balneario* to the novella *La última niebla* by the Chilean author María Luisa Bombal to illustrate that both works use the same subversive strategy to elaborate a feminist discourse. She proposes that the juxtaposition of dreams with real life, as described in the “official text” of the novella, allows the novelists to criticize the patriarchal hegemony of their societies. This use of “marginal discourse” within the “official text” permits both writers to talk about women’s desires that run counter to traditional gender roles. This feminist analysis focuses to a large extent on self-censorship and the unsaid; however, Trevizan neglects to mention the official censorship forced upon Martín Gaité and all other Spanish authors who wished to publish in Spain during the dictatorship. In my opinion, Trevizan’s concept of a “marginal text” is still indispensable for a full understanding of the novella, but for different reasons. I argue that use of a “discourse of censorship,” as defined by Neuschäfer, would include tactics such as those employed by Martín Gaité, as well as María Luisa Bombal, to hide the parts of their message that contradict the Francoist ideology.

Like Trevizan, Carla Olson Buck (1996) develops a feminist analysis upon the idea that the dream symbolizes the protagonist’s quest for identity. As did Palley and Servodidio, Trevizan also finds much support for her argument in Martín Gaité’s more recent works; however, she selects a different text: an essay about “odd girls,” women who did not want to be defined based on their relationships with men—who would rather leave their childhood homes and develop their own interests and identities independently from their families. Where Palley misunderstands the

relationship between the protagonist and Carlos, Olson Buck is correct in identifying the many ways in which Carlos's controlling and demanding behavior inspires sensations of anxiety and oppression, not tenderness and satisfaction (115). This is important since the protagonist in no way idealizes the matrimonial bond. The woman in the dream attributes her speechlessness directly to Carlos' lack of respect for her and her ideas, describing him as "...[E]ste hombre absorbente que me condiciona, que limita y atrofia mis palabras" (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 193). When she attempts to speak up, he shuts her down and puts her in her place, as when she advises him to check on hotel prices (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 203). What Matilde, the woman whose nightmare comprises the novella's first part, wants is a more interesting and independent life than the one she lives. Olson Buck briefly considers the era's political situation at the end of her essay, but ultimately doesn't take the opportunity to consider the novella with a greater emphasis on its political context.

While the majority of studies about this novella concentrate on either its structural or feminist aspects, one chooses an entirely different reading. In 2003, Gregorio C. Martín published an article that focuses on the fantasies experienced by the bellboy immediately prior to opening the door at the beginning of the second half of the novella. Martín almost completely ignores the first part of the story, as well as the majority of the second. His argument, which is at the very least original, focuses so much on the experience of the fifteen-year-old bellboy that he appears to view the majority of the novella as nothing more than background for the aborted heroism of the boy. The most salient aspect of his analysis is a reflection upon how popular culture (which was also controlled by the Francoist government),

specifically film, can condition our reactions to the events in our lives. Since saving a lady in danger is one of the deeds that prove a man's merit, the bellboy imagines Matilde as a robbery or rape victim—and himself as the hero in her story. His fantasies are clearly influenced by the *machista* messages in the media. This, in itself, explains one of the motivations behind governmental censorship within a dictatorship: Because of the media's strong influence on people's desires, it is to a totalitarian leader's best interest to forbid the press, publishers, and entertainment industry from presenting materials with the potential to make people question their society's rules, and only permit images and messages that reinforce the ideals of the regime. Even though Martin pays very little attention to the novella's protagonist, his reaction to the text allows a reader familiar with Francoist censorship to see how social norms affect everyone who lives under a dictatorship.

Out of all of these interpretations, those by Servodidio, Sobejano, Trevizán, and Olson Buck most overtly approach the topic of political repression and lack of freedom of expression, but their analyses do not concentrate sufficiently on the pre-market censorship to which the novella was subject. As I stated in Chapter 1, Neuschäfer, who wrote one of the first internationally available studies of Francoist censorship, explains that the censors considered three questions about a new literary work: Does it violate sexual mores, contradict Catholic dogma, or criticize the regime or its representatives? (Neuschäfer 49). In addition, Neuschäfer affirms that censorship, in spite of blocking expression, also stimulated the imagination, and that various techniques used by authors allowed them to, to a certain extent, circumvent thematic prohibitions. For example, he suggests authors could express

their ideas indirectly, by means of allusions, “moderate” the discourse, and treat communication as if it were contraband, disguising the message with various tropes, such as using an isolated house as a stand-in for Spain (Neuschäfer 56).

Keeping in mind the split structure of the novella’s first and second parts; Neuschäfer’s ideas may be used to continue this analysis in greater detail. I argue that Martín Gaité frequently moderates her language, as well as uses other distinct tactics, in order to disguise her discourse in this short novella. One way in which she moderates the discourse is by hiding it within the dream from the first part of the novella; the fantasy element hides her criticism of life under a dictatorship. Another way in which Martín Gaité moderates, or dissimulates, the discourse may be seen in the description of the mill, which lies in ruins near the hotel due to a long-ago war (198). Here the narrator discusses the many people who were killed in the building during that war:

... el molino se había incendiado muchos años atrás, de noche, en una noche lúgubre de muchas matanzas, y que las llamas eran las más altas que nunca se vieron. Que, desde entonces, muchas personas se embrujaban y venían a morir a este lugar (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 199-200).

In the second part of the novella, the protagonist describes stories told by a doctor who stayed at the hotel the previous year. She says that he told ghost stories about the mill, “contaba cosas de ese molino, leyendas de aparecidos y fantasmas para asustar a las señoras. Pero ya se sabe que esas cosas son mentira...” (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 249). We see here that Martín Gaité moderates her discourse in two ways: she puts the war in a distant past and diminishes the brutality described in the first part by attributing the source to a jokester guest. It wasn’t prohibited to make references to the Spanish Civil War after 1948; however, no one could publish

statements that criticized Franco or those who supported him (Abellán 19). In other words, an author could write about the brutality of war in general, but not the brutal practices of one of the factions involved in that recent war. The images that Martín Gaité creates of the mill, as it exists in the dreamed landscape, evoke terror and signal the violence that still affects the contemporaries of the novella's characters.

The other trope mentioned by Neuschäfer, an isolated house, is also present in this novella, though in a different form. The action takes place on a bus, at a rural spa resort surrounded by mountains, and in a hotel room. The resort is portrayed as an insular system, separated from the rest of the world, as seen in the description of the topography around the hotel, as well as its other spaces, such as hallways and rooms. At one point, the dream protagonist considers what might exist on the other side of the mountains, but doesn't dare find out for many reasons, most notably her fear of disobeying Carlos. Among the critics who mention this fear is Olson Buck, noting that the resort represents enclosure and that it's a suffocating space (116). In addition, Lipman Brown argues that the hallways with many doors, the uniformed staff, and the paranoia experienced by its guests combine to symbolize an asylum (171). Although the dream protagonist would like to leave this "cage," she cannot. If the hotel in *El balneario* represents Spain, the characterization of the establishment constitutes a powerful criticism of society under a dictatorship. Lipman Brown's description perfectly captures this sense of the hotel/society as a closed space ostensibly beneficial to those who populate it, but in reality filled with anxiety and paranoia. By desiring to peer over the mountains, the dream protagonist expresses

an interest in the outside world—and also her sense that life under the regime is ultimately unsatisfactory.

In addition to using isolation to symbolize the country, Martín Gaité creates enclosed spaces characterized by claustrophobia. The bus and the hotel room evoke this feeling in the dream protagonist. On the bus, she is nervous and feels trapped, comparing herself with someone obliged to appear before a court (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 192). In these passages it's clear that the protagonist finds herself in a situation in which she cannot know if someone close to her works for the regime. Since this part of the novella concerns a dream, perfectly explained rationally as being the result of food poisoning, it would be unlikely to concern the censor tasked with reviewing the story. Moreover, it may have escaped criticism since Martín Gaité's work was most popular among an elite group of intellectuals, and therefore not likely to challenge the assumptions of a wide segment of the population (Labanyi, *Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture* 214). When Carlos leaves for the mill, the protagonist searches him out since being alone in the room makes her feel impotent at not being able to help her man if he should need it. According to Olson Buck, the mill represents Carlos' desire to distance himself from his companion (115), a significant point since it reminds the reader that although Carlos can make the decision to act alone, she cannot. The protagonist remains trapped in the resort, unable to travel where she pleases, including the other side of the mountains, as she reveals shortly upon her arrival to the bus stop nearest the spa (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 198).

Martin also writes about the role of physical space in his article, *El balneario, la literatura como desquite*, focusing on the architectural detail of each setting in the novella. Of the bridge near the bus stop, he notes that on one side lay the hotel and daily life; the other home to the mill, mystery, uncertainty, and dreams. The bridge itself is unassociated with the places it connects, and represents both possibilities and boundaries (Martin). The door to the room is also a significant divider: “Separa dimensiones, planos... posibilidades hasta límites insospechables” (Martin 122). This is important for the same reasons as the mountains surrounding the resort: there are limits that those living under a dictatorship cannot cross. What rests on the other side of this division awakes curiosity, growing into the subject of private fantasies, since it remains beyond the reach of trapped citizens. If, as Martin seems to suggest (123), this spatial representation illustrates a binary relationship between the current (restrictive) location and another place with less security but more possibilities, then it is important that in the two scenes mentioned by Martin, as well as the scene discussed by Olson Buck, the characters are in a location that limits them, while the other place in that binary relationship is the one that inspires interest and yearning. Their situation bears similarity to that of the Spanish people in the middle of the 20th century, who also could not leave their country to explore the potential outside of it. Olson Buck speaks to this while summarizing the different parts of the novella’s setting:

Its [the novella’s] setting point[s] towards the extratextual referent of postwar Spain where an authoritarian regime interprets reality, assigns roles, and equates the soporific state of its citizens with peace. Only the transformative power of dreams can disturb the peace of this setting and then only for brief moments (Olson Buck 122).

In this assertion, Olson Buck approaches the topic of repression but stops short of discussing censorship. If dreams are a way to escape the quotidian and oppressive aspects of life during the postwar era, then a literature that references dreams fulfills two functions: representing individuals' true desires and contrasting the relative freedom of life within a dream life to the limits and restrictions in waking life. It is clear that this setting serves as a metaphor for country. In addition, the continuous use of closed, isolated spaces separated from other, more interesting spaces, reinforces this idea.

In addition to criticizing the dictatorship through the use of these spaces within the novella, Martín Gaité criticizes one aspect of Francoist society in particular: the oppression of women, for whom there is only one acceptable social role—being exemplary wives and devoted mothers. As previously stated in this chapter, Palley misunderstands Spanish/Francoist patriarchy when claiming that the dream proves that Matilde wishes to be married. Her real desire seems to be to experience sexual pleasure, and also be considered an ideal woman. The feminist critique present in the novella is part of a much larger critique that includes the entire society. This criticism can be divided in two parts, corresponding to the two divisions in the novella. The first criticizes the institution of marriage; the second emphasizes the problems inherent in being single in a society that demands that all women marry. Some critics, like Palley, claim the dream represents Matilde's wish to marry. I, however, argue that this is not the case.

Firstly, it should not be assumed that the two protagonists are Matilde without looking to the novella for evidence. Many critics disagree whether the

dream protagonist is Matilde or another person. Lipman Brown, Palley, Servodidio, and Olson Buck conclude the two women are the same person; Trevizan maintains that she has no clear identity: "...la protagonista... no tiene nombre, edad, rasgos físicos..." (Trevizan 95). Martin does not offer a clear position on the matter, but based on his assertion that the divisions between reality and fantasy are quite strong, he likely classifies the dream protagonist as the fantastical product of the real woman's imagination. I agree with Trevizan and Martin. No evidence exists in the first part of the novella that the dream protagonist is necessarily Matilde. Instead, in the same way that many dreams reflect experiences from waking life, her dream is merely a reflection of her experiences and frustrations. Although it is true that what is known about the woman in the dream may be similar to Matilde—that she travels to a spa resort accompanied by Carlos and that she rents a room in a luxurious hotel with a mineral spring, thereby suggesting they too belong to the upper or upper-middle classes—little else may be gleaned about her identity from the plot. Not even the protagonist's marital status is clear since the "I" of the dream is not necessarily the same as the "I" of real life.

Much like they question the identity of the dream protagonist, Trevizan and Martin also debate whether the couple is married, whereas the other critics regard the dream protagonist's marriage to Carlos as almost a forgone conclusion. Their relationship status is significant since the protagonist's emotions and reactions to Carlos, including physical attraction, would be accepted as appropriate by a contemporary under the condition of matrimony, but completely outside the bounds of polite society as an unmarried couple. Lipman Brown argues the two are

a typical middle-aged married couple, and throughout her analysis characterizes their relationship in this manner, as it pertains to the Matilde's paranoia upon arrival at the resort. Matilde is obsessed with what the rest of the world might think about her or Carlos, who, in stark contrast, grows bored with her concerns and chooses to avoid his companion or wife by fleeing towards the mill. Servodidio presents an analysis in which Carlos is a husband/lover, tyrant/protector and guard/thief; in addition, she maintains that, for Matilde, Carlos is a source of sexual arousal (119). Olson Buck, another critic who regards Matilde and Carlos as married in the dream, argues that the dream protagonist is married to a fictitious Carlos and that a real Carlos exists for the purpose of exposing her opinions about marriage; that she is frustrated and powerless, and that she suspects that the role of wife is not natural for her (114). She also develops a more feminist analysis than the others. In her analysis, Carlos represents all the impediments Matilde faces as she tries (and fails) to reach her goals (Olson Buck 115). In the description of the relationship there is a rejection of traditional gender roles on Matilde's part (Olson Buck 118) and a critique of the marginalization of single women. As Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar point out, "[i]t is debilitating to be *any* woman in a society where women are warned that if they do not behave, they must be monsters" (53), so Matilde, living in a milieu that refuses to allow her to develop as an independent individual, experiences life as claustrophobic and limiting.

Trevizan and Martin, on the other hand, do not accept that the novella shows these two individuals as married. Trevizan points out that the reader does not know anything about the protagonist and asserts that Carlos' name is meant to evoke male

characters from “las novelas rosas,” a strong, decisive, dominant and enigmatic personality who causes the protagonist to fear and depend on him (Trevizan 96). Martin does not offer an opinion about the marital status of the characters, but argues that the relationship is principally characterized by anxiety and fear, adding that the two people are separate souls with differing goals; he wants her to follow him without question, and she recurs to her imagination to fill the void in a relationship she finds unsatisfying (122). There are two possible scenarios regarding to the protagonist’s marital status worth consideration: either she and Carlos are married, and their relationship represents something that is unattainable for her, or they are not married. Each of these two readings fit within the discourse of censorship without requiring the characters to be married because, in the first case, the novel does not challenge Catholic moral rules about female sexuality, and, in the second case, the dream protagonist becomes part of a cautionary tale consistent with those rules. If Carlos, the husband, as Olson Buck says, is principally an obstacle for the protagonist’s personal desires and goals, he may symbolize the repression faced by all Spanish people under Franco, in addition to criticizing the repression of women in a society that requires them to comply with the only socially acceptable role that they have been assigned. In addition, it may also be that Matilde, in her dream, remembers some prior experiences in her life or in the life of another woman she knows.

At the beginning of the second part of the novella, Martín Gaité reveals that Matilde is single when the bellboy addresses her as “Señorita Matilde” (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 230). This citation notwithstanding, many critics regard the protagonist

as married in the dream, but the novella presents clues to indicate that this is not necessarily the case. Upon her arrival at the hotel, the protagonist's internal monologue reveals that she enjoys hearing Carlos referred to as her husband. "Me gustaba mucho decir en voz alta 'mi marido,' y oír que los demás me lo decían. Tenía miedo de que no resonaran bastante las palabras y que no se oyesen alrededor, miedo de estarlas inventando yo misma" (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 204). In the scene mentioned by Palley, the protagonist wants everyone to regard her as married, but that may be due to a desire to be perceived as an "ideal woman," not a desire to be Carlos' wife. Rather, it is likely that she wishes to disconnect herself from her patriarchal society's image of a single woman as a pathetic, aberrant spinster. It is possible to infer from these two scenes that what is truly important to the protagonist is only that everyone perceive her as married. An individual's marital status is an extremely important aspect of his or her identity, not knowing it is roughly equivalent to not knowing a person's name or age. The protagonist experiences a certain amount of confusion regarding her own status. Her willingness to consider that her marriage to Carlos is a lie, therefore, is meaningful. The emphasis placed on words such as "los demás" make it clear that what is truly important to the protagonist is others' opinion of her honor. When she speaks about her desire for Carlos to kiss her on the street without piquing others' curiosity or anger, the real goal is for others to believe the two are married and not merely (and scandalously) a pair of lovers. However, besides the importance placed on marriage by the regime, especially for women, for what other reasons might it be so important that they are perceived as a husband and wife? It's possible the dream

protagonist and Carlos are a young, unwed couple traveling in a world full of hostility towards relationships between men and women—or that they are escaping from some negative situation in their normal life.

The dream protagonist's anxiety has two specific sources: the desire for others to see her as a married woman and a more general confusion over her identity. This confusion is first revealed when, immediately after entering the hotel room, she expresses a desire to look at her passport to confirm her identity.

Servodidio and Olson Buck both refer to this scene, noting the lack of control felt by the protagonist and also her need to resolve this mystery about her identity. Palley, on the other hand, believes that this wish to see the passport is a sign of irrational anxiety (108). Nevertheless, if it's taken into account that the two characters may have assumed false identities upon checking into the hotel, the protagonist's wish to verify her identity isn't an "irrational" urge. As the following excerpt shows, the dream protagonist possesses many questions about her identity, and is very worried about not having the papers to prove it—going so far as to call the passports their "lifesavers":

Carlos, aquí nos conocen. Te lo aseguro. Sospechan de nosotros... Dicen que somos extranjeros... Nosotros no somos extranjeros, ¿verdad? ... Déjame ver los pasaportes." Teníamos que tener pasaportes, esos cuadernitos verdes, pequeños y alargados que todo el mundo tiene. En ellos se han superpuesto muchas firmas y advertencias importantes, que nos marcan y acompañan siempre... Aquellos papeles eran nuestra salvaguardia... Diría si estaba casada o no con Carlos, y a lo mejor hablaba de nuestra conducta (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 205).

The protagonist's two beliefs, that the other hotel guests know their identities, and that they also must be foreigners are ambiguous and contradictory. If the passports

are green, as they were in Franco-era Spain, it's likely they're not foreign; however, the question is not whether she knows their color, but if she doubts that they are green, in which case the passports may have been issued in another country. Also noteworthy is the misgivings the protagonist reveals regarding her marital status; in addition to a desire to ensure she is not seen as a foreigner, she also wishes to reaffirm she has a husband. When she equates the passports to a "lifesaver," she indicates that, for her, the identity inscribed on the document will "save" her from the situation she finds herself in, a situation that causes her significant anxiety. Martín Gaité also illustrates the great importance of passports in Franco-era society. By emphasizing that the passports contain crucial signatures and warnings, as well as the bearer's legal history, she constructs a narrative that depicts a state of sheer terror and anxiety, in which her behavior is constantly under surveillance. Moreover, the protagonist's statement about being spied upon (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 209) suggests a criticism of the police state in which she lives, where all possible actions require permission.

In fact, the dream protagonist's anxiety is so centered upon a fear that others will be suspicious of her, or of Carlos, that her thoughts may be taken to indicate her travels are more than a pleasant vacation. At first, as she struggles to reconstruct her personal memories, she possesses insufficient knowledge about her own situation, and she has difficulty gaining the information she requires. The impotence she feels at the beginning of the novella has already been noted, as she describes herself as like "an oppressed fish." She understands something is unusual about her circumstances, but not what precisely is wrong. If it's understood that the characters

in Martín Gaité's work live under a fascist dictatorship, their socio-political environment explains the overwhelming sense of paranoia present in this story. The protagonist's lack of information about her situation is a large part of her discomfort, although she does appear to understand that sticking out in any way is looked down upon by society, which explains her eagerness to justify any strange behavior by Carlos at the beginning of the dream, claiming that he is acting rude because he is ill. "Perdone usted, cobrador... Acepte mis sinceras excusas. Mi marido, ¿sabe usted? viene algo enfermo" (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 194). As the dream progresses, the protagonist's awareness of her surroundings and suspicion of others' motives grows.

From feeling an indescribable need to excuse her companion's behavior, she arrives at the conclusion that Carlos is in trouble with some unidentified authority figure—and pursued for some unknown crime; "Sin duda le perseguían por haber cometido algún delito que yo ignoraba" (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 213). Again, the protagonist's emotional experience is defined by a lack of knowledge about her circumstances. First, she feels a need to defend his behavior so as not to arouse suspicion. Then, she intuits that he has done something wrong, but she does not know what. The dream protagonist's confusion about her circumstances is also evident in her earlier worries that something bad could happen to her in the faraway place they're headed. Her experience is characterized principally by anxiety and disbelief. Her tone of voice is childlike as she frets that too much time has passed and expresses uncertainty about her future; she does not believe that she and Carlos are really going to live at the resort. "Si nos pasara algo aquí, tan lejos..."

Tenía muchas ganas de llegar al hotel, de que ya se hubiera pasado un día, para convencerme que era verdad que íbamos a vivir en este sitio” (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 199). I describe her tone as childlike since she seems to have followed Carlos blindly into this adventure and not to have chosen it for herself. She is unsure about whether the day will end as she plans because she does not feel ownership of the decision to spend a significant portion of time at the hotel.¹¹ It’s also clear that the hotel is located relatively far away from the protagonist and Carlos’ point of origin, and that she has found the bus ride agonizing. In contrast to the busses full of day-trippers (Martín Gaité, *El balneario* 250), the dream protagonist does not exhibit unbridled excitement about spending some time at a resort—she is upset, nervous, and paranoid. It has been evident from the novella’s opening sentences that the dream protagonist is ambivalent at best about her journey and scared at worst about being dragged along on Carlos’s flight from the law.

However, an important change occurs in the dream protagonist’s outlook after Carlos leaves the hotel room for a walk. Although she starts unpacking suitcases and setting up the room, she eventually rebels, throws the clothing everywhere, and decides to go out in search of her companion. It is at this point that she finally develops some agency of her own, and makes decisions herself. Unfortunately, she still finds herself confined throughout the hotel, only beginning to feel better as she reaches the crowds around the springs. Both scenes form part of

¹¹ Later, a hotel worker asks the protagonist whether she “lives” at the hotel, rather than “is staying” there, and she answers affirmatively. Carmen Martín Gaité, “El balneario,” Carmen Martín Gaité, *Cuentos completos*, 9th Edition (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1998) 191-252.

a larger arc in which the protagonist attempts to transition from a scared woman in the oppressive company of her man to a decisive, self-propelled woman. Since the dream narrative is abruptly cut off right as she both loses Carlos to the violent mob near the mill and begins to be convinced of her own power, the reader never gets to see her self-actualization occur. Instead, the bellboy wakes Matilde from her midday nightmare and the reader learns that nothing in the dream happened. In place of the image of a self-directed woman heroically attempting to save her man from danger, Martín Gaité imposes a description of a vaguely pathetic husbandless thirty-something with nothing better to do than worry about her appearance and card games. As we have seen, in this novella, Martín Gaité criticizes the oppression of female sexuality, Spain's insularity, and the isolation of individuals due to the lack of the ability to communicate freely. She criticizes the brutality of war, moderating her discourse through the use of the mill—in the dream and in the stories a doctor tells to scare the resort's female guests—and also society's deceptive nature by creating an environment with many doors but no place to go.

CHAPTER III

THE FOREIGN GAZE AND THE FORGOTTEN VOICE OF A MISFIT ADOLESCENT

GIRL: SELF-CENSORSHIP IN *ENTRE VISILLOS*

Like the novella she published in 1955, *El balneario*, Carmen Martín Gaité's 1958 novel, *Entre visillos*, is also full of small criticisms of Franco's regime and the suffocating social atmosphere of life under his dictatorship. In *Entre visillos*, like in her earlier work, Martín Gaité uses many of the tropes Neuschäfer identified as part of his discourse of censorship to disguise her critical view of the characters' situations. This time, instead of setting the plot in a specific isolated location, Martín Gaité develops a setting consisting of a series of houses, families, and individuals isolated from the larger world by their provincial outlook on life. The setting that she creates also embodies an environment in which constant surveillance and coercion into conformity are part of the town's physical structure: the cathedral tower and casino balcony both function as Foucault's figurative rendering of Bentham's Panopticon (Gagliardi 433). As part of her concentration on the lives of a few adolescent girls and young women, she situates the plot in the world of women, and much of the action transpires inside the home. By setting the novel's events in a provincial city, she emphasizes the primitivism of her society in comparison to the more cosmopolitan outside world. Additionally, this juxtaposition underscores the problems that result from having to live in a claustrophobic environment disconnected from the rest of the world. Her main criticisms are the absence of free

communication and the scarcity of respectable options for women desiring a life that did not center on a husband and children.

One of the most significant steps Martín Gaité takes in order to criticize the regime and her society is her choice of narrative structure for the novel. While a significant part of the story is narrated in the third person, other portions are not. She also chooses a young adolescent girl, Natalia Ruiz (who goes by Tali, and whose narration takes the form of diary entries), and a foreigner from Germany, Pablo Klein, to relate portions of the plot to the reader. Klein can express his dissatisfaction with his surroundings in a way that no Spanish person can (Neuschäfer 69). Because he is an outsider, he does not have to prove his loyalty to the regime or worry about failing to be the ideal Spaniard. Tali, the other narrator, is the youngest of three sisters. At first glance, her youth and gender might seem to make her diary's contents both less important and less influential than texts written by older, male writers. In fact, the censors accepted the novel because it was a novel about girls, and they judged the work to be frivolous and harmless. Some small obscenities were removed but the novel was published without fundamental changes (Neuschäfer 319). To the censor's eyes, the novel lacked any trace of ideas the regime considered problematic. He may have believed that the novel was ideologically unobjectionable and nonthreatening, but this does not confirm that the novel poses a noncritical view of society. Rather, his opinion only shows that Martín Gaité's discourse challenged Francoist social norms in a way that was so well disguised that the censor could not see it for what it was. Alternately, he did not

think most people could, and that the protests within were only evident to someone who knew (how) to look for them.

The extant criticism of this novel is more diverse than the criticism of *El balneario*, but it is still problematic. Some articles begin with an analysis of the universal oppression that existed under Franco's regime, and the others are rooted in either feminist theory or structural analysis. Feminism is indispensable for a complete understanding of Martín Gaité's work, but only as a part of a larger critique of Francoist repression in general. Sandra Clevenger points to Martín Gaité's rejection of the term "feminist," but explains that her ideas coincided with those of many contemporary feminists; specifically in her belief that women are capable of resisting their oppression and that they should not blindly accept their prescribed role (87). On the other hand, Martín Gaité says that women who truly wanted something other than marriage and self-sacrificing motherhood are "odd" and that, owing to a unique mentality that inspires them to look for other ways of living, social change is bound to happen (47). The most relevant point is the willingness to rebel against social norms. If we take for granted that, as Martín Gaité seems to assert, the situation of Spain's women could change by the sheer will of some odd girls, then the author must believe that the oppressive norms of her society are also temporary. The inevitability of change and the implied weakness of the current system becomes the main criticism present in the novel.

The novel begins with a diary entry by Tali, a young student at a primarily working-class girls' high school and the youngest daughter of a successful businessman, who exchanges the narrative voice with Pablo Klein, a German

national who lived in the provincial city as a child and has returned to teach German language classes at Tali's school, the Instituto de Media Enseñanza. The plot begins in the fall and ends just before Christmas. It follows the lives of Pablo, Tali, and several other people each of them know; Tali's sister Julia; her childhood best friend, Gertru; and Elvira, the daughter of the recently deceased principal of the Tali's school. Tali lives with her older sisters, her father, and Concha, the unmarried aunt who has occupied a maternal role in the girls' lives since their mother died giving birth to Tali. The reader also catches glimpses of other women's lives through Martín Gaité's descriptions of the main characters' friends and through the story of Rosa, the singer who works as an entertainer at the local casino and lives in the same boarding house as Pablo. At the novel's conclusion, some of the narrative threads remain unresolved, requiring the readers to make inferences about the futures of these characters. The incomplete resolution of these subplots allows the work's implicit criticism of the regime to remain disguised. Lynn K. Talbot explains the problems faced by the novel's female characters well, and also states that the novel's resolution is unclear. The reader does not know how Tali or her sister Julia's lives will unroll, and intuits that the majority of the female characters will lead unhappy lives. However, "[t]he initial break, providing hope for the future, assumes greater importance" (90).

John Kronik, in his essay "A Splice of Life: Carmen Martín Gaité's *Entre visillos*," further affirms that the novel's protests against the social norms for young women are reinforced by the absence of a happy ending; however, the failure experienced by each character's attempt to "transcend the structure's

conventionalism” (Kronik 51) does not preclude hope for a better future for men and women in future generations. This emphasis on unspoken hope is critical; Talbot seems to forget that a happy ending for the women that would allow them to act on their own desires would be problematic to the regime’s watchful eye. It is not a coincidence that Tali, the youngest and most important female character in the novel, is the one most internally influenced by subversive, foreign ideas; she may have her dreams dashed at the end of the novel, but she remains a girl of sixteen who may yet find the courage to determine the course of her own life. At the end of the novel, she is disappointed, depressed, and unable to think past her perceived abandonment by Klein, but she has also witnessed her older sister’s defiance of family expectations and been taught to question her circumstances.

A sentence taken from the beginning of Kronik’s essay perfectly summarizes the importance of the novel as a testament to Spanish life during the postwar period: “Just as Natalia early on raises the curtains of her room ever so slightly to inspect the scene outside, Martín Gaité’s novel reveals the reality that lies beyond its words” (Kronik 50). This statement, especially the latter segment, implies that readers’ perceptions are marked by their experiences, which allow them to understand more about the how the characters negotiate their role in society than is evident from an analysis limited to the text itself; implied ideas are just as crucial as explicit ones. This thought supports a reading of *Entre visillos* that concentrates on a search for criticism hidden between the lines, although the rest of Kronik’s article does not consider this theme. In fact, Kronik reads the novel more as if it were a criticism of the provincialism and traditionalism that govern daily life in a small city.

He says that it is not possible to tell whether the negative conditions portrayed in the novel result from human nature, Francoism, or provincial life (Kronik 50). Those negative conditions stemmed from a variety of causes, but I argue that ignoring Francoism's role as at least an aggravating factor is a serious omission. Additionally, Franco promoted a more traditional way of life, so social conservatism and his dictatorship functioned together to maintain the power structure of provincial society. I agree with Tiffany D. Gagliardi when she states in her article "Determined, Detached, and Drowning: The Use of Rhetoric of Enclosure in Carmen Martín Gaité's *Entre visillos*," that these rigid gender roles to which everyone was expected to conform were dependent on "[b]oth the self-imposed and societal censorship of women and men throughout Spain" (432).

If, over the course of *Entre visillos*'s plot, Martín Gaité explores the various ways that fascism and restricted communication inhibits the ability of women to determine the course of their own dreams and create a contented life for themselves, Tali, Julia, Alicia and Rosa each embody quests of women whose desires are constrained by their patriarchal society while Gertru, her married sister Josefina, Elvira, Tía Concha, and Mercedes exemplify the pitfalls of subscribing to traditional mores. In order to build upon Lynn K. Talbot's study (based on a post-Jungian dialectic), exploring the character development of the novel's women as exemplars of these different archetypes, I focus on each woman's struggle with an inability to express herself that has been hardwired into her being by patriarchy and Francoist censorship. Specifically, Talbot confirms that Tali and Elvira represent women who are seen as grotesque for choosing not to spend their youth in search of

a boyfriend (82), Gertru exemplifies the young woman who follows all of society's rules for her sex, and Rosa, a minor character who works as a casino entertainer, is seen by society as no better than a prostitute.

Tali is awakened by her German teacher to a logical thought process that considers her personal wishes, he helps her find the words to question why her father's opinions should influence her career choice. When he leaves town, Tali is left with unresolved doubts about her future and the ending does not inform the reader about what Tali will do with her life. Julia, unlike Tali, wishes merely for marriage to a man of whom her family disapproves and a life with him in Madrid; she finds herself trapped between her father's inflexibility and her fiancé's stubbornness and spends her autumn growing more convinced of her right to escape the stifling atmosphere of her provincial town. That her goal is to marry Miguel is no accident; as Gagliardi points out, the socially significant institution of marriage is an acceptable way for a woman to alter her life (436). At the end of the novel, Julia leaves for Madrid to live with relatives until she and Miguel can marry. Nonetheless, her happiness after she gets off the train is uncertain since Miguel exhibits a profound disregard for her feelings at several points throughout the novel, Julia may be merely trading in one oppressive male guardian for another. Lastly, Alicia expresses a desire to return to her village in Burgos, live with her grandmother, and teach the villagers to read (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 223), but she also supposes that it would be more realistic to find some sort of work that does not require a costly, time-consuming university education, suggesting that a job as a

postal worker or with the RENFE train company would be a better fit for her circumstances (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 192, 193).

As Carmen Alcalde rightfully points out during her interview with the authors of *Feminismo ante el franquismo*, feminism's main difficulty has historically been getting enough women together to fight for their equality; bourgeois women have been and are too financially comfortable to join the struggle, and working class women are and have been too busy working to support themselves and their families to agitate against sexism (Gould-Levine 32). This observation dovetails perfectly with the lives of the female characters in *Entre visillos*. Tali, her sisters, Elvira, and Gertru live in relative stability. While they are entirely dependent on their families and fiancés for support, they are neither hungry nor in danger of becoming homeless. Gertru's sister Josefina (married to a man from a lower socioeconomic status), Alicia, and Rosa are all unhappy with their lives but have no way to change them: they are stuck by their circumstances in an endless cycle of work and deprivation without means to reach their personal goals. The two largest critiques that Martín Gaité makes in her novel are of the stifling and oppressive atmosphere created by the fascist regime's systematic controls over communication and of the specific limitations on acceptable life choices for women. Talbot's analysis, which took censorship into account but emphasized the different archetypes of female roles, signaled that novels suffered less frequent and severe censorship than the press and for that reason the former took on the testimonial role usually occupied by the news media. She focused her inquiry into the novel as a

testimony to the harsh realities of postwar life and on how Martín Gaité explored questions of gender through her writing.

Although Talbot maintains that her study of differences between the sexes is quite different from the binaries that male authors explored during the 1950s and 1960s (79), the two subjects share more similarities than differences. The divides she cites (for example, city and country; or the powerful versus the impotent) separate people who support social norms from those who find themselves oppressed by those norms. Inequality between men and women forms part of this larger debate and should not be thought of as existing apart from a larger social critique. Like Talbot, Clevenger also concentrates her analysis on Spanish women's history. Her main argument concerns how women's social roles in postwar Spain are portrayed in *Entre visillos*, compared with two other novels from the same period: Carmen Laforet's *Nada* and Camilo José Cela's *La colmena*. In doing so, she writes primarily about the repression of women who wanted an alternative to embodying the 19th century ideal of the "angel of the hearth." She begins with postwar-era historical context, noting that the absence of men during the war allowed women more independence (Clevenger 84). After giving many examples of the negative effects of gender-related social pressure, Clevenger concludes that Martín Gaité manipulates her readers, making them care about the characters; with the result that readers sympathize with the more rebellious characters (90).¹² With

¹² As Pablo Gil Casado points out, identifying with and having compassion for fictional characters can lead readers to visualize problems in their own lives that they had been unable to recognize. Pablo Gil Casado, *La novela social española (1920-1971)* (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1973).

that statement, Clevenger notes the importance of literature as a source of subversive ideas. Even if *Entre visillos* appears to be a “novel for/about girls,” as the censor said, the way in which it is written encourages in its readers the rebellious idea that some women are not satisfied as wives and mothers.

Kronik, in spite of his emphasis on the novel’s social realism, devotes the majority of his argument to an exploration of the novel’s linguistic tropes. At first, he posits that the use of different narrative voices (in both first and third person) is no more than a fun game, but his tone changes when he explains that the language “both mitigates and mediates the limitations of her role as a female, as a teenager, as a schoolgirl, as a daughter, as a recalcitrant member of the provincial bourgeoisie” (Kronik 55). This emphasis on the power of language signals the importance of censorship as a means of control, but without reaching that specific conclusion. If words can mitigate and mediate limitations when the state does not control expression, when censorship exists, the difficulty of expressing oneself becomes an even more immediate problem. This is a result of two factors: the fear that one’s words will be censored and an absence of stories that might inspire unorthodox thinking. Kronik, in his discussion of the importance of language and time (specifically, memory) approximates a reading that takes Neuschäfer’s discourse of censorship into account, without arriving at that exact idea. Kronik understands that because modern literature is fragmented, it depends on the reader’s ability to interpret it adequately; but he fails to address the additional impact of state censorship on this literature. Even so, Kronik’s writing indicates an understanding of the idea that the language and communication strategies people know effect how

they think. It is likely that many people living in Franco's Spain had difficulty even envisioning alternatives to the lifestyle promoted by the regime, and it is equally likely that those who did remained silent in order to conform. Martín Gaité notes that Spaniards around her age, who were children and adolescents during the Spanish Republic and Civil War, were exposed to images and stories of heterogeneous life stories from all kinds of women and could imagine, if they were girls, becoming like them, or if they were boys, marrying a woman like them (Martín Gaité, *Usos amorosos* 29). For a certain population, envisioning these alternatives to becoming an "angel of the hearth" was possible. For Tali, who had never been exposed to the same stories as her older sisters, there were no good examples of successful odd girls like her that could help her form a vision of her adult life.

The absence of both positive examples of happy career women and the freedom to complain about and change social realities contributes significantly to Tali's inability to plan for any satisfying future for herself. While the problems that she faced were largely the result of institutionalized sexism, feminist analysis is not the sole way to read this novel. For example, Roxanne Marcus, in her 1986 article "Ritual and Repression in Carmen Martín Gaité's *Entre visillos*," avoids the temptation to analyze the work through a solely feminist lens, arguing instead that the novel shows the reader the effects of Spain's generalized repression during the 1950s. Specifically, she mentions two rituals; the parade of giants described in the novel's first chapter and the "lucha sorda" as described in a few sentences towards the end of the novel. According to Marcus, the inclusion of the giants projects a (unconscious) preoccupation with fear, submission, dominance, and control (138).

She develops the idea that the giants represent a permissible manner of rebelling against society's usual rules, and that they do so in such a way as to underscore the means of control that repress the people the rest of the time. The "lucha sorda" between Tali's high-school classmates and their teachers, in which they demand to be dismissed for Christmas vacations early, functions similarly, as a partially tolerated display of temporary rebellion against the social order. The temporary nature of this ritualized outburst, along with its consequence – less time spent learning for the girls who will likely spend the extra time engaged in socially approved pastimes such as looking for potential husbands or with family, are key to the teachers' lack of swift disciplinary action. Because the girls ultimately do not change their status quo, their petty uprising is tolerated.

A common theme between Marcus's analysis and that of Caragh Wells is the inevitable return of girls and women to their proper roles in society. While Marcus shows that staged rebellions are sanctioned but futile outlets, Wells explains that any awakenings experienced by the female characters are temporary visions of what life could offer them were they not trapped by their circumstances into meek subservience to men. Wells specifies that the novel is notable for its linking of literary epiphany with the male-gendered public spaces in the city. These epiphanies, Wells states, allow female characters to both see their repressed lives for what they are and expose the "tension between the patriarchal rhetoric of the Franco regime and women's desires for greater mobility." However, similarly to the unchanged status quo of the girls at the end of the "lucha sorda," any woman who has experienced an epiphany in a public space finds herself obligated to return to

her subjugated role in the “repressive domestic sphere” (Wells 8, 9). The factors that differentiate the experiences of the high school students from those of the women whose urban experiences have enlightened them are found in the dichotomy between individual and group action and in the possible ramifications of those choices. As previously stated, the adverse result of the schoolgirls’ rebellion is likely less time focused on their studies and more time spent in the private sphere. Their antics, though seemingly anti-authoritarian, cannot ultimately cause any meaningful change in their circumstances and are thus tolerated. The possible end result of a woman’s epiphany in a “symbolic site of potential emancipation” (Wells 8) is that she may choose to pursue a life outside the curtains of the family home. Because that would run counter to the mores Franco promoted, the need for society to keep these thoughts in check exists. Consequences for misbehavior are part of any means of effective control, and, as Gagliardi rightly states, these “...consequences of abandoning conformity for individuality ... were grave, not only for the [non-conformers] but for their families as well” (432). Because conformity is key to the functioning of a fascist regime, displays of disobedience of social norms were discouraged or punished.

Since the consequences for women seeking to achieve in their own right were so dire for their reputations as well as those of their loved ones, parsing the options available for their sex shows a divide between self-denying resignation and active rebellion. As Kronik maintains, Martín Gaité’s work’s focus on individuals teeters between rebellion and withdrawal (51). The characters face the choice of changing their lives or changing themselves to meet those circumstances; as the

former could result in negative repercussions for themselves and their families, many of them either withdraw into their socially expected role or they attempt to marry into different situations. Wells and Catherine G. Bellver both explore the function of space in this search for a way to cope with the restrictions on women's choices. Bellver explains that "man moves through space while woman is contained within it" (33); equating masculine spaces (like the city) with "temporal dynamism." This fits into Wells' vision of urban spaces as centers for female epiphanies. Cruelly, merely having the epiphany and understanding other visions for one's life does nothing to change it for the better. Rather, this seems to either reinforce a woman's impulse to withdraw into the home and act out her socially prescribed role or strengthen her plans to break away from the constraints of domestic life. Wells describes one scene in particular: Tali convinces Julia to walk around the city with her, and ascend the cathedral's clock tower. Julia refuses to go all the way up, perhaps afraid to "open her vision to its full capacity" (Wells 12). Tali, it becomes clear, has been to the apex of the clock tower many times before and is exhilarated by the view. When Julia finally climbs to the top, she begins to envision her life two ways: trapped by the society by her feet or transformed by the feeling of power she glimpses while observing her town from the height's of the city's symbol of panopticism (Wells 13, Gagliardi). Since she cannot become empowered in her society and must return to socially accepted behaviors, Julia's elation is only a temporary break from an otherwise stifled life.

While it is clear from the extant historical resources and literary criticism that the socially acceptable options for women in Francoist society were severely

limited by a patriarchal emphasis on traditional family structure, the equation of chastity and self-abnegation with virtue is best displayed by the life of a character who does not enjoy the respect of society. Of all the women in the novel, the best counterpoint to the respectable family-oriented girl or matron is Rosa, the casino entertainer and Klein's neighbor at Pensión América (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 77). Rosa seems to spend her life traveling to different cities for singing engagements, living in boarding houses each time. In stark contrast to all the other women in the novel, Rosa lives independently of any male guardian; she is also almost universally held in ill repute because she, unlike the "decent" girls of the provincial city, "supports herself by working outside the house" (Bellver 42). When Klein attempts to invite her to an after-party following a night at the casino, its female organizer is shocked and cannot believe anyone would truly desire the company of such a low-class woman: "Oye, no, esas bromas no. Gente de esa no queremos" (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 105). Rosa is suitably entertaining while at the casino, but otherwise must remain in her place; her interaction with respectable women might taint them. Rosa herself is keenly aware of people's low opinion of her and expects others to both demean and abuse her; in a moment she shares with Klein during which she is intoxicated, Rosa's surprise at his propriety reveals that men who see her drunk usually attempt to instigate sexual intercourse. She singles out Klein's unusual respectfulness, "... no hay nadie como tú; tú no te aprovechas de verme borracha" (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 80). Klein's demonstration of trustworthiness allows Martín Gaité to develop a relationship between the two

characters that, precisely because it remains platonic, lets the author explore what it is like to be marginalized by society.

Klein's status as a foreigner and Rosa's lonely, nomadic life bind them together as they experience the provincial city as outsiders; but Rosa is perplexed by Klein's lack of concrete plans for his future. She exclaims that he shouldn't think that she likes her work's transience, ... "Ay, pero no te creas que es por gusto, a la fuerza ahorcan" (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 106). She then claims that if she and Klein were to marry, he would quickly see how well she could put roots down. It's unclear whether Rosa truly dreams for the pleasures of married life, or merely yearns for the stability that a well-regarded life would provide. Like the dream protagonist in *El balneario*, Rosa seems to enjoy the idea of respectability, but it is unclear whether she in fact dislikes her work, wishes she could have a traditional life, or that the nature of her job would be an impediment to an honorable marriage. I assert that a combination of factors is at work. Rosa clearly wants something more stable, as evidenced by her desire to be rooted in a place, and she uses a grim aphorism to express that she travels for her job only grudgingly.

Nearly all working women during Franco's dictatorship claimed that their professions did not satisfy them the way they would be by married life (Martín Gaité, *Usos amorosos* 48). Many of these women may have been censoring themselves, omitting or reversing their true feelings; but the novel provides evidence that Rosa is forthright in her conversations with Klein. Towards the end of the *Entre visillos*, Klein and Elvira Domínguez are saying their goodbyes in anticipation of the former's departure from the city, and they waver on whether

Elvira should accompany Klein to his room. He opines that Elvira should return home, but she insists upon coming up. When Klein seems to agree, Elvira takes exception to being treated like a “fulana,” and protests that he seems to think she is just like Rosa. When Pablo replies, “[n]o eres como ella. Ella estuvo en mi cuarto muchas veces y yo en el suyo, pero no era como tú. Era directa y sincera. Si hubiera querido acostarse conmigo, me lo hubiera dicho” (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 258), he underlines the biggest key difference between Rosa and the other women in the novel. The German narrator, who takes such pride in his exact, scientific language, has become irritated by the insincerity of the people around him. If the novel’s expert on language and meaning finds her words truthfully direct, then Rosa’s predicament is likeliest caused by her difficulty finding a husband as a result of the work she finds herself obligated to perform in order to live.

Unlike Rosa, Pablo Klein enjoys the privilege of being both male and able to earn a living honorably. As noted earlier, the choice of Klein, a German national, as one of the narrators is important because it allows the author to present an outsider’s view on postwar Spanish society, a view that is less susceptible to scrutiny than the opinions of Spanish citizens. Klein’s point of view is almost anthropological; it is that of an observer, befuddled yet intrigued by the actions and attitudes around him. However, Klein is not totally detached from his environment; near the beginning of the novel, he admits that the teaching position was a means to reconnect with the city in which he’d spent time as a child (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 50). While Ramos Ortega suggests that Klein was the son of a political exile (292), a later part of the novel reveals that his father was killed in a bombing in

Barcelona during the Civil War. Vilanova asserts that those who were children during the war suffered unique damage that changed their perspective (295), Martín Gaité belongs to that cohort, and Klein enjoys protected status as a foreigner. Therefore, the reader can infer that some of the author's experiences and beliefs have been projected onto the German with freer speech. He is not Spanish, so he does not have to conform to idealized Spanish norms, but he shares past traumas, the novel's setting, and a social scene with the Spanish characters in the story. Tellingly, the language teacher and the writer who created him are both experts at communication but are unable to find interlocutors who understand them.

Klein came to the provincial city in the novel specifically to teach German, a language, and his approach to pedagogy is different than anything the girls he teaches have ever known: He encourages his students to develop communication skills, does not take attendance, and tells his students at the beginning of the year that he plans on assigning all of them passing grades. Consequently, only three of the fifteen girls enrolled come to his free-form outdoor sessions (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 185). As Bellver states, Martín Gaité uses Klein's character to "show the power of fascist education" (38), and how it ruins students for anything that is not motivated by rewards, punishments, and rules. Klein's intentions are to foment a desire of learning for learning's sake in his young students; however, he only ends up reaching the couple of them who were intellectually curious in the first place. When it came to the rest of the girls, Klein's experiment failed. Possibly because he was not keeping the majority of his class in line, the school's director tells him that the girls cannot handle any discipline other than what they've known. In fact, at one

point, Klein compares the school building to an “improvised fort” and the girls themselves to soldiers (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 212). Within months, Klein starts to take attendance and use a textbook (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 248). The result of his attempt to use his foreign educational philosophy is mixed; it stirs curiosity in a small minority of his students and confirms for all of them that the only discipline they can expect is the stifling rule-driven system they’ve grown up with. While this might be comforting and normal to the majority, it forces girls like Tali to choose resigned acquiescence to societal norms or experience confusion and disappointment while they try to break the mold without any support from anyone else.

Since Foucault’s theories on discipline are so important to this analysis, it is crucial to reemphasize the role of the school in the panoptic, carceral society he describes. As schools became more regimented, they evolved: “[T]he educational space ... is no longer made up of individual elements arranged side by side under the master’s eye,” it is now preoccupied with ranking each student against the others (Foucault 146, 147). In other words, teachers ceased to focus on their pupils as individuals and began to treat them as members of a society that expected them to be disciplined and productive. Because, in a totalitarian state, the entire apparatus of the social order functions to keep everyone under control, schools become a place to train young people to take on the social role that will be expected of them as adults. Fascist regimes especially depend on the school, along with the home and the church, to serve as “indoctrination centers that socialize girls in the values, attitudes, and activities authorized for them by the regime” (Bellver 36). In the case

of the girls' wing of the Instituto de Enseñanza Media, the girls learn that they will be expected to make do with less and make themselves invisible, and also that, while they might be permitted the occasional outlet to complain, nothing they do will effect any real change.

Readers learn towards the end of the novel that the girls' school, which is located in a Jesuit abbey, once had more equal space-sharing, but that the Jesuits have claimed more and more of the grounds and building for themselves as the years have passed. While the young men have "stupendous" heating, the female students suffer from the cold due to the school's low budget and the bureaucratic red tape inherent in its governance. The girls' needs are always secondary to the young men's; there is even a warning bell to alert the schoolgirls when the novice monks are about to use the staircase that the two groups share. In that case, they are expected to wait until the Jesuits are clear before using the stairs themselves, lest they incite lust and distract them from their religious life (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 280, 281). Bellver's assertion that female spaces, like the Instituto, "guarantee conformity to patriarchal concepts" aligns with the students' experience; their cramped learning space limits their movement and promotes mental inertia (35). The students' daily experience trains them to accept second-class status and reinforces the idea that nothing they need or want is as important as what the men around them need or want.

The girls also learn, through the customary "lucha sorda" that takes place before the Christmas vacation, that the only form of complaint that will be tolerated from them is pageant-like protests that will not and cannot change anything

substantial. Half of the girls demand to be given their Christmas break a week early, while the other half comply with the rules. During this time, neither the teachers nor the students cede their ground, and the opposing bands of students take to insulting each other via signs in the hallway and notes on the chalkboards. Klein's description of this annual ritual shows his great disdain for both the environment of the school and the girls that attend it. To him, the struggle is a pointless and divisive activity that irritates him so much so that he administers his exam early in order to be able to remove himself from the situation (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 253). According to Marcus, the "lucha sorda" formally dramatizes the students' emotional state, one that is ironically linked to the regime's propaganda (144). Marcus states that the "lucha sorda," as an externalization of suppressed and collective hostility, "aesthetically intensifies the stiflingly repressive and oppressive environment and underscores the absence of significant safety valves in the modern, highly organized society that is depicted" (Marcus 145).

Klein experiences some degree of the same anxiety that his students, and all women around him, suffer; Gagliardi rightly claims, "his ability to perceive the entrapment and be affected by it is a result of his exterior origins." However, Klein and the provincial town's men have privilege over the women: the other men see their domain over the public sphere as natural. While Klein can empathize with the women's struggles, his gender grants him the option to leave without suffering undue hardship (436-38). Tali, as the sole student in Klein's class with an eagerness to learn and a desire to chart the course of her life against the norm, is left with confusion and panic at her future when her German teacher leaves town at the end

of the novel. Tali's inability to express her frustration with her inability to study at the university level, or even guide her own life, parallels Martín Gaité's possible experiences trying to express forbidden ideas in her novel without comprehending the source of her frustration.

Gonzalo Sobejano zeroes in on the source of Tali's difficulties with communication and self-expression in his essay, "Enlaces y desenlaces en la novela de Carmen Martín Gaité," when he states that Tali wishes to be able to express herself freely and sincerely, and that she aspires to communicate in that manner with others: Tali wants "diálogo reflexivo y veraz consigo misma (a través del 'diario' que escribe) y con otros" (211). He concentrates his analysis on questions of a freedom of speech that many desire yet few achieve. In his discussion of the diary, Sobejano emphasizes the importance of being able to put one's thoughts into words. According to his analysis, communication is a pre-condition for satisfactory interpersonal relationships, exemplified in the interactions between Tali and Klein. This dynamic is shown in the novel through a conversation that the teacher has with his student about her plans for her future. In addition to the obvious frustration that Tali feels not being able to express why she does not see studying biology at a university in her future, her underlying inability to think critically about and consider alternate possibilities for her future stands out from the extremely detailed discussions about domestic affairs other characters have during the course of the novel. For example, shopping with her mother-in-law marks Gertru's life. Gertru is preparing for married life not by spending time getting to know her future husband, but by filling their future home with all the material goods she will need to be

Ángel's angel of the hearth. As she tells her sister, her mother-in-law has promised to take her to one of Madrid's fanciest stores to buy the majority of her trousseau after the engagement party (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 237).

Because so many of the conversations in the novel resemble Gertru's talk with her sister – in that they are mostly superficial with rumblings of sadness under the surface – it is difficult for the characters to find deeper communication. Kronik points to Tali's diary as a crucial narrative outlet for the teenager, noting both the importance of its near-to-the-present contribution to the narration of the novel and the paradox that Tali's least constrained mode of self-expression is also the one that she keeps secret. The one time she does share her diary, with her school friend Alicia, she regrets her uncharacteristic openness almost immediately. While Kronik is most interested in Tali's diary as a demonstrator of this duality between the "isolation and communication" present in the act of writing (Kronik 55, 56), Tali's diary, viewed through Sobejano's understanding of the importance of putting one's thoughts into words, is equally important as a means for her to understand her world and her thoughts through writing. Tali, in her interactions with her teacher, finds herself unable to respond to his questions. Her diary, then, is a means for her to attempt to understand the source for her concerns and put words to her worries. Klein answers Tali's doubts about whether she can contemplate going to university with irritatingly logical arguments, and language is the focus of the discussion: Klein opens his inquiry into her goals by explaining that German is a very exact, scientific language.

When Tali cannot explain why she can't do a university degree, Klein attempts to assuage her concerns with well-reasoned arguments, and is infuriated when she doesn't know how to reply to them. Tali simply knows that she can't envision her father giving her permission to attend classes in Madrid. The reasons for Ruiz's disapproval are unclear to Tali, and she is convinced that Klein would be even more confused: "[p]ero él menos todavía, claro, porque no conoce a papá y no ha oído las conversaciones que se tienen en boca y las críticas que se hacen, y eso." Tali is both frustrated and befuddled by her inability to answer Klein's questions, which is shown by the frequent pauses in her thought and her repeated use of the word "y." Her response is childlike and telling. Her father's wishes govern her life, and if she wants to regain her former closeness to him, she must do as he says. However, she cannot explain this to Klein in that many words and believes that if he knew her father, he would understand (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 186-188). Tali speaks her true feelings to her father only once, at the end of Chapter 15. He responds by telling her never to speak like that again and by willfully misunderstanding her desire that he accept her as she is, as he had when she was a child. She states: "Me ha hablado de dinero, de seguridad y de derechos... Hablaba cada vez en un tono más seguro y satisfecho, más hueco, y hacia frases, seguramente escuchándose, como quien gana un pleito" (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 234). Ruiz's main objection to his daughter's existential crisis is his discomfort in the idea that she could be upset with him. He seems convinced that Tali's love is transactional and that their relationship can be salvaged by giving her what she wants; however, he is unwilling to understand that what she needs is to be loved for who she is, and

to be able to speak freely. In their conversation, Tali's words are a confused outpouring of grievances, and Ruiz's illustrate that he is mostly talking to himself. His words are empty, and his ears will not hear what he doesn't want them to. At the end of the chapter, Tali admits that she never asked him about going to university. Having been unable to express her needs to her father, she spends the night writing in her diary.

Martín Gaité's text shows that Tali's father has become less close to her since childhood, and that their relationship, which was once was extremely affectionate and supportive, is now characterized by distance and disapproval. This change seems to be rooted in the family's move from the country to the provincial capital after her father's success in business and in Tía Concha's subsequent increased influence over the household. In their old life on the farm, Ruiz was disinterested in others' opinions and relative social standing; but in the city he has become more swayed by conformity. He will grudgingly allow Tali to go to the Instituto but will not approve of a university education for her (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 217, 218). Concha, as the spinster aunt, plays an even larger role in determining the social acceptability of the sisters' lives; it is remarked that Mercedes is the only one of the three who shares Concha's sensibilities, and that no man will put up with her enough to marry her (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 226). Concha, Mercedes, and Ruiz all believe that instead of attending school, Tali should spend her time becoming marriageable and prefer friends of their own social class. Concha attempts to arrange a friendship between Tali and Petrita López, a girl from a well-respected family who, like Tali, is shy and withdrawn. Tali is befuddled by this proposal, as she

cannot imagine how she could determine interest in befriending someone she has never met (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 221).

Sobejano states that by inviting free communication, Klein acts in a way that Tali interprets as intimate. In contrasting this type of conversation with the meaningless chats found in the novel's provincial environment (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 221), Sobejano focuses on the limitations that exterior social conditions place on communication and on the resulting stifling of the ability to share oneself completely with another. When free expression is not possible, the richness of interpersonal relationships suffers. Political conditions surely contributed to this stilted communication as well. According to Sobejano's view of postwar interpersonal relationships, truly free communication and the coercive effect of social realities both exist in stark contrast with each other and are mutually exclusive. A social reality that Sobejano does not mention in this essay is pre-market censorship and the suppression of anti-Francoist ideas. He concludes that the rift between Tali and Klein underscores Tali's nonconformity, and that her growing self-awareness, including an understanding about her increasingly nonstandard goals, were a result of her having met him (Sobejano 213). This is important because it demonstrates that sincere communication can guide people towards a unique life trajectory. The repression of communication prevents people with nonconforming souls from discovering their true desires. Tali certainly experiences this as she attempts to plot a path for herself based on her own needs and interests but feels constrained by circumstances and believes that meaningful change will be hard to come by. After Tali has been overwhelmed by Klein's reasonableness and frustrated

by an inability to identify and express her goals, she enters the building where she lives and is overcome by a sensation of extreme claustrophobia. She cannot even bring herself to scale the stairway and enter her family's apartment (Martín Gaité, *Entre visillos* 188).

I argue that Francoism, poverty, traditionalist views of women's roles in society, and a censorship machine which so limited citizens' ability to express themselves fully and truthfully that, like Tali, they could not always even put their frustrations into words functioned synergistically in order to psychologically compel people to resign themselves without question to their station in life. As the novel shows, most of the characters have bought into the system: Gertru and Mercedes spend all of their time and energy trying to attract and keep potential husbands; Alicia plans for a practical career instead of indulging in her interest in education; and Elvira attempts to fit in through courting a young man appropriate for a woman of her social class despite an attraction to Klein and the exciting, outside world he represents. Aside from Tali, those who do not actively attempt to conform are either outcasts, such as Rosa, or male; and even Tali is, at best, unhappy for the majority of the novel. It is not until towards the end of the novel that the spark of dissent truly begins to glow, and without her teacher there to fan the flames, Tali is likely to face her future alone and discouraged.

Martín Gaité accomplishes her critique of Franco-era limitations on self-expression and women's self-determination via a variety of literary tropes and dialectic techniques. Her choice of narrators allows her to explore different points of view while seemingly minimizing them, or moderating her discourse; Tali is a

teenage girl whose diary can be argued to be trivial and immature, Klein is not Spanish, and therefore more easily dismissed by contemporary readers, and the omniscient third-person narrator is nearly invisible. Klein is the only one who expresses outright censure of the provincialism he encounters, and he criticizes people and their behavior rather than the government or culture itself.

Furthermore, Martín Gaité sets her novel in an unnamed provincial city centered around a cathedral, a symbol of panoptic power. The isolation of this location vis-à-vis the rest of the world combined with the traditionalist character of the setting make it exemplary of the type of extended metaphor Neuschäfer describes wherein a remote house stands in for the entirety of the Spanish nation. Descriptions of more cosmopolitan aspects of the rest of the world, such as the young *madrileña* from the train's significantly more stylish appearance, serve to highlight how backwards the city in the novel seems by comparison. The cathedral stands in for the surveillance and discipline enforced by Franco's regime and censorship, and in the isolated city, a life without the constraints of entrenched, militaristic traditionalism seems inconceivable. Through the setting, the narrators, and the discussion of language and science, Martín Gaité's unhappiness emerges from between the lines of her novel.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

In the introduction, I stated that I would show how Carmen Martín Gaité, a Spanish author from the 20th century, protested oppression in her society between the lines of two of her novels from the 1950s, *El balneario* and *Entre visillos*. In her life, she was a woman living in an antifeminist society, a writer working within the constraints of censorship by General Francisco Franco's fascist dictatorship, and an individual coping with the psychological stresses of having lived through the Spanish Civil War as a child and the ensuing totalitarianism. Martín Gaité's writing shows signs of self-censorship and of literary tropes known to have been used to dissent in a less obvious way. In analyzing both novels, I have considered feminist critiques, Foucauldian panopticism, Hans-Jörg Neuschäfer's "discourse of censorship," historical accounts of censorship's functioning and its effects, and 20th century Spanish women's history.

Martín Gaité's 1953 novella *El balneario* explores the nightmarish effects of being trapped by society in an empty life. The woman in the nightmare in Part I is consumed by questions of identity; later the author reveals that the dreamer is a thirty-something spinster with no real occupation. The setting of the novella in a remote spa resort in the mountains emphasizes both Spain's isolation and the woman's inability to connect with a meaningful future. The protagonist, Matilde, has few opportunities, cannot communicate freely, and is haunted by the specter of a brutal past war. In the nightmare that comprises the first part of the story, Matilde dreams of a woman whose male companion, Carlos, controls, terrifies,

misunderstands, and abandons her. Despite the evident inequality in their relationship, the woman in the dream clings desperately to her man and anxiously seeks his approval. Through her relationship with Carlos, her obsession with her passport, and her thwarted interest in what lies beyond the mountains surrounding the resort, she is on a search for her true identity. When it becomes apparent that the dreamer is single and well past marriageable age, the dream is revealed to be a manifestation of her anxiety about not having a true place in society. Because women were not allowed to seek fulfillment as individuals in Francoist society, Martín Gaité's criticism is, by necessity, couched in a dream and filled with metaphors. In evaluating *El balneario*, I have shown that the setting of the story in isolated places, the difficulties the protagonist faces in determining who she is, and the repression of her attempts to communicate truthfully contribute to a beautifully described criticism of Franco's enforced patriarchy and censored communication.

Her later novel, *Entre visillos*, criticizes the stifling atmosphere of a provincial city's social scene for young women. Of the many characters in the novel, none seem truly happy with their lives, especially the women. Their unhappiness, Martín Gaité hints, is caused by their inability to think for themselves, determine their own lives, and truly communicate with others. Aside from the German co-protagonist Pablo Klein, all of the men misunderstand or dismiss the concerns of the women in their lives. Martín Gaité moderates her discourse through her choice of subject matter (women's social lives are not considered important enough to merit any real attention), by ensuring that her novel's meaning can be understood on more than one level, and also by compressing larger sociopolitical issues into interactions

between individuals. For example, she couches her harshest critiques in the words of Klein, who enjoys intellectual freedom not granted to Spaniards. His efforts to enlighten his students meet with failure when it becomes apparent that most of them are incapable of doing anything outside of their realm of experience. This can be read either as a condemnation of external influences as corrupting or a criticism of fascist denial of individual thought. Additionally, 16-year-old Natalia “Tali” Ruiz Guilarte’s diary entries display the sort of youthful curiosity that could inspire a young reader to think for herself, but also highlight how grotesque her ambitions seem to her family and peers. The only female character in the novel to earn her own living, thirty-something entertainer Rosa, can be perceived either as a cautionary tale against living on one’s own accord, or as a sorely misunderstood and disrespected individual who is not permitted by society to both be considered decent and take care of herself. This ever-present duality, in my opinion, allows Martín Gaité to criticize the restrictions on communication that were part of daily life in Franco-era Spain.

Finally, let us return to Neuschäfer’s thesis about the discourse of censorship: “Me parece que es hora ya de valorar lo que significa tener que escribir cuando no se puede decir lo que se quiere decir.” In Martín Gaité’s case, it means that she moderated her discourse, chose her characters, settings, and plots with the intention of both softening and hiding her verbal blows, and that her own experience living under the psychological stresses of Franco’s dictatorship comes through in the pain of her characters.

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