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of Cristina Fernández Cubas

The Fiction

in Post-Franco Spain

Angels on Otherness

Cristina Fernández Cubas. Photo courtesy of Jerry Bauer.
As Cristina Fernández Cubas tells it, her days growing up in Post-Franco Spain

Introduction: Subjectivity and Difference

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INTRODUCTION

Under the microscope of critical analysis, it becomes evident that the concept of subjectivity is a dynamic process, shaped by the interplay of personal experiences, cultural influences, and societal norms. This interplay is not static; it evolves over time, reflecting changes in individual and collective consciousness. The concept of subjectivity is thus not an absolute entity but rather a constantly shifting framework, influenced by a myriad of factors that shape our perceptions and understanding of the world.

In exploring the notion of subjectivity, it is crucial to consider how historical and cultural contexts impact our perspectives. The construction of subjectivity is a complex and multifaceted process, characterized by the interconnection of individual experience and collective narratives. This interconnection is evident in the way historical events and cultural traditions are interpreted and reinterpreted through the lens of subjectivity.

The study of subjectivity is thus a multifaceted endeavor, requiring a comprehensive approach that encompasses historical, cultural, and individual dimensions. By examining the ways in which subjectivity is constructed and contested, we gain insights into the dynamics of power, identity, and discourse. This understanding is crucial for navigating the complexities of contemporary society, where subjectivity is often implicated in debates about justice, equality, and power.
INTRODUCTION

ACCUES ON OTHERNESS IN POST-FRANCESC SPAIN

The context of this study is the economic and cultural shifts that occurred in Spain after the transition to democracy in the late 1970s. The Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE), led by Felipe González, came to power in 1982, marking a significant shift from the previous dictatorship of Francisco Franco. This period saw a notable increase in cultural exchange and a reevaluation of Spain's role in European politics.

The emergence of a new identity in Spain, influenced by both national and international factors, led to a redefinition of Spain's place in the European Union and the world. This complexity is reflected in the works of authors such as Pau Casals, who used their narratives to explore themes of identity, history, and culture.

In this study, we analyze the representation of Spain in the works of Pau Casals, focusing on how his portrayal of Spanish identity and culture is influenced by the broader political and cultural context of the time. We aim to understand how Casals' works contribute to the ongoing discourse on national identity in Spain and its implications for the country's place in the European Union.
the 1980s but wilted under charges of conspiracy and corruption in the 1990s. Consequently, the 1996 elections brought the marginal victory of José María Aznar’s conservative Partido Popular (PP, the Popular Party). Whereas some Spaniards lament that this handover of power signaled a return to more reactionary politics, others are relieved at the smooth transition from one ruling party to another, which, together with King Juan Carlos’s squelching of the attempted military coup in 1981, may be seen as evidence that democracy is solidly in place in Spain. As the country has moved from dictatorship to democracy, the oppositional forms of government have underscored their distinction from one another. Yet a consideration of the contradictory messages projected by political action on the national, regional, and multinational levels suggests that the dictatorial and democratic Spain share at least one similarity: they discursively define their identities by emphasizing their essential difference from other groups. Indeed, the cynical and nostalgic leftist mantra of the desencanto years, “Things were better against Franco,” underscores this tendency (Labanyi 1995, 397; italics mine).

Although Fernández Cubas’s stories do not overtly focus on issues of Francoism, subtle time markers in certain texts do reveal a reflective commentary on the age. For instance, as if to lay to rest the nostalgic wish of some Spaniards for a return to the perceived safety and structure of dictatorial control, in *El cumblopio* the author uncannily superimposes the Francoist past of the 1950s with the post-Franco present of the 1990s. In this novel a young woman travels for the first time to her deceased mother’s childhood home. She finds the house preserved exactly as it was in her mother’s youth and discovers that her adult uncles secretly played out rituals of acquiescence and reverence with the supernatural figure of her mother as a tyrannical child. Within a single, shared space then, Fernández Cubas juxtaposes two distinct moments in time and two radically deviant perspectives of history and identity. Like the movement of the metaphorical swing of its title, *El cumblopio* highlights the importance of the passage of time to the production of knowledge through change and difference.

As *El cumblopio* indicates, the status of women has markedly changed over the last three decades in Spain’s increasingly liberal social environment. The five years before Franco’s death saw a marked increase in women working outside the home, and in 1980 they constituted 27% of the workforce; by 1990 that figure had increased to 35% (Montero 1995, 382). The year of Franco’s death also witnessed the abolition of the permiso marital, which had prohibited women from undertaking any activity outside the home without their husband’s consent. Prior to this, husbands had extensive control over their wives’ dealings in society—they even had rights over the women’s salaries and could deny permission for them to open bank accounts or make large purchases such as a car. As of 1978, adultery and concubinage were no longer crimes (previously, adultery committed by women was a crime punishable by prison whereas concubinage—committed by men—met with much less severity), and the sale of contraceptives was legalized. By 1981, notwithstanding ecclesiastical opposition, divorce was officially permissible in Spain. After much dissen- sion, abortion under limited circumstances was legalized in 1985, which has somewhat ameliorated the high numbers of abortions performed illegally or abroad on Spaniards. The advancement of women’s status in society has been fomented by social organizations such as the Instituto de la Mujer, established by the Socialists in 1983. Women have increased their numbers in education, making up more than one-half of the graduates at all levels in 1990. Nonetheless, equality can hardly be said to reign on all levels. Eight out of ten men make no contribution to housework at all, the lowest figure of any country in the EC (Montero 1995, 382). As with politics, the “difference” in women’s roles over time is a relative condition, evaluated in terms of the roles of men.

Although Fernández Cubas chooses not to ally herself as a writer with the feminist movement in Spain, her works do question the social formation and performance of men and women—exposing both to an equally critical and often humorous perspective.3 In “En el hemisferio sur” [“In the Southern Hemisphere”; *Los altillos de Brumal*] the angst-ridden male narrator is a book editor who belittles his neatric, best-selling author when she suffers a breakdown. She eventually dies, but he seems unperturbed. Then he discovers that his every word and deed have been prescribed in the writer’s posthumously published novel, which playfully and vengefully wrests away any sovereignty he thought he had. Lest womanhood be read as a sort of utopian ideal that justly turns the tables on men, however, in other texts such as “Lúñula y Violeta” [“Lúñula and Violeta”; *Mi hermana Elba*] Fernández Cubas explores how women deploy manipulative power plays against one another. Fundamental to these depictions is the author’s ongoing exploration of the nature of gender, power, and socially invested codes of behavior in relation to identity.

Whereas women’s emergence in the extradomestic sphere has reflected and effected many changes in the Spanish sociocultural scene since the end of the dictatorship, the marked opening in the industry of media communication has revolutionized the way Spaniards see themselves and the rest of the world. The domination of the state-run Televisión Española (TVE) was curtailed when a 1983 law passed by the PSOE authorized the
INTRODUCTION

The economic success and the growing influence of Spain in the world of cinema and television have been closely linked to the popularity of its culture and its art. This has led to a resurgence of interest in Spanish literature, art, and cinema, particularly in recent years. The Spanish film industry, for example, has been recognized for its creativity and innovation, and has won several international awards. The growth of the Spanish film industry has also been facilitated by the expansion of Spanish-language television and the emergence of a new generation of Spanish filmmakers who have taken advantage of new technologies and distribution channels to reach a wider audience. The success of Spanish films has also been supported by the Spanish government, which has invested heavily in the development of the film industry and has provided financial support to filmmakers. This has allowed Spanish filmmakers to produce films of high quality and to compete with films from other countries.

The success of Spanish films has also been influenced by the growing interest in Spanish culture and identity. The emergence of a new generation of Spanish filmmakers who have sought to represent the diversity of Spanish culture has also contributed to the growth of the film industry. The Spanish film industry has also benefited from the increased coverage of Spanish films in the media, which has led to increased awareness of Spanish cinema and its role in the world of art and culture.

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INTRODUCTION

Ancestral and Otherness in Post-Franco Spain

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INTRODUCTION

Angels in Otherness in Post-Franco Spain
an introduction to the subject of gender as a political factor in Spain reveals

the nature and extent of the phenomenon of feminization of political power in the context of the female presence in parliament and government. The document discusses the role of gender in political decision-making, highlighting the underrepresentation of women in key positions and the challenges they face in accessing power. It also explores the implications of gender equality in governance and the need for policy interventions to address gender inequalities.

In conclusion, the text underscores the importance of gender inclusivity in political discourse and the need for ongoing efforts to promote gender parity in political institutions. By addressing these issues, the document aims to contribute to a more equitable and just political landscape in Spain.

1. Introduction

2. Women's Participation in Politics

3. Challenges and Barriers to Gender Equality

4. Policy Interventions for Gender Inclusivity

5. Conclusion
through power, which I address in chap. 1.

... offers a kind of anti-pose to the reversibility of ideological relations. Within her initial work, My Hermeneutic Elbow, the author herself suggests that both the task of the reader and the analyst is to deplete further into the unsalvageable, by which I mean the post-modern shift toward post-structuralist readings. By adding to this effect the general voice of the literary critic is no longer a neutral one, but is inextricably bound up with the interpretation of Others to whom I refer in this book. Hence, I recognize the essential openness of my own constitution, which leads to the inextricable and open-ended nature of my identity. The dynamic of difference is fundamental to all constitutions of identity.

The final chapter, "Politics of Desire: The Visual Constitution of Power and the Production of Power," opens a new arena to the discussions of power in the postmodern subject. Here, the distinction between the subject and its representations is blurred, and the power of representation is understood to be inherent in the very act of representation. The chapter explores the role of visual culture in the production of power and the effects this has on the construction of identity. It also examines the ways in which power is inscribed in visual forms and how these forms are used to construct and maintain power structures.

The final chapter concludes with a discussion of the role of visual culture in the construction of identity and the power it holds over the subject. It argues that the visual is not merely a reflection of power, but is itself a site of production and resistance. The chapter concludes with a consideration of the ways in which visual culture can be used to challenge and resist power structures, and the potential for new forms of identity to emerge from this resistance.