

(Re)membering the Madrid Moviada:  
Life, Death, and Legacy in the Contemporary Corpus.

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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my family, my friends, and all my teachers.

## **Abstract**

My dissertation explores the legacy of the Movida, a cultural renaissance that took place in Madrid, Spain from 1976-1986. I examine a series of cultural products that have contributed to the legacy of this fundamental moment in contemporary Spanish history, including museum exhibits, documentaries, novels, and feature films created between 1999 and 2007. I argue that the memory of this moment is constantly evolving, creating a series of narratives about the life, death, and second life of the Movida.

The resurgence of commemorative efforts about the Movida serves a number of purposes. In certain instances, the Movida is viewed through the lenses of nostalgia, mourning and melancholia. Generally, the Movida serves as a place of memory on which many people dwell. In other instances, the moment of the Movida is used for the process of working through the past. Other products I consider transform the memory of the past, sometimes offering critical perspectives about how the Movida is remembered via the concepts of pastiche and postnostalgia. Still others utilize the past as an inspiration for the present or the future, creating a "Removida" by mobilizing the concepts of parody and kitsch to engage with the past. My analysis of these products demonstrates that in recent years, the Movida has been "re-membered" and given a new and distinctive form in its second life.

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## Introduction:

### Defining and Redefining the Movida

The Madrid Movida is easily *the* quintessential cultural moment in Spain's recent past. Broadly speaking, it was a cultural renaissance that began in Madrid and lasted roughly from 1976 to 1986, a part of the 'uncorking' that occurred partly during the transition to democracy after the death of long-time dictator, Francisco Franco (1892-1975). The transition to democracy is a term that has multiple meanings and is said to encompass various time periods<sup>1</sup>. It is said to have begun in 1973, when Franco was still in power. 1973 was also the year of the assassination of then Prime Minister Luis Carrero Blanco. The transition lasted until 1982 with the victory of the PSOE (The Spanish Socialist Workers Party), but it is also said to have ended when Spain joined what is now known as the European Union<sup>2</sup>.

While the Movida began as an underground movement, it soon moved beyond closed doors, and those involved in the Movida were the cultural architects of a new, more brazen street life. In the beginning, the Movida was countercultural, but in the mid 1980s it was appropriated for social and political purposes as a marketing tool. The images in their artwork, films, fashions, and performances created narratives that helped a new generation of Spaniards to construct their identities. Not only did these narratives

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<sup>1</sup> See the introduction of Luis García-Torvisco's dissertation, "Modos del exceso en la cultura de la transición democrática en España" (2005). García-Torvisco mentions that some see the economic expansion of the 1960s as the beginning of the transition, and it is also said that the transition lasted until 1993 (Vilarós), the year in which Spain signed the treaty of Maastricht.

<sup>2</sup> See *El aprendizaje de la libertad 1973-1986. La cultura de la transición*, by José Carlos Mainer and Santos Juliá. (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2000).

assist people in understanding the historical present in which they were created, they also played an important role in breaking free from, redefining and even burying the past. Therefore, those involved with the Movida were part of a new avant-garde. If we think of the term "avant-garde" in its true sense, derived from the word "vanguard," which means the "foremost part of an advancing army,"<sup>3</sup> it is easier to be more forgiving in the judgment of avant-garde artists. Part of the purpose of the avant-garde is to produce new, innovative techniques, ideas, and ways of seeing. But another essential aspect of the avant-garde is to go first so that others can follow. Once the bombs drop, the soldiers might fall, but others will follow, for they have paved the way. This is certainly true with the legacy of the Movida and the concept of the "Removida" which I discuss in my second chapter.

Rafael Doctor Roncero, the director of MUSAC, a contemporary art museum in Castilla y León, refers to the initial excitement associated with avant-garde movements as "bombs" (11). This characterization turns out to be a particularly appropriate way to explain the Movida. It has often been referred to as a "cultural explosion," and indeed criticized for some of the less desirable things it left in its path. Although the Movida was a sort of rebirth, it was also linked to premature deaths of a number of its participants due to drug overdoses, AIDS and other tragedies. Its multifaceted relationship to life and death, both figuratively and literally, has only been further complicated in recent years.

While my dissertation focuses principally on the construction of the legacy of the Madrid Movida since the year 2000, it is vital to be cognizant of the scholarship about

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<sup>3</sup> "Vanguard": a group of people leading the way in new developments or ideas; a position at the forefront of new developments or ideas; the foremost part of an advancing army or naval force. (New Oxford American Dictionary)

this cultural phenomenon prior to this point. The collection of interviews contained in José Luis Gallero's book, *Sólo se vive una vez: esplendor y ruina de la Movida madrileña* (1991) is indispensable for any study of the Movida. If we might for a moment put aside the inevitable erosion brought on by the passing of time, perhaps it is possible to look beyond the beautiful display cases in search for what was utopian and revolutionary about the Movida as it first stepped out onto the scene, a vanguard in its own right. It seems proper to begin with the words of someone who participated in the Movida, photographer Pablo Pérez Mínguez, who is quoted in Gallero's compilation. After declaring himself a "great defender of the Movida," Pérez Mínguez explains his opinions about this exciting time:

Para mí, ha sido uno de los movimientos culturales más importantes que se han dado en Europa en este siglo. Tan gordo como eso. Y no creo que se olvide. Ya está en el corazón de todos nosotros. Lo que pasa es que ha sido una corriente cultural tan desinteresada que parece que dejamos que se olvide. Pero está totalmente presente. Aunque haya muerto dos veces, huele a Movida por todas partes. Y aunque ya no se hable más, porque *huela*, la Movida ha impregnado toda España y todo el mundo. No es tajante, como esos movimientos de principios de siglo, sino precisamente lo contrario. Fue un movimiento de concentración y dispersión. Uno de los más importantes que se han dado en el continente de los manifiestos, en el continente de las revoluciones, que es Europa. No creo que se olvide en la vida, y por eso hablo del tema. (Pérez Mínguez in Gallero 80-81)

For me, it's been one of the most important cultural movements in 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe—as big as that. And I don't think it will be forgotten. It is already in all of our hearts. What happens is that it has been a cultural current so disinterested (in self reflection) that we let it be forgotten. But it's totally present. Even though it's died twice, it smells of Movida everywhere. And even though it's not talked about anymore, because it smells, the Movida has impregnated Spain and the whole world. It's not categorical, like the other movements of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; on the contrary. It was a movement of concentration and dispersion. One of the most important [movements] that has been introduced to the continent of the manifiestos. And I don't think it will ever be forgotten; that's why I talk about it. (Translation mine)

Pérez Mínguez's words emphasize remembering and forgetting, the death and the life of the Movida. His views emphasize the considerable influence of this period in Spain. I begin with a quote that "looks back" on the Movida in order to emphasize the considerable amount of attention it has received since its inception. Gallero's 1991 compilation is a point of departure for the vast majority of scholars who write about the Movida. It includes very useful information about the various facets of the Movida and gives an idea of the breadth and depth of this cultural moment.

#### Previous Scholarship About the Movida

There are multiple ways to approach research about the Movida, and I will briefly summarize some of these approaches. In the last thirty years, research on the Movida has focused on contextualizing it as a youth culture phenomenon with similarities to the British punk movement and Andy Warhol's Factory in New York. For example, Mark Allinson's article "The construction of youth in Spain in the 1980s and 1990s" in the anthology *Contemporary Spanish Cultural Studies* (2000) does well in establishing these connections. It has been generally assumed that the Movida inherited certain aspects of the counterculture movements in the United States and Europe in the 1960s. The Movida may be considered the last attempt to hold onto what was left of the utopian narratives prevalent during May of 1968.

To address the function of the Movida in its early years, framing it in terms of the notions of kitsch and utopia is fundamental. Noël Valis has an excellent chapter in her book *The Culture of Cursilería: Bad Taste, Kitsch, and Class in Modern Spain* (2002) in which she reflects upon kitsch and utopia as two cultural metaphor-myths that dominated

the scene in 1980s Spain. Teresa Vilarós's work *El mono del desencanto* (1998) addresses the failure of these utopian narratives in her analysis of post-Transition Spain's "desencanto," or disenchantment, taking a critical but overly negative stance towards the Movida, which is nonetheless compelling and informative.

More recently, scholars have been focusing on the visual importance of the Movida, perhaps because of the increasing importance of the field of Visual Culture Studies. Paul Julian Smith's text *Spanish Visual Culture: Cinema, Television, Internet* (2006) devotes a chapter to the Movida, titled "The Movida relocated: press, chronicle, novel." Many of the primary documents from this period such as fanzines and other periodicals have been examined for their original contributions to the arts. For example, in Susan Larson's excellent article about the short-lived magazine "La Luna de Madrid, called "*La Luna de Madrid y La Movida Madrileña: Un experimento valioso en la creación de la cultura urbana revolucionaria,*" in *Madrid: De Fortunata a la M-40: Un siglo de Cultura Urbana* (2002). In the same volume, María del Mar Alberca García's article "La configuración de una imagen de España para la democracia: juventud, vanguardia y tradición" explains the political characteristics of the Movida. The ample scholarship on the Spanish transition to democracy also reflects on the role of the Movida during this period, such as texts by José-Carlos Mainer and Santos Juliá's *El aprendizaje de la libertad 1973-1986* (2000) and Eduardo Subirats's *Después de la lluvia: Sobre la ambigua modernidad española* (1993). Hamilton M. Stapell's article "Reconsidering Spanish nationalism, regionalism, and the centre-periphery model in the post-Francoist

period, 1975–1992" (2007) offers a particularly useful summary of the Movida's local and international role.

I explain the relationship to the Movida and postmodernism in the coming pages, and throughout this dissertation the queer aspects of the Movida are also highlighted. Gema Pérez Sánchez's text *Queer Transitions in Contemporary Spanish Culture: From Franco to La Movida* (2007) is essential to situate the history of queer culture during the Movida by first explaining the context of the dictatorship. Further, the scores of studies on the films of Pedro Almodóvar often address the queerness of the Movida phenomenon as well, but they are too numerous to mention here.

#### Recent Reflections on the Movida

The re-defining of the Movida continues today, especially with the flurry of commemorative events since the year 2000. Since its inception, there has been an ever-evolving discursive construction of the Movida through a variety of cultural products. While the primary texts from the Movida have been studied extensively, a new body of contemporary texts and commemorations that recall this period has emerged in recent years, granting the Movida what I term a "second life." Most of these documents have yet to receive critical attention.

These distinctive versions of the past appear in popular culture books (such as José Manuel Lechado's scrapbook-like text *La Movida: Una crónica de los 80* (2005) and *Dios salve a la Movida* (2006), by Silvia Grijalba) and films such as *El Calentito* (2005) directed by Chus Gutiérrez and *El mundo asombroso de Borjamari y Pocholo* (2004). Pedro Almodóvar's *Bad Education* (2004) also uses the Movida era as one of the time

periods he astutely weaves together in the film. A bright pink and yellow commemorative stamp that celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Movida was released in 2007, featuring the image of the iconic bear from Madrid and the name of Tierno Galván, once mayor and major proponent of the Movida as an image for the city of Madrid. The musical "Hoy no me puedo levantar," which opened in Madrid in 2005, highlights the importance of the pop group Mecano, one of the groups from the Movida era that remains quite popular today. In addition, novels such as Luis Antonio de Villena's *Madrid ha muerto: Esplendor y caos en una ciudad feliz de los ochenta* (1999; reissued 2006) and more recently, Charlie Miralles's novel *1964 antes de Cristo y después de perder el autobús* (2007) also deal with the theme of looking back on the Movida. The 2008 edition of the documentary festival DocumentaMadrid featured an entire section of eleven documentary films made about "The Movida Phenomenon."

In 2008, the 44<sup>th</sup> edition of "Baile de la Rosa" party in Monaco was dedicated to the Madrid Movida; Pedro Almodóvar was invited by Prince Albert II to be the master of ceremonies for the sold-out 750 euros per ticket fundraising event. Other costly ventures about the Movida have appeared in gallery and museum exhibits dedicated either to specific artists from the Movida or to the phenomenon itself including the large scale cultural festival in 2006-2007 called simply LA MOVIDA. All these events and items are symptomatic of a process that Maureen Turim has called "semiotic layering." Turim defines semiotic layering as "[...] the accrual and transformations of meanings associated with an artifact as it passes through history, or as it is presented in different versions" (109). The process that Turim describes can also be applied to the artifact of the

individual and collective memories of the Movida. In its "second life," the Movida is constantly unearthed, reborn, and inserted into the present with 25<sup>th</sup> (or sometimes 30<sup>th</sup>) anniversary commemorative exhibits, films, celebrations, documentaries and compilations that add to its legendary status. Pierre Nora suggests that the overabundance of commemorative events results from how "the past has ceased to have a single meaning and [...] the present [...] is overlaid with an awareness of its own history, which necessarily allows for several possible versions of the past" (*Reasons* np). The cultural products I evaluate in this dissertation exemplify the abundance of various versions of the story and legacy of the Madrid Movida.

My project also contributes a new dimension to the memory of the transition to democracy. José Colmeiro explains why there has been a resurgence in memory recently: "El espacio vacío dejado por el desencanto<sup>4</sup> de la transición y su tabú se va rellenando por diferentes formas memoriales que desbordan y debilitan a la vez los cauces tradicionales de la memoria [...]" ("The empty space left by the disillusionment of the transition and its taboo is being filled by different memorial forms that both spread beyond and debilitate the traditional origins of memory" ; *Memoria* 19). The increase in commemorative events and manifestations of memory is seen mainly with the upsurge in critical interest regarding the role of the memory of the Spanish Civil War during the transition to democracy; much less critical attention has been paid to the way the memory of the Movida is being altered in recent years. Colmeiro discusses the trends in remembering the past: "todos vuelven su reflexión de una manera más o menos directa al tema subyacente de la memoria en el cercano pasado español (de la guerra y la postguerra

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<sup>4</sup> I explain the concept "desencanto" further in my chapter on documentary films.



a la transición y la post-transición) y la necesidad de hacer cuentas con el pasado" ; ("They all reflect in a more or less direct way upon the underlying theme of memory in the recent past in Spain (from the war to the post-war period to the transition and the post-transition period) and the necessity of settling the score with the past" ; *Memoria* 13). My work is concerned with the transition and the post-transition period, and in many ways the cultural products I consider reflect a desire to "settle the score" about the memory of the Movida, as I have previously noted. By addressing the legacy of the Madrid Movida, this project adds another dimension that is only beginning to be explored to the fields of memory studies and Peninsular cultural studies.

In my analysis of museum exhibits, documentary films, feature films and novels, I describe the nuances and contradictions present in the process of remembering the Movida, demonstrating that the Movida becomes re-membered, taking on a new and distinctive form with each new incarnation of its memory. The materials I analyze are representations of the past in the present and are all examples of the "textual traces" of the Movida. As Linda Hutcheon asserts, "The past really did exist, but we can only know it today through its textual traces, its often complex and indirect representations in the present: documents, archives, but also photographs, paintings, architecture, films, and literature" (Hutcheon 78). I take Mieke Bal's notion of "cultural memorization" as a point of departure, defined as "an activity occurring in the present, in which the past is continuously modified and redescribed even as it continues to shape the future" (Bal vii). In each chapter, I consider what these modifications of the highly significant cultural moment known as the Movida mean for the shaping of the past, present and future in

Spain. Viewed in this sense, each one of the cultural products I analyze here represents a distinctive view of the history and the legacy of the Movida. Often, the versions of the past presented in these products are at odds with one another and with the dominant construction of historical discourse about the Movida in general.

One caveat that I should mention is that this project does not attempt to cover all aspects of the Movida or of the memory of the Movida. For instance, while I discuss the musical aspect of the Movida throughout this dissertation, none of my chapters explicitly deal with this facet of the Movida, in part because there is already a great deal written on this subject, such as Héctor Fouce's book *El futuro ya está aquí* (The Future is Already Here) (Velegío, Madrid 2006). The book stemmed from Fouce's dissertation on the same subject entitled "*El futuro ya está aquí*: Música Pop y Cambio Cultural en España. Madrid 1978-1985," which was completed at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid in 2002. Fouce is an ethnomusicologist and one of the foremost experts on the musical aspect of the Movida. Fouce regularly teaches seminars and workshops at universities throughout Spain on popular music. He also writes newspaper columns about music in addition to working as a music critic. After becoming familiar with Fouce's work, I realized that he has made a substantial contribution to the field of Spanish Cultural Studies with his work on the musical dimension of the Movida. His work as a curator for the 2007 exhibit "Modernos, Urbanos y Hedonistas: Una exposición para entender la Movida madrileña" is addressed in my first chapter.

While Fouce's work focuses on the musical dimension of the Movida from an academic perspective, there are other non-fiction texts that address this dimension from a

more journalistic perspective. For instance, Jesús (José) Rodríguez Lenin's *Gabinete Caligari: El lado más chulo de la Movida* (*Gabinete Caligari: The Coolest Side of the Movida*), published in 2004, focuses on the story of the 1980s band Gabinete Caligari. Carlos José Ríos Longares's book *Y yo caí—enamorado de la moda juvenil: la Movida en las letras de sus canciones* (*And I Fell—In Love with Youth Fashion: The Movida in the Lyrics of its Songs*) (2001) offers more general information about several bands from this era and the role of FM radio in promoting and popularizing new bands in the late 1970s and early 1980s throughout Spain.

In the United States, there is some work being done on the musical memory of the Movida. Of particular importance is Santiago Fouz-Hernández' recent article in the *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, "Me cuesta tanto olvidarte: Mecano and the *Movida* Remixed, Revisited and Repackaged." (2009) As the title of the latter article suggests, it examines the way the memory of the Movida has been contested and modified in recent years, specifically through the recent musical "Hoy no me puedo levantar" (I can't wake up today), which draws on the memory of the 1980s band Mecano.

All of the previous scholarship on the Movida informs my work, and I believe there is much more to be written about this fascinating phenomenon. I will begin by explaining the disputed origins of the term "Movida," followed by a description of its participants, an establishment of a timeline of the Movida and the important locations in Madrid where events took place. I will also briefly mention its political and commercial implications, the influence of the Movida beyond Madrid (both nationally and internationally) and some of the debates surrounding its existence and significance. Each

of these characteristics will be further elaborated throughout the four chapters of this dissertation.

### The Movida or the movida?

The term "Movida," which I deliberately capitalize throughout this dissertation, has a number of meanings. Michael Ugarte describes the term as "insólita y movediza," "unusual and shifting/unstable" (357). The shifting, mobile quality of the term (and the way in which it has been mobilized in various contexts) is one of its most important facets. For instance, one source suggests that the term 'Movida' is "[...] a defiant, slangish pun on the Francoist *Movimiento*" (Triana Toribio 275). Another simply translates it to mean "the action" (Valis 279). Eduardo Subirats refers to the Movida as "otra palabra de nuestra jerga mediática cotidiana que nunca llegó a ser concepto" ("another word from our everyday mass-media slang that never became a concept" ; 32). I establish that the Movida is indeed a concept, but it does have multiple, ever-shifting meanings.

I capitalize the term "Movida" in this dissertation because the word "movida" has different implications. For example, phrases like "¡qué movida!" ("what a crazy thing!") or "¿dónde hay movida?" ("where is the party/where is the action?"), while related to the Movida in some way, do not have the same connotation as the meaning that I use. Javier Escudero affirms that the expressions "hay movida" and "¡qué movida!" were used to "[...] referirse a la existencia de un tipo de ambiente en los bares, plazas y barrios de la capital, en particular para designar aquéllos en donde había cierta permisividad hacia el consumo de hachís u otras drogas y al que acudían gente de distinto aspecto y

procedencia social" ("refer to the existence of a type of ambiance in the bars, plazas and neighborhoods of the capital, in particular to designate those locations in which there was a certain permissiveness for the consumption of hashish or other drugs, and in which distinctive-looking people from certain social groups would gather" ; Escudero 148).

Many sources note that the term "movida" comes from the argot of drug culture, where "hacerse una movida" or "ir de movida" meant "I am going to procure drugs." For instance, "*Movida* era una palabra del argot de los toxicómanos, o puede que de los aprendices de tal: *hacer una movida*, en el Madrid del año 67/68, era ir a conseguir determinado tipo de estupefacientes a un barrio (Alpuente 17). Escudero points out that it is necessary to consider "[...] el papel primordial que juegan las drogas en su génesis" ("the fundamental role that drugs play in its genesis" ; 147). The term is also said to have been heard initially on the radio, and also has different meanings in Latin America:

Aunque ya poca importancia tiene, la denominación de *Movida* fue periférica. Unos dicen que fue Ordovás quien la promovió, yo creo recordar que fue Paco Martín a quien se la oí por primera vez. Entre nosotros se hablaba de "música moderna," término demasiado genérico como para tener éxito. Aunque en Madrid el término *Movida* es levemente peyorativo, y tiene que ver con viajes azarosos para conseguir drogas y otras yerbas, en Latinoamérica se aplica a descargas festivo-musicales. (Arenas de Pablos 328)

Although it is of little importance now, the naming of the *Movida* was peripheral. Some say that it was Ordovás who promoted the term, and I seem to remember that it was Paco Martín whom I first heard use the term. Among us we talked of "modern music," a term that was much too generic to be successful. Even though in Madrid the term *Movida* is slightly pejorative, and it has to do with random trips to obtain drugs and other herbs, in Latin America it applies to musical downloads.

This definition suggests that Jesús Ordovás, a radio personality, was responsible for popularizing the term *Movida*. The importance of the radio as a tool for spreading the

music of this period not only in Madrid but also throughout Spain cannot be underestimated. In 1981, Paco Martín wrote: "En toda esta 'Movida' ha tenido especial importancia una emisora de radio madrileña [Radio España FM (Onda 2)], casi se podría decir que ha sido el padre de la criatura producida en Madrid en los últimos cuatro años" ("In all this 'Movida,' one Madrilenian radio channel [Radio España FM (Channel 2)], has been especially important; it could be said that it has been the father of the child that has been produced in the last four years" ; Martín 12).

However, the paternity of the Movida is debateable. It has also been suggested that the term first appeared not on the radio, but on television, and not in Madrid, but in Barcelona. José Luis Gallero mentions that the term "Movida madrileña" emerged during the 1980 Spanish television program called *Musical Exprés*, which was produced in Barcelona (Larson 309). The slightly pejorative connotation that Arenas de Pablos mentions above is confirmed by Marta Moriarty in Gallero's interview compilation: "Los de Barcelona, horrorizados, nos llamaban *los de la Movida*" ("The people in Barcelona, filled with horror, called us 'the ones from the Movida'" ; Gallero 54). Moriarty's comment suggests that the reaction to the Movida in Barcelona was less than favorable, maybe because Barcelona had long been the center of avant-garde cultural movements, and perhaps Barcelona natives looked down on the underground culture in Madrid. The term also has resonance in other areas of Spain. For instance, "the term has by extension been applied to other subsequent explosions of youth culture, as in 'movida galega' [Galician 'movida']" (Graham/Labanyi 423). The Galician movida, centered in the city of

Vigo, is one of the better known 'movidas;' there were also similar cultural happenings in Sevilla and Barcelona, Spain.

To further complicate the meaning of the term "Movida," it is important to remember that this term was not invented and applied from within this loosely associated group of people, but from outside, which is often the case with classifications created for artistic or literary movements. The group involved in what is now known as the "Movida" initially referred to themselves as "La nueva ola," (The new wave), perhaps borrowing the term from the French new wave filmmakers of the 1960s or from the "British trends of punk and new wave" (Allinson 268). "La nueva ola" was not the only initial label for this subculture. Paul Julian Smith points out that "[...] artists who stamped their imprint on the period, such as Almodóvar, identified themselves simply as 'the moderns' before they were pigeon-holed by the press as the 'Movida'" (*Moderns* 43). Moncho Alpuente suggests that the naming of the Movida was beneficial in the sense that it was a term that traveled well outside of Spain and in that sense was very successful: "Hay que reconocer, indudablemente, que es una de las etiquetas de mayor éxito que hayamos patentado, y con mayor posibilidad de exportación, por así decir" ("It must be recognized, without a doubt, that it is one of the patented labels that has enjoyed the most success, and that has had a great possibility for exportation" ; Alpuente 18). He mentions that when people representing international press arrived to Madrid, they would ask "¿Dónde está la *Movida*?" (*ibid* 18). The term not only functioned well on a local level, but also transformed the Movida into an international phenomenon.

The term "Movida madrileña," is the name that persisted for this cultural phenomenon, but the very people who were involved in the creation of the Movida often debate it. This debate is highlighted in Gallero's 1991 compilation of interviews entitled *Sólo se vive una vez: Esplendor y ruina de la movida madrileña*, and there are numerous examples of this debate throughout the chapters of this dissertation. Finally, the word "Movida" is sometimes translated to mean "movement," and arguably, the Movida was not a movement per se, but rather a moment. This is clear in the following statement, where Pedro Almodóvar negates many of the common classifications of the Movida: "No formábamos parte de ninguna generación, tampoco éramos un movimiento artístico, ni un grupo con una ideología concreta, sólo éramos un montón de gente que coincidió en uno de los momentos más explosivos, vitales y exuberantes del país, y de Madrid en particular" ("We were not part of any generation, we were not an artistic movement either, nor were we a group with a concrete ideology, we were just a bunch of people who coincided in one of the most explosive, vital and exuberant moments in the [history of] the country, and of Madrid in particular" ; LA MOVIDA 628). Almodóvar avoids specificities to categorize the Movida, and others do the same. Alpuente notes that because of its wide range of uses, it became impossible to talk about *the* Movida: "No era posible, por lo tanto, hablar de *la Movida*, porque lo que existían era cientos, miles de *movidas* dentro de la ciudad" (Alpuente 17). In his explanation of the term "movida," Alpuente points to the more general phenomenon of nomination. Fredric Jameson states that "...the supreme act of nomination wields a material impact and, like lightning striking from the superstructure back to the base, fuses its unlikely materials into a



gleaming lump or lava surface" (Jameson xiii). The idea of fusing unlikely materials together is particularly applicable to the Madrid Movida, because the use of the label Movida served as a way to connect many different kinds of activities and people together under one umbrella term.

### Participants, Places, Punk, and Postmodernism

While Almodóvar and Alpuente prefer a more expansive description of the Movida, there are some general characteristics that can be associated with this group of people. I do not believe that the characteristics I describe are necessarily applicable to everyone involved in what has come to be known as the Movida, but I will summarize some of the commonalities and differences between this loosely associated circle of individuals. The participants in the Movida included musicians, painters, fashion designers, comic book writers, photographers, film directors and other artists, influenced in part by British punk and Andy Warhol's factory, who began to create their own local brand of underground culture. I do not mention their names here since they appear within each of my chapters, but I will point out that filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar is referred to at many points as a synecdoche for the Movida phenomenon. Besides the well-known names of people who were creators during this period, the consumers of many of the fashions and events they produced were fundamental to the popularity of the Movida. Numerous people were involved in making the Movida a popular culture phenomenon, including the people who listened to music on the radio, the attendees to gallery and museum exhibits, and those who purchased comic books at the Rastro flea market. Local politicians were also involved in the Movida, as I have mentioned.

There were a few central locations where people would meet and interact to find the Movida. El Rastro, Madrid's Sunday open air flea market was of particular importance during this period because it was there that people could acquire the latest fashions and comic books. The "Cascorro Factory," founded by photographers Alberto García Alix and his friend Pablo Pérez Mínguez (PPM), took its name from Cascorro Street, one of the location of the Rastro flea market. Bars and night clubs such as Rock-Ola, El Penta, La Vía Láctea, La Bobia and Pentagrama were central to the Movida culture and to the development of the Madrid nightlife that continues today. Art galleries such as La Galería Juana de Aizpuru, La Galería Fernando Vijande, and the Galería Moriarty were also meeting places where people interacted and viewed contemporary art, happenings and fashion shows. Private homes such as the home of the painters Las Costus, which has been compared to Andy Warhol's factory, were destinations for after-hours parties and even served as the set for Almodóvar's first feature film, *Pepi, Luci, Bom y otras chicas del montón* (1980).

One of the main characters in this film, Olvido Gara (who became musician Alaska), then an adolescent, was one of the youngest participants in the Movida. The people involved in this urban underground culture were usually young—ranging from adolescents like Olvido Gara to people in their early thirties. The culture of the Movida can be characterized as a youth culture, for it "[...] shares with many other youth cultures the characteristics of spontaneity, disrespect for authority, playfulness and erotic curiosity; and it also shares the social context of mass youth unemployment which conditions the predicament of youth across contemporary Europe" (Allinson 265). The

impact of mass youth unemployment was arguably not felt by many of the participants in the Movida, since many were "sons and daughters of middle-class and upper-middle-class families (for example, Carlos G. Berlanga from *Kaka de Luxe* and *Alaska y los Pegamoides*—was the son of film-maker Luis G. Berlanga and had benefited from European travel; Santiago Auserón of *Radio Futura* was another, having studied in Paris and the USA)" (Triana Toribio 276). One major exception was Pedro Almodóvar, who held a day job at the large Spanish telephone company *Telefónica* for many years before dedicating himself exclusively to filmmaking.

The Movida was related to the punk culture of the UK and the United States, but it was distinctive due to differences in socio-economic status of its participants. Helen Graham and Jo Labanyi note that the Movida was "similar in many ways to British punk, it was nevertheless a response not to unemployment but to affluence and the new sexual permissiveness: in this sense it could be seen as a delayed form of 1960s culture, but of an aggressively apolitical nature<sup>5</sup>" (423). The Spanish form of punk was distinct from its foreign equivalents: "the expectant and less restrictive atmosphere inspired by the transition to democracy gave Spanish punk a less socially aggressive character than its counterparts in the UK and USA [...] but the nihilism characteristic of punk, which mixed itself into the Spanish *desencanto* (apathy) was pervasive" (Triana Toribio 275).

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<sup>5</sup> In her book, *Queer Transitions in Contemporary Spanish Culture: From Franco to la Movida*, Gema Pérez Sánchez argues that the Movida was not entirely apolitical, because the strides made by queer culture during this period were certainly a political gesture.

The Movida was also a postmodern phenomenon, though it has been debated that it was instead a modern phenomenon<sup>6</sup>. Susan Larson remarks that postmodernity sometimes does not translate well in areas that have just entered into modernity, and makes clear that it is important to remember the fact that Spain entered the modern world in the 1970s and that the particular economic, political and social context in Spain must be kept in mind (314).

The increasing aperture that occurred in Spain during the 1960s and continued into the 1970s is often said to culminate with a "rupture": the death of Franco on November 20, 1975<sup>7</sup>. The ideas of rupture or continuity are also associated with the political debates of the transition to democracy. The group of so-called "rupturistas" was composed of a coalition of democratic forces, composed of dissidents of the Franco regime and the parties of the vanquished from the Spanish Civil War (Mainer/Juliá 43). After Franco's death, they wanted a provisional government that would begin the process of drafting a new constitution (*ibid* 43). On the other hand, the "reformistas" or "continuistas" favored a provisional government in which they would have a decisive role in the transition to democracy. In the end, the transition was neither a complete rupture nor a continuity of the past, but rather a combination of both. This is reflected in the fact that the protagonists of the transition "[...] habían sido parte del régimen hasta el mismo día de la muerte de su fundador y que los comunistas podrían participar en el proceso desde el primer momento" ("had been part of the regime until the day of the death of its

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<sup>6</sup> See *Después de la lluvia. Sobre la ambigua modernidad española*, by Eduardo Subirats. Madrid, Temas de Hoy: 1993.

<sup>7</sup> I discuss the implications of tourism and economic policies that contributed to this aperture in the 1960s in my second chapter.

founder, and the communists could participate in the process from the beginning" ; *ibid* 45).

According to Noël Valis, "the sense of rupture [... is] fundamental to any understanding of post-Franco society, particularly in light of the postmodern label frequently attached to it. Most associated with this postmodern turn is the *Movida*" (Valis 283). In my view, Franco's death was not a complete a "rupture" for other reasons. While it was certainly a decisive change, the reforms that occurred in Spain as early as the 1950s through the mid-1970s in terms of the expansion of the economy, the rise in foreign tourism and a desire to become more incorporated into the international community (by joining the UN in 1955 and the World Bank in 1958) show that many transformations were taking place in Spain well before the transition to democracy following Franco's death. These changes did not indicate a complete rupture with the past either. An assessment of the popular saying created to promote tourism in the 1960s, "Spain is different" proves this point: "the late-Francoist expansion imposed upon Spaniards the collective opportunistic identity of a country whose institutions (still dictatorial), lifestyles (still mostly patriarchal), and economy (still falling behind other European nations) were 'different' (read 'anachronistic')" (Afinoguénova/Martí-Olivella xii). Still, it is crucial to remember that the *Movida* was not necessarily a rupture. Jo Labanyi also suggests that the idea of a complete rupture with the past is not accurate, highlighting: "the complex relationship of Francoist Spain to modernity and of post-dictatorship Spain to postmodernity (in many respects an intensification of modernity

rather than a break with it—except in the important respect of postmodernity's evaluation of mass culture)" (*Engaging...1*).

Similarly, Antonio Sánchez sees Spanish postmodernism as a combination of old and new traditions: "Spanish postmodernism is characterized by an eclectic incorporation and celebration of both old and modern cultural traditions" (A. Sánchez 109). Susan Larson offers an eloquent study of the Movida's relationship to postmodernism in her analysis of the popular magazine *La Luna de Madrid*, specifically, a 1984 issue of the magazine entitled "Madrid 1984: ¿la posmodernidad?" Larson mentions that the pages of the magazine included a mixture of both old and modern traditions such as articles on new music and fashions combined with old poems and references to the history of Madrid (311). Gema Pérez Sánchez sees the tension between modernity and postmodernity as positive: "this wavering between embracing new post-modern aesthetics and recognizing Spain's lag behind the rest of Europe in terms of modernization—far from hindering creativity in literature and the visual arts—has given them a force and innovation unparalleled in Spain since the time of the early-twentieth-century avant-garde" (Pérez Sánchez 187). While the pages of *La Luna de Madrid* often contained reflections on postmodernism, Larson notes that in the mid-1980s, the people involved in the Movida began to distance themselves from the commodification aspect of the phenomenon and were tired of feeling "empujados a adherirse a una posmodernidad igualmente autoconsciente y comercializada" ("pushed to adhere to a postmodernity equally self-conscious and commercialized" ; 316).

Notwithstanding the debate about whether the Movida constituted a postmodern phenomenon, it certainly did have characteristics of postmodernism. For example, it not only incorporated both the old and the new, but also the local and the global. As Noël Valis explains, "Spaniards and non-Spaniards alike paradoxically saw this local narrative of Madrid, the movida, as a postmodern phenomenon, thus suggesting simultaneously a nonlocal or un-rooted quality about it" (Valis 279). The Movida was used to create this local and international narrative of Madrid in part by the local government, which I discuss in more depth in my chapter on museum exhibits. The government subventions of many activities that were part of the Movida are closely related to its demise in the mid-1980s.

#### The Chronology and the Politics of the Movida

In the introduction to the "Plastic Arts" section of the LA MOVIDA catalog that I consider in my first chapter, Fernando Huici March points out that the seeds of the Movida were planted in the later years of the dictatorship: "Madrid [...] viviría en los años setenta, y aún desde el final de los sesenta, una muy singular efervescencia en el ámbito de la formulación de nuevas tendencias creativas" (In the 1970s, and even since the end of the 1960s, Madrid was living through a very unique effervescence in the formulation of new creative tendencies" ; Huici March 32). To prove this point, he mentions a performance he attended in 1972 where Herminio Molero (the founder of the renowned Movida pop band Radio Futura) and Pedro Almodóvar performed. This point also serves to question the narrative of a rupture with the past that is often associated with the Movida.

While there were important artistic activities occurring in the final years of the dictatorship, in my estimation, the Movida lasted roughly from 1976 to 1986. This ten-year period is probably the broadest definition of the duration of the Movida, for various sources suggest that it began in 1978, the date that coincides with the implementation of the democratic Constitution, or in 1980. The "end" of the Movida is also debated, but many sources state that it ended in 1986, coinciding with the death of the beloved Enrique Tierno Galván (mayor of Madrid from 1979-1986), whose support for the Movida was fundamental. Galván was largely responsible for associating the Madrid Movida with many of the transformations that were occurring during this period. Thus the Movida served as the principal artery through which the ideas of the politicians at the time would pass. For, as Tomás Llorens points out: "the ambiguous notions of 'change' and 'modernity' were to be united with the adjectives 'young' and 'new,' and applied to cultural 'products' for their capacity to illustrate and make visible the accelerated process of transformation that Spain was undergoing politically, economically and socially" (146, translation mine).

Susan Larson states that the Movida can be divided into three main phases: first, the underground phase, prior to 1981 (though she does not give a specific date), which is most closely related to punk and to the so-called "tribus urbanas" ("urban tribes"<sup>8</sup>; 309). This early phase is sometimes referred to as the "original" Movida, because there were not very many people involved in the underground activities of this period. Pedro Almodóvar's film *Pepi, Luci, Bom y otras chicas del montón* (1980) exemplifies this

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<sup>8</sup> The importance of these urban tribes and their significant differences is described in my chapter on museum exhibits, specifically with the analysis of the exhibit titled *Modernos, urbanos y hedonistas*.



early phase as it was created in the punk spirit of do-it-yourself. The film was made with a Super-8 camera, an almost non-existent budget, mostly volunteer actors (friends of Almodóvar's), and sets that included his friend's apartments.

For Larson, the second phase lasted from 1981-1986, and was characterized by the creation of new commercial channels such as new galleries, editorials, record labels, a provocative cinematographic style, and fashion that was modern and unique to Spain (309). I would add to Larson's division of the different phases of the Movida by discussing the involvement of the PSOE (Spanish Socialist and Worker's Party) in its creation, beginning in 1982. As Antonio Sánchez notes, "following the election of the PSOE in 1982 and the growing autonomy of the regions, art, including the avant-garde, was widely promoted through a variety of official institutions" (109). The Movida had a very specific relationship to politics, as I will demonstrate in my discussion of the involvement of the PSOE and former Madrid mayor Enrique Tierno Galván in its promotion in chapter one. Despite the fact that Tierno Galván was known as "the old professor," he also represented many values of youthful vitality (Ugarte 359). Interestingly, it was the so-called apolitical nature of those involved in the Movida that interested politicians: "the youth culture financed by the government was not a political culture like others that did exist. The establishment was interested in the political *pasotismo* [not-giving-a-damn-attitude] of those youth who participated in underground cultures...because it helped with the historical amnesia promoted from above to achieve democratic consensus" (Alberca García 294).<sup>9</sup> The promotion of the Movida by local

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<sup>9</sup> The historical amnesia that Alberca García refers in part to the "pact of silence" that was agreed upon during the transition to democracy in order to avoid the conflict of how to discuss the memory of the

politicians was a deliberate way in which they attempted to create an international image for Spain. It worked—for a time, journalists from across the globe would come to Madrid asking where the Movida was so they could report on this phenomenon. Fashion designer Ágatha Ruiz de la Prada affirms that the Movida has become an internationally recognizable term: "Ahora La Movida me sirve para explicar mi moda en el extranjero porque Movida es para siempre una palabra mágica" ("Now, the Movida helps me to explain my fashion outside of Spain, because the word Movida is always a magic word" ; LA MOVIDA 538).

Ágatha Ruiz de la Prada is an example of someone who began her career during the years of the Movida and has achieved international success. Her commercial success relates to the third stage of the Movida that Larson mentions, though she does not mention the years during which this phase took place, which consisted of the commercial consolidation of the Movida and the confirmation of its arrival to the international market (Larson 309). While the Movida reached its peak in the mid-1980s, its cultural trappings were rejected by many young Spaniards in the 1990s who were more interested in international music and grunge culture, an aspect that is detailed in one of the documentaries I address, *Madrid, la sombra de un sueño* (2007).

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Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). This pact of silence created during the transition has since been highly criticized, and there are a number of scholarly works that address the need to deal with the memory of this period, such as Paloma Aguilar's book *Memory and Amnesia. The Role of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy* (2002). The Association for the Recuperation of Historical Memory and the passage of the law of Historical Memory (passed in October 2007) are proof of the initiatives that have been undertaken to recover the memory of the Spanish Civil War in the present.

## Debating the Existence of the Movida

While the Movida clearly occurred, there has been a great deal of debate about its legacy, which stems primarily from a quote from José María Álvarez del Manzano, the former mayor of Madrid, who once remarked the following about the Movida: "Era algo etéreo, una propaganda política, no ha dejado un solo poso. Yo no recuerdo un solo libro, un solo cuadro, un solo disco; nada, de La Movida no ha quedado nada" ("It was something ethereal, a political propaganda tool, it has not left a single trace. I do not remember a single book, a single painting, a single disc; nothing, there is nothing left from the Movida" ; LA MOVIDA Arenas de Pablos 329). Arenas de Pablos calls this "negation of history" (*ibid* 329). Luis Antonio de Villena mentions the mayor's opinions in his novel *Madrid ha muerto: esplendor y caos de una ciudad feliz de los ochenta* (1999; reissued 2006): "¡Qué sabe uno! A lo mejor nunca existió nada, como pretende el rancio alcalde de hoy. A lo mejor nada ni nadie hemos existido. Tampoco estaría mal, a fin de cuentas" ("What do I know! Maybe nothing ever existed, like the current rancid mayor thinks. Maybe nothing, and none of us, has ever existed. It wouldn't be all that bad, in the end" ; 233).

Apart from this nonchalant attitude about Manzano's comments, most reactions are more vehemently opposed to his comments. For instance, in 2006, Musician Alaska wrote a text that is part of the LA MOVIDA catalog in which she responds to Álvarez del Manzano's famous comment, contradicting him directly: "[...] no pude evitar enojarme pensando en Paloma Chamorro y sus programas de televisión, en la obra de Costus, Pérez Villalta, García-Alix, en Pedro y su cine o Fabio y su genialidad extrema, en los miles de

muestras multidisciplinares que quedan de artistas de renombre y de culto. ("I could not avoid getting angry, thinking about Paloma Chamorro and her television programs, about the work of Costus, Pérez Villalta, García-Alix, about Pedro and his films and Fabio and his extreme genius, in the thousands of multidisciplinary exhibitions that remain of these renowned, cultured artists" ; LA MOVIDA, Alaska 326).

### Assessing the Movida: Patterns of Remembering

The Movida has been alternately judged in an extremely Manichean manner, as either a success or a failure, which is misguided. Speaking to this point, Paloma Aguilar notes that "any social memory represents a simplification of events in the sense that 'an overemphasis is placed on drama in narratives—wars are very apt; one-dimensional characterizations are favored—heroes and villains; and memories of social pasts tend to be romantic or demonic' (Nerone, 1989:95; Aguilar 10). The judgments and memories about the Movida are often either romantic or demonic. Similarly, Eduardo Subirats notes that the events of the transition to democracy are often judged to be either heroic or tragic (13).

The numerous opinions about the memory of the Movida prove that it continues to generate interest. Paul Julian Smith surmises: "Far from being a failure, [...] the Movida can be read as a laboratory for social change which remains ongoing" (Smith *Visual* 10). The choice of the word 'ongoing' is of interest to me as it suggests that many of the social changes that were initiated during the period of the Movida maintain relevance in the present. The memory of the Movida continues to be transformed as well, and the broad spectrum of opinions about it are also apparent in the cultural expressions

of its legacy. Addressing the Movida, Gema Pérez-Sánchez affirms: "Interpretations of the scope and aims of this urban, cultural movement vary drastically: from the most celebratory ones (Almodóvar); to nostalgic, pessimistic ones (Vilarós); to the most critical, condescending ones (those launched by older, leftist intellectuals like José Carlos Mainer" (106).

The more recent interpretations of the legacy of the Movida follow a similar pattern. True to one of the many definitions of the term Movida, the way it is being remembered is constantly shifting. A certain continuum can be observed among these attitudes and strategies, which range from mourning to working through, celebratory or condemnatory, affirming the life and exuberance of the Movida to highlighting the deaths associated with this period. Other strategies express a desire to create a permanent record of the Movida or a completely metamorphasized account of this period. Some narratives are nostalgic, while others are postnostalgic narratives<sup>10</sup>.

To acknowledge only these binary oppositions about the legacy of the Movida would be an oversimplification, for the interrelationship between these strategies for remembering is much more complex. All of the approaches that I consider are related to the dynamics of life and death, but also everything in between, and even beyond life and death. Nostalgic renderings of the past, along with the inability to complete the mourning process, seek desperately to keep the past alive. Postnostalgic narratives maintain a relationship with the past, but at a critical distance. Celebratory narratives about the past commemorate the Movida, often for its exuberance. Narratives that condemn the Movida

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<sup>10</sup> Postnostalgic narratives demand "historical judgments" and "evaluations of moments of the past," rather than romantic visions of fantasies of the past (Jameson 288). I describe the term "postnostalgia" in more depth in my fourth chapter.

seem to want to put it to death and forget its significance. Each of my chapters focuses on various attitudes and strategies for remembering or (re)membering the Movida.

In my first chapter, "*¿Sólo se vive una vez?: La Movida on Display in Recent Museum Exhibits*," I establish connections between the museum as mausoleum and the Movida's complex relationship to life and death in two museum exhibits from 2006-2007, creating a dialogue with Adorno's *Valery Proust Museum*. The first museum exhibit was part of a large-scale cultural festival in 2006-2007 called simply LA MOVIDA, sponsored by the Council of Culture and Sports of the Community of Madrid. The second was a 2007 traveling museum exhibit entitled *Modernos, Urbanos y Hedonistas: Una exposición para entender la Movida madrileña*. I detail the political implications of the way in which the Movida both fulfilled and defeated the promise for utopia during the democratic transition, and how it was used for political purposes in both of these recent exhibit series.

My second chapter, "Documenting the Past: *Sombras de un Sueño* or *La Removida*?" analyzes two documentaries about the Movida, *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* and *La empanada de la Removida*, both from 2007. These documentaries reveal the wide-ranging dimensions and possibilities of the relationship between permanence and metamorphosis inherent in what Pierre Nora has termed *lieux de mémoire*, or places of memory. The film *La empanada de la Removida* exemplifies how kitsch is employed to eradicate the historical narrative of the Movida. Both films address the idea of a "Removida," a term that demonstrates the metamorphosis and the second life of the memory of the Movida and shows how it serves as inspiration for newer generations. I

also show how the term "Removida" complicates the meaning of the Movida, because the Movida only happened once, due to a specific set of socio-cultural circumstances.

My third chapter, "*La Movida Re-leída: Mourning, Melancholia and Working Through Literary Memories*," analyzes novels that recollect this period. This chapter focuses mainly on two texts: Charlie Miralles's 2007 novel *1964 Antes de cristo y después de perder el autobús* and Luis Antonio de Villena's 1999 novel (reissued in 2006) *Madrid ha muerto: esplendor y caos de una ciudad feliz de los ochenta*. I relate these novels to Freud's works, "Mourning and Melancholia" and the concept of "working through." Both novels offer distinctive ways to narrate the memory of the Movida era. I connect the concept of melancholia to Barbie Zelizer's idea of the subjunctive voice, suggesting that in Villena's novel, the mourning process cannot be completed because the protagonist in the novel is too caught up in remembering what might have been rather than what happened, clinging to the ghosts of the past. While Miralles mourns the past, he is able to detach himself from his losses and move forward, providing a more effective way of dealing with the past and moving on in life.

My fourth chapter, "Voices and Visions: The Madrid Movida Revisited in Film," addresses the possibilities of the past created through the reconstruction of this period in two recent films, Pedro Almodóvar's 2004 film *Bad Education* and Chus Gutiérrez's *El Calentito* (2005). Both films move beyond nostalgic representations of the past by being examples of "pastiche" as well as "postnostalgic narratives." The interpretations of the past presented in the two films challenge the spectators to view the past differently by presenting the possibilities of what might have happened during various moments of the

Movida era. In *Bad Education*, Almodóvar's re-visits the period of the Movida, creating a kind of auto-pastiche of his earlier work. However, *Bad Education* is a clear departure from the depiction of the Movida in his early films, especially in the portrayal of the drug-addicted character Ignacio. Almodóvar's different approach to this period in which he was a protagonist is significant, for it allows us to re-think the portrayal of this time in Spanish history, thus creating a postnostalgic narrative. In the film *El Calentito*, a postnostalgic narrative is created in the film by allowing spectators to re-think the importance of Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Tejero's coup d'état attempt on February 23, 1981. The films revisit the "ghosts" of the past and show that they have much to teach us in the present by exploring what might have been.

The present study demonstrates that as places of memory, each of the cultural products I examine brings to light the life, death, and afterlife of the Movida. As Pierre Nora affirms, "indeed, it is this very push and pull that produces *lieux de mémoire*—moments of history torn away from the movement of history, then returned; no longer quite life, not yet death, like shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded" (Nora, *Between...* 12). The recent commemorative events and products created about the Movida reveal these tensions and underline the shifting meanings not only of the Movida, but also of all memories, which move about between the continuum of remembering and forgetting.



## Chapter One

### *¿Sólo se vive una vez?: La Movida on Display in Recent Museum Exhibits*

#### Introduction: La Movida, Between Life and Death

A number of conspicuous contradictions arise when examining the way stories about the Movida are told, and these paradoxes are the focus of this analysis. In the museum exhibits I consider, it will become clear that the Madrid Movida not only existed in the past, but also exists in the present and the future of the city and autonomous community of Madrid, since the past is put to use for the needs of the present and the future. From the beginning, the Movida was a renaissance, but it was also linked to premature deaths of a number of its participants due to drug overdoses, AIDS and other social ills. Its multifaceted relationship to life and death, both figuratively and literally, has only been further complicated in recent years.

Since its inception, an ever-evolving discursive construction of the Movida has been created through a variety of media, which reveal that the Movida has always had a number of contradictory, ambiguous elements. For example, the combination of high and low culture, the mixing of young people with older politicians like Tierno Galván, and the love-hate interpretations of the Movida in public forums. Painter Juan Ugalde, who began his career during this era, uses the following descriptors, which highlight the many contradictions of this period: "[...] la alta y baja cultura, futuro y pasado, los vaqueros con la falda escocesa, la Bauhaus con Mortadelo, o Andrea Mantegna con Jackson Pollock" ("High and low culture, future and past, jeans with plaid skirts, the Bauhaus

with Mortadelo, Andrea Mantegna with Jackson Pollock" ; LA MOVIDA, Ugalde 206)

<sup>11</sup>. In the same catalog, photographer Ana Arabaolaza describes the era as "[...] esa época dorada y maldita a la vez [...]" ("That era that was at once golden and damned" ; 216). The evolution of the prominence of the Movida in Madrid is also contradictory. While in the beginning the Movida was countercultural, in the mid 1980s it was appropriated as a marketing tool to breathe new life into the social and political scene in Madrid. A similar appropriation of the Movida occurred again in the 2000s, both in a vast number of cultural products and in government-sponsored events created in part by politicians searching once again for a renewed image for Madrid.

The multiple representations of the Movida reveal a curious discourse that paradoxically embraces and resists both life and death. The contradictions between life and death, the Movida and museums, intersect in the representation of the Movida in several recent museum exhibits. The first was part of a large-scale cultural festival in 2006-2007 called simply LA MOVIDA, sponsored by the Consejería de Cultura y Deportes de la Comunidad de Madrid (Council of Culture and Sports of the Community of Madrid). These exhibits, which featured work from artists from the late 1970s to early 1980s, were held in three large gallery spaces (the Sala Alcalá 31, the Sala Complejo "El Águila," and the Sala Canal de Isabel II) in Madrid from November 2006 to February 2007. Two other smaller-scale series of exhibits were part of the LA MOVIDA cultural

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<sup>11</sup> The series of references mentioned here connect different art schools and cultural products that are seemingly disconnected. During the Movida, there was a great deal of borrowing from different art schools and artistic referents. This quote is a collage of different references. "La Bauhaus" might refer to the 1970s English rock band called "Bauhaus," or to The Bauhaus, which was founded in 1919 in Germany during the Weimar Republic by architect Walter Gropius. The Bauhaus wished to combine all arts and crafts to create useful, "total" art. "Mortadelo" is reference to *Mortadelo y Filemón*, a popular comic book series created by Francisco Ibáñez in the 1950s. Andrea Mantegna, an Italian Renaissance Painter, is related to Jackson Pollock, one of the foremost artists of Abstract Expressionism.

festival. First, there was a series of small gallery exhibits called *Madrid.06*, which featured the work (created in the 2000s) of emerging contemporary artists in Madrid and served as a complement to the larger exhibits and as an attempt to look to the present and future of the art scene in Madrid. These exhibits exemplify the notion of the *Removida*, an idea that ultimately fails as a weak attempt to project the past into the future, as will be discussed here<sup>12</sup>. The second small scale exhibit, a 2007 traveling museum exhibit entitled *Modernos, Urbanos y Hedonistas: Una exposición para entender la Movida madrileña* (Moderns, Urbanites, and Hedonists: An Exhibition to Understand the Madrid Movida), was also sponsored by the Council of Culture and Sports of the Community of Madrid and was tangentially related to the LA MOVIDA events. I also briefly mention the 2007 edition of the contemporary art fair ARCO<sup>13</sup>. All of these exhibits serve as a platform from which to discuss many of the ambiguities surrounding the representation of the Movida.

The insistence on emphasizing the legacy of the Movida shows that life and death are at stake in its commemoration, for memory staves off oblivion. From its beginnings, the Movida was connected to both life and death, which is perhaps the reason why the discourse of life and death is so prevalent when considering its' memory. This relationship between life and death echoes what Noël Valis has remarked, that "[...] the Movida can be seen as a local narrative of Madrid in which rupture and continuity both

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<sup>12</sup> The term "Removida" was used in newspaper coverage in 2006-2007 to suggest the return of the Movida via commemorative events and products. It is also used in the 2007 documentary "La empanada de la Removida," which I examine in another chapter. In this documentary, the term suggest that the cultural scene in Madrid of the late 2000s is experiencing a similar cultural moment. However, it is problematic, because the original Movida occurred due to a very specific set of socio-historical circumstances, especially the death of Franco, that have no equal in more recent years.

<sup>13</sup> ARCO stands for "Arte Contemporáneo," an international contemporary art fair that has taken place in Madrid every year since 1982.

play a role" (279). In 2006, Teresa Vilarós reflected on the meaning of the Movidá, connecting it to life and death and portraying it as a large bird: "Gran pájaro empujado por la tormenta que soplabá del paraíso perdido de la modernidad, *La Movidá* fue el espectro de aquel ángel benjaminiano, pajarraco que inesperadamente, durante un instante fugaz, reveló bajo sus alas la catástrofe de la razón para caer después, roto y descompuesto, junto a su imagen del parque del Retiro" ("A large bird pushed by the storm that blew out of the lost paradise of modernity, the Movidá was the spectre of the youngest angel child, a bird that, unexpectedly, during a fleeting moment, revealed from underneath its wings the catastrophe of reason only to later fall, broken and decomposed, together with its image of the Retiro park" ; Vilarós, *Zero*, 56). Vilarós depicts the fleeting moment of vivaciousness associated with the Movidá, and also its "fall" from grace, a clear reference to life and death. Vilarós explains how the fallen angel returned in 2006, during the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary Movidá commemorations, albeit with its "[...] cuerpo fragmentado y comido de sida, de sexo y drogas [...]" ("fragmented body, devoured by AIDS, sex, and drugs") to project its shadow (*ibid* 56). This overly decadent, exaggerated description of the Movidá is consistent with Vilarós's earlier work, *El mono del desencanto* (1998). Whether a fallen angel or a source of pride, since it is constantly unearthed, the Movidá is literally re-membered, given a new and distinctive form by the creation of a new corpus of materials, including the exhibits examined here.

The fact that the Movidá is being either entombed or preserved for a second life in museum exhibits reveals a double set of seemingly exclusive alternatives: first, whether the museum is a mausoleum or a kind of life support, a cryogenic chamber that preserves

life. The second contradiction is whether the Movida is symbolically dead or simply living its second life, which is suggested in both press about the LA MOVIDA cultural festivities and in the problematic notion of the Removida, a term that cropped up during the commemorative events in the 2000s. All of the contradictions about the Movida highlighted here reveal that it has various meanings for distinct groups of people, depending on who tells the story. The motivations behind these narratives, whether personal or political, reveal that the Movida has lived many lives and died many deaths. Whether a tool for mourning the lost possibilities of the past or celebrating this very sense of possibility that it represented, like objects in a museum, the Movida is both dead and alive, rife with the ambiguity that was so cherished by its original participants.

In an examination of the catalogs from these exhibits, I demonstrate how the variety of discourses about the Movida inevitably includes contradictions, especially in regards to its complex relationship to life and death. By nature, museum exhibits are ultimately fleeting: *sólo se viven una vez*<sup>14</sup> ("they only live once"). Despite their ephemeral nature, these exhibits do leave something in their wake. My analysis focuses on the textual traces left behind from the LA MOVIDA exhibits and the *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit in the catalogs from these two events<sup>15</sup>. The *Modernos, Urbanos...* catalog is divided into three basic sections: Modernos, Urbanos y Hedonistas, for each of the categories included in the exhibit title. The LA MOVIDA catalog is divided into eight chapters: the plastic arts, photography, music, graphic design, architecture and

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<sup>14</sup> This saying comes from the title of José Luis Gallero's compilation of interviews with people involved in the Movida, *Sólo se vive una vez: Esplendor y ruina de la Movida madrileña* (1991).

<sup>15</sup> As Linda Hutcheon notes, in reality, "the past is only known to us today through its textualized traces (which, like all texts, are always open to interpretation)[...]" (Hutcheon 81).

industrial design, fashion, literature, and film. Each chapter begins with a general introduction and history of the theme in question. Images of works from the Movida are interspersed with texts ranging from personal reflections and accounts of the era to some theoretical texts. Several images and texts from each of these catalogs will be analyzed throughout this chapter, providing information not only about the legacy of the Movida but about what it meant when it first occurred. The exhibit catalog, an often under-examined and forgotten text in the study of exhibits, provides a set of compelling narratives about these particular exhibits that need to be interpreted and even questioned.

#### Exhibit Catalogs as Archival Narratives

While ultimately the two exhibits examined here contain similar conclusions about the life and death of the Movida, the exhibits were distinct from one another. These dissimilarities are important to keep in mind. One of the main storylines of the *Modernos, Urbanos...* catalog is that the exhibits it discusses were meant to be didactic, aimed at an audience unfamiliar with the Movida. The narratives in the LA MOVIDA catalog suggest that the exhibit creators wanted to pay their respects to those involved in the Movida and to consecrate this group of artists by giving them a sacred place in the trajectory of Spanish artistic movements. Each narrative has specific purposes that are grounded in a specific set of social relations. Beyond the obvious reasons that people have for commemorations: marking the anniversary of a specific event or making sure it is not erased from history books, there are other reasons why commemorative events and initiatives deserve a closer look. Far from nostalgic meanderings about the past, these commemorations serve a very specific purpose for the understanding and meaning

making of the present. What may be seen at first glance as dwelling on the past actually proves, in a closer analysis, to be memory work done for the future.

In order to enter into an analysis of the exhibit catalog, it is important to understand its purpose and significance. While museum exhibits are temporal, catalogs are meant to be the permanent "record," what stays in the bookshop and on the stacks well after the exhibits are dismantled. Jacques Derrida reminds us of the dual definition of the word *archive*, which can be understood both as a commandment (as in: "please archive this document") and as a place, "the archive" (Derrida 1). The exhibit catalog is a kind of archive, while museums are also archives. Beyond being archives, "museums are more than cultural institutions and showplaces of accumulated objects: they are the sites of interaction between personal and collective identities, between memory and history, between information and knowledge production" (Crane 12). This knowledge production is part of a power structure. Derrida explains that the meaning of "the archive" comes from "the Greek *arkheion*: initially a house, a domicile, an address, the residence of the superior magistrates, the *archons*, those who commanded" (Derrida 2). The connection is thus made between the place and those who resided there: the *archons* exercised their power over what was housed in the archive. The items included in an exhibit catalog and also in a museum's collection are chosen by those who exercise power over these two distinct types of archives: curators and scholars choose what will be written about and displayed.

I conceive of the catalogs analyzed here as cultural products that hold concrete narratives that will be interpreted and placed into the broader context of pre-existing

narratives about the legacy of the Madrid Movida. It is relevant here to note that catalogs are only one part of the general narrative of a museum exhibit. In the book *Museum Exhibition: Theory and Practice*, David Dean explains the need to develop *narratives* for museum exhibits through label text that accompanies the displayed objects, along with title signs, introductory and group texts, and distributional materials (Dean 111).

However, many of these materials are kept short for the purpose of displaying only necessary, thought provoking information about a particular exhibit. Often, catalogs have an academic perspective: they include erudite texts composed by curators along with artist statements and philosophies, and sometimes even theoretical academic texts.

Catalogs serve to contextualize exhibits in a way that newspaper articles and exhibit reviews do not: popular media seeks to promote exhibits, while catalogs seek to interpret and catalogue the art works displayed in exhibits. Catalogs serve as a supplement to the general narrative of museum exhibits, for "often the informational content of an exhibition (the narrative) is either too long, too esoteric, or otherwise inappropriate to be contained within the exhibition design *in toto*. Distributed materials [like catalogs and brochures] are an ideal outlet for such information" (Dean 115). In the case of the two Movida exhibit catalogs analyzed here, both texts are hybrids: in part, they offer an historical-cultural overview, but are also popular culture texts that include a collection of eyewitness accounts about people who lived through the era in question. Catalogs are often very large books—the LA MOVIDA catalog discussed here is a volume with 781 pages that cost 55 Euros. I mention the price to emphasize the catalog as a *product*: catalogs are not purchased by every person who views an exhibit, but rather by a small



portion. Sometimes this is because they are rather expensive—entry to a museum may be up to \$25, and a catalog can cost \$50-\$100 in the United States. Thus they are also an item that is "consumed" privately, while viewing an exhibit is a public event.

Catalogs are also mementos and souvenirs: they serve as a tool for remembering, for reviewing and referencing the exhibits after they have ended. In addition, "for the possessor of a memento, the object represents an experience nostalgically imbued with the aura of a lost origin" (Little 70). Yet a catalog is hardly an exact representation of the experience of walking through museum galleries. An exhibit catalog usually does not even contain photographs of the exhibits themselves, but high quality images of the paintings or objects displayed. The catalog may be seen as a memento in the sense that at the very least, least the images of these objects conjure up a constructed narrative that "[...] re-present[s] an original experience" (Little 69). Exhibit catalogs are also associated with forgetting. José Colmeiro comments on the recuperation of memory through commemorations, seeing the latter as a symptom of "[...] una memoria pendular, que aparece y desaparece, una memoria resurgida artificialmente (a través de congresos, exposiciones, placas, libros, necrológicas) y rápidamente devuelta al olvido del archivo" ("a pendular memory, that appears and disappears, a memory that resurfaces artificially (by way of conferences, exhibitions, plaques, books, obituaries) and is quickly returned to be forgotten in the archive" ; *Memoria...*23). Even though the catalog remains as a memory of the event, if it is archived and never read, it is largely forgotten. Before turning to my analysis of the exhibit catalogs, I will briefly describe the context of

museums in Spain during the last four decades in order to provide a context for the exhibits described here.

### The Museum and Gallery Scene in Spain: From the 1970s to the Present

Though there were already a fair number of art galleries and museums in Spain in the 1970s, their numbers began to increase steadily. For example, Juana de Aizpuru, now one of the most well known gallery owners in Spain, opened her first gallery in Seville in 1970. However, even though the 1960s and 1970s represented a time of *aperturismo político* ("policy of openness") in Spain in many respects, censorship was still alive and well during this time. In order to truly understand what the arrival of the Movida meant for the art scene in Madrid, it is helpful to recall some examples of the repression characteristic of the Franco regime. In the final years of the dictatorship, the following instances of censorship occurred at Madrid galleries:

En 1973 quemaron una exposición de Picasso en la Galería Theo, dirigida por Elvira González. En Vandrés, dirigida por Fernando Vijande, Gloria Kirby y Marisa Torrente, la policía clausuró *La Paloma*—exposición homenaje a Picasso—en la que Alcaín expuso un maniquí desnudo (a los pocos días se autorizó nuevamente su apertura, eso sí con bragas—realmente se le pusieron unas bragas al maniquí—). En 1974 retiraron una portada del escaparate de una librería porque la portada era *La maja desnuda* de Goya. (B. Sánchez 20).

In 1973 a Picasso exhibition was burned at the Galería Theo, directed by Elvira González. At Vandrés [gallery], directed by Fernando Vijande, Gloria Kirby and Marisa Torrente, the police closed an exhibit in homage to Picasso entitled *The Dove*, in which Alcaín exhibited a nude mannequin (after a few days it was authorized to open again, but this time, with underwear—they really put underwear on the mannequin. In 1974, a book cover was removed from the display window of a bookstore because the book cover featured Goya's *The Nude Maja*.

These are only a few of the countless examples of the censorship typical during Franco's dictatorship. This kind of alarm over nudity would be obliterated after Franco's death.

As the dictatorship came to an end, the art scene as we know it today came alive. The death of Dictator Francisco Franco in 1975 prompted a political and ideological turn in Spain, beginning with the transition to democracy and later with the incorporation of Spain into the European Union in 1986. The changes in the socio-political climate in Spain led to the opening of galleries and museums and the creation of international art fairs such as ARCO that began the process of establishing Spain as a destination for artistic ventures. Instead of watching their great artists speak about their country while in exile in Paris and beyond, Spaniards would now have the opportunity to look within and create their own art scene. Many artists returned from exile, but there was also a new contingent of artists cropping up, particularly in Madrid. Many of those artists were part of the "Nueva Ola," the new wave, which much later became known as "La Movida"<sup>16</sup>. The artists from this period wanted to liberate themselves from the "[...] legado cultural y artístico del discurso ideológico fascista que lo había *secuestrado* para sus propios intereses políticos durante cuarenta años" ("cultural and artistic legacy of the fascist ideological discourse which had been sequestered for political interests for forty years" ;Yarza 17). Their work was exhibited at many of the new galleries in Madrid, and eventually in museums, and the Movida would eventually become one of the most important aspects of a new cultural identity for Madrid.

In Spain, museums were especially important during the transition to democracy and beyond. Holo's text *Beyond the Prado: Museums and Identity in Democratic Spain*

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<sup>16</sup> The label "Nueva Ola" is used more often by its original participants than the term "Movida." The term "Movida" was only widely used beginning in the mid-1980s. Since this term was used as a marketing tool to give Madrid a national and international image, it was popularized to the extent that it has basically overshadowed the original name, "Nueva Ola."

(1999) details in part the appearance of numerous regional museums in Spain in an effort to further confirm regional identities. Holo emphasizes the importance of developing cultural identities in Spain after the 1978 constitution was issued: "The proliferation of orchestras, theaters, dance companies, art schools, festivals, languages, literatures, and museums that have flourished throughout the country since Franco's death attest to how seriously this wide range of possibilities of cultural identification has been taken" (xiii). In the 1990s, there was a veritable museum boom in Spain, with one of the highlights being the opening of Guggenheim in Bilbao in 1997, which is a world-renowned destination. Holo explains how important museums have been in post-Franco Spain, noting that "Museums, especially art museums, held a high profile in the cultural debates and emerged as one of those institutions expected to play a starring role in Spain's addressing of the current challenges" (11). This is important to remember when considering the museum exhibits examined in this chapter, because the abundance of commemorations about the Movida is an example of the acquisition of symbolic capital to reaffirm the local identity of Madrid. The current abundance of commemorative events in museums is also symptomatic of the postmodern condition: "La obsesión memorialista y museística de nuestros días, típica de la sensibilidad coleccionista postmoderna del souvenir, es en cierta manera explicable dado que el museo o el monumento ofrecen la materialidad del objeto que el ordenador y la televisión [...] niegan" ("The memorialistic and museological obsession of our days, typical of the collection-oriented postmodern sensibility of the souvenir, is in a certain sense explicable given that museums and monuments offer a materiality of the object that computers and

televisions negate" ; Colmeiro 22). Not only do museums offer a sense of materiality of objects, but they also become sites in which the past is displayed and deliberated upon. Museums have "emerged as a key site for cultural politics arising over questions of the past in late democracies" (Chakrabarty 7). This is certainly true when viewing the cultural politics of the recent commemorations of the Movida, especially when considering the way the past is portrayed in the narratives of museum exhibit catalogs.

#### Contextualizing the Movida Commemorations: The Identity of Urban Spaces

The significance of the recent commemorations about the Movida is just beginning to receive attention in academic journals and at conferences, where critical revisions of these commemorative items and events are being produced. In his forthcoming article, William Nichols examines two recent commemorative exhibits about the Movida, LA MOVIDA (2006-2007) and Pablo Pérez Mínguez's "Mi Movida" (2006). In his analysis of these two exhibits, Nichols argues that "[...] the museum as a space of mediation [...] ironically strips the Movida of the context of its cultural vibrancy [...] to ultimately reinforce a normalization of Spain's self-image and reaffirm an official narrative of the perceived origins of its modern identity" (Nichols 4). I add to his discussion by analyzing the 2006-2007 exhibits in more depth, especially an exhibit that he mentions only briefly; *Modernos, Urbanos y Hedonistas: Una exposición para entender la Movida madrileña*. The exhibit also supplements the discussion of the contradictions Nichols mentions, while alluding to other paradoxes about both museum exhibits and the Movida phenomenon.

The "official narrative" that William Nichols mentions in the previous quote seems to me not to be of Spain's self-image, but focuses more on the city and the autonomous community of Madrid and its (sometimes problematic) association with the Movida. As is true in many urban environments, the relationship between the past, the present and the future is constantly being negotiated. The exhibits and festivities to commemorate the Movida were used as a way to transform the "urban imaginary" of both the citizens of Madrid and the visitors to the city. Many cities attempt to redesign urban environments in the physical sense, but there is also an ideological rebuilding of the city that goes hand in hand with its material reconstruction.

The Movida is put to use as a way to "theme" the city space "in order to orchestrate an appealing urban imagery;" it goes beyond the literal construction of new buildings and infrastructure to create a certain urban image and attitude of the city (Salmon 106). Both in the 1980s and in again in the 2000s, the Movida has been claimed as part of Madrid's cultural patrimony, thus giving it a legitimate place in the formation of Madrid's identity as an autonomous community in Spain. Being that it is the capital city, it is a place in which pluralism should be celebrated, but since Madrid was a new autonomous community beginning in 1978 (due to the introduction of the new Constitution), there was a perceived need to look inward to self-define a particular local identity for Madrid in the early 1980s. Madrid has long been the seat of power in Spain, and is geographically located in the center of the country. Prior to and during Franco's dictatorship, a central Spanish identity was affirmed in Madrid, the political center of power. While much focus has been placed on the study of regions peripheral to Madrid

(Basque, Catalan, and Galician nationalisms), Hamilton M. Stapell points out that "[...] little work has been done on Spain's core" (174). During the democratic transition, Madrid needed to create its own local identity instead of affirming Spanish nationalism, which had accrued a bad reputation due to the oppressive Francoist rhetoric and practices (Stapell 175). Stapell also notes that "As the capital of the nation-state of Spain, and as the former centre of the dictatorship, Madrid *should* hold a special place of interest for scholars interested both in the creation of new forms of democratic identity and in the fate of Spanish nationalism after 1975" (176). Indeed, while little has been said about the Madrid-based nationalism, the use of the Movida for political means in the 1980s and the 2000s is an example of an attempt to define the autonomous community from within. Stapell notes that there has been a lack of scholarly interest about Madrid's collective identity and that "no one has identified a collective identity in Madrid that is separate from Spanish national identity" (177). However, he does mention the importance of the Movida as a major part of an attempt to create a local, collective identity: "The promotion of the colourful, and at times chaotic, cultural movement proved to be an essential piece in the development of a new regional sense of place based on inclusion and greater cultural participation" (Stapell 178). The Movida represented a complete departure from older forms of rigid Spanish nationalism and conservatism associated with Madrid. Since Madrid was associated with this inflexible Spanish nationalism, it was particularly important for politicians to adopt a movement like the Movida to show that they wanted to change the image of Madrid.

The exhibits analyzed here offer a narration of the past and thus seek to define in part who *madrileños* are today, but perhaps more importantly, who they were in the past. However, narrations of the past are inherently tied to the needs of the present and the aspirations of the future. In 1974, Italo Calvino wrote the following about cities, which is applicable to the way the Movida fits into Madrid's past and its present:

With cities it is as with dreams: everything imaginable can be dreamed, but even the most unexpected dream is a rebus that conceals a desire, or its reverse, a fear. Cities, like dreams, are made of desires and fears, even if the thread of their discourse is secret, their rules are absurd, their perspective deceitful, and everything conceals something else. (Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, 1974)

The Movida exhibits I examine involve desires and dreams, as well as fears. The desire to bring the past into the present is not an accident, but rather, it conceals a fear: the fear of forgetting, and worse, the fear of death. The exhibits display the lives, deaths, and eternal quality of those who were involved in the Movida. It has been said that in the text *The System of Objects*, Jean Baudrillard "interprets the display of objects from the past as a visualization of the idea of continuity, of overcoming time and death" (Ostow 4). The desire to put the Movida on display in recent years is therefore tied in part to the fact that many of the people who were involved in it are being faced with their own personal *memento mori*. Faced with the possibility of death, there is a desire to leave a legacy: a vision of the past as they lived through the Movida, so that future generations understand what it meant. The president of the Community of Madrid, Esperanza Aguirre, expresses a sense of this particular usage of memory in the final statement of her introduction to the LA MOVIDA catalog: "Queremos que estas exposiciones y los actos que las han acompañado sean recordados, sobre todo, como una celebración. Una celebración que



esperamos que los nuevos madrileños hayan disfrutado tanto como los que vivieron los años de la Movida en directo" ("We want these exhibits and the events that accompany them to be remembered, above all, as a celebration. A celebration that we hope that the new Madrilenians have enjoyed as much as those who lived through the Movida"; 27). Aguirre clearly attempts to unite those who lived through the Movida with the new Madrilenians hoping to forge a collective bond between them via a celebration of the Movida. Aguirre's embracement of the Movida and emphasis only on the celebratory aspect of this moment is problematic, as will be discussed in more depth in the forthcoming pages.

#### The Conditions of Production: The Exhibit Creators

The commemoration of the Movida contributes to its legacy by creating different "official" versions of it via multiple citations in numerous settings. It is important to take into account that various individuals and groups are responsible for the creation of the memory of the Movida in the exhibits examined here, as well as those who respond to and criticize these memories, such as the response in the press. Therefore, Pierre Bourdieu's notion that "[...] no cultural product exists by itself " must be taken into account. (Bourdieu 32-33). Bourdieu speaks of the importance of considering the "social conditions of production" of any given cultural product. In the case of museum exhibits, these include both the curatorial intentions and the public's response to the exhibits, which are sometimes at odds with one another. I discuss the roles of the various people involved in the production of the exhibits (curators, artists, and employees of the Comunidad de Madrid) as well as the spectators and critics who responded to the

exhibits. For example, Sigfrido Martín Begué, a Movida-era painter who was in charge of the montage of the LA MOVIDA exhibits, was personally implicated in the Movida and in the creation of the exhibits. Martín Begué's vision of the exhibits was therefore informed by his own experiences and the inclusion of his work from that period of his life.

His involvement in the exhibits differs from that of Esperanza Aguirre, the President of the Comunidad de Madrid, who wrote one of the introductory texts for the exhibit catalog, which explains some of the socio-political underpinnings of the exhibits. Aguirre was not involved in the Movida in its' early years, but represents a politician who was invested in the creation of the commemorative exhibits. It is often the case that the ideas the creators of museum exhibits wish to communicate differ from the reactions brought forth by spectators. The reception of the exhibits is also important to consider: what was the written response to the exhibits in the press? These points of view are addressed by assessing editorial responses, newspaper articles and other forums (such as interviews I conducted) for the opinions of spectators. In addition, how did the people who were featured in the exhibits (but not directly involved in their creation) respond?

This reconstruction was created in part by the temporary exhibits about the Movida in recent years, which are analyzed in order to understand how the Movida is remembered through the medium of the museum and/or gallery exhibit. The discourse that emanates from these exhibits seeks in part to situate the Movida in a position of respect, as part of Madrid's cultural patrimony. The analysis of the catalogs from the

museum exhibits I examine provide rich possibilities for the study of these interactions in Madrid.

### From the Center to the Periphery: Cultural Festival Versus Traveling Exhibit

In order to gain an idea of the distinctions between the LA MOVIDA exhibits in the capital and the *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit, it is useful to examine portions of the narratives from the catalogs as well the reaction from the press about the exhibits. These narratives vary considerably, simply because of their scale and the number of contributors for each exhibit. The LA MOVIDA catalog is an impressive 781-page tome that contains a stunning collection of reproductions of the original works included in the exhibits. It seems that Blanca Sánchez wished to create a fairly exhaustive illustration of the various areas of the Movida for the LA MOVIDA exhibits. The exhibit venture united areas of the Movida that had not been previously exhibited together, most notably the inclusion of graphic design and architecture of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Thus this exhibit had a breadth and depth formerly unseen in previous exhibits about the Movida. However, the *Modernos, Urbanos...* catalog is a mere 48 pages, and has its share of images and explanatory texts, written mainly by three people, while the LA MOVIDA catalog includes commentaries from over 150 people including academics, artists, writers, architects, musicians, gallery owners, politicians, fashion designers, graphic designers, film directors and photographers.

The aims of the two exhibits were quite different. The *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit, which was curated by Héctor Fouce, an ethnomusicologist who wrote his

doctoral thesis on music from the Movida<sup>17</sup>. The tone of the catalog is one of detachment: the narratives included within its pages express opinions, but always in the third person. Given Fouce's academic background, his curatorial vision was to create exhibits with a didactic purpose. Even the title of the exhibit reveals that its purpose was "para *entender*" ("to understand") the Movida. If the *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit was created to understand the Movida, the LA MOVIDA series was a kind of blockbuster exhibit designed to attract attention to almost every possible aspect of the Movida. The LA MOVIDA series was a full-scale cultural festival curated by Blanca Sánchez and sponsored by the branch of Archives, Museums and Libraries of the Council of Culture and Sports of the Community of Madrid. The LA MOVIDA catalog is not only a valuable tome of pictorial reproductions from the Movida; it also contains a wide variety of scholarly and anecdotal texts. As previously mentioned, Blanca Sánchez also inserts her first person experiences during the Movida, and so do many of the writers in the catalog, who lived through this period. This creates a very distinctive sensation for the reader, since most of the texts read as personal accounts of what occurred during this period of Spain's history rather than an academic version of the story.

There is also an awareness of a multiplicity of voices in the LA MOVIDA catalog, as opposed to the three writers of the *Modernos, Urbanos...* catalog, which was actually mostly written by Fouce and reads for the most part as an academic text. The LA MOVIDA catalog contains a wide variety of different texts, but often, its writers use a

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<sup>17</sup> Fouce's thesis was titled "'El futuro ya está aquí': Música pop y cambio cultural en España. Madrid 1978-1985." It was completed at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid in 2002, and published in book format as *El futuro ya está aquí* in 2006.

first person perspective. However, it is not entirely void of an academic perspective, since it does include parts of theoretical, scholarly texts such as Teresa Vilarós's *El mono del desencanto* (1998). The catalog thus bridges the personal and the collective as well as academic judgments versus individual memories. The differences between the two ways of narrating presented in the two catalogs exemplifies how "individual memories and academic intentions interact in the production of personal expectations and collective representations, in an ongoing, reciprocal mediation. The viability of these collisions is constantly being tested in museum exhibits [...]" (Crane 7). For example, the purpose of the first person perspective in the LA MOVIDA exhibits is due to the desire of the curator and exhibit organizers to collect eyewitness accounts of this period, which lend the whole endeavor an impression of authenticity.

In some sense, this catalog contains a collection of both individual and collective memories. The President of the Comunidad de Madrid, Esperanza Aguirre, explains the presence of these multiple narratives about the past in the introduction to the LA MOVIDA exhibit catalog: "[...] hemos tratado de que la visión que ofrecemos de aquellos años fuera una visión desde dentro, que fueran los propios protagonistas quienes nos contaran cómo se produjo aquel estallido de creatividad" ("we have tried to make the vision that we offer of those years a vision from the inside, that the protagonists [who lived through this period] would tell us how that explosion of creativity was produced" ; Aguirre 27). In the introduction to the LA MOVIDA catalog, Blanca Sánchez uses the first person immediately, stating that for her, "lo que fue mi Movida me parece casi imposible" ("what was my Movida seems almost impossible to me" ; B. Sánchez 18).

She gives credit to Pablo Pérez-Mínguez, who has a published catalog of his photographs called "Mi Movida" and also exhibited a series of photographs under that title. Sánchez affirms the idea that everyone had their own personal Movida, and Pérez-Mínguez's idea is later reiterated in the plastic arts section of the catalog by Fernando Huici March, who notes that "el lema de 'Mi Movida,' título que no puede resultar más atinado y certero, pues tantas y tan dispares movidas hubo [...]" ("the slogan 'My Movida,' could not be more accurate and on target, since there were so many different movidas" ; 40). The existence of various movidas, or versions of the past, is tied both to postmodernity and the production of this exhibit. Pierre Nora suggests "the past has ceased to have a single meaning" (Nora, *Reasons* np). The many meanings of the Movida were articulated on different levels in the two exhibits, which had very distinctive purposes.

#### The Scale of the Two Exhibits

The scope of the exhibits was also quite distinctive. The LA MOVIDA exhibits and events may be conceived of as a full-scale cultural festival, while the *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit was a smaller municipal venture. As a supplement to the LA MOVIDA exhibits, there were a number of events held in Madrid in 2006-2007. This is relevant to point out because the presence of so many events not only made the Movida commemoration into a citywide event, but also included a wide variety of public avenues for remembering and learning about the Movida over a four-month period. For example, beyond the gallery walls, there were also numerous other celebratory activities and events to commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Movida, including screenings of films (including Almodóvar's early work) and television shows (*La Edad de Oro* "The Golden

Age") from the 1970s and 1980s, musical performances and a series of round table discussions about Movida-oriented topics with academics and Movida artists<sup>18</sup>. Again, the variety of events were true to the meaning of the Movida as a hybrid of high and low culture: there were academic discussions as well as public "reunion" concerts of Movida-era bands. Each of these different elements served a distinctive purpose, and the organizers of the events associated with the exhibits wished to achieve numerous objectives with each event.

Different from the events in the city center, the *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit was small, portable, and exhibited in municipal museums in the autonomous community of Madrid as part of a program developed by the Comunidad de Madrid called "Red Itiner"<sup>19</sup>. The *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit exemplifies a commemorative exhibit that incorporates the contemporary artistic patrimony of the city of Madrid. In the catalog for the exhibit series, Santiago Fisas Ayxelà, the Chancellor of Culture and Sports of the Comunidad de Madrid, noted that "La Red Itiner de exposiciones es, una vez más, la encargada de difundir los logros de la *Movida* por nuestros municipios" ("The Red Itiner series is once again commissioned to spread the achievements of the *Movida* to our municipalities" ; Fisas Ayxelà 5). Thus the Red Itiner exhibits seek to move beyond the

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<sup>18</sup> My main source for this section is the schedule of these events, released by the Consejería de Cultura y Deportes (a branch of the Comunidad de Madrid), a document that Francisco Fernández de Alba, Assistant Professor of Hispanic Studies at Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts, kindly shared with me in 2007.

<sup>19</sup> Created in 1990, the general purpose of the Red Itiner exhibits is to promote artistic creation and in particular to promote diverse cultural and historical themes (Comunidad de Madrid "Red Itiner" site). In 2009, there were Red Itiner exhibits in 62 municipalities of Madrid with themes such as immigration, tourism, music and film. The exhibits often include the opportunity to participate in workshops about the content of the exhibit and also offer guided tours to school groups, which exemplifies a desire to reach out to and educate smaller communities.

capital and to spread knowledge of what happened in the city to the outskirts. This exhibit series was created to complement the LA MOVIDA series, and Fisas Ayxelà also mentions the importance of the municipalities of Madrid during the Movida: "[...] pues muchas de sus ciudades también la vivieron y crearon" ("many of its cities also lived through it and created it" ; *ibid* 5). It is significant that the *Modernos, Urbanos* exhibit was displayed in the outskirts of the city, for they bridged the gap between the city center and the periphery, and this aspect also allows for considerable contrasts. The participation of the municipalities in the exhibit (and the Movida) is also significant because it establishes the connection with the entire autonomous community of Madrid, not just the capital city.

#### The "Imagined Public" of the Exhibits: Curatorial Visions

It has been suggested that the LA MOVIDA exhibits were designed at least in part for "insiders"—people involved in the Movida helped to curate and design the montage for them, such as Blanca Sánchez and artist Sigfrido Martín Begué. In a personal interview, Fouce mentioned that he felt the *La Movida* exhibits in Madrid were created at least in part by and for those who *did* live through the Movida (Interview, 17 July 2008). In contrast, the *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit was created with a specific public in mind: those who had not lived through the Movida. Curator Héctor Fouce notes the latter in the introduction to the exhibit catalog: "Esta exposición intenta dar una visión del movimiento a los que no estuvieron allí. En lugar de centrarnos en los grandes nombres, hemos intentado dar una idea global de los aspectos generales que definen la *Movida* " ("This exhibition intends to give a vision of the movement to those who were not there.



Instead of focusing on the big names, we have tried to give a global idea of the general aspects that define the Movida" ; Fouce 9).

Although the series of LA MOVIDA exhibits held in the city of Madrid included round-table discussions, the *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit claimed to reveal the sociological side of the Movida by framing it as a youth culture movement: "por primera vez en España la juventud surge como grupo social diferenciado, con sus propias prácticas, valores y símbolos, con su propia cultura, entendida como una particular manera de vivir" ("for the first time in Spain, a group of young people appears as a social group that is differentiated by its practices, values and symbols, with its own culture, understood as a particular way of life" ; Fisas Ayxelà 5)<sup>20</sup>. As in other countries, instead of existing at the periphery of society, young people took center stage in Spain. Héctor Fouce notes that the *Rolling Stone* article published about the Movida in 1985 (which is also featured in the exhibit catalog) proclaimed that "la juventud reina en España" ("youth reins in Spain" ; Fouce 32). Due in large part to the popularization and commodification of the Movida, Spanish youth culture is the emblem of the "official image of Spain" (Graham and Labanyi, 1995, p. 312).

It seems that Fouce's curatorial vision was to present the Movida in general terms rather than focus on its particularities. Fouce also suggests that the purpose of the exhibit is to allow people to travel through time to the past: "La exposición, a través de la imagen y de la música, nos propone una vuelta atrás en el tiempo, a un país que quería,

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<sup>20</sup> Mark Allinson has detailed the youth subculture in Spain in his article "The Construction of Youth in Spain in the 1980s and 1990s." In *Contemporary Spanish Cultural Studies*. Eds. Barry Jordan and Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas. New York/London: Oxford University Press, 2000.

apasionadamente, olvidar sus años oscuros y lanzarse a las calles a disfrutar" ("the exhibition, through image and music, proposes to step back in time, to a country that passionately wanted to forget its dark years and throw itself out into the streets to enjoy [life]" ; Fouce 9). This characterization of the exhibit also clearly expresses a narrative of death and life, darkness into light, and the desire to resuscitate this period through an exhibit. However, different from those who lived through the Movida, the "imagined" public of this exhibit (people who did not live through this time period) was to conjure up images in their minds, using those they viewed in the exhibits as inspiration, in order to imagine what that time must have been like. While the LA MOVIDA series may have been about attracting attention to Madrid and creating a commemorative spectacle, the *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit served a different purpose, mainly to educate people about the Movida and the socio-historical moment from which it arose. The LA MOVIDA series received national press coverage, while the *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit was given little more than lip service in the schedule of events for the LA MOVIDA series.

#### The Material Aspects and Aesthetic of the Exhibits

The materials included in the *Modernos, Urbanos...* traveling exhibits were at least somewhat similar to those in the LA MOVIDA exhibits. They included album covers, magazines, fanzines, newspapers, concert tickets and fragments of television shows (Fisas Ayxelà 5). Photographs of several of these objects are featured in the exhibit catalog, organized into categories that represent the three main "labels" of the exhibit: Moderns, Urbanites, and Hedonists. Curator Héctor Fouce was in charge of collecting different items for the exhibits, which he mostly borrowed from friends and

acquaintances. The arrangement of the items collected by Fouce was simple—the different objects were mounted on several large pieces of thick cardboard stock, so as to be easily portable for travel to the various exhibit locations. While many of the items displayed were primary documents, the way in which they were organized is a strict departure from the glossy galleries created and press conferences held for the LA MOVIDA series in the capital.

The exhibitions for the LA MOVIDA events in the capital took place in the galleries at the *Sala Alcalá 31*, the *Sala Canal de Isabel II* and the *Sala Complejo "El Águila"*. The three different spaces housed various parts of the exhibitions. Sigfrido Martín Begué, a well-known painter who began his career during the Movida in Madrid, was in charge of the montage for the exhibits. In a personal interview, Martín Begué noted that he took care of most of the work for the organization and set up of the exhibits. (Interview, 20 July, 2008). He wanted the aesthetic to reflect the works from the Movida. These different works of art that were shown came from private collections, museums, and galleries. Many of the walls were painted bright or neon colors: pink, fluorescent green, yellow; the palette of the 1980s<sup>21</sup>. The staircases were also painted brightly and smaller works were held up on white platforms that were sustained by yellow lightning bolts.

The colorful lightning bolt was a symbol of the exhibits, appearing on the catalog, the walls of the exhibit halls, and under the small platforms on the walls. There were also large display cases that held items of clothing that were popular during this period, to

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<sup>21</sup> Sigfrido Martín Begué was kind enough to give me a copy of photographs of the exhibit galleries, which are described here.

reflect the fashion aesthetic of the Movida. The aesthetic of the exhibits also reflected the Movida-era juxtaposition of day and night. Some galleries were decorated with black walls, and others with white walls and bright neon lighting. One of the ceilings of a gallery was painted to resemble a night sky, complete with a large moon and stars. The culture of nightlife was also reflected in the creation of a small bar that people could enter, reflecting the importance of bars as centers of activity during the Movida. If the general aesthetic of the exhibits reflect the past, the images and narratives contained in the exhibit catalogs go further in elucidating what the Movida meant.

#### Narratives of Life, Death, and the Movida

The phenomenon of the Movida is implicated in a twisted dance between death and life, which begs the question: did the Movida only live once, or does it somehow live on? Why "sólo se vive una vez?" ("You only live once"). This adage is most often associated with José Luis Gallero who interviewed a number of people involved in the Movida and combined the interviews in the compilation *Sólo se vive una vez: Esplendor y ruina de la Movida madrileña* (1991). The saying is the perfect expression to encapsulate the Movida's fleeting nature. The subtitle of the book alludes to splendor and ruin, which might also refer to life and death. The title also has a connection with the bolero "Amar y vivir," which repeats the line "se vive solamente una vez." The song "Amar y vivir" also expresses a *carpe diem* sentiment: "Quiero gozar de esta vida, teniéndote cerca de mí hasta que muera"<sup>22</sup> ("I want to enjoy this life, having you close to me until I die"). The "Amar y vivir" song may be related to the Movida phenomenon

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<sup>22</sup> "Consuelo Velazquez, 'Amar y vivir.' <http://www.lyricstime.com/consuelo-velazquez-amar-y-vivir-bolero-lyrics.html> Lyricstime.com. 2007-2009.

because many of the people who lived with a *carpe diem* attitude about life during this period ended up dying due to the consequences of their lifestyles. In the LA MOVIDA catalog, fashion designer Isa Brena puts it succinctly in her memories of the Movida: "Vivimos un momento único, pero también pagamos el precio" ("we lived through a unique moment, but we also paid the price" ; 514). The price she refers to alludes to the deaths so common during this period. In the same catalog, Curator Blanca Sánchez puts forth the idea of ruin and death in her reference to the unfortunate consequences of AIDS and drug use during this period:

El sida irrumpió en La Movida, como en el resto del mundo, de forma inesperada y contribuyó a desinflar aquellas fuertes emociones y entristecer aquel mundo tan divertido. Las drogas, ya en plan *heavy*, también pusieron su granito de arena para que todo fuese mucho más difícil. Aunque es un tema recurrente en todo ese período, no quiero recordar todas las 'ruinas' que originaron a tantos amigos. (B. Sánchez 23).

AIDS interrupted the Movida, as in the rest of the world, unexpectedly, and it contributed to the deflation of all those strong emotions and to make that really fun world really sad. The heavy drugs, also contributed their grain of sand to make everything much more difficult. Although it is a recurring theme of this period, I do not want to remember all the ruins that gave rise to [the demise of] so many friends.

It is compelling that Sánchez expresses a desire to forget the "ruins" of the past. She both recognizes death as a "recurrent theme" of this period and also mentions the causes of the numerous deaths at that point in time, but her personal wish is to not remember these things. Significantly, Sánchez speaks from a first-person perspective in her introduction of the LA MOVIDA exhibit catalog. Since she was a participant of this period, it is valid for her to do this in some sense. On the other hand, inserting her own voice is also a curious thing for a curator to do, since normally an objective stance takes precedence

over sharing personal opinions in an exhibit catalog. Sánchez also expresses a desire to in some way gloss over the large number of deaths that occurred during this time.

Whether they actually died or survived this period, the stigma of death follows those involved in the Movida. Pablo Sánchez León has commented that the mortality rate of the young people of the transition (those between age 15 and 20 in 1975) is much higher than that of the cohort immediately before them, noting that the mortality rate is significantly higher in males. (168) These figures ring true when remembering the deaths of a group of young males from this period. Due to the excesses of drug use, suicide, violence, and the advent of HIV, famous Movida-era artists, writers, and musicians such as Eduardo Haro Ibars, Antonio Vega, Carlos Benavente, Rafa Pérez Mínguez, and the painters (and partners) known as Las Costus died prematurely<sup>23</sup>. The attitude during this period was *carpe diem*, live for today for tomorrow we may die; and many did. In a 2006 article, Teresa Vilarós conceives of the youth who lived and died during this period as human sacrifices: "[...] fue la vanguardia generacional de *La Movida* la que pagó con su cuerpo parte de una descomunal cuenta" ("it was the avant-garde generation of the Movida who paid for part of a massive debt with their bodies" ; Vilarós, *Zero* 56). There is a sense that those involved in the Movida paid with the price of their lives for being the first generation to be able to live without such extensive repression. Vilarós's statement underlines the tragic aspect of this period, which many "survivors" also share in their memories.

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<sup>23</sup> Antonio Vega was in the popular Movida-era band Nacha Pop. His song "Chica de ayer" is considered to be one of the quintessential anthems of the Movida. The song is nostalgic and also represents lost youth with its lyrics: "Eres la chica de ayer, jugando con las flores en mi jardín [...] mi cabeza da vueltas persiguiéndote."

For example, in the LA MOVIDA catalog, photographer Alberto García Alix remembers his friends and family who died as a result of addictions during this period: "Fuimos víctimas de nuestro paraíso. [...] Mi hermano Willy falleció de sobredosis. [...] Rosa murió con su hígado destrozado. [...] Nadie salió indemne, girábamos en una espiral de vértigo" ("we were victims of our paradise. My brother Willy died of an overdose. Rosa died with her liver destroyed. No one escaped unharmed, we spun into a spiral of vertigo" ; 254). García Alix speaks of how death seemed to consume everyone, and even those who survived were highly affected by seeing many of their peers pass away. It often seems that, when this period is remembered, people who are able to list several friends or relatives who perished for various reasons. García Alix also renders homage to the dead, and speaks of how his art form was always related to death: "Para bien o para mal asocio la fotografía con la muerte. A más muertos, más fotografías hacía. [...] No me extraña que mis amigos piensen que mis fotos son tristes, es más, les doy la razón. Revelador, paro y fijador también son tóxicos. Lo es también la vida" ("For good or ill I associate photography with death. The more deaths there were, the more photographs I made. It does not surprise me that my friends think my photos are sad; I even agree with them. Developer, stops and fixatives are also toxic. So is life" ; García Alix 254). Many of García Alix's photographs capture people who died during this period, and they live on in some sense, which is what makes them rather melancholic images.

The people in his photographs are captured during their youth, and it is as though García Alix ensures their longevity through the images that remain. The artist himself

poetically states that his photographs are emblematic of the past: "Madrid, tumba de mis amigos, respira en mis fotos" ("Madrid, tomb of my friends, breathes in my photos" ; *ibid* 254). García Alix expresses the relationship between life and death—while his friends are entombed, they live and breathe in his photographs. Another very significant photographer from this period, Pablo Pérez Mínguez, also associates eternity with his work, albeit in a different sense. Pérez Mínguez points out that even during the time when the photographs were first taken, there was a sense that they would remain for eternity: "En mis fotos todos jugábamos a inmortalizarnos para la eternidad" ("In my photos we tried to immortalize ourselves for eternity" ; 270).

As with other stars and youth who die at a young age, often the most potent memory of them is something that never existed: the rest of their lives. Therefore, the lost possibility of what "could have been" of their futures is often pondered. In the process of remembering the Movida, many people wonder what could have happened, since this era was so full of possibilities. The subjunctive voice (which is to say, the possibilities that people think of when recalling the past) often takes a primary position in memory. In the process of remembering, these "spaces of possibility" are often those in which many people choose to dwell. Thus "subjunctivity...becomes a voice or trope through which to remember" (Zelizer 167). A poem written by Manolo Cáceres, included in the plastic arts section of the LA MOVIDA catalog, narrates the loss of his friends and exemplifies this sense of "what might have been." He introduces the poem by saying that remembering those who were lost is the most poignant thing to recall: "Pero ahora al mirar atrás y ver todos los que han caído, los que no pudieron resistir el ataque



despiadado de la vida, eso es lo más duro" ("But now, looking back and seeing all of those who have fallen, the ones who could not resist the ruthless attack of life, which is the hardest thing" ; 90). His poem follows:

Ha sido la gran pérdida de todo este tiempo  
Los talentos apagados  
Las agudezas perdidas  
Las risas ausentes  
Los amigos más queridos  
Para siempre desaparecidos  
Los recuerdos por dolorosos no recordados.  
(Cáceres 90).

They have been the great loss of all this time  
The turned off talents  
The lost witty comments  
The absent laughter  
The dearest friends  
Disappeared forever  
The memories not remembered for being too painful.

Cáceres expresses the loss he feels as well as this sense of possibility that was snuffed out by the premature deaths of many gifted people, whose talents, while recognized, were never given the chance to flourish. Cáceres seems at once to want to remember but also forget these losses of people and of their unrealized potentials. This is particularly evident in the last verse, when he gives credence to the memories but does not wish to remember them, similar to what Blanca Sánchez expressed in her introductory remarks. Photographer Ana Arabaolaza expresses comparable sentiments, using the subjunctive voice to express her musings about what could have happened in the past: "Me pregunto qué habría sucedido si el consumo de drogas que tiñó toda esta década no hubiera calado de la manera que lo hizo" ("I wonder what would have happened if the drug consumption that colored this whole decade had not soaked through everything like it did" ; 216).

Arabaolaza's comments on the possibilities of what could have happened had drug consumption not impeded many people's progress are potent. She speaks of the vitality so prevalent before these ills snuffed out many people's lives just as they were beginning. Arabaolaza focuses on this sense of possibility, noting that the LA MOVIDA exhibits were a platform from which to feel that "[...] los ausentes puedan estar estos días con nosotros, recordando un tiempo en el que parecía que [todo] podía ser posible" ("the absent ones can be with us during these days, [in which we] are remembering a time when it seemed as though anything was possible" ; 216). Arabaolaza's comment reflects a desire to resuscitate the past. It is as though, by being exhibited, the deceased would be brought back somehow, and the spirit of possibility would return.

Both exhibit catalogs render homage at various points to the dead of the Movida. For example, the opening pages of the LA MOVIDA catalog feature a reproduction of a painting by the Movida's most important painters, Juan Carrero, who, along with Enrique Naya, was part of the couple referred to as Las Costus. The painting is a detail of *Personaje madrileño* ("Madrilenean Character") and it features a large black wolf that stares out at the onlooker. The choice of this painting as the first page of the catalog is not accidental, for Juan Carrero and his partner, Enrique Naya, both deceased, are often said to be among the most important contributors to the Movida, and also succumbed to tragic deaths.

Las Costus premature deaths from suicide and AIDS are emblematic of the period of *desencanto* that followed the Movida. In the LA MOVIDA catalog, Julio Pérez Manzanares describes their deaths as the end of an era: "Con ellos, se acabó la década de

neón, la década fluorescente que cambió la vida de los que la vivieron y los que la recordamos, aquella década en la que la historia volvía a pintarse...en Madrid" ("With them, the neon decade ended, the fluorescent decade that changed the life of those who lived through it and those of us who remember, that decade in which history began to be painted again...in Madrid" ; 110). It is as though their deaths marked the end of an era, one in which marginal figures like two gay painters were the ones who wrote history from the fringes of society. One need only think of Las Costus kitschy rendering of Carmen Polo, Franco's widow. Their portrait of Carmen Polo shows her as an exaggerated caricature, bordering on grotesque, rather than a distinctive, stately first lady. They rearticulated history with their portraits, turning taboo into totem. Although they were marginal figures in some sense, within their social circle, Las Costus were at the core of much of the Madrid social scene. Their home and art studio at 14 Calle de la Palma was a center for activity during the Movida, and has now become a sort of mythical address. A number of the articles in the press about the Movida commemorations mentioned an anecdote shared by Almodóvar's muse Fabio McNamara, who notably asked the mayor of Madrid, calling him "don Alberto," for "'una placa conmemorativa en el número 14 de la calle de La Palma' que, situada en el barrio de Malasaña, [que] fue el centro neurálgico de la explosión creativa de nombres fundamentales como Alaska o los fallecidos Tino Casal y Carlos Berlanga" ("A commemorative plaque at 14 Palm Street,' that, located in the Malasaña neighborhood, was the neurological center of the creative explosion of fundamental names like Alaska and the now deceased Tino Casal and Carlos Berlanga" ; *Alerta de Cantabria* 56). The

apartment of Las Costus even served as the backdrop in Pedro Almodóvar's first feature film, *Pepi, Luci, Bom, y otras chicas del montón* (1980). The presence of Las Costus' apartment in the film somehow immortalizes them, and the showing of this film as a part of the LA MOVIDA events as well as the display of their work remembers both their lives and their deaths.

The notion of "surviving" the Movida is also a way to view the life and death relationship associated with the Movida. In an opinion piece, Miguel Ángel Gozalo reflects on this relationship:

Como de todo hace un cuarto de siglo, por lo menos, ya hay memoria histórica también de la llamada "Movida madrileña." Es un tópico repetir aquello de Marx de que los grandes acontecimientos surgen como tragedia y reaparecen como farsa. ¿Es que vuelve *La Movida*? Las farsas, ¿pueden volver como tragedia? Ni lo uno ni lo otro. *La Movida* tuvo mucho de farsa y bastante de tragedia. A algunos de sus héroes de entonces, como Enrique Urquijo, estrella de Los Secretos, se los llevó el vendaval de la droga. Otros, como Alaska, que ahora se llama de otra manera, han sobrevivido a aquella mezcla de ruido, furia y pintadas que protestaba haciendo sonar la batería a todo trapo. (Gozalo 62).

Like everything from a quarter century ago, at least, there is already a historical memory of the so-called "Madrid Movida." It is a cliché to repeat what Marx said, that the great events emerge as tragedies and reappear as farces. Is it that the Movida returns? Can farces return as tragedies? It is neither one nor the other. The Movida had much to do with a farce and a lot to do with tragedy. Some of the heroes from that period, like Enrique Urquijo, the star of [the band] Los Secretos, were swept up by the strong wind of drugs. Others, like Alaska, who is now called something else, have survived with that mix of noise, fury and graffiti that protested by playing the bass at full blast.

Gozalo mentions both those who died during or after the Movida, and the fact that those who were involved in the gritty Madrid street life of the late 1970s and early 1980s and lived to tell their stories are often considered survivors, for they survived the "plagues" of drug abuse, AIDS, and suicide. Yet sometimes these "survivors" are referred to as

"cadáveres ambulantes" ("sleepwalking cadavers") who are trying to dredge up a lost past that no longer exists. ("Mónaco..." 3/30/08). This characterization is interesting, because it exemplifies the contradiction of the memory of the Movida itself, which lies somewhere between life and death.

In the *Modernos, Urbanos...* catalog, Aurelio Sánchez (of the group Nueva Ola08), explains the cost of the behaviors predominant during this time: "[Los creadores] eran capaces de hacer bandera del exceso, sin miedo al ridículo, lo que, inevitablemente, se cobró un buen puñado de víctimas" ("The creators were capable of being proud of excess, without being afraid of being ridiculous, which inevitably led to a good number of victims" ; A. Sánchez 6). In a way, Sánchez lessens the seriousness of the deaths during this period, which is a clear departure from Teresa Vilarós conception of the "dark side" of the Movida: "tenía que ver con el exceso, con la ruina, con la alucinación y con la muerte, con el espasmo del éxtasis y con la alegría del reconocimiento" ("had to do with excess, ruin, with hallucination and with death, with the spasm of ecstasy and with the happiness for the recognition" ; Vilarós 34). Vilarós borders on being excessive in her comments, while Sánchez seems to see these overindulgences as the result of a fearless desire for experimentation, thus portraying these individuals as heroic and bold. Overall, the risk-taking and resulting deaths during this period contribute to its characterization as a mythical moment.

#### Questioning the Myths of Overnight Change and the Myths of Origin

In the *Modernos, Urbanos...* catalog, Héctor Fouce alludes to the fact that the 1980s have achieved a mythical status in the memory of many Spaniards. Often, when

an event or a group reaches the status of a myth, a series of false claims about the event tend to appear. Myths often become exaggerated or idealized, melding truth into fiction, making it difficult to discern which is which. The very title of the exhibits shown in the municipalities of Madrid is revealing; it includes three labels and characteristics commonly associated with Movida participants: moderns, urbanites, and hedonists. The label "moderns" was one of the early self imposed labels for what later became known as the Movida: "[...] artists who stamped their imprint on the period, such as Almodóvar, identified themselves simply as 'the moderns' before they were pigeon-holed by the press as the 'Movida'" (Smith *Moderns* 43). Paul Julian Smith points out yet another contradiction about the Movida participants: the way they defined themselves has often differed significantly from the way they have been defined from outside. Exhibit curator Héctor Fouce discusses what modernity and the ambition to be a "moderno" meant during the Movida: "para ser moderno, había que ser cosmopolita. Había que manejar además una cultura basada en la música y la imagen [...] había que viajar a Londres, comprar los discos de moda, imitar los atuendos y aprender las actitudes de los contemporáneos foráneos" ("to be modern, one had to be cosmopolitan. You had to be able to have knowledge of a culture based on music and the image, you had to travel to London, buy fashionable records, imitate the attire and attitudes of their foreign contemporaries" ; Fouce 17). Being cosmopolitan, then, also meant one had to have the financial means in order to purchase the latest records and fashions and travel to places like London, but also to *imitate* foreign styles, which again points to the connection between the Movida and other foreign subcultures. Fouce's observation underscores the

importance of having purchase power in the 1980s, which is something that not everyone enjoyed. For this reason, it is often said this coveted modernity was only available to the affluent. The often forgotten characterization of being "moderno" is not the only aspect from this period that is mis-represented in recent representations of this period.

The way the Movida is often remembered certainly adheres to these problematic aspects attached to myth status; sometimes it is characterized as a scene that abruptly appeared and immediately changed everything in its path. Fouce also comments on this erroneous characterization, describing it as magical thinking: "Pero pretender que de repente una colectividad, como por arte de magia, cambie valores y prácticas, deseche una herencia política y cultural y la reemplace por una nueva, no deja de ser una pretensión ingenua" ("But to assume that suddenly a collectivity, as though magically, changes values and practices, discards a political and cultural heritage and replaces it with a new one, does not stop being a naïve pretention" ; Fouce 12). For this reason, Fouce explains that the appearance of the Movida in Spain is due to a number of different factors and influences. He points out that "muchos de los discursos que celebran la *Movida* parecen aceptar la idea de esa transformación mágica," ("many of the discourses that celebrate the Movida seem to accept his idea of a magical transformation") which, for Fouce, is not the way the Movida should be remembered (12).

Interestingly, in the catalog that Fouce prepared, some simplified stories about the Movida are also present, albeit not in his words. Santiago Fixas Aixelà, then the Chancellor of Culture and Sports, who also contributed to the catalog, offers a rather general narrative about what the Movida meant:

A finales de los años 70 y principios de los 80 del siglo XX, Madrid se convirtió en un lugar asombroso. Después de años de pasar prácticamente inadvertida en cuanto a vanguardia cultural, la juventud estalla en manifestaciones creativas y en ganas de disfrutar. Algo se movía. Madrid era una fiesta. Treinta años después parece un buen momento para revisar ese período que dio lugar a interesantes y novedosos planteamientos en artes plásticas, música, cine, fotografía, moda y diseño y que también modificó la imagen de nuestras calles y hasta contagió nuestra forma de hablar. (Fisas Aixelà 5).

At the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Madrid became an astonishing place. After years of being practically escaping notice in terms of cultural avant-garde, the youth burst into creative manifestations and a desire to enjoy [themselves.] Something was moving. Madrid was a party. Thirty years later seems to be a good moment to revise that period in which new and interesting approaches in the plastic arts, music, film, photography, fashion and design that also modified the image of our streets and even changed our way of speaking.

Fisas Aixelà's explanation of the time period is somewhat simplistic, and focuses more on the constructive aspects of the Movida: Madrid was an astonishing place filled with creativity, movement, and enjoyment. Literally, "Madrid was a party." Absent from this particular explanation are the mentions of the disenchantment, addiction, or the deaths from AIDS. The legacy of the Movida is emphasized, and the Movida is credited for changing the streets of Madrid as well as popular discourse, which focuses on the constructive aspects of this period rather than on the destruction mentioned previously by Vilarós.

However, many of these celebratory discourses about the Movida are often incorrect in their assumptions. Tour books such as *Let's Go Spain and Portugal* created for student travelers connect the Movida to the notion of the "destape," (the uncovering) and to the history of Madrid's nightlife: "When the dictator died in 1975, Madrid, and the rest of Spain, came out in what is known today as the *la Movida*, ("shift" or "movement")



or *el destape*. A 200,000 strong student population took to the streets and stayed there—they haven't stopped moving yet" (Gordon, et. al. 93). On a surface level, the comment reflects a desire to connect the Movida to the young population of Madrid today, which is commonplace in the recent commemorative events about the Movida. However, this quote is misleading on various levels. First, it equates the Movida with the *destape*. The term *destape* refers to the explosion of films with violent and erotic themes during the Transition, a result of the abolishment of censorship codes<sup>24</sup>. Second, the quote suggests that immediately after Franco died, everything changed in Spain. In addition, the quote is a perfect example of the sort of simplistic discourse Fouce warns against. Fouce wishes to adjust erroneous narratives about the Movida, to correct the idea that the people involved in the Movida simply appeared one day, ready to give Madrid an instant makeover.

While it is true that many things changed significantly upon the occasion of Franco's death, it is simplistic to dichotomize this period of time as an abrupt before and after scenario. This is one of the most prominent misconceptions about the Movida that both exhibit catalogs seek to challenge, for the most part. There is one text, however, in the LA MOVIDA catalog in the section on plastic arts, that creates a simplistic fairy-tale like narrative of the Movida. This narrative is quite compelling, since it is often said (in basic terms) that with Franco's death came the birth of the new street life of the Movida.

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<sup>24</sup> José Colmeiro affirms, "Son los primeros años del 'destape,' tanto político como sexual, como un fenómeno ambivalente de apertura, emancipación y explotación consumista, en el que la imagen desnuda de la sexualidad consumida en los kioscos, cines y teatros, está fuertemente politizada" (It is during the early years of the 'uncovering,' politically as well as sexually, as an ambivalent phenomenon of aperture, emancipation and consumer exploitation, in which the nude image of sexuality consumed in kiosks, movie theaters and theaters, is strongly politicized" ; "España al borde..." 32).

The following narrative, written by painter Manolo Cáceres, offers a very perceptive example of the Movida's relationship to life and death:

Érase un tiempo en que, parece ser, no se movía nada de nada, pues el ogro más ogro dominaba desde su palacio todo, todo. Pero un buen día el ogro murió y lo que parecía que no se movía nada de nada, empezó a moverse, pero a moverse de verdad. Y todos los que estábamos bastante hartitos del ogro y de todas sus castas, nos lanzamos a los clubes, pues ya habíamos hecho la calle de aquí para allá y de arriba abajo sin parar ni un solo minuto, sin parar ni un solo día. A esto se unieron todos los que quisieron y pudieron y un buen día alguien dijo "¡Qué Movida!" y alguien dijo "La Movida," porque es verdad, a todo hay que ponerle nombre, porque si no es que falta algo. (Cáceres 90).

Once upon a time, in which it seemed that nothing moved at all, the most ogre-like ogre dominated everything from his palace. But one good day, the ogre died and what seemed not to move at all began to move, but to really move. And all of us who were very sick of the ogre and all of his people [and their traditions], went out to all the clubs, since we had already been out on the street and up and down without stopping for a minute, without stopping for a single day. Everyone who could and who wanted to joined up with this, and one fine day, someone said "What a Movida!" and someone said "the Movida," because it is true, you have to put a name on everything, because if not, something is missing.

Through this simple fairly tale-like description, Cáceres explains the stagnant, dead feeling present before Franco's death; he later says "tanto tiempo el ogro reprimiendo todo todo, que, claro, fue como dar el pistoletazo de salida, y ale, al cachondeo" ("[since] for so long, the ogre was repressing everything, sure, it was like firing the starting shot, and boom, the craziness and disorder began" ; 90). However, when Franco the "ogre" finally died, people began to move again, to come to life and to live without stopping. Again, there is the sense that a death began the new street life. Yet, what he represented was not put to rest so easily. One need only mention that many of the politicians who served under Franco continued in the "new" regime, assuring at least a partial prolongation of the former regime. In addition, it can be argued that the underground

culture in Madrid was "born" and active even before the word Movida was invented; fanzines and comic books were sold illegally at El Rastro, Madrid's most famous flea market, even in the later years of the dictatorship. Manolo Cáceres does not limit his characterization of the Movida solely in simplistic terms. He also points out that "realmente, las cosas no surgen por combustión espontánea. Había historias, gente, acciones que ya presagiaban, que ya se movían" ("really, things do not come into being by spontaneous combustion. There were stories, people, actions that foreshadowed it, that already were in movement" ; Cáceres 90). These are only a few brief examples that serve to support Fouce's idea that historical accounts of social movements are more complicated than is often acknowledged. Fouce challenges pre-existing notions about the Movida and strives to "set the record straight" about its meaning and significance in Spanish culture, which is something that many others have also attempted to do.

#### Narratives of Restorative Nostalgia

The examples provided by Fouce, Huici March and Sánchez in the two catalogs exemplify what Svetlana Boym refers to as "restorative nostalgia," because all of the things they mention seek to prove the absolute truth about the Movida. None seem to see themselves as nostalgic, since "restorative nostalgia does not think of itself as nostalgia, but rather as truth and tradition. [...] Restorative nostalgia protects the absolute truth" (Boym xviii). The truth that the narratives in the catalog wish to communicate is that defining the Movida is a complex undertaking. Since so many different people were involved in it, each story about its origins differs slightly from the last, and it seems there is always something more to add, another forgotten aspect to remember. The desire to

include every minute detail demonstrates that "restorative nostalgia manifests itself in total reconstruction of monuments of the past" (Boym 41). The problem is that the past can never be fully reconstructed. Even if an exhibit catalog contains almost 800 pages, something will always be left out. The desire to reconstruct the long dead past is in some sense futile: the action of doing so implicates the one who attempts it in a losing situation, where the ever elusive goal is always slipping out of their hands, since it is no longer alive. The disputes over the origins of the Movida, or the story of its birth, also reveal more facets of its relationship to life and death. In the descriptions provided by Blanca Sánchez, "the past is not supposed to reveal any signs of decay; it has to be freshly painted in its 'original image' and remain eternally young" (*ibid* 49). Sánchez mentions the "artistas emergentes"—the artists who, at that time, were just beginning to blossom, who had not yet faced the perils that would lead to some of their tragic ends. In her description, the artists remain eternally young. This reconstruction of the past via numerous narratives is beginning to receive critical attention. Interestingly, it is this very effervescence and youthful exuberance that is often removed when presenting the Movida.

#### Nostalgia for the Lost Possibilities of the Past: Utopia Found and Lost

Manuel Vázquez Montalbán's book *Crónica sentimental de la transición: Los desnudos, los vivos y los muertos de una transición que no sólo ha sido política* (1985) ("A Sentimental Chronicle of the Transition: The Nudes, The Alive and the Dead of a Transition that Has Not Only Been Political") includes a chapter titled "Contra Franco estábamos mejor" ("we were better against Franco"). The quote parodies its opposite,

"con Franco vivíamos mejor" ("with Franco we lived better"). In 1978, as a reaction against the new constitution, the latter was expressed by many people: "Los muros de las ciudades de España se habían llenado de leyendas ultras en torno al argumento: 'Con Franco vivíamos mejor.' Se fomentaban así buenos recuerdos inmediatos, los de la prosperidad derivada del boom de los sesenta" ("The walls in Spanish cities had been filled with the legends of right-wing extremists about the argument: 'with Franco we lived better'" ; Vázquez Montalbán 151). The idea of "Contra Franco estábamos mejor," refers to Franco's detractors who had longed for the end of the dictatorship so much that when it finally ended, they no longer knew what to fight against. Some seemingly lost themselves in the utopist possibilities for reform. Vázquez Montalbán comments on this point: "Y bastaba tener sentido del oído para escuchar gemidos, aún controlados, sobre lo que pudo haber sido y no fue [...] los espíritus más sensibles de la izquierda empezaban a añorar aquellos tiempos en que el enemigo era tan nítido y tan único que unificaba voluntades y no requería demasiados esfuerzos de clarificación teórica ni práctica" ("you only had to have a sense of hearing to listen to the cries, while controlled, about what could have been but was not [...] the most sensitive spirits from the left began to miss those times in which the enemy was so clear and so unique that it unified intentions and did not require a lot of efforts of theoretical or practical clarifications" ; 151). It was easier to lament the loss of the past, even though it was difficult: at least people knew clearly who the enemy was, and did not have to think a lot about it. On a similar note, Pablo Sánchez León suggests that there are two alternate, conflicting ways of remembering the transition: the first is a sort of enchanted history, based on optimistic

memories of those who were socialized during the fight against Francoism. The second vision is a disenchanted story of the transition, a pessimistic memory of the unfulfilled expectations and promises made by the protagonists of the transition, which is often referred to as "el desencanto," or disenchantment (Sánchez León 164-165). These two visions bring forth yet another contradiction inherent in the way in which the Movida is remembered.

The optimistic memories of the sense of possibility present during the Movida is highlighted in both catalogs. A collage by Pedro Almodóvar entitled *Felicitación 76* ("Congratulatory 76") (created in 1975) was displayed as part of the plastic arts section of the exhibit series. The image is an excellent example of the sensation of possibility experienced by many upon the occasion of Franco's death, and may be considered a synecdoche for this sensation. The collage epitomizes the first vision of the transition mentioned by Sánchez León since it is based on optimism and was created by Pedro Almodóvar, who lived part of his life during the dictatorship, and remarks in the catalog that the death of Franco was fundamental: "éste es el detonante sin el que nada de lo que ocurrió después hubiera sido posible; con el dictador vivo, todavía seguiríamos secuestrados en nuestras casas, mirando revistas extranjeras" ("this is the trigger without which nothing that occurred afterwards would have been possible; with the dictator alive, we would still be trapped in our houses, looking at foreign magazines"; LA MOVIDA 628). Almodóvar's collage is a colored photocopy that includes several provocative elements. On the right, there is a newspaper clipping of an obituary for Franco. The heading reads "HA MUERTO," ("he has died") and below these words is a portrait of

Franco's head. Almodóvar creates a comic effect by subverting the image of Franco, and subsequently of his death, in a number of ways. First, the words "HA MUERTO" are dripping with red blood, rendering the clipping vampire-like. The newspaper clipping has been cut out in the form of a flower-like sunburst and is surrounded by red and yellow dots and yellow rays. A rainbow, a classic symbol of hope and promise, emerges from the right side of this flower shape. The flower-like sunburst may even be read as the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Inside the pot of gold is Franco's death, which was finally attained after being hoped for and sought after for so long. Even the expression "chasing rainbows" applies here, for the ever-illusory death of Franco finally arrived.

If the festive décor around the image projects happiness, the words that accompany the image state this jubilation clearly: "Ya hay una razón para que este año sea más feliz" ("now there is a reason why this year will be happier" ; Almodóvar 64). The statement also parodies commercial greeting cards. The indication that "Now there is a reason that this year will be happier" obviously refers to the fact that 1976 will be a happier year than 1975 due to Franco's death. The title of the piece, *Felicitación 76*, seems to refer to the happiness that will come in 1976 as a result of the changes that were to happen in Spain. There is a sense that Almodóvar felt that new life would result from Franco's death. This is clearly an optimistic view of the future, and placing this particular image in the exhibit provided spectators with a window into this sensation of hope and relief that came for many upon the occasion of Franco's death.

The presence of the union of a life-death scenario is represented in this work of art, and including it as part of the exhibit draws attention to the significant memory of

Franco's death. Other artists in the LA MOVIDA catalog also refer to the feeling of freedom they felt after Franco's death, such as photographer Alberto García Alix: "Éramos unos ilusos, vivíamos confiados en un porvenir milagroso. Había muerto el dictador y ambos poseíamos una estrenada libertad lejos de nuestros padres" ("we were full of illusions, we lived having confidence in a miraculous future. The dictator had died and we possessed a new-found freedom far from our parents"; 252). García Alix echoes the sentiment that freedom, new life, and prospects for a bright future arrived with the death of Franco. In the graphic design section of the LA MOVIDA catalog, the oppressiveness of the Franco regime and the importance of his death are also highlighted:

En aquellos años de grisura en una España que empezaba a despertar de la pesadilla de la dictadura, con "el general" todavía caliente en su tumba y demasiado presentes aún su imagen y su herencia en los usos y costumbres de la ciudadanía, el diseño gráfico como disciplina, y sobre todo como profesión, apenas sí tenía carta de naturaleza entre nosotros [...] (Sycet 374-375).

In those grey years in a Spain that began to wake up from the nightmare of the dictatorship, with the "general" still warm in his tomb and with his image and his inheritance still all too present in the practices of the citizens, graphic design, as a discipline, and above all as a profession, hardly even had a naturalization papers among us.

Sycet mentions the body of the generalísimo in an interesting way: dead, but still alive, still warm, exhibiting life, but dead as well. Even though he was physically dead, what Franco left behind was even greater than himself: the strict mores and inhibitions he imposed. Sycet expresses a sense of backwardness, of needing to catch up with other countries in the field of graphic design, and recognizes why this occurred in the first place. The designer speaks of the lack of progress in the field of graphic design in Spain during to the dictatorship, saying that "[...] unas tradiciones que durante un buen tramo



de la dictadura estuvieron presas de la mediocridad que el régimen trataba de imponer en cualquier disciplina artística" ("some traditions that, during quite a large part of the dictatorship, were prisoners of the mediocrity that the regime tried to impose on all artistic disciplines" ; Sycet 375). Perhaps the most important point about the lost possibility for utopia lies in the fact that the Movida is not repeatable. Not since Franco's death has Spain experienced such expansive reforms of so many areas of society and politics.

Another dimension of utopia is expressed in the narratives of the Movida that describe this period as a time when everything was perfect and Madrid was an ideal place, free of barriers. Such is the portrayal written by fashion designer Chus Burés: "Todos eran bienvenidos, no existían fronteras, ni idiomas, ni clases, todos hablábamos el mismo lenguaje y todos pertenecíamos a la misma etnia sin distinción alguna" ("Everyone was welcome, there were nor borders, no languages, no classes, we all spoke the same language and we were all part of the same ethnic group without any distinctions whatsoever" ; LA MOVIDA 516). Burés's description is quite idealistic, given that there were definitely clashes between various social classes and ideological differences between social groups. This sense of romantic possibility, albeit on a more superficial level, is also underscored in the *Modernos, Urbanos...* catalog's discussion of the Madrid nightlife.

The disparity between daytime and nighttime is yet another interesting point of contrast during this period. Many people literally led two different lives, working by day and then pursuing completely distinct careers by night. Pedro Almodóvar is the

prototypical example of this as he spent many years working at Telefónica, Spain's largest telephone company. At night, Almodóvar's made films and performed at places like Rock-Ola. A quote by Nanye Blázquez in the catalog reflects this day-night juxtaposition: "En esta ciudad, [...] la gente, a partir de las ocho, no quiere seguir siendo lo que era hasta esa hora, sino que quiere ser él mismo...Quiere ser algo más que sí mismo. Quiere ser algo mítico. Quiere ser Tarzán" ("In this city, after 8:00, people do not want to continue being what they have been until that time, but they want to be themselves, they want to be more than themselves. They want to be something mythical. They want to be Tarzan" ; Fouce 30). It seemed that a person could be almost anything, even an actor, a model, a producer and a writer all at once, and it was as though there were no limits to what was possible artistically and creatively, and it was possible to live many lives simultaneously. There was a sense of vitality present during this period that has not been repeated. Pablo Sycet describes the difficulty of fomenting artistic freedom and creativity during the years of the dictatorship, and later remembers what it felt like to finally be able to do so:

A los ojos de hoy, la dinámica de aquellos años regresa a nuestra memoria como una necesidad vital de sentenciar tan oscuro pasado, un casi inconsciente y determinante impulso colectivo que nos empujaba a quemar etapas sin mirar atrás con ira, y un desafío insólito que involucraba a varias generaciones de españoles en la tarea inaplazable de descubrir nuevos horizontes políticos y profesionales con aires de cambios profundos. (Sycet 375)

Looking back on it today, the dynamic of those years returns to our memory like a vital necessity to sentence such a dark past [to death], with an almost unconscious and determined collective impulse that pushed us to burn eras without looking back with rage, [which was] an unusual challenge that involved various generations of Spaniards in the urgent work of discovering new political and professional horizons with an air of profound changes.

Sycet most clearly remembers the vitality, the necessity to break with the past and move forward, so present during this era. There was a need to breathe new life into many fields of artistic creation and also into politics, and Sycet accurately describes this union of new life after the death of Franco. The language that Sycet uses also reflects the tension between life and death. He speaks of sentencing the dark past (to death) and of burning the past, and conversely, of vitality, new horizons, and profound change.

This cultural vitality received attention both inside Spain and beyond its borders. Due in part to the efforts of the Comunidad de Madrid to commodify the Movida, those involved in it began to receive international attention. The influx of journalists from other countries who wanted to write about the buzz surrounding the Movida is also included in the exhibit catalog. The aforementioned 1985 *Rolling Stone* article, "The New Spain," was written by Bob Spitz and photographed by Mary Ellen Mark. The title of the article is revealing, because anyone who reads it will automatically think of the new Spain versus the old Spain; the subtitle of the article is "After years of repression under Franco, the youth of Madrid are talkin' 'bout regeneration" (Spitz 33 in Fouce). The article's title and subtitles thus establish a sense of before and after, and give credit to the young people in Madrid who were responsible for introducing many of these changes on a socio-cultural level. The cover of the *Rolling Stone* issue is also included, featuring Julian Lennon, but also including the headline "Youth Reigns in Spain." Like the juxtaposition of punk album covers from Spain with bands like The Ramones, the presence of an English-speaking, world-renowned rock publication in the catalog also

lends a certain sense of esteem to the Movida as an internationally recognized phenomenon that is worthy of respect.

The article declared that the Movida was "a peaceful, cultural revolution that encourages former political captives to take all the energy they put into fighting for freedom and invest it in experimentation with new art forms and philosophies. Consider the possibilities!" (Spitz 34). This era was rich with possibilities, and the Movida has at least in part achieved such an iconic status because of that sense that anything was possible. The same *Rolling Stone* article quoted Diego Manrique, a popular disc jockey in Madrid in the eighties, who said "Now, in Madrid, all the doors are wide open. It's fantastic. Anything Goes. So much so that we have to live twice as fast in order to make up for lost time" (Spitz 34). It is compelling that Manrique talks of living twice as fast: it is as though he felt he needed to live life at an accelerated pace to make up for the atrophy of the past, but it is this very acceleration that led to many people's demise during this period. Foucault's vision of the Movida leans towards the optimistic memories of the Movida. The last quote in the catalog credits those involved in the Movida for creating a new culture, and also alludes to the waiting that took place during the dictatorship: "una generación que decidió que, después de tantos años de predicar la revolución, había llegado el momento de reivindicar las emociones en lugar de las soluciones" ("a generation that decided that, after so many years of predicting the revolution, the moment had arrived to focus on emotions rather than solutions" ; Foucault 48).

Those who wish more attention would have been paid to creating changes and solutions often criticize the emphasis on emotion instead of solutions. The sense of lost possibilities, or dwelling on what could have happened, is widespread in narratives about the Movida. José Colmeiro encapsulates the sentiments experienced during the transition as "[...] una sensación de desencanto provocado por las limitaciones del proceso político y la nostalgia de un futuro utópico definitivamente postergado" ("a sense of disenchantment provoked by the limitations of the political process and the nostalgia for a utopist future that had been definitively postponed" ; *Memoria...* 18). Even today, some still clutch to that feeling of excitement brought on by the possibility for utopia during the transition. Inherent in the rhetoric of possibility is the notion of utopia, which Teresa Vilarós also describes in her seminal text *El mono del desencanto* (1998) when discussing the ideological weight of the moment of Franco's death as a moment of interval or as a gap, and that "los años del tardofranquismo fueron para la izquierda democrática años estructurados tanto alrededor de una esperanza de muerte—la de Franco—como de una vida—una nueva organización social de factura más o menos marxista que sería la que nos hubiera permitido la realización utópica" ("for the democratic leftists, the late years of Francoism were years structured equally around the hope for a death—Franco's—as around a life—a new social organization of a more or less Marxist character that would have been the one that would have permitted the realization of utopia" ; Vilarós 19). Vilarós sees the transition to democracy in Spain as a period of time when impulses of deconstruction and construction existed simultaneously. She also mentions the relationship between life and death during this period. There

existed a desire to destroy the past, but also to construct the future. Vilarós cites Gianni Vattimo's optimistic account of the postmodern project in Spain and mentions that the exuberant cultural production by the alternative culture in the years of the transition is evidence of the impulse to construct and create in the postmodern era (Vilarós 18). At the same time, Vilarós mentions the ideas about May of 1968 developed by Gabriel Albiac, that 1968 was a "preludio de una revolución que jamás tuvo lugar, que sólo dejó abierto el largo desierto de esperanzas traicionadas" ("prelude to a revolution that never happened, that only left a large open desert of dashed hopes" ; Vilarós 19). Albiac seems to see this period as one wrought with the death of possibilities. Vilarós also quotes Herminio Molero, a musician in the Movida-era band Radio Futura, who stated in 1990 his vision of the Movida era is that "todo estaba a punto de ser y no ha sido" ("everything was at the point of happening and it did not come to be; *ibid* 37). Vilarós notes that Molero's words reflect "un grave desencanto, nostalgia por lo que pudo ser y no fue" ("a grave disenchantment, nostalgia for what could have been and was did not happen" ; *ibid* 37). For Molero, the transition period left behind a desert of lost possibilities.

Artist Juan Ugalde in the plastic arts section of the LA MOVIDA catalog echoes a somewhat similar idea. He remembers the Movida as follows: "El futuro estaba allí, como decía la canción y, ahora que es pasado, tengo la sensación de que se quedó allí para siempre. Al menos ese futuro de ciencia ficción lleno de colores psicodélicos y estupefacientes, de música y de locura colectiva" ("the future was there, like the song said, and now that it has passed, I have the feeling that it stayed there forever. At least that science fiction future full of psychedelic colors and narcotics, drugs, and collective

insanity" ; Ugalde 206). Ugalde suggests that the future imagined during the Movida never came to fruition, but was left in the past forever. He adds to his description of that future, calling it science fiction, because it was a fictional future since it was imagined. Ugalde's words make an allusion to yet another ambiguity of the representation of the Movida—the line between truth and fiction. It is as though he recognizes that the fun could only last for so long before it came to an abrupt end, so that the science fiction future was cut off before it began. In 2005, photographer Alberto García Alix narrated his experiences with drugs during the 1980s, and how eventually his drug use snuffed out many of the possibilities for utopia: "Creíamos en el paraíso y empezó a joderse todo. El vicio a los narcóticos y la vida que llevábamos poco a poco empezó a golpearnos, a mordernos" ("we believed in paradise and everything started to get messed up. The vice for narcotics and the life that we led began to catch up with us little by little, it began to bite us" ; 252). García Alix speaks of the excess and the ruin that eventually got the best of him and many of his peers; paradise was lost, and no longer possible when the realities of drug addiction took over. Interestingly, these dead visions of the past are related to the very relationship between museums and the past.

#### Museum as Mausoleum or A Space to Resurrect the Past?

These lost possibilities of the past are intriguing when linked to museums, which have long been institutions that expose the complex interactions between the lives and deaths of people and artifacts. In the seminal text "Valéry Proust Museum," Theodor Adorno points out that "Museum and mausoleum are connected by more than phonetic association. Museums are like the family sepulchers of works of art" (Adorno 175).

Beyond simply being the sepulchers of works of art, Adorno discusses how dead visions of the past are also put to rest in museums. Adorno comments on Paul Valéry's impressions of a museum written in "Le problème des musées," ("The problem of museums") noting that "Neither a hedonistic nor a rationalistic civilization could have constructed a house of such disparities. Dead visions are entombed there" (Adorno 176-177). Indeed, this exhibit on the Movida, along with its dense catalog, entombs the now dead utopic visions and possibilities of the past, even as the catalog tries to suggest the visions are not dead yet. Perhaps it is more accurate to say that the Movida is given a second life by being exhibited. Adorno also comments on Proust's visions of the museum. For Proust, the museum was a space of rebirth rather than death:

[...] Proust knows that even within works of art themselves history rules like a process of disintegration. 'Ce qu'on appelle la postérité, c'est la postérité de l'oeuvre' might well be translated as, 'What is called posterity is the afterlife of the work.' In the artifact's capacity for disintegration Proust sees its similarity to natural beauty. He recognizes the physiognomy of decomposing things as that of their second life. Because nothing has substance for him but what has already been mediated by memory, his love dwells on the second life, the one which is already over, rather than on the first. (Adorno 181-182)

Proust's sentiment is echoed in the memories of a painter from the Movida era called El Hortelano included in the LA MOVIDA catalog. Interestingly, El Hortelano alludes to the relationship between life, death and museums in his reminiscences: "La Movida, para mí, significa 'el movimiento de la vida, vida' en estado puro, caliente, palpitante, transgresora y fecundadora" ("the Movida, for me, means 'the movement of life,' life in its purest state, hot, palpitating, transgressive and fertile" ; 138). In his beginning statement, El Hortelano remembers the vivacity of this era in his life. Finally, El Hortelano discusses the importance of what remains from the Movida:



Pero lo mejor de todo, lo más importante, es que La Movida ha dejado un montón de obras buenísimas, de cuadros, de películas, fotos, música, moda, libros, etc., que nunca morirán y que vuelan hacia el futuro, iluminando el presente. Ya están en las hemerotecas, y estamos en los libros de Historia. Nos estudian en los colegios y en las Universidades de todo el mundo [...] (El Hortelano 138).

But the best thing of all, the most important thing, is that the Movida has left a ton of great works, painting, films, photographs, music, fashion, books, etc., that will never die and that fly towards the future, illuminating the present. They are already in the newspaper libraries, we are already in History books. They study us at schools and at universities all over the world.

For El Hortelano, this sense of posterity and the afterlife of his work and the work of his peers seem to give him a great sense of pride. He also alludes to the idea that the preservation of the works ensures that they will never die, but continue to contribute to Movida's legacy. Andreas Huyssen's remarks are also connected to what El Hortelano mentions, especially in the sense that the objects preserved from the Movida will continue to live on: "[...] one might even see the museum as our own *momento mori*, and as such, a life-enhancing rather than mummifying institution in an age bent on the destructive denial of death: the museum thus as a site and testing ground for reflections on temporality and subjectivity, identity and alterity" (Huyssen 16).

It seems that the second life suggested by Proust and later affirmed by Huyssen is a way in which many Spaniards are understanding their relationship to the past, and what the Movida means today for Madrid's identity. The museum exhibits about the Movida were a way to face and unearth the dead visions of the past, but they were also a way to remember how much things have changed, and how much influence the Movida has had in Spain. The discourse of the reactions in the press to the commemoration of the Movida explicitly mention the idea of the Movida having a second life, being reborn or

resurrected, which brings me to the analysis of the next narrative thread present in the LA MOVIDA catalog.

To return again to Proust's idea of the museum as a place where the afterlife begins, an ample number of articles used words that suggested that the Movida would be resuscitated, resurrected to live again, such as the words "recuperar," "desempolvar" and "conmemorar" ("recuperate, dust off, commemorate") to describe the events. The temporary character of the exhibits is noteworthy because of the way in which it was presented in the press: for a few months, there was a return to the past. One article stated that "Madrid vuelve a vivir por unos días aquellos gloriosos años de la Movida en los que España despertaba del letargo franquista y se echó a la calle enamorada de la moda juvenil, los pelos de colores o cualquier manifestación que oliese a modernidad" ("Madrid lives the glorious years of the Movida once again, the years in which Spain woke up from the lethargy of Francoism and burst onto the streets, in love with youth fashion, dyed hair and any other manifestation that smelled of modernity" ; Gassó 18). Whether the events and exhibits really constituted a "re-living" of the phenomenon of the Movida is debatable, what is true is that the past was exhibited for a period of time, encouraging people to remember a significant time in Madrid's past.

It becomes evident that the Movida is not only kept alive, but also resurrected, preserved under glass and in the pages of thick catalogs and the press archives from the exhibits. As Huyssen has noted, museums are "fundamentally dialectical," and serve "both as burial chamber of the past—with all that entails in terms of decay, erosion, forgetting—and as site of possible resurrections, however mediated and contaminated, in

the eyes of the beholder" (15). Museums served an important role during the transition to democracy to resurrect the identity of many regions.

#### From Galván to Aguirre: Politics and the Movida, The 1980s and Today

During the democratic transition, politicians recognized the importance of supporting the arts. Selma Holo explains that politicians wanted to "[...] fund museums since they reach a large and mixed public of citizens and tourists" and they also recognized that the Spanish public took "[...] a special pride in their collective artistic patrimony, [because] they frequented in far greater numbers their museums, than their public libraries, theaters, or symphony orchestras" (11). The second point that Holo makes is of particular significance, because it points to the centrality of museums in Spain. Politicians were not the only group who wanted to associate themselves with the arts in post-Franco Spain. Many private institutions also contributed large sums of money to "[...] sponsoring museums and museum-related activities" and even purchased collections of contemporary art to renew their image in the public eye as forward-moving, democratic institutions (Holo 11).

The political involvement in the arts during the 1980s and today is highlighted in both the LA MOVIDA exhibit series and the *Modernos, Urbanos...* series. It is often said that those involved in the Movida were apolitical. However, whether they liked it or not, they became closely tied with the aspirations of politicians hoping to create a newly minted identity for the Comunidad de Madrid. It is compelling that what began as a countercultural "movement" was appropriated by the Comunidad de Madrid through museum exhibits that linked the Movida to Madrid's identity both in the 1980s and the

2000s. Even more fascinating is the fact that the liberal *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE, The Spanish Socialist Worker's Party), appropriated it in the 1980s, while the conservative *Partido Popular* (PP, The People's Party), did the same in the 2000s, albeit for different reasons.

The role of former Madrid mayor Enrique Tierno Galván (of the PSOE) is especially underlined in the memory of the *Movida*. Jorge Marí points out that today, Galván is remembered "[...] entre otras cosas por haber sido el máximo impulsor de la 'Movida' desde la política oficial" (137). Hamilton M. Stapell explains the role of Socialist mayor Enrique Tierno Galván, elected in 1979, who led the effort to "physically rehabilitate the capital and return a sense of pride to madrileños. This fostering of a renewed sense of pride for Madrid represented a conscious effort on the part of the capital's local political elite to create new feelings of collective unity and collective responsibility – two prerequisites for a successful democracy" (178). One such effort was a 1984 museum exhibit promoted by "Madrid's beloved Mayor Tierno [...] in the Centro Cultural de la Villa entitled 'Madrid, Madrid, Madrid,' showcasing primarily the youth culture of the *Movida*" (Allinson 269). This 1984 exhibit is an important predecessor to the 2006-2007 exhibits examined here. The centrality of museums in the creation of collective identity has been very important in Spain. Selma Holo has remarked that "In the new political reality, Spain's leaders accepted that the peaceful existence of the country depended upon the elevation of its deeply fragmented citizenry from that of a threatening liability to that of the highest possible civic asset" (Holo 5). Tierno Galván was an example of one of these leaders who sought to elevate young artists, who would

previously have been seen as a threat, to instead be an asset in society. Therefore, when Galván died in 1986, thousands of young madrileños took to the streets to mourn his death. For many, Galván's death signaled the death of the utopian ideals of the Movida. Despite Galván's popularity, the involvement of the PSOE in the appropriation of the Movida for political purposes in the 1980s was controversial. In 1986, Carmen Giménez, a former employee of the Madrid Ministry of Culture, was criticized for remarking "Busco una imagen internacional para España" ("I am looking for an international image for Spain") to be culled from an international exhibit of Spanish artists sponsored by the PSOE (Larson 316).

Artists and musicians involved in the Movida were very aware of their role in creating an international image of Spain propagated by the Comunidad de Madrid. A song lyric from the 1980s pop group Los Refrescos critiqued the "Movida promovida por el Ayuntamiento" ("Movida promoted by the Town Hall") in their song "Aquí no hay playa," ("There is no beach here") which exemplifies the co-optation of the Movida for political purposes: Madrid may have been a city without a beach, but it had the Movida, even if it was promoted by the local government<sup>25</sup>. A text written by Fabio McNamara in the plastic arts section of the LA MOVIDA catalog satirizes this relationship in his explanation of how the Movida began:

La forma en que nació La Movida es harto curiosa y por casualidad. Yo vivía en la calle Noviciado, y un día andando por la calle Palma, vi un cartel pegado en la pared que decía "El Ayuntamiento de Madrid busca pintores, músicos y artistas que sean un poco sarasas para formar un nuevo movimiento artístico llamado La Movida. Los requisitos para apuntarse son: primero, no saber hacer nada,

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<sup>25</sup> The lack of beach in Madrid is often negatively compared to Barcelona and its fame for Mediterranean beaches, which make it a more popular tourist destination.

segundo, no tener un duro y querer triunfar y ser famosa y tercero, tener más de 16 y menos de 30 años" (LM/McNamara 162).

The way in which the Movida was born was really curious and totally random. I lived on Noviciado Street, and one day while I was walking on Palma Street, I noticed a sign posted on a wall that said "The Town Hall of Madrid seeks painters, musicians and artists that are a little gay to form a new artistic movement called the Movida. The requisites for signing up are: first, not knowing how to do anything, and second, not having a cent and wanting to be famous, and third, to be between 16 and 30 years old.

McNamara's satirical rendering of the "birth" of the Movida is obviously fictitious, but it is rather compelling in the sense that sometimes the beginnings of the Movida are described just as simplistically. McNamara mocks himself along with his peers in his inclusion of the requisite that the artists should "not know anything," rendering the group a kind of *tabula rasa* on which the Ayuntamiento would inscribe their ideals. One important detail about McNamara's quote is that he mentions that the arts should be "un poco sarasas," or "a little gay." This points to the centrality of queer identified individuals in creating a new identity for Madrid during this period. While satirical and entertaining, McNamara's description only tells part of the story of the link between the Comunidad de Madrid and the Movida.

Both in the 1980s and the 2000s, the Comunidad de Madrid created exhibits that linked the Movida to Madrid's identity. The adoption of the Movida was intentional, for it was part of a larger project. Selma Holo has remarked that "the cultural policies developed by the new government were strategically designed to aid in the important task of convincing the populace that the emerging democracy was, in the name of Spain, endorsing the country's heterogeneity" (6). What better way to endorse heterogeneity than to sanction a radical counterculture movement? Other examples of government

sponsored activities included a youth magazine called *Eyaculación precoz (Premature ejaculation)*, which was financially backed by Madrid's City Council and government sponsored rock concerts, at one of which Tierno Galván once famously stated "'Todos al loro y el que no esté coloco que se coloque;" ("Everyone on their toes and whoever isn't stoned yet better get stoned quick!" ; Allinson 269). This is a fairly radical statement from a local politician. Some think that Galván was simply repeating something he overheard and did not fully understand the implications of his exclamation. For example, Blanca Sánchez, curator of the LA MOVIDA exhibit series, concluded the following about Galván's statement: "Todavía hay una pregunta del millón: ¿sabía Tierno lo que significaba 'a colocarse y al loro'? Personalmente creo que no. Ningún político lo hubiera hecho" ("There is still the million dollar question: Did Tierno know what 'getting stoned quick' meant? Personally, I think not. No politician would have done that"; B. Sánchez 23). Still, even though Sánchez does not think Galván knew what he was saying, she still poses it as the million-dollar question, leaving room for speculation. In the exhibit catalogs, both curators seem to have understood the importance of giving credit to the former mayor for connecting the arts to politics. The two curators might also have political motivations for speaking well of Galván, since their more recent projects sought to re-establish the connection between the arts and politics by creating government-sponsored exhibits about the Movida.

Susan Larson points out that it is doubtful that Tierno Galván and his colleagues in the PSOE understood "los impulsos detrás de la cultura alternativa de *la Movida*, pero la apoyaron porque les sirvió para la legitimación de la nueva comunidad autónoma de

Madrid" ("the impulses behind the alternative culture of the Movida, but they supported it because it helped them to legitimize the new autonomous community of Madrid" ; 321). It is compelling that both Larson and Sánchez suggest that Galván was unaware of exactly what he was doing. Even if he did not understand it, his efforts were successful. Héctor Fouce also commented on Tierno Galván in the catalog for this exhibit, simply stating: "Más allá de las discusiones sobre su papel, amplificador o vampirizador de un movimiento que le era ajeno, el alcalde Tierno Galván contribuyó, con su ironía y su gusto por mezclarse con los más jóvenes, a la leyenda de la *Movida*" ("Beyond questions of whether his role was to vampirize or to amplify a movement that was distant from him, the mayor Tierno Galván contributed, with his irony and his taste for mingling with the youngest people, to the legend of the *Movida*" ; 46). The fact that Fouce describes Galván's role as either "amplificador o vampirizador" also relates to the life and death of the *Movida*, and whether Galván gave the *Movida* life or metaphorically sucked life out of it, and was thus responsible for its death. While Fouce avoids discussing Galván's somewhat controversial role during this period, the image in the catalog that accompanies the texts about Galván says it all, demonstrating the attention-grabbing cocktail of the arts mixed with politics.

The image features Galván giving actress Susana Estrada the "Premio Populares de *Pueblo*" on February 14, 1978. Estrada was often featured in *destape* films, which were often erotic or violent in their content. It has become one of the most iconic images of the *Movida*, because while Estrada smiles and accepts the award from Galván, she sports a glittery dark tunic that is completely open, exposing her right breast entirely. The



image also reflects yet another contrast: an older politician mixing with a young, beautiful woman. When Galván died, thousands of young madrileños took to the streets to mourn his death. This kind of brazen exposure was at least somewhat typical during this time period; it may be seen as a reaction against the enforced modesty of previous years. The connection in the image between the exposed body of Estrada and Galván, a liberal politician, confirms the association of eroticism with freedom during the transition. Jorge Marí has analyzed the meaning of this image extensively, and succinctly summarizes its importance:

La fotografía en cuestión es testimonio de una alianza en la que cada uno aprovecha la popularidad del otro para atraer sobre sí la atención de la audiencia. La aparición de la "artista del destape" junto al "viejo profesor" brinda a aquella un reconocimiento y una cierta legitimación de la relevancia cultural de su arte—y consiguientemente, del destape como fenómeno de masas—, mientras que al político le sirve para exhibir públicamente su tolerancia y su compromiso con el proceso de apertura, la liberación de las costumbres, la abolición de la censura, la libertad de expresión. (Marí 137).

The photograph in question is testimony of the alliance in which each person took advantage of the popularity of the other to attract the attention of the audience onto themselves. The appearance of a "*destape* artist" together with the "old professor" toasts to that recognition of a certain legitimization of the cultural relevance of her art, and consequently, of the *destape* as a phenomenon of the masses, while for the politician it serves to publicly exhibit his tolerance and engagement with the process of political opening, the liberation of social conventions, the abolition of censorship, and freedom of expression.

Marí's analysis of how both Estrada and Galván benefited from being photographed together may be seen as a synecdoche for the broader phenomenon of the PSOE's sponsorship of many cultural activities associated with the Movida in the 1980s. The relationship between politics and the arts in 1980s Spain has been heavily criticized. Eduardo Subirats's portrayal of Spain in this period is an example of this: "La

carnivalización de la democracia, la esteticización de la política como fiesta mediática, la configuración de un Estado cultural como ficción de las masas electrónicas, la cómoda comodificación de las vanguardias artísticas, y su elevación mística a espectáculo volátil" ("using democracy for carnivalesque purposes, the aestheticizing of politics as a media party, the configuration of a cultural State as a fiction of the electronic masses, the comfortable commodification of the artistic avant-garde, and its mystical elevation to a volatile spectacle" ; 17). The words of Subirats exemplify how the Movida was used as a tool for promoting a certain political image, and how spectacles often create overwrought images that are worthless when examined at their core. The relationship of those involved in the Movida with politics is an additional contradictory element. Earlier in the catalog, Fouce differentiates the youth of the Movida from their older brothers and sisters, who were more interested in politics and are referred to as "*progres*" (progressives). He points out that instead of being interested in politics, the people who came of age during the Movida focused on the personal cult of the image, more than on ideologies (Fouce 32)<sup>26</sup>. Fouce also mentions in the *Modernos, Urbanos...* catalog that during the Movida "se acabó lo político, llega lo vital, la diversión" ("politics ended, and the vital thing arrived: diversion" ; 42).

However, it is not as though this era was devoid of politics; in fact, the politics of the Movida were constantly contested. To say that the Movida was apolitical is thus an incorrect assumption. Alejandro Yarza argues that the use of camp aesthetics during this

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<sup>26</sup> In her book *Queer Transitions in Contemporary Spanish Culture: From Franco to La Movida* (2008), Gema Pérez-Sánchez proves that politics of gender were indeed important and reflect a political involvement of those involved in the Movida.

period (which he sees as the liberation and recycling of objects and discourses from the past) was a political gesture, because: "[...] esa reapropiación paródica subvertía unos códigos ideológicos que pretendían fijar la identidad nacional" ("that parodic reapropriation subverted the ideological codes that had tried to fix the national identity" ; Yarza 17). For example, the film *Entre tinieblas* (1983) parodies the Catholic church, one of the fixtures of Francoist Spain. Rather than leading ascetic lives of prayer and devotion, the nuns in the film are addicted to drugs, have homosexual fantasies, and write sensual romance novels. In short, the nuns are liberated from the codes imposed upon them in the past. Yarza sees Almodóvar's films as political, albeit not in an explicit or traditional manner, pointing out that the frivolous aspects of the film subverted the political and social discourse (17-18). Yarza's analysis of Almodóvar's work could also be applied to that of others from this period, such as the painters known as Las Costus, who often parodied objects from the past in their work.

In the *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit catalog, Héctor Fouce explains the relationship between the arts and politics in the 1980s succinctly, describing how the characteristics of the Movida were a perfect fit for the new democracy:

En este caso, su ruptura simbólica con los códigos estéticos del pasado, su espontaneidad e inmediatez, su invitación a vivir el presente, comulgaban con la estrategia discursiva emergente en el ámbito del poder: una joven democracia necesitada de legitimación social e internacional en busca de una imagen suficientemente atractiva como para hacer olvidar que había llegado como resultado del pacto con los supervivientes del régimen, con el consiguiente rechazo del cambio revolucionario y el olvido de los pecadillos del pasado. (Fouce 12).

In this case, its symbolic rupture with the aesthetic codes of the past, its spontaneity and immediacy, its invitation to live in the present, sympathized with the emergent discursive strategy in the sphere of power: a young democracy in

need of social and international legitimacy in search of an image that was sufficiently attractive to forget what had arrived as a result of the pact with the survivors of the regime, with the following rejection of revolutionary change and forgetting the peccadilloes of the past.

According to Foucault, the use of the image of the Movida in the political realm served to cover up some of the difficulties that arose during the transition to democracy, including the presence of some politicians who served during the Franco regime in the new regime and the "pact of silence," about the previously unaddressed atrocities of the Spanish Civil War. There was also a desire to forget the repressive dictatorship. José Colmeiro has noted that the memory of the dictatorship and the post-war period have largely disappeared from "[...] la conciencia política, como si nunca hubiesen ocurrido o hubiesen sido un mal sueño colectivo que nadie quiere recordar" ("the political conscience, as though they had never happened or as though it had been a collective bad dream that no one wants to remember" ; *Memoria...* 25). If the Movida was a distraction to cover up the past during the transition, it continues to be used as such in the present, but in a slightly different sense. Now, it is the transition that is given preference in the way the past is remembered. Thus "La transición ha venido a ocupar el lugar histórico preferencial en la memoria colectiva, como nuevo mito fundacional sobre el que se ha construido el presente, borrando efectivamente los rastros del pasado y con ello una pieza fundamental de nuestra identidad histórica" ("the transition has come to occupy the preferential historical place in collective memory, like a new foundational myth upon which the present has been constructed, effectively erasing the traces of the past and with it, a fundamental piece of our historical identity" ; Colmeiro *Memoria...* 25). The recent

boom of commemorations about the Movida reflects this kind of preferential treatment for the memory of the transition.

In the *Modernos, Urbanos...* catalog, the images from the covers of three magazines from 1985 portray some element of marking the ten-year anniversary of Francisco Franco's death on November 20, 1975. Fouce does not include any overt mention of this anniversary in the text that accompanies the images, but it is obvious that these three magazine covers were chosen specifically to make mention of this fact. It is compelling that even in 1985 there were commemorations of the change that had occurred since Franco's death. The Movida was used to exemplify these changes. However, even the appropriation of the Movida in the 1980s has been attributed to death and life; photographer Miguel Trillo states in the LA MOVIDA catalog that by 1985 "La Movida se había convertido en un cadáver maquillado que venían a descubrir los periodistas de fuera con motivo del décimo aniversario de la muerte del Caudillo ecuestre, que nos había robado durante tanto tiempo la contemporaneidad" ("The Movida had been converted into a made-up cadaver that journalists came to discover as though it was the tenth anniversary of the death of the equestrian Caudillo [Franco], who had robbed us of contemporariness for such a long time" ; 304). Trillo suggests that the Movida was already a cadaver in 1985; it had already "died," but the little life that is retained was being used to demonstrate how much was different from the death of Franco ten years before. A documentary created by PBS in 1985 about Spain included a segment on the Movida, exemplifying the international attention it received. The images on the covers of the magazines in the *Modernos, Urbanos...* depict the new life in Spain and do

not focus at all on the death of Franco, but for the mention of the ten years that had passed.

Each of the three images in the *Modernos, Urbanos...* catalog includes some reference to the past, whether overtly or in a more subtle manner. The past is thus still present in the images, but it is often parodied or subverted by the more contemporary elements in each image. For example, the March 1985 cover of *Cambio 16* has a number of characteristics that invoke the past and the present. A sidebar on the cover points to change; a piece by José Oneto hailed as the "Primera Crónica del Cambio"—the first chronicle of the timeline of events that changed Madrid from 1975-1985. The very title of the magazine, *Cambio*, means change, and its content is true to its title. It features the headline "Del centralismo a la Movida: La locura de Madriz" ("From centralism to the Movida: The insanity of Madriz"). This pronouncement indicates all that has changed: Madrid had gone from being centralist to being internationally recognized for the heyday of the Movida. It was now an autonomous community that had successfully created its own local image, complete with writing "Madrid" as "Madriz," evoking the local's pronunciation of Madrid with a soft "d" that sounds like a "z." This subversion of the spelling of Madrid is just the kind of local "branding" that served to market a new image of the city that was searching for its own particular identity.

#### The Politics of Sex and the Movida: Acceptance and Resistance

The final section of the catalog addresses hedonism, the third main theme of the exhibits. The Movida era is often criticized for being too hedonistic, with critics seeing the excessive pleasure seeking as what was to blame for the abrupt end to many lives.

Curator Héctor Fouce writes that hedonism was prominent in many areas of the social milieu in the Movida era: in song lyrics, at parties, and in televised musical performances. As an example, he mentions the parties that were held by the magazine *La Luna de Madrid*, "en las que confluía toda la modernez del momento, tenían los *striptease* como plato fuerte" (in which all of the moderns of the moment mixed together, with stripteases as the main course" ; 42). In the discussion of the controversy surrounding a performance of the song "Me gusta ser una zorra" ("I like to be a slut") in this section it becomes clear that sex is not an alternative to politics but is complicated by political ideas.

In particular, two texts and images in the catalog illustrate some of the "hedonistic highlights" of the time period; interestingly, they focus not on the excess, but on nudity and the expression of sexual desire. The first example is a revealing photograph taken by Paco Manzano that appears in the catalog and is from one of these parties in July 1983. It features a woman, completely naked save a scarf around her neck, smiling while sitting on a motorcycle. In the background, several men stare at her and one man photographs her from a different angle. Thus there is still a sense of the presence of the voyeur in this photograph—the woman's expression shows that she is aware of people looking at her. The smiling, naked woman is at once empowered, riding a motorcycle, but still an object of consumption for the men in the background. One man in the background is clapping his hands as though he is highly amused by what he is seeing, while three others stare directly at the woman. The presence of the other photographer in the image is also fascinating, as the actual act of documenting what we are seeing from a different angle is

included in the image. This kind of scandalous image was a far cry from the modesty coveted in previous years, and also serves as a contrast to the images of women from the Franco era. The image is also an example of somewhat acceptable nudity—when a woman was an object of consumption for men, her nudity was acceptable.

While the men featured in Paco Manzano's photograph appear to be pleased with what they see, not all hedonistic displays were immediately accepted by the Spanish public. The Manzano photograph is an interesting counterpoint to the "Me gusta ser una zorra" controversy. In the exhibit catalog, Fouce includes an image of a reactionary editorial published in *El País* in 1983 about the scandal created by a girl punk band from Bilbao called Las Vulpes. Their performance of the song "Me gusta ser una zorra" on a program called "La caja de los ritmos" on the Televisión Española channel (TVE) sparked a public political dispute because it was "broadcasted during children's programming time, which caused a great controversy because of the title of their song and its lyrics. [As a result,] the show director [Carlos Tena] resigned from his post and the show was no longer broadcasted" (Last FM). This example is compelling because the chorus exhibits women who enjoy having multiple sexual partners. This was unacceptable to some, yet on the other hand, seeing a nude woman on a motorcycle was acceptable. The nude woman was an object of consumption to be enjoyed by the men who saw her, but the women in Las Vulpes were not allowed to express their sexuality for fear that children would adopt their hedonistic behaviors, or perhaps for the fear of women who express their desire rather than being objects of desire.



The song sparked a political controversy as well; Fouce notes that many conservatives reacted to the performance with a hostile response. The *El País* editorial explains how state district attorney Luis Burón effectively censored the television show. The editorial points out that article 124 of the Constitution describes the state district attorney's position as follows: "promover la acción de la justicia en defensa de la legalidad, de los derechos de los ciudadanos y del interés público tutelado por la ley" ("promote judiciary action in defense of legality, the rights of citizens, and public interest, under the tutelage of the law" ; *El País* 10, Fouce 43). The author of the editorial felt that Burón abused his power by attempting to define "conceptos abstractos como *moral pública, pudor y buenas costumbres*" ("abstract concepts like public morality, modesty and good habits") and accuses the district attorney of applying a legal code promoted by the old regime, as though he was not required to follow the current Constitution (*ibid*). In addition, the editorial criticizes Burón by equating him with the censors of the old regime. He even states that what Burón did was even worse than the censors of the past: "[...] Burón ha dejado en mantillas a los censores del franquismo al querellarse contra la letra de una canción interpretada por un modesto conjunto musical" ("Burón has made the censors of Francoism look innocent by bringing a lawsuit against the song lyrics performed by a modest musical group" ; *ibid*).

On a larger scale, the "Me gusta ser una zorra" controversy reflects the challenges faced during the transition to democracy within the political realm; there were many politicians from the old regime who still exercised power during the Transition, and sometimes brought their ideas from the past with them. The song may even be seen as an

example of the negotiation and testing of the new Constitution. Jorge Marí elaborates on the tensions during the democratic transition, noting that there were both political tensions but also tensions between traditions, habits, ghosts, anxieties, fears and desires; within these spaces, "[...] el erotismo y la sexualidad confluyen y negocian con la ideología, la acción política y los intereses comerciales" ("eroticism and sexuality converge and negotiate with ideology, political action and commercial interests" ; Marí 134). The controversy surrounding the song "Me gusta ser una zorra" exemplifies these tensions—the reaction to the song clearly elicited fear of public expressions of sexuality. The debate about the song included negotiations about ideology and what was permissible in the new democratic nation-state.

Fouce does well to include such information in the exhibits and in the catalog, because he includes the *resistance* to change that was also present during the Movida in his narrative. The juxtaposition of the two final images in the catalog (the Paco Manzano photograph that seems to welcome hedonism and the image of the editorial about the controversy sparked by the Las Vulpes performance) shows the conflicting responses to the pleasure-seeking attitudes so popular during this time period. It is valuable to remember that even in 1983, eight years after Franco's death, the changes occurring in the realm of civil liberties were still not smoothly assimilated into Spanish society. As artist Javier de Juan flippantly remarks in the LA MOVIDA catalog, "Los de las Importantes Ideas Enormes opusieron, claro, una feroz resistencia. Unos decían que era desorden, marginalidad y que atacaba no sé que firmes principios" ("Those with the Enormously Important Ideas, opposed it, of course, with fierce resistance. Some said it was disorder,

marginality, and that it attacked some solid principles" ; 146). This resistance to the transformations in social behaviors and popular culture is yet another example of an element that gets lost in the narratives of the Movida that claim that these changes were ushered in seamlessly or overnight. In the multiple reincarnations of the Movida in recent years, it seems that the Movida is being tamed from the controversial beast it once was into a nicely packaged product to be consumed at parties in Monaco<sup>27</sup>. While in the re-telling of stories something is always lost, it is necessary to remember the contradictions and the complicated, chaotic elements of memories.

#### Government Appropriation of the Movida in the 2000s

While conservative politicians denounced the Movida during the 1980s, in the 2000s, they have appropriated it for the purposes of the present. William Nichols notes that politicians from Spain's conservative party, El Partido Popular (PP) such as Alberto Ruiz Gallardón and Esperanza Aguirre "[...] have supported the reappropriation of the Movida (with the aid of such corporate sponsors as Caja Duero and the collaboration of media outlets like Telemadrid, RTVE and RNE 3) to weave a narrative about the mythic origins of Spain's modernity" (16). After all, ever since Galván was mayor "[los] ayuntamientos y partidos políticos descubrieron que el *rock* era algo que podía atraer el voto y la atención de los jóvenes" ("the town halls and the political parties discovered that rock was something that would garner votes and the attention of young people" ; Fouce 46). Like many of the cultural elements of the Movida, the relationship forged between politics and the arts has been repeated.

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<sup>27</sup> The annual "Baile de la Rosa" in Monaco had a Movida theme on March 29, 2008. Pedro Almodóvar was invited by Prince Albert II to be the master of ceremonies, and many other famous Movida-era musicians and artists were in attendance. Tickets to the sold out event cost 750 euros. (Quiñonero np).

Aguirre in particular was heavily criticized for using the Movidá for political purposes. In an opinion article featured in *El País*, Spanish writer Vicente Molina Foix proposed that "lo más llamativo de toda esta re-Movidá es el papel absolutamente preponderante que la política, la más miserable política electoralista, desempeña en los fastos" ("the most attention-calling aspect of all this Removidá is the absolutely preponderant role that politics, the most miserable electoral politics, plays in the celebrations" ; 13)<sup>28</sup>. He seems to be suggesting, first, that the idea of a "re-Movidá" is absurd, but is particularly critical of the role of politics in the appropriation of the Movidá, and with good reason. Molina Foix asks, "*¿ubi* estaba Esperanza en los días de la Movidá?" ("Where was Esperanza in the days of the Movidá? ; 3). According to the writer, his inside sources claim that "a Esperanza no se la solía ver en ninguno de los *parcours de la movidà*" ("Esperanza was never seen in any of the routes of the Movidá" ; *ibid* 13). Unlike Tierno Galván, Aguirre was not associated with liberal politics or the underground culture of the 1980s. During her tenure as councilor of the Ayuntamiento de Madrid from 1983-1996, Aguirre was lieutenant to the mayor José María Álvarez del Manzano (mayor of Madrid from 1991-2003). Another councilor, Ángel Matanzo, worked alongside Aguirre during the 1990s and was a controversial figure during his term. Ángel Matanzo is referred to as a "siniestro personaje [...que] se dedicó todo lo que pudo a cerrar bares de copas, a dismantelar mercadillos de artesanía a clausurar el subversivo teatro Alfil" ("sinister character who dedicated himself to closing as many bars as possible, to dismantle artisan markets, and to close Alfil, the subversive theater" ;

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<sup>28</sup> Molina Foix is a novelist and also writes poetry. He is a contributor to *El País* and *Diario 16* and the magazine *Fotogramas*. In 2007, he won the Premio Nacional de Narrativa.

*ibid* 13). The closing of bars, artisan shops and subversive theaters were actions that suppressed cultural activities popularized during the Movida. Both Manzano and Matanzo have been criticized for attempting to move backwards by this type of action. Since "Esperanza no dijo ni mu" ("Esperanza did not say a thing") in response to Matanzo's actions, she was really a detractor rather than a supporter of the cultural diversity in Madrid, and therefore her recent support for the Movida commemorations could be considered hypocritical (*ibid* 13). While it has been said that the Movida "died" when it was appropriated by the PSOE in the mid 1980s, it was the PP who put a stop to many activities that began during the Movida in the 1990s. In 2002, Pedro Almodóvar remarked that "[...] Madrid se ha convertido en un desierto cultural, resultado de una devastación rigurosa y sistemática por parte de quienes nos gobiernan," ("Madrid has become a cultural desert, the result of the rigorous and systematic devastation by those who govern us") directly implicating the PP in generating this cultural devastation (Cervera 26).

It is ironic that the PP wanted to bring the Movida to life again in the 2000s. It seems that this cultural moment has been conveniently remembered and forgotten at various points, depending on the needs of politicians. The appropriation of the Movida in the 2000s reflects "the extent to which the arts have increasingly been used as handmaidens to economic development, particularly in urban areas [...] in recent years across Europe" (Gray 189). It is as though the memory of the Movida is being squeezed in order to yield every last drop of the liveliness it first represented. Ultimately, Molina Foix accuses Aguirre of trying to "investirse del mando del aperturismo y la *modernéz*"

("invest in the leadership of openness and the moderns") for her association with the 2006-2007 commemorations. The *modernez* of the Movida was used to inject life into the political and cultural scene of the 1980s, and again in the 2000s, but in a different manner, since it was really the overwrought nostalgic memory of this *modernez* that was brought forth recently.

While Aguirre's connection to the Movida is dubious, Fabio McNamara showed support for her in public forums<sup>29</sup>. Although McNamara was one of the wildest characters of the Movida, he has since declared himself "católico, apostólico y de derechas" and a supporter of Aguirre: "mi voto, para Esperanza. No tengo nada que ver con los de la Movida, que son todos socialistas" ("my vote is for Esperanza. I have nothing to do with the people from the Movida, they are all socialists" ; Rada 2). It is as though McNamara and Aguirre have switched roles—while Aguirre showed tepid interest in the Movida in the past, she now embraces it as part of Madrid's cultural patrimony. McNamara, while still interested in the Movida, wishes to dissociate himself from his peers. He appears to have gone from one extreme to another. In the documentary film *Madrid, la sombra de un sueño* that I address in another chapter, McNamara explains his transformation: "Caí, pues en excesos, no. Estaba bastante drogado muchas veces. Ahora mismo soy fan de Jesucristo, y poco más, y de la Virgen María. Nunca pienso en esa época ya" ("I fell into excesses. I was pretty drugged up many times. Now I am a fan of Jesus Christ, and little more, and of the Virgin Mary. I never think about that time anymore"). He proceeds to point to several paintings he made

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<sup>29</sup> Fabio McNamara is known for being part of the duo Almodóvar y McNamara who sang kitsch songs like "Suck it to me," and for his role as Patty Diphusa in Almodóvar's 1982 film *Laberinto de pasiones*.

of Christ and the Virgin Mary. Even though he states he never thinks of the past, he appears consistently in the commemorative events of the past he rejects, which is an interesting contradiction that contributes to the evolution of his public persona. During the Movida, there were many different social groups, and people often moved from one group to another. As McNamara undoubtedly realizes, the impact of these groups has contributed to Spanish popular culture.

### The Legacy of the Movida

Fisas Ayxelà mentions the specific divisions of social groups during the Movida, explaining their legacy: "*Los mods, rockers, punkies, heavies, skins, siniestros, el glam...* nacieron en Madrid en esos años y ¿quién duda de que nuestras ciudades no serían lo que son sin sus estéticas, sus ritmos, su argot, sus símbolos y experiencias?" ("The *mods, rockers, punkies, heavies, skins, siniestros, el glam...* they were born in those years, and, who doubts that our cities would not be what they are without their aesthetics, their rhythms, their slang, their symbols, and their experiences?" ; Fisas Ayxelà 5). It is clear that Fisas Ayxelà sees the street life of the late 1970s and early 1980s as responsible for greatly impacting the local culture, and that what they left behind is important to the identity of *madrileños* today. Another important part of his comments are the different social groups he mentions: it seems that those involved in the Movida "culture" are often grouped together, when in reality, there were a number of (sometimes highly divisive) differences between different groups<sup>30</sup>. These divisions are often glossed over when

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<sup>30</sup> These groups were often at odds with one another, which can be observed in Charlie Miralles's recent novel, *1964 después de Cristo y antes de perder el autobús* (Arttime, 2007). Miralles recounts the street fights that were common among various factions in 1980s Madrid, attesting to the violence of this period that is often brushed over in the accounts of this period of a fun-loving, collaborative atmosphere.

speaking of those involved in the Movida as a group with similar ideals. The images of people from various groups are featured in Miguel Trillo's photographs, which were taken at iconic clubs such as Rock Ola.

#### The Cult of the Image: Rock Ola as Icon and a Symbol of Life and Death

Not only did young madrileños distinguish themselves by using distinctive argot, but also by the way they dressed. The fashions and attitudes of the early 1980s are reflected in four pages of the catalog that include 26 photographs taken by Miguel Trillo. Most of Trillo's subjects stare straight into the camera, some are smoking and drinking or posing seductively. The photographs represent some of the "tribus urbanas" of the Movida—there are punks, rockers, and mods, differentiated by their clothing styles, which serve as a visual reminder of the fashions and lifestyles that were popular during the early 1980s. Every single person in Trillo's photographs is young, and their youthful attitudes and experimentation are somehow bound up in these images. A number of Trillo's photographs were probably taken at some of the new nightclubs that began appearing in the early 1980s. Fouce mentions the importance of these clubs for Madrid: "Esa nueva imagen de Madrid está directamente ligada a la aparición de locales en los que la música es protagonista fundamental. Al mismo tiempo que se escucha lo más reciente del *rock* y el *pop* anglosajón, los nuevos grupos tienen espacios donde actuar y encontrar su público" ("This new image of Madrid is directly related to the appearance of places in which music is a fundamental player. At the same time that the most recent Anglo-Saxon rock and pop is being listened to, the new groups have spaces in which to act and to find their public [following]" ; Fouce 40). The new image of Madrid was not



the only one that mattered at these new locales; they were places in which young people could see and be seen. In particular, Fouce comments on the vital role of Rock Ola, a nightclub that was open from 1981 to 1985:

Pero sin duda es la sala Rock Ola el referente fundamental del hedonismo de estos años: un espacio en el que mirar y ser mirado, en el que soñar proyectos y poner manos a la obra. Rock Ola es un hito en la cultura española: estaba concebida como un espacio autosuficiente, con sus propios diseñadores y su imprenta, su equipo de sonido, lo que permitió un nivel de actividad que casi nunca ha llegado a ser alcanzado en otro momento. (Fouce 40)

But, without a doubt, Rock Ola is the fundamental referent for the hedonismo of these years: a space in which to see and be seen, in which to dream up projects and begin work. Rock Ola is a landmark in Spanish culture: it was conceived of as a self-sufficient space, with its own designers and its own printing press and sound crew, which made possible a level of activity that has almost never been achieved in another moment.

Although some of the clubs that were opened during this period are still open today, such as La Vía Láctea and El Penta, Rock Ola has achieved a mythical status in the annals of the Movida, due to a number of different factors. First, as Fouce mentions above, the creation of Rock Ola reflected the do-it-yourself aesthetic of the punk movement. Second, the now iconic film director Pedro Almodóvar and Fabio McNamara performed together at Rock Ola in the early 1980s. Almodóvar refers to Rock Ola as the "University of the Movida." Rock Ola has achieved a mythical status, however, because it was shuttered in the mid 1980s, before it was even able to "take off"—a man was murdered outside Rock Ola after a street fight, and the club was closed. Its life was thus abruptly ended by a death, revealing yet another aspect of the relationship between life and death and the Movida. A recent project to remember Rock Ola has given it a second life; a website called "Proyecto Rock Ola" is dedicated to sharing memories of the

"mythic" club. A documentary about Rock Ola was included in the 2008 edition of DocumentaMadrid. Therefore, even though the club's doors were shuttered long ago, it lives on in these recreations.

In addition to Proyecto Rock Ola, there are several other initiatives created to preserve and commemorate the Movida. Aurelio Sánchez comments on the legacy of the Movida in the following:

[...] aún hoy sigue siendo acicate básico para la curiosidad de investigadores y viajeros, influencia innegable en posteriores décadas y modo de vida exitoso para la mayoría de los artistas supervivientes. En definitiva, un rico legado de nuestra historia que deberíamos preservar, aunque sólo fuera para mantener el espíritu banal y trágicamente optimista, con el que un día tuvo a bien sorprendernos y que el tiempo no ha podido recuperar todavía. (A. Sánchez 7)

Even today it continues to spur the curiosity of researchers and travelers and to be a non-negotiable influence for subsequent decades and also created a successful way of life for most of its surviving artists. It is definitely a rich legacy of our history that we should preserve, even if only to maintain the banal and tragically optimistic spirit, which we were surprised with one day, and that time has not been able to recuperate again.

This quote is compelling as it reflects the appeal of the Movida to several distinct groups of people: academics, tourists, surviving artists from the Movida, and the collective cultural memory of Spaniards. Sánchez also gives credence to the influence of the Movida and the continued success of artists who began their careers during this period, such as musician Alaska and filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar, who still make a living from the careers they began during the late 1970s and early 1980s. They are two of the more famous "survivors" that Sánchez is referring to, and their continued success is yet another reason why the artifacts and testimonies from the Movida should be preserved.

Sánchez's quote also expresses a sense of loss in relation to the past; time has not been able to recuperate a kindred spirit of the Movida in more recent years, so perhaps that is why the Movida holds such an important place in some Spaniards' collective memory. This sense that it is irrecuperable also attests to the unique character of the Movida, and proves the impossibility of a "Removida." The idea of loss is related to nostalgia for the past: to the sadness resulting from the realization that history will never repeat itself. However, nostalgia is a kind of double-edged sword; it is associated with sadness, but also with a romantic notion of the past. The word nostalgia comes from the combination of *nostos* (return home) and *algia* (longing), and is "a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed; [in addition, it is] a sentiment of loss and displacement, but it is also a romance with one's own fantasy" (Boym xiii). Many expressions of the romance with the past are included in the LA MOVIDA catalog and in other commemorations of this period. For example, fashion designer Elisa Bracci states in the fashion section of the catalog: "Cuando miro atrás me llena una nostalgia de ilusión de aquella época, de la que estoy tan orgullosa de haber vivido" ("when I look back I am filled with the nostalgia of the illusions of that period, which I am so proud to have lived through" ; Bracci 512). She does not express regret for the lost possibilities of the past, but rather takes pride in having lived during this era. Many others express nostalgia for this period, and it certainly holds in an important place in the collective memory of numerous people, which is why the commemorations and new cultural products are so popular.

## Situating La Movida: Mecano and the Beatles?

Curator Héctor Fouce discusses the distinctive place of the Movida in the collective imaginary by comparing its' music to that of other countries:

La *Movida* sigue presente en el imaginario de la música popular española como la edad de oro del *pop* español y con ese título se han publicado discos recopilatorios y libros. De la misma manera que los norteamericanos mantienen a Elvis y a toda la música de los 50 en un altar, y los británicos no dejan de añorar los años dorados en que los Beatles comandaron la *British Invasion*, en España ese lugar mítico de la memoria lo ocupan los años 80 [...] (11).

The Movida continues to be present in the imaginari of Spanish popular music as the golden age of Spanish pop, and with this title many greatest hits albums and books [have been produced]. In the same way that North Americans maintain Elvis and all the music from the 1950s on an altar, and British people do not stop missing the golden years in which the Beatles began the British Invasion, in Spain the 1980s occupy that mythical place of memory.

First, Fouce states that the Movida is still alive and well in the memories of Spanish popular culture: it is not dead yet. Indeed, commemorative albums are released by the dozens, ensuring that the Movida will enjoy several more incarnations. Second, Fouce situates the Movida alongside other cultural referents: Elvis in the United States, and the Beatles in the United Kingdom. Despite the fact that the music from the Movida era may not be recognized throughout the world, Fouce makes an important comparison to assist people outside of Spain in understanding the impact of this music within Spain<sup>31</sup>.

However, it is true that in many respects, the Movida can be described as the arrival of counterculture to Spain. This arrival came later than in other countries because of the confines of the repression of Franco's dictatorship. In 1985, Bob Spitz declared in *Rolling Stone* that "to much of the rest of the Western world, that opportunity [for

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<sup>31</sup> In the LA MOVIDA catalog, Movida photographer Miguel Trillo points out that "[...] musicalmente sus discos no llegaron a triunfar fuera de nuestro mercado—ni siquiera en Latinoamérica" (304).

change] came and went with the Sixties, but the Madrileños are only now inching themselves out of the cocoon" (Spitz 34).

The Narrativity of Images in the *Modernos, Urbanos... Catalog*

The images and accompanying brief explanatory texts included in the *Modernos, Urbanos y Hedonistas* that appear in the catalog serve to highlight curator Héctor Fouce's vision of the most notable aspects of the Movida. These images and texts serve to conjure up an impression of the past, and contextualize the Movida within the narratives of modernity and urban youth cultures. Taken together, each of these artifacts and explanations of the Movida create a set of specific narratives about the Movida. The opinions expressed in this catalog reflect a desire to pay the Movida respect, to contextualize it within other international popular and counter-cultural movements, and to explain the specific details rather than simply give overly general explanations of what the Movida meant.

The first illustration in the catalog features three pages of a well-known Movida era comic book, *El Víbora*. The pages show images of people attending rock concerts, reading magazines, and watching television. The images serve the purpose of remembering the consumption of popular culture and the importance of image during the Movida and reflect upon the cacophony of media voices present during this period. This also speaks to the rapid creation of a capitalist, consumer culture in post-dictatorship Spain. One image from the comic book is particularly fascinating. The title bar of the comic says "Los medios informan con obstinación. Grandes conceptos están en juego" ("the media informs us with obstinately. Great concepts are at play" *El Víbora* 1982,

Foucault 17). Two people are featured in this image: a young man and a young woman. The man reads a magazine titled *Rock* while the woman, seated behind him, sips a cocktail. The couple is bombarded by different media: *Time* magazine, *ABC* magazine, a magazine titled *Actual* with the headline *¡La Lucha!* and the backdrop of a cityscape and clogged traffic swim behind their seated bodies. A television and a radio are on simultaneously, and the speech bubble connected to both of them screams "¡¡Espectáculo!! ¡¡Apuestas!! ¡¡Sin precedentes!!" ("Spectacle! Bets! Without precedents!") The couple is obviously trying to soak in all the latest popular culture they possibly can in one sitting, but they also seem somewhat passive, which provides an interesting account on the society of spectacle. The comic strip is a meditation on spectacle. As Guy Debord comments, "In societies where modern conditions of production prevail, all of life presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles" (Chapter 1, np). In the comic, the couple pictured is surrounded by a number of different spectacles, signaling the all-encompassing arrival of modernity. The sidebar next to the comic reports that modernity had finally arrived in Spain: "La modernidad, la ambición de ser modernos, es el rasgo más importante de la Movida" ("Modernity, the ambition to be modern, is the most important characteristic of the Movida" ; Foucault 17). Debord also claims that in the society of spectacle, "Reality considered partially unfolds, in its own general unity, as a pseudo-world apart, an object of mere contemplation" (Chapter 1, np). The man and woman in the comic contemplate reality through all the media objects that bombard them, but they seem rather passive, dwarfed by the images that surround them. They are apart from reality, contemplating it, but not entirely involved in it. Debord also

remarks: "The spectacle is not a collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images" (Chapter 1, np). This is a good way in which to think about the relation between the couple—they are obviously connected, but they do not face one another. Their interaction is mediated by all the images that envelop them. The comic is a reflection on the development of a consumer culture in Spain. There also seems to be an implicit commentary on the possibility of being consumed by the media during this period, a time when everyone wanted to have their 15 minutes of fame, even if later they faded into oblivion. The influence of punk during the Movida is one of the essential examples of how Madrid-based youth created a modern image for themselves.

#### Live for Today: Remembering the Underground Punk Influence on the Movida

The multiple media voices in this image also reflect the use of collage and punk during this period. Fouce refers to the importance of collage in the following: "El *collage*, que el *punk* toma del *pop art* y revitaliza como técnica creativa, junto con la ironía y la provocación, son elementos constitutivos de la estética de los años 80" ("Collage, which punk borrows from pop art and revitalizes it as a creative technique, together with irony and provocation, are constitutive elements of the aesthetic of the 1980s" ; Fouce 44). Even the very use of collage is somewhat of a collage—it borrows from pop art and even earlier, from the vanguard artists of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Fouce posits that "La *Movida* mira con ironía a la cultura de lo cotidiano, a las *marujas*, a la copla, los bares, y lo mezcla con los personajes de la modernidad, cuyo prototipo es el *punk*" ("The Movida looks with irony at the everyday, at the housewives, at the popular

folk songs, and bars, and mixes it with the characters of modernity, whose prototype is punk" ; Fouce 44).

The importance of punk during the Movida is not limited to the use of collage. Several album covers are included in the catalog, along with explanations of the importance of punk and rock music. Fouce reminds us that one of the main tenets of the punk movement was the emphasis on the present and the idea that there was no future. According to Fouce, "el *punk* predicaba la inmediatez, el reciclaje y el *hazlo tú mismo*, despreciando el intelectualismo y el virtuosismo musical que había marcado los años anteriores" ("punk preached immediacy, recycling, and do-it-yourself, while disapproving of intellectualism and musical virtuosity that had marked the previous years" ; 18). The punk aesthetic thus fit well with the desire to live in the moment so popular in post-Franco Spain, and this idea was one of the focal points of the entire era. Leaving the past behind was also a key element of the punk movement and of the Movida. Thus the notions of life and death are at play with punk, which ultimately values the present above all else. Fouce also contextualizes the punk influence in Spain (most notably with the group Kaka de Luxe) within outside influences such as The Ramones and the Sex Pistols. Two album covers are featured side by side in the catalog: a 1978 Kaka de Luxe album and a 1976 Ramones album. The Kaka de Luxe album reflects the do-it-yourself aesthetic of punk: most of the information on the cover is handwritten instead of typed. Notably, the Ramones album cover also includes a handwritten element—the band members lean against a brick wall which is covered with graffiti, one of the most potent forms of do-it-yourself street art.



The influence of punk on the Movida is a crucial part of Fouce's particular narrative: it is imperative to remember that in the beginning, the efforts of most of the people involved in the Movida were self-funded. It was only after 1982 and later that government sponsorship of artistic activities came into being. It is often the case that popular movements are accused of "selling out" or of being unoriginal after they have been commodified. What gets lost in this commodification are the precarious beginnings of underground movements or bands that begin to play at bars, making little to no money. This is an example of another contradiction about the Movida: was it an underground movement or was it simply a government-sponsored appropriation of street culture? It is not one or the other, but both, for the beginnings of the Movida must be remembered as well as what it eventually became. Additionally, the meaning of the Movida is continually evolving, especially in recent initiatives such as the ones that follow.

#### Madrid.06 and the "Re-Movida"

Despite its ultimate failure, the notion of a "Re-Movida" was highly publicized in 2006 and 2007<sup>32</sup>. The idea of a "Removida" is connected to the *Madrid.06* exhibits, since both terms represent the desire to connect the original Movida with the cultural scene in Madrid today. The exhibits represented emerging artists who would supposedly be inspired by the exuberance of the past, to ride on the wave of the creative possibilities that were present during the Movida. Barbie Zelizer notes that "modern culture's capacity to freeze, replay, and store visual memories for large numbers of people—facilitated by museums, art galleries, television archives, and other visual data banks—

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<sup>32</sup> I return to the notion of the "Removida" in the chapter on documentaries about the Movida, one of which is called *La Empanada de la Removida (Removida Pie or Re-Stirring the Movida Pot Pie)*.

has enhanced our ability to make the past work for present aims" (*ibid* 161). It is as though the Janus face is constantly at work: one side looking to the past, and the other to the future, but both somehow anchored in the present. A 2006 article from *El País* described the purpose of the Madrid.06 exhibits (of contemporary artists): "el epílogo lo pondrá un ciclo, Madrid.06, dedicado a mostrar el trabajo de creadores contemporáneos locales o residentes en Madrid y con la pregunta entre líneas ¿es posible otra Movida?" ("the epilogue will be a series called Madrid.06, dedicated to showing the work of contemporary, local creators or residents of Madrid with the underlying question, is another Movida possible?" ; Rivas 2). This question brings back the relationship between the past, present, and future. The question, "is another Movida possible?" is an example of employing the subjunctive voice to project the past onto the future: what if there could be another Movida?

In another newspaper article from 2006, with the noteworthy title "Vuelve la Movida" (The Movida returns) the journalist noted that the homage to the Movida had two purposes: "Por un lado, una retrospectiva de lo que fue la Movida en todos sus ámbitos artísticos y, por otro, acercar el conocimiento de la misma a los más jóvenes, ofreciéndoles también un espacio expositivo y de expresión a través de Madrid.06" ; ("On the one hand, a retrospective of what the Movida meant in all its artistic spheres, and on the other, to bring the knowledge of this to young people, and also offering them a space in which to exhibit and express themselves with the Madrid.06 series" ; Amado 56). This quote implies the dual purpose: what was the Movida then, and what might it mean for future generations of artists who did not live through the Movida? Another article

describes the commemoration as follows: "Pero no sólo se mirará atrás. La muestra pretende tender un puente hacia el presente, con vistas al futuro, para presentar la 'movida actual'" ("But we will not only look back. The show seeks to create a bridge with the present, with visions of the future, to present the 'present-day Movidá'" ; Arias 5). The 'Movidá actual' refers to the artistic scene in present-day Madrid: young artists who live and work in the city were featured in the Madrid.06 series, in which several galleries were involved.

While the curators and organizers of the Movidá exhibits thought that the commemoration of the past was a positive idea, others were more critical. For example, Fernando Castro Flórez remarked the following: "Hoy, de nuevo, la política tiene el descaro de volver a aquellos 'tiempos heroicos' con una actitud arqueológico-patrimonial que intenta convencernos de que es posible algo tan aberrante como la *re-Movidá*" ("Today, once again, politicians have the gall to go back to those 'heroic times' with a patrimonial-archeological attitude that tries to convince us that something as aberrant as the re-Movidá is possible" ; 43). For Castro Flórez, the past is dead, and cannot be used to look into the future. His opinion exemplifies what Nietzsche once stated about history: "a historical phenomenon, purely and completely known and resolved into an object of knowledge, is, for the person who has recognized it, dead" (I). With all the emphasis on the Madrid.06 exhibit series, it seems that what really was publicized about the Movidá was more about the past than about the future or the idea of a "Re-movidá." This notion was given lip-service, but the sheer size of the Movidá exhibits and the amount of press generated about them shows that in the end, the glorification of the past was far more

important than looking towards the future. It seems that there was a kind of good faith effort to focus on the prospects and the potential of the future, but the past was given a much larger space in every way, in terms of the size of the galleries, the catalog, the reaction from the press, and all the events surrounding the large scale LA MOVIDA exhibits.

### ARCO 2007: Burying and Unearthing

At the 2007 edition of ARCO, there was a stand dedicated to the Movida. The stand received unenthusiastic reviews from Ángela Molina of *El País*, who stated that while the 2007 edition of the fair included some appreciable novelties, the focus on the past in some cases was without merit: "Un ejemplo, el peor de toda la feria, está encerrado entre las paredes que acogen los testimonios de *La Movida*—un gran pasado y un presente misero—del espacio de la Comunidad de Madrid" ("One example, the worst of the fair, is enclosed within the walls that hold the testimonies of the Movida—a great past and a miserable present—of the space of the Community of Madrid" ; Molina 44). Molina is highly critical of the representation of the Movida at ARCO—she seems to argue that the decision to include it at the 2007 fair is by a group of ill-willed people wishing to ride the waves of the past, and that the Movida has no value for the present. The journalist wants the past to remain in the past, and her criticism does not end there. Interestingly, Molina mentions the idea of life and death in relation to the Movida. In the following passage, she uses several terms that recall notions of burial, brokenness and resurrection:

Sigfrido Martín Begué ha acabado de enterrar a la gran familia de los ochenta en unas catacumbas si frenesí, congeladas bajo la luz mortecina—sin ninguna

fantasía—de una arquitectura pedante y de un lujo ocioso. El espectador que entra en las toscas y empotradas estancias de El Hortelano, Carlos Berlanga, Pérez Villalta y Tino Casal, habrá perdido definitivamente el sentido de lo primordial, el ritual y todos sus demonios de un fenómeno sacudido por la fractura y el desgarramiento de una época. Y ahora tenemos aquí una movida garrabateada y plana. (Molina 44)

Sigfrido Martín Begué has finished burying the great family of the 1980s in catacombs with frenzy, frozen beneath the faint light—without any fantasy—and with a pedantic architecture and pointless luxury. The spectator who enters into the crudely fitted stands of El Hortelano, Carlos Berlanga, Pérez Villalta and Tino Casal, will have definitely missed the sense of the primordial, the ritual, and all the demons of a phenomenon shaken by the fracture and torn from an era. And now we have a movida that is scribbled and flat.

Molina accuses Martín Begué (the artist in charge of the montage for both the LA MOVIDA exhibits and the ARCO stand) of digging up the catacombs of the past, of attempting to bring light to what should not have been unearthed in the first place. Again, the question of life and death on display is evoked. In Molina's estimation, the portrayal of the Movida in the ARCO stand is flat and void of meaning and does not represent the initial excitement associated with the Movida at its inception. She plays on the word "movida" in the last sentence of the quote; in this case it can be roughly translated to mean "a thing" or a "situation;" this choice of words further reflects Molina's disdain for the stand. Her use of the word "movida" in this way is also a way to express that she believes that the stand reduces the "Movida" with a capital "M" to simply a "movida," a thing unworthy of capitalization that should be cast off. Molina's opinions are examples of how the meanings that are presented in exhibits are often contested.

Reporting on the same event, a writer from *La Razón* reported that King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofía picked up the following items on their two hour visit: "se llevaron, entre otras cosas, un grabado de la fotógrafa Ouka Leele y dos chapas de la

Movida con el lema: «Si te acuerdas de la Movida es que no estuviste en ella» ("they took, among other things, an engraving of a photograph by Ouka Leele and two buttons from the Movida with the motto "If you remember the Movida, it's because you weren't there" ; García Maestro 48). The message on the button is worth explaining. The catchphrase comes from one of the most irreverent voices of the Movida: Fabio McNamara. It suggests that those who were involved in the Movida do not even remember it themselves—the insinuation is that for many people, it was like a night of drinking to the point of oblivion where you wake up the next morning unsure of what happened the night before. It also alludes to the notion of explaining a phenomenon from the outside vs. from the inside; here, even memory is parodied. There is a contradiction here as well, because even though the exhibits were supposed to provide an insiders perspective on the Movida, it is insinuated from this slogan that the memory of this period has been forgotten even by those who participated in it. The slogan was chosen to epitomize the Movida in the series of exhibits created by the Comunidad de Madrid in 2006-2007 in Madrid. The saying explains a great deal about the Movida, and also brings the notion of memory to the forefront: who remembers the Movida, and how and why is it remembered? Were the people who remember the Movida by way of "institutional" means like museum exhibits not even there?

Teresa Vilarós has also commented on this slogan in relation to commemorating the Movida, suggesting that "por mucho que nos apresuremos ahora a convocarla, a contarla, a exhibirla, la Movida elude toda forma de registro, retirada de los archivos de la historia y, por tanto, de la memoria. De ahí la frase que se ha acuñado hoy para

evocarla: 'Si te acuerdas de la Movida es que no estuviste en ella'" ("as much as we scramble to convocate, talk about, and exhibit the Movida, it eludes all form of registry, removed from the archives of history, and also, from memory. It is fitting that the phrase coined to evoke it should be 'If you remember the Movida, it's because you weren't there'" ; Vilarós *Zero* 56). While some of the people involved in the creation of the exhibits were actually present during the Movida, there is an implicit suggestion about memory in this slogan: the institution, the Madrid government, uses a parody of the era only to end up parodying itself.

#### Conclusion: The Coexistence of Divergent Visions

Despite their differences, the recent commemorations of the Movida point to the complex relationship with life and death in which it is enmeshed. All these tributes ultimately beg the question: did the Movida only live once, or does it somehow live on? What does the "sólo se vive una vez" ("You only live once") mean when used to refer to the Movida? This adage comes from José Luis Gallero's book *Sólo se vive una vez: Esplendor y ruina de la Movida madrileña* (1991), a compilation of interviews with Movida participants. The saying perfectly encapsulates the Movida's fleeting nature. The subtitle of the book alludes to splendor and ruin, which also refers to life and death. In considering the way in which the era of the transition and the Movida are remembered, either as a time rich with possibilities for utopia or as for being disenchanted with the unfulfilled promises of the past, both life and death coexist. The various contradictions point to the complex nature of memory, depending on who remembers something and their reasons for doing so.

An anecdote written by Miguel Ángel Arenas de Pablos in the LA MOVIDA

catalog in the section on music serves to illustrate the connection between life, death, and the Movida:

Un movimiento deja de ser movimiento y vanguardia en el momento que se empieza a mirar el ombligo y a repetirse. El 20 de septiembre del 2006 se celebró en el Teatro Monumental de Madrid la misa de réquiem por La Movida Madrileña. La interpretación de algunos de sus clásicos con orquesta sinfónica ha sido el curioso epitafio final de un fenómeno primo del *punk* e hijo de la nueva ola. El halago debilita, pero la nostalgia—y más con violines—mata. (Arenas de Pablos 329).

A movement stops being an avant-garde movement in the moment in which it begins to look at its belly button and repeat itself. On September 20, 2006, the requiem mass for the Madrid Movida was celebrated at the Teatro Monumental in Madrid. The interpretation of some of its classics with a symphonic orchestra has been the curious final epitaph of a phenomenon that is the cousin to punk and the son of the new wave. Praise debilitates, but nostalgia—even moreso with violins—kills.

Arenas de Pablos's word choices are interesting: first, he suggests that a vanguard movement ceases to exist when it begins to repeat itself, and turning into a cliché. The death of the Movida is implied in his statement that the "requiem mass" was held in 2006; requiem masses serve to put dead souls to rest. The use of the word "epitaph" is also curious, for an epitaph is usually an inscription on a tombstone. Finally, for Arenas de Pablos, nostalgia has killed the Movida, the final blow that puts it to rest. His account, though, is not completely concerned with death, because he does recognize that the 2006 orchestral performance was a commemorative event. Still, this repetition of the Movida in a completely distinctive form—to change the eclectic mix of songs from the past into orchestral songs, much like what has happened with 1990s grunge rock band Nirvana's



music—does indicate that through all these commemorations, the Movida has become something entirely different than what it was originally.

Ultimately, as a historical occurrence, the Movida *sólo se vivió una vez*. While the Movida may have "survivors," the actual events that transpired during this period are not repeatable. In this sense, the Movida exists only in memories of what once was, fragments that are repeated and altered many times over, both publicly and privately: now only remembrances of things past. In another manner, this very repetition ensures that the Movida is living a second life. It has become something else, and is literally remembered, given a new and distinctive form by being commemorated. Yet its aura is lost. As Walter Benjamin has remarked, "making many reproductions [...] substitutes a plurality of copies for a unique existence" (Chapter II, np). In its new form, the Movida becomes a kind of place for mourning either the possibilities that never materialized or the very sense of possibility felt during this period. Recent commemorations of the Movida like the *Modernos, Urbanos...* exhibit serve to ensure the Movida's legacy, especially through the archival document of the exhibit catalog. As musician Mikel Barsa noted in the LA MOVIDA catalog, "[...] aunque no creemos en 'espíritus,' es claro que su significado y legado continúa siendo motivo de debate y estudio" ("even though we do not believe in 'spirits,' it is clear that its significance and its legacy will continue to be a motive for study and debate" ; 330). Barsa makes clear that the spirits of those involved in the Movida are still important, even if now it is for debate and study. Generally, the commemorative tributes both remember the dead visions of the past and make certain that the transgression of this period is not forgotten among the distilled

versions of the Movida created as nostalgic profit-makers. Yet even these visions of the past secure a place for the Movida's legacy. They guarantee that the Movida will continue living as a kind of chameleonic being, trading previous skins for newer ones in an ever-changing tryst between life and death. In the following chapter, my analysis of two documentaries further elaborates the relationship between the life and death of the Movida. The first documentary, *Madrid, la sombra de un sueño*, begins with footage from the LA MOVIDA cultural festival, and the second, *La empanada de la Removida*, sheds a different light on the concept of the Removida.

## Chapter Two

### "Documenting the Past: *Sombras de un Sueño* or *La Removida*?"

In her essay "Documenting the National and Its Subversion in a Democratic Spain," Marsha Kinder points out that "as in most other cultural contexts, documentary film in Spain remains a marginal form confined to the shadows of fiction, one that receives relatively little critical attention" (*Refiguring* 65). However, along with mini-series, blockbuster history films and docu-dramas, documentary films are "[...] increasingly important in our relationship to the past and to our understanding of history" (Rosenstone 4). This is particularly true when considering contemporary renderings of the popular memory and historical understanding of the Madrid Movidá portrayed in two recent documentary films, *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* [Madrid, the Shadow of a Dream] (2007) and *La empanada de la Removida* [The *Empanada* of the Removida] (2007), both of which are the focus of this chapter. While the first film is actually shorter than the second, the first film contains more content. Therefore, I concentrate more on the analysis of this film. However, I discuss the lack of content in the second film as a strategic decision in its creation. Both films focus at least in part on the notion of a "Removida," a term that demonstrates that the memory of the Movidá has been metamorphosized to the point that it has become something entirely different than it was originally. The term "Removida" is closely related to kitsch, which deals with metamorphosis and recycling.

The films also allude to the way in which historical narratives are constructed. The distinction between "historical discourse" and "historical memory" is of particular significance when considering the two documentaries addressed here. José Colmeiro discusses this distinction, noting that "whereas historical discourse is scientific, verifiable, documented, and archival in nature, historical memory is provisional, unstable, ever changing and always in the making [...] Memory is always in the making, a continuous process of construction and reconstruction" (Colmeiro *Canciones* 31). This continuous process of construction and reconstruction relates to Pierre Nora's ideas about *lieux de mémoire*. The two documentaries function as what Pierre Nora has termed *lieux de mémoire* ("sites or places of memory"), and reveal the wide-ranging dimensions and possibilities of the relationship between permanence and metamorphosis inherent in places of memory. In the following passage, Nora proposes that sites of memory serve numerous purposes:

For if we accept that the most fundamental purpose of the *lieu de mémoire* is to stop time, to block the work of forgetting, to establish a state of things, to immortalize death, to materialize the immaterial—just as if gold were the only memory of money—all this in order to capture a maximum of meaning in the fewest of signs, it is also clear that *lieux de mémoire* only exist because of their capacity for metamorphosis, an endless recycling of their meaning and an unpredictable proliferation of their ramifications. (Nora *Between* 19)

The films analyzed here exemplify the wide range of manners in which the memory of the Madrid Movida has been invoked in recent years. They also reflect "[...] the desire to record history and the equally strong desire to expose the unreliability of such representations" (Kinder *Refiguring* 66). Even their titles reveal significant distinctions. The title *La empanada de la Removida* suggests something that will be

newly concocted, an empanada, and the use of the prefix "re" with "Movida" suggests the return or restoration of the Movida. The word "empanada" also has a double meaning in Spanish: it is a type of food similar to a pot pie (but more portable), and metaphorically it stands for confusion or a mess. Often empanadas are made with leftovers and thrown together, and the aesthetic of the film seems to reflect that as well. In the film, the leftovers of the Movida are made into the Removida, and the film is an example of a haphazard, kitsch creation. The phrase "estoy empanado" can be translated to mean "I am out of it," and the film reflects the definition of this phrase as well, because it is ultimately confusing and at times vague. The translation into English does not necessarily capture both of the double meanings of the words "empanada" and "removida." Two ways to translate the title to English would be "The Muddle of the Removida" or "Restirring the Movida Pot Pie<sup>33</sup>." The title *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* creates a vision of the Movida as merely the shadow of a dream, something that hardly even exists and thus must be remembered and even immortalized.

The representation of this period in *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* tends toward the first purpose Nora mentions, for the film seeks to reinforce the memory of the Movida, and to immortalize many of those who died during this period. It blocks the work of forgetting by visiting certain places of memory that no longer exist in the same sense as they did in the past. Generally, the film focuses on telling the story of the Movida through the eyes of those who lived through it, and also connects it with the cultural scene in Madrid during the 1990s and today. The main facets of this film center around the analysis of what the Movida was, why it ended, and how its legacy is being

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<sup>33</sup> I would like to thank José Colmeiro for suggesting these two translations.

defined in recent years. Therefore, this documentary not only focuses on anecdotal memories of the past, but is also a meditation on the explosion of commemorations about the Movida in the last decade, especially the 2006-2007 cultural festival called LA MOVIDA, organized by Madrid's Consejería de Cultura y Deportes [Council of Culture and Sports].

On the other hand, *La empanada de la Removida* shows how the meaning of the Movida has been recycled and metamorphasized to the point that it is almost unrecognizable. However, the main focus of the film is not the memory of the Movida as much as how this memory was used to fuel new underground activities, in this case, a series of parties featuring performances by transvestites called "En Plan Travesti" held from 2003-2006. Specifically, this documentary focuses on whether or not the "En Plan Travesti" parties constitute a "Removida," a concept that is mentioned in both documentaries. I discuss how the term "Removida" has been used in various contexts, thus giving it different meanings, much like the word "Movida." Before proceeding with this analysis, some information that will help contextualize the documentaries will be presented, first by briefly explaining the history of the documentary genre in Spain. Second, I will briefly explain the documentary festival, Documenta Madrid 2008, at which the films were first presented, a festival that included other documentary films about this period.

#### Documentaries in Spain: From Pre-Civil War era to the 1990s

Marsha Kinder analyzes several documentaries from post-Franco Spain, but also includes information about the history of the genre in Spain. She notes:

As in other cultural contexts, the documentary or actualities was one of the first genres to emerge in Spain—one that could be used to assert the cultural distinctiveness of the nation or local region [...] The Spanish documentary genre quickly became associated with questions of local identity and the dialectics of insiders versus outsiders, issues that acquired new levels of political resonance in subsequent periods. It is hardly surprising, then, that documentaries featuring local customs, costumes, rituals, and landscapes were frequently emphasized in those film histories that were driven by a desire to prove the existence of an autonomous regional culture, such as Alberto López Echevarrieta's *Cine vasco: ¿realidad o ficción?* (Basque Cinema: Reality or Fiction?, 1982) and José María Unsain's *El cine y los vascos* (Cinema and the Basques, 1985). (*Refiguring* 66).

The two documentaries analyzed here deal with the distinctiveness of the cultural scene in Madrid, in the 1980s in the case of *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* and in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century in the case of *La empanada de la Removida*. Both documentaries assert the local identity of Madrid. Kinder notes that with the division of Spain into autonomous communities in the 1978 constitution, "Madrid was redefined as one of those autonomous communities, implying it has always been a microregion masquerading as the nation" (Kinder 83). During the 1980s, the Movida was utilized to define the local identity of Madrid as an autonomous community, and the reconstructions of this period in the two 2007 documentaries reaffirm that identity once again. Kinder also mentions other documentaries created to reaffirm autonomous regional culture in other areas such as *La nova cançó* and *Canet Rock*, two documentary films released in Catalonia in 1976. Local customs were portrayed in films from earlier periods, Luis Buñuel's *Las Hurdes/Tierra sin pan* (1932) and Carlos Saura's *Cuenca* (1958) (*ibid* 66-67). She also discusses documentaries in the 1990s, which address the "dynamics of decentering" such as *Innisfree* (1990), directed by José Luis Guerín, and *El sol del membrillo* (1991), directed by Víctor Erice (*ibid* 83). The "dynamics of decentering" refers to the fact that both films

were made by "[...] filmmakers seeking autonomy, [...]" which meant that they sought to emphasize the independent identities of other regions as separate from Madrid, Guerin being a Catalan filmmaker and Erice being a native of the Basque country. The "decentering" in documentary filmmaking that took place after the dictatorship was significant, because the production of documentaries was previously linked to a high level of state-control, beginning in the 1940s.

Kinder points out that "Although the documentary had been a viable form during the 1930s and a potent ideological vehicle for the various political factions that participated in the Civil War, in 1942 a government ban was imposed on the shooting, editing, and processing of any documentary footage other than that produced for the state-controlled Noticias Documentales ("NO-DO" [News and Documentaries])" (*ibid* 67). NO-DO were newsreels broadcasted beginning in 1942. They were projected as late as 1981, well into the transition to democracy. Josefina Martínez quotes the order that initiated the NO-DO, created by the Vice-Secretary of Popular Education and signed by Gabriel Arias Salgado on December 17, 1942: "la entidad de carácter oficial Noticiarios y Documentales Cinematográficos NO-DO (...) que editará y explotará, con exclusividad, el Noticiario Cinematográfico Español (...) siendo este organismo el único que en el futuro podrá llevar a cabo el intercambio de noticias cinematográficas con el extranjero" ("The entity of official character, Cinematographic News and Documentaries which will exclusively edit the Spanish Cinematographic Newsreel. This organism will be the only one that, in the future, will be able to facilitate the exchange of cinematographic news with other countries; 145-146). I return to discussing the importance of the NO-DOs in



the forthcoming pages, since one of the documentaries I analyze incorporates footage from the NO-DO newsreels. Kinder proposes that the NO-DO impacted the way that the Spanish public perceived documentaries in general, because the policy underlying their existence "privileged documentary as a key site of struggle for control over popular memory" (*ibid* 68). Similarly, Song and Garlinger point out that films like José Luis Sáñez de Heredia's *Raza* (1941) "appropriated high art modes of cinematographic representation in order to create a mythic realm of fixed signification whose purpose was to consolidate the regime's affective control over its viewing subjects" (7). Interestingly, the two documentaries examined here deal with the struggle over the memory of the Movida era, and offer varying opinions of what it meant in the past and what it means for the present. The phenomenon of the Movida was addressed at the 2008 edition of Documenta Madrid.

#### Documenta Madrid: "Looking Back on the Movida"

2008 marked the fifth year of Documenta Madrid, an annual international festival dedicated exclusively to documentary film and organized by the City Council of Madrid. The festival was funded in part by the "Area de Gobierno de Las Artes" ("The Branch of Government of the Arts") and is said to be the most highly-attended festival in the city. The festival was open to professional filmmakers, academics, people interested in "[...] making business arrangements with producers [...]", and, of course, spectators. (Documenta Madrid 470). From May 2-11, 2008, many different types of documentary films were shown under the auspices of the festival, including retrospectives on Nicolas Philibert, Martin y Osa and Harun Farocki, a tribute to Octavio Paz, short and full length

films, and Latin American documentaries, among others. In conjunction with the festival, there were round table discussions, film forums, workshops and exhibitions.

The festival also featured a section of eleven documentaries about the Movida entitled "¡Qué Movida! The Movida Phenomenon." The documentaries in this section were part of a category entitled "Echando la vista atrás/Looking Back" which also included documentaries about remembering historical moments like May of 1968. These films not only dealt with the Madrid Movida as their subject matter, but also with "Movidas" in other areas in Spain, including Valencia, Vigo and Barcelona. The fact that the Movida received its own section in the film festival in 2008 is a reflection of the recent resurgence of interest in the Movida, and that it occupies a central position in the contemporary cultural discourse in Spain.

Juan Ignacio Francia, writer and journalist, explains his thoughts on the Movida phenomenon in an introductory text to the section of Documenta Madrid 2008 entitled "¡Qué Movida! The Movida Phenomenon."

Imaginación, desobediencia, necesidad de hacer cosas y, sobre todo, ganas de pasarlo bien, distinguieron lo que han llamado la *Movida*, a la que todo hijo de vecino se apunta. Pero la mayoría no estaba. Unos aún no habían salido de las faldas de su mamá. Otros contemplaban a los Kaka de Luxe como a unos pijos estrambóticos. Los de más allá ni siquiera pasaban por ahí. Pero ahora, cuando quienes quedan en pie incluso van a Montecarlo para ser exhibidos como atracción por los Grimaldi, todo el mundo quiere foto. (Francia 296).

Imagination, disobedience, a need to do things, and most of all the desire to have a good time, distinguished what has been called *Movida*, which every Tom, Dick and Harry joined along. But most of them weren't even there. Some were still tied to their mother's apron strings. Others saw Kaka de Luxe as a couple of outlandish brats. Those really out there didn't even come around. But now, when those left standing go to Montecarlo to be paraded around like an attraction by the Grimaldis, everyone wants a photo. (Francia 296. Translation included in Documenta Madrid Catalog).

Here, Juan Ignacio Francia points out that although the Movida initially enjoyed some attention, many people were unaware of it. Now that time has passed, and some of the important figures of the Movida have become famous, there is a renewed interest in the phenomenon. His mention of Montecarlo is a reference to the annual "Baile de la Rosa" ("The Rose Ball") in Monaco that had a Movida theme and was held on March 29, 2008. Pedro Almodóvar was invited by Prince Albert II to be the master of ceremonies, and many other famous Movida-era musicians and artists were in attendance. Tickets to the sold-out event cost 750 euros (Quiñonero np). The event represents how the memory of the Movida has been commodified to a great extent, even in other countries.

Unlike those he criticizes for wanting to hang on to the coattails of the Movida, Juan Ignacio Francia was personally involved in the Movida as the director of a radio program on the station Radio 3. Francia also notes that in his free time he "rehearsed, for example, *El hombre que mató a Pablo Picasso* (The man who killed Pablo Picasso), a demented show written by Jorge Berlanga, which we performed at Rock-Ola" (Francia 297). He thus establishes himself as someone who participated in some of the central activities of the early 1980s: the performances at the club Rock-Ola, a claim to fame also maintained by Pedro Almodóvar. Francia also includes a general definition of what the Movida meant. He puts forth his thoughts about the time period in the following excerpt from his introduction entitled "¿Qué hiciste en la guerra, papi? (What did you do in the war, Daddy?):

Fue una buena época. Sobre todo porque habíamos salido de las garras de un franquismo garrulo y castrador. Porque hacía bueno, apetecía salir y meterse de todo. Pero la música era *mu* mala, el cine *mu* deficiente y el resto de las

manifestaciones, bien que disueltas en alcohol, bastante *ñapas*. Sí, el ambiente puso a la gente a tiro de mejorar en lo suyo. Pero lo cierto es que había, sobre todo, mucho morro. (Francia 296).

It was a good era. Especially because we had been freed from the grips of that loutish and castrating Franco. Because it was nice out, enjoyable to go out and get into everything. But the music was **real** bad, the movies **real** deficient and the rest of the manifestations were rather soaked in alcohol, kind of an extra. Yes, the atmosphere got people to bring out the best in themselves. But what is undeniable is that there was, more than anything, a lot of nerve. (Francia 297; Translation included in Documenta Madrid catalog).

Francia's definition of the Movida does allude to the free-spirited carousing characteristic of this period. He incorporates a bit of historical context with the mention Franco's death, portraying the former dictator as a castrating lout, but mostly his description is based on flimsy adjectives and generalizations and the image that everything else was "soaked in alcohol." However, Francia does fondly remember that people had a lot of nerve, perhaps referring to the fearless experimentation and artistic innovations during this period. Still, by stating that the music and movies were "*real* bad," Francia criticizes the artistic production of the Movida. While they may have been ironic, pastiche productions, other people, like ethnomusicologist Héctor Fouce, seem to value the music of this period for its novelty.

Francia includes a quote from one of the most quintessential Movida movies, *Labyrinth of Passions* (1982), directed by Pedro Almodóvar, in his introduction. The quote serves to draw attention to the drug use so prominent during the Movida. In the film, Fabio MacNamara plays a tranvestite named Patty Diphusa (a character created by Pedro Almodóvar) who cries out "*qué overdose*" ("What an overdose!") after sniffing nailpolish and drinking from two cocktails simultaneously. The inclusion of this quote

seems at least somewhat contradictory to what Francia posits about the quality of the films during the Movida since he says the movies were "really bad," but makes mention of this one in his introductory paragraph. In sum, Francia's introduction to the "Movida Phenomenon" section of Documenta Madrid 2008 provides a brief yet superficial account of the Movida. It does seem that Francia seeks to present himself as one of the "real" representatives of the Movida, privileging his view of this period to some extent. This is a common theme in many of the products and events created to remember the Movida. However, the depth and breadth of the eleven documentaries about the Movida featured in the festival serve to fill in the gaps and show some of the multiple dimensions and perspectives that emerged from the Movida.

#### Other Documentaries Featured at Documenta Madrid 2008

A total of eleven documentaries were included in the 2008 edition of DocumentaMadrid. I will briefly mention the other nine films that were presented at the festival in order to give a sense of the scope of films with topics relating to the Movida shown at the festival. Although they are not divided into different categories in the festival schedule, the documentaries about the Movida can be loosely grouped based on their content. The documentaries can be broken into different categories: some are about general information on the Movida, while others deal with rather specific subject matter. There are a few that are about music during the Movida: *A quién le importa* (Who Gives a Damn?) (2000) is about musicians Alaska and Nacho Canut who formed the group Kaka de Luxe in 1979 and *Que parezca un accidente* (It May Seem an Accident) is about the band Siniestro Total. *Rock & Cat, més enllà de les cançons* (Rock & Cat, Beyond the

Songs) (2007) is about the Catalan music scene in the 1980s, and focuses on concerts at the Theatre of the Liceu in Barcelona. Similar to the latter documentary, *Rock-Ola: Una noche en la Movida* (Rock-Ola, A Night in the "Movida") (2007) also places importance on a specific place as the center of action during the Movida: Rock-Ola, one of the most famous bars during the 1980s. There were also documentaries that presented other specific aspects of the Movida: art and television. *Costus, El documental* (Costus, The Documentary) (2007) focuses on the lives of the deceased artists Enrique Naya and Juan Carrero, known as "Las Costus." Another documentary, *La Movida: La Edad de Oro* (The "Movida": The Golden Age) (2001) is a retrospective featuring famous clips from the television show "La Edad de Oro" including performances by different musical groups from the Movida and interviews done by the shows' host, Paloma Chamorro. The film *72-H* (2007) is about the history of discoteques in Valencia in the 1980s and 1990s. *Periféricos* (Peripherals); (2006) is about the Movida in Vigo, Galicia in the 1980s, focusing on Vigo as a city on the periphery of the other major cities in which different manifestations of the Movida took place. *Pepe Sales: Pobres pobres que els donguin pel cul* (Pepe Sales: Poor, Poor People, Fuck 'Em); (2007) focuses on a specific artist, Pepe Sales, and his protagonism in Barcelona; this documentary focuses on what might be called the "darker side" of the Movida: the toll of AIDS, drugs and other social ills.

The documentaries included in the series highlight many of the different sides of the Movida, from remembering it as a time filled with celebration to the latter documentary about Pepe Sales which described the deaths and drug abuse associated with this particular period. The other "Moviditas," or cultural scenes in urban areas like

Valencia, Vigo and Barcelona are also featured in the documentaries from the 2008 festival, providing a sense of the cultural panorama in the 1980s throughout Spain. I will now turn to a detailed analysis of the two documentaries I focus on in this chapter, which were also screened at the 2008 Documenta Madrid festival. I should also point out that I chose to evaluate these two documentaries for a specific reason: both films contemplate how the Movida is being remembered in recent years. While the other documentaries focus on certain artists or musicians associated with the Movida, the two that I analyze deal with the phenomenon of the Movida in general, and its recent commemorations and incarnations.

*Madrid: La sombra de un sueño*

Mexican director Alejandro Andrade Pease, who resides in Madrid, wished to create a documentary that would be critical, an in-depth analysis of the Movida, rather than a superficial look at this period<sup>34</sup>. The film is a Mexico-Spain co-production.

*Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* calls itself "un documental sobre las Movidas Madrileñas" (A documentary about the Madrid Movidas). The fact that the film utilizes the plural form "Movidas" is compelling because it suggests the multiple definitions of the Movida in Madrid, both in the 1980s and in more recent years with the Removida.

The documentary was produced by Pedro Morenos de los Ríos in a collaboration between Mexico and Spain by Puzzle Films y Niño con Bomba, 2007. Not only was the documentary shown at Documenta Madrid 2008, but also at *The Kratkofil International Festival* in Bosnia Herzegovina, *The Festival de Cortometrajes de Torrelavega* in

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<sup>34</sup> I would like to thank Alejandro for kindly meeting me in Madrid in 2008 and giving me a copy of the documentary to use in my dissertation.

Cantabria, Spain, and *Visual 08* in Majadahonda, a city 10 miles northwest of Madrid. The 29 minute film includes personal testimonies of those involved in the Movida, which lends it a sense of veracity and endows the film with certain authority. The testimonies, however, are also utilized to create and manufacture such authenticity. As Bill Nichols has pointed out, "The documentary tradition relies heavily on being able to convey to us the impression of authenticity" (Nichols xiii). This "impression of authenticity" is often only an impression and a construction, but can be convincing (and even misleading) to spectators.

Further, due to its extensive use of interviews, *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* may be classified as an *observational* and *interactive* documentary, which tend to involve the use of "[...] talking heads—either historical witnesses who had lived through events which they recalled and described, or experts such as historians, who were used not only to help create a narrative, but also to provide an overview of and context for the story being told" (Rosenstone 73). The inclusion of these historical witnesses is an example of how places of memory "block the work of forgetting." Since these particular people witnessed the events of the Movida, and their memories are recorded in the (somewhat) permanent form of a documentary film, forgetting is blocked. However, since remembering always involves a selective process, there are many things that are inevitably forgotten. Still, at least their testimonies are preserved in the film, giving them some permanence. More generally, the film demonstrates how "Memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images and objects [...]" (Nora, *Between...* 9). A number



of important landmarks from this period are revisited, and many images are featured in the film to invoke the memory of the Movida.

The film may be seen as a complement to José Luis Gallero's now famous collection of interviews, and a canonical resource for the study of the Movida, *Sólo se vive una vez: Esplendor y ruina de la Movida madrileña*, (You only live once: Splendor and Ruin of the Madrid Movida) published in 1991. As suggested previously, both the text and the documentary exemplify Pierre Nora's definition of *lieux de mémoire* since they are "[...] dedicated to preserving an incommunicable experience that would disappear along with those who shared it [...]" (Nora, *Between...* 23). The inclusion of these witnesses also lends films a sense of authenticity, which also creates a kind of aura around documentaries in general: if someone witnessed an event, they must be telling the truth. However, it is always pertinent to keep in mind that people can only tell their particular *version* of the truth, and memory is quite subjective, as countless studies have shown. Pam Cook notes the following about the use of eyewitness accounts in films that deal with memory:

Even though memory is tinged with subjectivity, it can still be regarded as authentic, especially when it comes to eyewitness accounts that provide a record of the impact of momentous events on the lives of individuals—the enormous increase in studies of personal testimony and cultural memory testifies to this. The fact that the eyewitness was actually present at the time invests their recollections with an aura that transcends the knowledge that their experience is reconstructed for the purpose of current agendas, and endows it with authority and emotional power. (Cook 3)

Cook points out that the eyewitness accounts are often put to use for purposes other than simply remembering an event: perhaps certain political regimes have a stake in why and how events are remembered at different points in order to cast themselves in a flattering

light, for example. In terms of the documentaries on the Movida, the testimonies from those who were involved directly in the Movida exemplify this aura—they lived through this period, and their accounts give authority and emotional power to the film as a whole.

In his 2006 book *History on Film/Film on History*, Robert A. Rosenstone undergoes a detailed study of the telling and doing of history in films. Rosenstone's thesis that written and filmic history share similarities informs my own reading of *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño*. The notion that documentaries have much in common with the act of writing history thus seems quite logical; both work to constitute "facts by selecting traces of the past and enfolding them into a narrative" and both ignore "the overall fiction that the past can be fully told in a story with a beginning, middle, and an end" (Rosenstone 70). There is a clear attempt to show the beginning, middle, and end of the Movida in *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño*. In the following synopsis of the film, included on the MySpace page for the documentary, there is a clear attempt to establish a linear narrative about the Movida<sup>35</sup>:

A principios de los años 80, tras la muerte del dictador Franco, surge en España una explosión de libertad creativa nunca vista. El movimiento conocido como LA MOVIDA situó a Madrid en el mapa de la modernidad y catapultó a sus jóvenes y transgresores artistas al estrellato, entre otros Pedro Almodóvar, Alaska y Alberto García Alix. Sin embargo, para muchos todo acabaría a finales de década por el desgaste de una vida frenética llena de excesos. □ En el Madrid del siglo XXI nuevos artistas, jóvenes y transgresores como La Prohibida, L Kan, M.G.B o Big Toxic, reviven la energía de la Movida tomando al asalto la escena underground madrileña. Los consagrados de la "Vieja Ola" mientras tanto disfrutaban de una segunda juventud entre celebraciones, revivals y aniversarios institucionales. Pero... ¿Qué fué en realidad la Movida? ¿Una revolución? ¿Un mito? ¿Un producto? En este documental recorreremos las calles de la ciudad para

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<sup>35</sup> The existence of web-based materials that deal with the memory of the Movida is another area I would like to explore in the future, since many websites and forums exist about the Movida, which are arguably another type of *lieux de mémoire*.

averiguarlo, hablaremos con los vanguardistas de antes y con los de ahora, y a lo largo de nuestro viaje iremos descubriendo cómo Madrid aún se mueve a ritmo de underground. (MySpace, *Madrid la sombra de un sueño*).

At the beginning of the 1980s, after the death of dictator [Francisco] Franco, a previously unseen creative explosion appeared in Spain. The movement known as La Movida gave Madrid a place on the map of modernity and catapulted its young transgressive artists to stardom, including Pedro Almodóvar, Alaska and Alberto García Alix, among others. However, for many of those involved, everything would end at the end of the decade due to the erosion caused by a frenetic lifestyle full of excesses. In the Madrid of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, young and transgressive new artists such as La Prohibida, L Kan, M.G.B. and Big Toxic revive the energy of the Movida, taking the Madrid underground scene by storm. Meanwhile, the consecrated members of the "Old Wave" [A play on words, since they were originally called "The New Wave"] are enjoying a second youthful heyday through celebrations, revivals and commemorative anniversaries, [sponsored by governmental] institutions. But...What was the Movida in reality? A revolution? A myth? A product? In this documentary we visit the streets of the city to find out; we will talk with the vanguards of yesterday and those of today, and on our way we will discover how Madrid still moves at the rhythm of the underground. (Translation mine)

The synopsis begins with the 1980s, which is somewhat misleading since Franco died in 1975, and since it is often said that what was earlier known as "La Nueva Ola" began in the mid- to late-1970s. Still, there is a chain of events that establishes a linear narrative here: Franco's death, an explosion of creative freedom, the end of the explosion, then the revival of the energy of this period in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Nevertheless, the story of this period is not told in a linear fashion in the actual documentary, but instead it skips from the present to the past and back again at various moments. Based on this narrative synopsis, it is also clear that "The documentary also shares much with the fiction film [because it] [...] regularly structures material into the conventions of drama, with a story that begins with certain problems, questions, and/or characters at the outset, develops their complications over time, and resolves them by the end of the film" (Rosenstone 71).

In the above synopsis, several questions are posed, all of which are explored, developed, and resolved in the film. While the synopsis raises certain questions about the Movida, the film also poses other questions. One of the most significant questions is about its legacy: "más allá de la avalancha mediática por recordarla...¿Qué quedó de aquella Movida?" ("Beyond the mediatic avalanche to remember it...What is left of that Movida?") The film not only attempts to define the Movida, but explores its legacy by connecting it to the present. The presence of such questions in this documentary also demonstrates how "Filmmakers are often drawn to documentary modes of representation when they want to engage us in questions or issues that pertain directly to the historical world we all share" (B. Nichols xiv). *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* wants to engage its spectator with the question of how the history of the Movida has been constructed.

This "media avalanche" is addressed very specifically in the beginning of the film, because *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* uses the recent commemorations of the Movida as its point of departure. The first words that flash on the screen speak of these events: "Entre los años 2003 y 2007 se vivió en Madrid una fiebre por recordar y reivindicar la Movida madrileña de los 80. Se cumplían 25 años del inicio del movimiento cultural que intentó posicionar a Madrid como centro de la modernidad"<sup>36</sup> ("Between the years 2003-2007 there was a period of intense remembrance and vindication of the Madrid Movida of the 1980s. It had been 25 years since the beginning of the cultural movement that tried to position Madrid as the center of modernity"). It is clear from the beginning that this film is not only concerned with the memory of the

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<sup>36</sup> The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary usually refers to the year 1981, when a concert called "El concierto de primavera" took place on May 23, 1981. It was an eight hour music festival held at the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid. However, it can be argued that the Movida began in the mid- to late-1970s.

Movida, but also with the act of remembering it through commemorative events. There are implicit and explicit commentaries in the film about the purpose of these commemorations. One of the most obvious remarks about this process was to "reivindicar," the Movida, which can be taken to mean that there was a desire to vindicate and restore its image, as well as to justify this cultural moment as a part of Spain's artistic patrimony deserving of respect. The film's opening statement also gives credit to the Movida for making Madrid into a center of modernity, which was indispensable to the creation of Madrid's renewed identity after long being held as the seat of the repressive dictatorship. Indeed, "The promotion of the colourful, and at times chaotic, cultural movement proved to be an essential piece in the development of a new regional sense of place based on inclusion and greater cultural participation" (Stapell 178).

The idea of a new beginning for Madrid is emphasized by the preliminary images of the documentary, which feature the city of Madrid enveloped in sunlight. The day quickly changes to night, and the camera swiftly displays some of the main landmarks of Madrid: the Gran Vía, the Cibeles fountain, the stunning Correos building. Pedro Almodóvar, the posterchild of this cultural movement, is appropriately the first face to appear on screen, on the cover of an issue of *El País Semanal*. It is an image from the 1980s of Almodóvar in drag, complete with heavy makeup, huge earrings, a pearl necklace and an open shirt. As in other moments in this film and in many other commemorations of the Movida, Almodóvar serves as a synecdoche for the entire period.

The past is fused with the present in the image of the newspaper, because the headline reads "La Movida 25 años después," (The Movida 25 years later) while the

image is one of Almodóvar as a young man. The theme of commemorating the Movida continues in the first few moments of the film with an image of photographer Pablo Pérez Mínguez's exhibit catalog entitled "Mi Movida," an exhibit that took place in 2006 at the Museo Municipal de Arte Contemporáneo. The most significant commemorative event about the Movida, as seen in my previous chapter on museum exhibits, was a cultural festival titled "LA MOVIDA" held in Madrid from 2006-2007, sponsored by the Consejería de Cultura y Deportes de la Comunidad de Madrid. The three exhibits that formed part of this festival featured work from artists from the late 1970s to early 1980s, and were held in three large gallery spaces (the Sala Alcalá 31, the Sala Complejo "El Águila," and the Sala Canal de Isabel II) in Madrid. The festival also included round-table discussions, concerts, and screenings of popular films and television shows from this period. *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* contains a fair amount of footage from the opening party for the 2006-2007 exhibits, and many of the people who were involved in the Movida are interviewed at this event. Footage from the party is interspersed with quotes from the interviews at the beginning of the documentary. The interviews serve as a way to elicit reflections about the commemorative events, which becomes a significant component of the documentary. Generally, the act of recording the documentation of the commemorative events provides an interesting layer to *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño*. Documentaries generally seek to record a certain process or movement, but there is a double documentation going on in this particular film since it overtly displays the media attention given to the tributes about the Movida.

The commemoration of the Movida is carefully presented in the initial sequences of the film. First, an announcer at the festivities proclaims "Hoy vamos a celebrar juntos estos 25 años" ("Today we are going to celebrate these 25 years together"). The inclusion of the commemorative events within the film also blocks the work of forgetting, another aspect of places of memory detailed by Nora. There is a kind of double commemoration happening in the film, because the film itself recognizes the memory of the commemorative events. The commemorations of this period are explained in detail in the film. For instance, the phrase "y se celebró con conciertos," ("It was celebrated with concerts") is accompanied by images of revival concerts and the word "exposiciones" ("exhibitions") is juxtaposed with images of artists like Pablo Pérez Mínguez and Alberto García Alix standing next to their work at the exhibits. The presentation of these phrases and events evokes the paparazzi by intermingling flash bulbs between takes with footage of photographers and the press taking pictures of famous Movida figures such as Fabio/Fanny McNamara during press conferences about the festival. The curator of the LA MOVIDA exhibits, Blanca Sánchez, is also shown speaking at the press conference for the exhibit opening. In the following quote, Sánchez likens the process of coordinating the exhibits to the Movida: "La organización de esta exposición ha sido lo más parecido a la Movida, sólo que sin risas" ("The organization of this exhibit has been the closest thing to the Movida, only without the laughs"). Her comment probably refers to the interdisciplinary aspect of both the Movida and the exhibits created to remember it; and because the festival reunited many of the people from this movement. However, the idea that the process was void of laughs suggests the presence of the sobering realizations

that hindsight offers, especially the darker aspects of the memory of this period, such as the deaths of many of the people who were originally involved in the Movida. While some of the comments shared by the individuals that are interviewed for the film are positive, others are somber.

The memory of the original Movida is not the only aspect that is highlighted in this film. There is also an attempt to connect it with the cultural scene in Madrid during the 1990s and the 2000s. The footage of the exhibits is followed by commentary on the rebirth of the Movida, and the following words appear on screen: "Incluso se habló del renacimiento de la Movida" ("There was even talk of a renaissance of the Movida"). Following this statement, a few different performers reflect on the idea of a renaissance of the Movida, each offering a distinct opinion of the connection of their work to this period. First, a singer named Elektro states: "Se le llama la segunda Movida, pero yo creo que es una Movida nueva" ("They call it a second Movida, but I think it is a new Movida"). He acknowledges that the cultural scene of the 2000s has been called the Movida's second coming, but also says that what is happening in the present is something new, and not an imitation of the past.

Unlike Elektro, a performer named MGB/Agnes la Sucia, from the group known as "En Plan Travesti," (on which the second documentary analyzed here, *La empanada de la Removida*, is based) wishes to emphasize connections between his recent performances and the Movida. According to him, "Hay muchos elementos que se repiten. El mismo Pedro Almodóvar, cuando vino a una de nuestras fiestas, el comentario que hizo fue que



es la tercera vez que veo que ocurre esto<sup>37</sup>" ("There are many elements that are repeated. Even Pedro Almodóvar, when he came to one of our parties, made the comment that this is the third time that this has happened"). By mentioning the opinions of Pedro Almodóvar, the most renowned figure from the Movida, MGB/Agnes la Sucia bestows a certain amount of prestige upon the "En Plan Travesti" performances. It is clear that the filmmaker wished to emphasize this connection as well, because the cover of the DVD features a large image of Pedro Almodóvar's head in the center, surrounded by other considerably smaller renderings of other figures from this period. Almodóvar's head dwarfs the other images, and cutouts of famous Madrid landmarks such as La Puerta de Alcalá and the Cibeles fountain rest atop his head, further suggesting his prominence. The choice to include Almodóvar's head clearly points to how he is often considered a synecdoche for the Movida in general, as I have mentioned in other chapters as well.

Since Almodóvar is the most recognizable person who was involved in the Movida from its inception, it is significant that he (and not someone else who would be perhaps less well known) acknowledges the link between these performances and the Movida. Pedro Almodóvar's endorsement of these performances is further emphasized by a quotation that appears on the screen: "Me dan escalofríos cuando descubres en los guateques de En Plan Travesti la cantidad de chavales que entonces no habían nacido...vibrando e imitando las mismas actitudes y la misma música que nosotros" ("It gives me chills to discover such a large quantity of young people who hadn't even been born yet in the clubs for the En Plan Travesti parties...vibrating and imitating the same

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<sup>37</sup> It is unclear why MGB/Agnes la Sucia reports that Almodóvar said this is the *third* time that this has happened. It is never explained what the second time was, and the vast majority of other sources (even Elektro, mentioned above) talk about a *second* Movida.

attitudes we had and the same music as we did"). Almodóvar establishes a connection between the past and the present, recognizing that a completely new generation is deriving inspiration from the attitudes and music that he and his peers pioneered in Madrid three decades ago. Like the performer MGB/Agnes la Sucia, Almodóvar emphasizes the continuities between the Movida era and the "En Plan Travesti" parties.

Perhaps there are similarities between the cultural scene of the 2000s and the Movida in terms of practices and aesthetics, but the political comparisons being made between the two periods are rather unsound. The young performers in the film feel that a parallel exists between the repression of Franco's dictatorship and that of the Partido Popular (PP) (The People's Party), the conservative party that was in power during the 1990s and early 2000s, most notably with the election of José María Aznar, Prime Minister of Spain from 1996-2004. In Madrid, the conservative party dominated local politics during the 1990s and 2000s as well. For instance, a singer named Elektro asserts: "Que hemos dejado de vivir un tiempo político muy represor, que tiraba hacia un pensamiento único" ("We have just ceased to live in a political time that was very repressive, that tended toward a single, uniform ideology"). Another performer, Big Toxic, contends: "Hemos pasado 12 años de alcaderías híper-conservadoras" ("We have just been through 12 years of hyper-conservative mayors"). While the politics of the PP may have been conservative, all the politicians associated with the party were democratically elected.

Furthermore, the commemorative events for the celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Movida were sponsored by the Ayuntamiento de Madrid, led by

leaders of the PP such as Esperanza Aguirre and Santiago Fisas. Towards the end of the documentary, several comments are made on the occasion of the inauguratory party for the commemorative exhibits, held on November 24, 2006. Santiago Fisas, the Consejero de Cultura y Deportes speaks positively about the memory of the Movida during the event. Artists from the Movida are skeptical of the political implications of the event. Photographer Pablo Pérez Mínguez looks around at the festivities and simply states "Hay elecciones en el mes de mayo," ("There are elections in the month of May") suggesting that the spectacle will inspire votes for the PP. Comparing the transition from a dictatorship to a democracy to several years of dominance of a conservative, democratically elected government is mistaken. One need only remember that performances like "En Plan Travesti" would have been banned during the dictatorship, and those involved in them would probably be sent to centers of rehabilitation that were enforced by the "Ley de peligrosidad social" ("The law of Social Danger"). The importance of comparing the cultural ambiance of the dictatorship to what happen afterwards is also included in the film.

#### The spectre of Franco: Los NO-DO

*Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* contextualizes the Movida by including what Robert A. Rosenstone has deemed "actuality footage," by including two black and white clips from the era of Franco's dictatorship. The first features one of Franco's public appearances, and the second shows a group of women dancing the zarzuela from a NO-DO (short for "Noticiarios y Documentales" ("News and Documentaries")). NO-DO broadcasts included news footage "gathered from both home and abroad, this 'news'

covered major historical events (such as World War II) as well as the banalities of everyday life, both naturalized through a mediating Francoist point of view" (Kinder *Refiguring* 67). However, even though a documentary is composed of "[...] actuality footage or other traces of the world, it is never a neutral 'history lesson,' but a cunning work that must be as carefully interpreted by the viewer as the dramatic film" (Rosenstone 72). The commentary that accompanies this footage in the film is not merely a history lesson to show what the Franco era was like. Rather, the inclusion of the NO-DO in the documentary is employed to establish the difference between Franco's idea of Spanish popular culture and how much this changed during the transition to democracy. Kinder points out that this trend to "appropriate and recontextualize images [...] to challenge the monolithic 'official history' of the Francoist regime" began in the later years of the dictatorship (71). The examples she mentions are Basilio Martín Patino's *Canciones para después de una guerra* (Songs for after a War, 1971), which included a "subversive collage of popular images and songs from the 1940s and 1950s, and his *Caudillo* (1975), an ironic biography of Franco comprised of found footage tinted in different colors to indicate the ideological bent of the source" as well as Jaime Camino's 1977 film *La vieja memoria* (Old Memory) and Gonzalo Herralde's *Raza, el espíritu de Franco* (Race, The Spirit of Franco, 1977) (Kinder 70).

By including this footage from the dictatorship, the documentary fulfills a particular purpose of places of memory since it "blocks the work of forgetting" what things were like before the transition to democracy (Nora *Between...* 19). Nora's idea of blocking the work of forgetting relates to what Marsha Kinder's reflections on

documentaries created during the post-Franco period. She emphasizes that in the films from this period, "The key question, then, for the Spanish spectator was not merely what was being documented (the *referent*) but from which political perspective and for what end. In other words, what ideological function it was *performing*" (Kinder *Refiguring* 69). What is fascinating about the NO-DO clips included in *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* is that they originally performed a certain function, but they perform an entirely distinct one when placed into the context of this film.

In the first NO-DO clip that is incorporated into *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño*, Franco is standing outside on a balcony, surrounded by four military men. He exclaims "¡Arriba España!" ("Hail Spain!") two times, and the camera shows the response of the adoring crowd. The entire plaza is filled with people who wave their hats and shout "¡Arriba España!" in unison, demonstrating the happiness and acquiescence of a certain sector of the Spanish people during Franco's dictatorship. Following this image, a paragraph of text is imposed onto the symbol of the eagle and the coat of arms of Franco's regime. The text, obviously not part of the original footage, is superimposed upon old NO-DO footage, along with the triumphal music characteristic of the NO-DO broadcasts: "durante la dictadura de Franco, entre 1939 y 1975, se definió sólidamente una identidad cultural española" ("During Franco's dictatorship, between 1939 and 1975, a Spanish cultural identity was solidly defined"). The ideological function of this text is to stress the fact that the Franco regime sought to establish a single Spanish identity, therefore obviously leaving out many of the peripheral identities that have long been present in Spain.

The next scene shows footage from another NO-DO, this time with the purpose of introducing this Spanish cultural identity imposed by the Franco regime. A group of women wearing long, ruffled polka-dotted dresses typical of flamenco dancers are in the middle of a large plaza, and in the background, signs display their loyalty to Francoist Spain, emblazoned with the words "Franco. Franco. Franco. Arriba España." The women begin with the arm salute to accompany the saying "¡Arriba España!" and they dance traditional Spanish dances to the rhythm of castanets. By including the footage of the female dancers, the documentary implicitly comments on the popularization of this image. Images of Andalusian women and bullfighters were heavily marketed by the tourism industry in 1960s Spain in hopes of attracting tourism, along with the slogan "Spain is different." The slogan is one of the most famous in Spanish history; it was introduced in 1964 when "[...] Manuel Fraga Iribarne, Minister of Information and Tourism of the dictatorial government of General Francisco Franco, put it on the propaganda posters that marked the official celebrations of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Regime in order to promote a program aimed at an economic and ideological renovation of the country via tourism<sup>38</sup>" (Afinoguénova/Martí-Olivella xi). While the slogan was popularized in the 1960s, the idea of Spain being different was not new: "expressions of Spain's difference, peculiarity, exceptionality, and, at times, its 'abnormality' have been circulating since the late eighteenth century in Spanish discussions of national identity and in accounts of Spain written by foreign travelers and

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<sup>38</sup> For an in depth discussion of the impact of tourism in Spain, see Afinoguénova, Eugenia and Jaime Martí-Olivella, eds. Spain is (Still) Different. Tourism and Discourse in Spanish Identity. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008.

tourists" (Afinoguénova/Martí-Olivella xi). Even the Madrid Movidá has erroneously been categorized as an expression of Spain's difference, a point that I return to later in this chapter.

The purpose of placing this footage in the film is to emphasize the difference between some elements of traditional Spanish culture and the emergent youth culture of the late 1970s and early 1980s. The narrative in the film establishes distance itself from the culture of the past. A palimpsest is formed by superimposing a textual explanation of the dances onto the symbol of the eagle and the coat of arms of Franco's regime: "La copla y la zarzuela, públicos y reconocidos, poco tenían que ver con las aspiraciones de muchos jóvenes a finales de los 70" ("The copla and the zarzuela [typical Spanish dances], public and renowned, had little to do with the aspirations of many young people in the late 1970s"). As the castanets play on, more information appears onscreen: "La censura y la falta de apoyo por parte del régimen condenaban a los nuevos ritmos a vivir en el 'underground'" ("Censorship and the lack of official support by the regime condemned the new rhythms to live underground"). While the official culture was busy broadcasting certain official images of Spain, an underground culture was brewing that would soon alter the façade of Spain. The interpretations of how young people in Spain did not relate to the official culture, thus causing them to express themselves in 'underground' environments, serves to "[...] expose the 'imaginary' nature of the community that had been forcibly unified by the consumption of those images during the Francoist era" (Kinder *Refiguring* 71). *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* thus makes clear that the images propagated by the official culture were not accepted or consumed by

everyone, therefore performing a "historical and ideological analysis" of this period (*ibid* 71). In general, the fact that this documentary includes a re-interpretation of the NO-DO newsreels exemplifies how many documentaries in post-Franco Spain "[...] reedited and recontextualized the meanings of existing footage" (Kinder *Refiguring* 69). As a place of memory, the newly contextualized footage in the film both blocks the work of forgetting the NO-DO newsreel and establishes a state of things by creating a new response to the NO-DO footage.

The fact that the documentary mentions that the new rhythms were living underground *during* the Franco regime is significant, because it is often mistakenly held that the underground culture appeared only after Franco's death, in a rather abrupt fashion. It is more accurate to say that this underground culture came to the surface after the end of the dictatorship. The final image of Franco shows him riding in a car through the streets of Madrid in a patriotic posture, sporting his military uniform and raising his arm in salute, a smile lighting up his face. It is a compelling show of respect for the dictator, for as he passes by, admirers and onlookers on the side of the street raise their arms in salute. The music of the castanets fades into the sound of traffic outside of Madrid, and instead of Franco's smile, the car headlights on a busy highway demand our attention. The Royal Palace glows in the distance, a landmark of Madrid. The death of Franco is symbolically performed in the documentary when the "voice of God," a voice from a radio broadcast announces "Atención, españoles. Atención, españoles. Franco ha muerto. Franco ha muerto. Franco ha muerto" ("Attention, Spaniards. Attention, Spaniards. Franco has died. Franco has died. Franco has died"). The sentences are



repeated to emphasize the news that is being broadcast. The caption onscreen informs us that it is the voice of Carlos Arias Navarro, the President of the Spanish Government in 1975. The death of Franco is performed, but only audibly—there are no images of his death, but instead, an image of the street, at night in Madrid. Thus within the first five minutes of the film, we are taken through several time periods: beginning with the present and the commemorations of the Movida, followed by the memories and avalanche of images of the 1980s, then even further in the past, to the Franco era. While the film does exhibit a linear narrative in some senses, it also moves from the present into the past, thereby reversing the typical linear narrative. This technique reflects how memory functions, for oftentimes events are not recalled in linear manner, with details being confused and time frames muddled.

#### Other "Memory Devices"

In addition to the inclusion of the NO-DO footage, a variety of visual and aural devices in the film serve to provoke a reaction from viewers. For example, the way images are "framed, coloured, and edited; as well as [...the use of] sound track, the quality of voice of both narrators and witnesses, the words spoken, the sound effects, the music from found sources [or music that is composed in order to] heighten the impact of the images" (Rosenstone 74). The sound track of *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* includes songs like "La chica de ayer" ("The Girl from Yesterday") from the popular Movida-era band Nacha Pop. Bandmember Antonio Vega died in 2009, so the song takes on an even more pronounced level of nostalgia, by immortalizing his death, one of the purposes of places of memory. The song "Chica de ayer" is considered to be one of

the quintessential anthems of the Movida, and in the documentary, it is referred to as "un himno de la Movida." The song is nostalgic and also represents lost youth with its lyrics: "Eres la chica de ayer, jugando con las flores en mi jardín [...] mi cabeza da vueltas persiguiéndote" ("You are the girl from yesterday, playing with flowers in my garden. My head spins as I try to follow you"). Vega sings into the microphone, his aging voice singing of yesterday, and of yesterday's girl, and of yesterday's songs. It is a nostalgic song: Vega sings of his romance with the past. The song continues as we are transported back into time; it serves as a window into the past, and as background music for the photographs of young people from the 1970s and 1980s that appear onscreen, women and men dressed as punks and mods in their leather-clad outfits and slicked-back hair. In some sense, the Movida phenomenon is the girl from yesterday that many people cannot seem to shake from their memories. A *mise en abîme* structure is created with the use of the song in the film, for the song simultaneously recalls two pasts: both the past it originally remembered, and that of the Movida, creating an image within another image.

*Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* is punctuated by the poetry of Eduardo Haro Ibars, whose work also inspired music by Movida-era band Gabinete Caligari. Haro Ibars died in 1988 due to complications of AIDS. His poetry is used throughout the documentary either to introduce a new section, serve as a segue, or to conclude a section. Since Haro Ibars is considered one of the victims of this period, the presence of his voice in this work is a poignant reminder of his death. Arguably, his poetry also serves as a place of memory. Many of the fragments written by Haro Ibars speak to the themes of life, death, and resurrection that were prevalent during the Movida and continue to

characterize it in more recent years. For example, "Mueren o morían niños plata en el pelo, mercurio en las entrañas nylon suave, tras haber jugado a la mano caliente" ("Children died or used to die, silver in their hair, mercury in their guts, silken nylon, after drawing the wild hand"). The latter may be a reflection of those who died during this period, who played the "wild hand" by experimenting with drugs, alcohol, and other risque behaviors. Another quote from Haro Ibars mentions the death of the Movida phenomenon: "La Movida genera el éxito y el éxito mata a la Movida" ("The Movement brings success; and success kills 'The Movement'<sup>39</sup>"). This quote reflects on the life of the success generated by the Movida, and how the life it brought led to its death. Finally, towards the end of the documentary, a 1985 quote from Haro Ibars appears onscreen: "La 'Movida' fue un intento de etiquetar, para mejor vender y hacer digerible la resurrección de Madrid" ("The movement was a tag-line, placed to better sell and digest the resurrection of Madrid"). Viewed in conjunction, these three quotes suggest that those involved in the Movida somehow sacrificed their lives, thus enabling the resurrection of Madrid.

While the commercial and political usage of the Movida are critically revisited in the film, the ending pays homage to the people who were involved in the Movida who are now deceased. In this sense, the film functions as a place of memory that immortalizes their deaths. At the end of the film, images of those who died during this period are shown, such as painters Las Costus, singer Tino Casal, composer Carlos G. Berlanga, singer Eduardo Benavente, composer Poch, poet Eduardo Haro Ibars, and curator Blanca Sánchez. They continue to "live on" figuratively by being included in the film.

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<sup>39</sup> [The translation "Movement" is arguably not an accurate translation, but was included in the documentary's subtitles as such. See the introduction of this dissertation for a further explanation of the origins of the term "Movida."]

At another point in the film, photographer Alberto García Alix laments the deaths of his peers: "Hay mucho dolor también. Yo formo parte de una generación que fue arrasada, y quedamos muy pocos, por las drogas" ("There is a lot of pain as well. I am part of a generation that was destroyed, and there are very few of us left, because of the drugs"). Images of someone injecting one of their veins represent the drug use common during the 1970s and 1980s. In the film, Fabio McNamara criticizes his own drug use in the past: "Caí, pues en excesos, no. Estaba bastante drogado muchas veces. Ahora mismo soy fan de Jesucristo, y poco más, y de la Virgen María. Nunca pienso en esa época ya" ("I fell into excesses. I was pretty drugged up many times. Now I am a fan of Jesus Christ, and little more, and of the Virgin Mary. I never think about that time anymore"). McNamara has converted from the outspoken, cross-dressing drug user he was in the 1980s to a completely different lifestyle as a devout Catholic. The change is quite drastic, especially since McNamara was quite the opposite of a devout religious person in the past. In some sense, McNamara's change reflects the capacity for metamorphosis that also occurs in places of memory. While up to this point I have mostly discussed gestures, music and anecdotal memories, actual physical places that were associated with the Movida are also highlighted in the film *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño*.

#### Revisiting the Loci of the Movida

According to Pierre Nora, "Memory attaches itself to sites, whereas history attaches itself to events" (*ibid* 22). The only physical place that receives attention in the documentary that still exists is the Rastro, a large flea market that occurs on Sundays in

Madrid near the metro stop Embajadores. The Rastro was a place where people could accumulate the newest fashion trends or the fanzines created by Ceesepe and Alberto García Alix. After 1975, at the Rastro, "[...] empezaría a surgir nuevas modalidades culturales, manifestaciones alternativas al discurso cultural predominante durante la transición democrática" ("New cultural modalities began to arise, alternative manifestations to the predominant cultural discourse during the democratic transition"; Reguera 12.6.07). Composer Fernando Márquez (known as "El Zurdo") from the band Kaka de Luxe points out the importance of the Rastro: "Era un lugar de reunión de la época. Era éste. O sea, veníamos todos aquí. Era un poco el equivalente [...] pues a una zona bohemia en Nueva York, o yo que sé en París o en San Francisco, en su momento" ("It was a meeting place of the era. This place. I mean, we all came here. It was the equivalent, say, of a bohemian area of New York, or, what do I know, in Paris or in San Francisco, in their moments").

Eduardo Haro Ibars published an article in the periodical *Triunfo* in 1977 titled "El nuevo Rastro, ágora madrileña" ("The New Rastro, Madrilinean Agora"). Haro Ibars characterizes the Rastro as a "feria de la libertad" [Freedom Fair/Party] and writes of the new faces who began to frequent the market:

[...] una fauna nueva y joven empezó a frecuentar el Rastro redivivo tras la muerte de Franco: miembros de conjuntos rockeros, dibujantes, periodistas y escritores, que ya no van allí sencillamente para comprar o vender—aunque esto también puede suceder [...] sino más que nada a reunirse, intercambiar ideas y proyectos, estar al tanto de lo que ocurre en la vida madrileña; comunicar, en fin... (Haro Ibars 42)

A new, young fauna began to frequent the Rastro after Franco's death: members of rock bands, comic book artists, journalists and writers, who don't go there simply to buy or sell—although this can also happen [...] more than anything,

they come to meet, to exchange ideas and projects, to be on top of what is happening in Madrid life, to communicate.

Haro Ibars also mentions that various political groups also set up stands at the Rastro, and points out that episodes of violence sometimes broke out there: "Domingo tras domingo, los grupos incontrolados vuelven a atacar con porras, palos y cualquier arma contundente que encuentren" ("Sunday after Sunday, the uncontrolled groups attack again with sticks and with whatever arms they can find"; Haro Ibars 43). This violent characterization of the Rastro is something that seems to be forgotten or unmentioned in the memories of this era. While the Rastro remains a vibrant fixture of Madrid street culture, many of the places that were important during this period no longer exist. Invoking their memory here establishes them as places of memory and also gives a materiality to what no longer exists in a material sense.

Two of the places that are emphasized in the *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* are significant because of their relationship to deaths of different people from this period: La Casa Costus and the nightclub, Rock-Ola. The first, the former home of painters Las Costus, still exists but is no longer inhabited by the same people, deceased painters Enrique Naya and Juan Carrero. In the documentary, Fabio McNamara explains the significance of La Casa Costus.<sup>40</sup> Although it is now a private residence, an image of the outside of their apartment is shown along with a caption that reads "Casa Costus, Calle Palma 14, Barrio Malasaña." McNamara describes the Costus's former home:

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<sup>40</sup> Elsewhere, McNamara has publicly declared his desire that the site be commemorated: "[debe haber] una placa conmemorativa en el número 14 de la calle de La Palma' que, situada en el barrio de Malasaña, fue el centro neurálgico de la explosión creativa de nombres fundamentales como Alaska o los fallecidos Tino Casal y Carlos Berlanga" ("There should be a commemorative plaque at 14 Palm Street, located in the Malasaña neighborhood, which was the neurological center of the creative explosion of fundamental names like Alaska and the (now deceased) Tino Casal and Carlos Berlanga" ; *Alerta de Cantabria* 56).

El epicentro, el *sancta sanctorum* de la Movida, era la Calle Palma 14. La Calle Palma 14 era como si dijéramos, la Fábrica de Warhol. Era el sitio donde se reunían todos los genios, todas las futuras estrellas. Estábamos pues Tino Casal, Las Costus y yo, pues iba también Alaska, iba también Carlos Berlanga, hasta Pedro Almodóvar. Después de Franco, fuimos, erámos los que dimos pie a que se modernizara todo este país.

The epicenter, the *sancta sanctorum* of the Movida, was the address 14 Palm Street. 14 Palm Street was like, we could say, Andy Warhol's Factory. It was the place where all the geniuses met up, all the future stars. We were, well, Tino Casal, Las Costus and I, and Alaska also went, Carlos Berlanga too, even Pedro Almodóvar. After Franco, we were, we were the ones who started the modernization of this whole country.

McNamara's narration is accompanied by images of the people he mentions in addition to photographs of Las Costus's paintings and of their more famous works, such as the kitsch portrait of Carmen Polo, Franco's widow. In his characteristic style, McNamara embellishes a bit, for there were of course many other reasons why Spain began to modernize, including many of the political changes that were occurring at this time. McNamara is poised as an authoritative voice on the Casa Costus since he is someone who frequented their home in the past. McNamara plays the role of the person who "establishes a state of things" when discussing the importance of the home of Las Costus. Their home was also quite significant, because many of the scenes in Pedro Almodóvar's 1980 film *Pepi, Luci, Bom y las otras chicas del montón* were filmed there, and Las Costus appear in this film painting in their apartment. On a side note, the Casa Costus is probably not as well known as Warhol's Factory, but the connection is not entirely untrue. The allusion to Warhol's Factory suggests a linkage that is often made between the art scene in post-Franco Spain and that of 1960s New York. Both the Factory and Las Costus's apartment served as meeting places where artists and musicians

intermingled. Warhol also had connections in Spain, and visited Madrid just before his death. Upon the occasion of his visit, he met many of the people involved in the Movida, which is documented in Pedro Almodóvar's book *Patty Diphusa*, published in 1992.

Of all the bars that existed during the Movida era, Rock-Ola is without question the most influential one. Perhaps because of its abrupt closing, it has also become one of the mythical places of memory from this period. A man named Manuel "Patacho" Recio, identified in the documentary as a guitarist from the band Glutamato Ye-Yé, comments about the various bars that were popular during the Movida era; he mentions a bar called "El Penta"<sup>41</sup>, " and another called "El Jardín," which for him was "[...] el preámbulo de lo que luego fue el local por excelencia de la historia nocturna de Madrid, que fue el Rock-Ola" ("The preamble to the location, par excellence, of the nocturnal history of Madrid, which was Rock-Ola"). Black and white images of the club are shown from when the club was in its heyday. Rock-Ola was open from 1981-1985 and was famously referred to by Pedro Almodóvar as "the University of the Movida." In the documentary, Borja Casani, once the editor of the well-known magazine *La Luna de Madrid* from the Movida era, points out that Rock-Ola was a place where many different types of people rubbed shoulders: "Se empiezan a crear pues eso 'los famosos' un poco por primera vez en España, ... y realmente es la primera vez que hay famosos que son cercanos, que son gente, o que la gente puede acceder a ellos pues yendo al Rock-Ola" ("The 'famous people' were just beginning to have a presence in Spain, and really it was the first time that there were famous people who were close by, who were people, or people who

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<sup>41</sup> The bar El Penta is also mentioned in the song "La chica de ayer" that I mentioned previously in this chapter. The lyric in the song is: "Luego por la noche al Penta a escuchar canciones que consigán que te pueda amar" ("Later at night to El Penta to listen to songs that make me love you").



others could have access to by going to Rock-Ola"). Despite its fame, the club was closed in 1985 when a man was murdered in a street fight outside. Recio points out that "[...] entonces allí muere un chaval, y que dicen, se toman, la culpa lo tiene el rock o el pop, se cierra el local" ("So then a guy dies there, and they go and say that it's rock or pop's fault, and the place is closed"). Héctor Fouce, an ethnomusicologist and curator of a 2007 exhibit series about the Movida has commented on the importance of Rock-Ola:

Pero sin duda es la sala Rock Ola el referente fundamental del hedonismo de estos años: un espacio en el que mirar y ser mirado, en el que soñar proyectos y poner manos a la obra. Rock Ola es un hito en la cultura española: estaba concebida como un espacio autosuficiente, con sus propios diseñadores y su imprenta, su equipo de sonido, lo que permitió un nivel de actividad que casi nunca ha llegado a ser alcanzado en otro momento. (Fouce 40)

Without a doubt, Rock Ola is the fundamental referent of the hedonism of these years: a place in which to see and be seen, a place in which to dream up projects and make things happen. Rock Ola is a landmark in Spanish culture: it was conceived as a self-sufficient space, with its own designers and its own printing press, its own sound equipment, which permitted it to have an unprecedented level of activity, one that has almost never been reached in other periods.

Since Rock-Ola was closed, and thus in a sense put to death (curiously, because of a death) it has achieved a mythical status in the history of the Madrid night life. When Recio returns to the location that was once home to the famous nightclub in the mid 2000s, the past grandeur of Rock-Ola is nowhere to be found. Instead, Recio points to a supermarket covered in graffiti, saying that Rock-Ola once stood in this very spot.

"Donde ahora hay un supermercado, con una pintada. Esto era la entrada al templo de la Movida. Y esta es la famosa sala donde todo el mundo estuvo" ("Where there is now a supermarket, with a graffiti tag. This was the door to the temple of the Movida. And this is the famous hall where everyone went"). He laughs nervously while pointing to the

building with a tinge of irony and disbelief that this was once such an important place. Later, as he stands in front of the building talking, behind him there are dumpsters and scaffolding, and once building has a sign on it that says "Local en venta" (For sale). The fact that the background behind Recio is littered with debris is rather disconcerting to him. Nothing remains of the vibrant character of Rock-Ola from over twenty years ago, only ruins and ephemeral memories of what once happened there. The material ruins are not the only aspect of the remains and the demise of the Movida that are addressed in the film. The history of the music industry during this period that was supported by places like Rock-Ola is one of the most essential facets of the Movida.

#### Rise and Fall: The Music Industry and the Commodification of the Movida

Much of the documentary focuses on the rise and fall of the Movida, blaming the commercialization of the music industry for its demise. This aspect of the film reflects the aspect of places of memory that "establish a state of things" and also block the work of forgetting what contributed to the downfall of the Movida. The focal point of this crescendo to decrescendo process is the development of the music scene in Madrid. Importantly, music from this period can also be considered a place of memory. For instance, José Colmeiro points out that "[...] one of the most emblematic songs of the 1980s, 'La puerta de Alcalá', [...] celebrates unproblematically the strong sense of historical continuity between past and present, turning the Madrid monument constructed by King Carlos III into a national *lieu de mémoire* for the resistance against oppression, as well as for the triumphant achievements of the ahistorical and forgetful *Movida*" (*Canciones...* 41).

The beginnings of the music scene were rather haphazard. Jaime Urrutia, a singer from the band Gabinete Caligari remarks: "Musicalmente, éramos bastante principiantes [...] La verdad es que era difícil encontrar un concierto que sonaba bien" ("Musically, we were really beginners. The truth is that it was hard to find a concert that sounded good"). Fernando Márquez, (known as "El Zurdo"), a composer from the band Kaka de Luxe, comments on the fact many people who later became famous musicians lacked musical ability: "Pero claro, ni Alaska ni yo tocábamos. Claro, el problema era, encontrar gente que tocase" ("But sure, neither Alaska nor I played. Clearly, the problem was finding people who played"). Musician Alaska was arguably discovered by Pedro Almodóvar. In his first full length feature film, *Pepi, Luci, Bom y las otras chicas del montón* (1980), Alaska had not yet established herself as a prominent musician; she played Bom, the young adolescent musician in the film. Before this film, she had never performed. Despite their deficiencies, many musicians rose to fame and their bands were soon signed by record companies such as Hispavox, which had record deals with bands like Nacha Pop, Alaska y los Pegamoides, Ejecutivos Agresivos and Radio Futura. The expansion of the music scene is highlighted in the following: "Entre 1980 y 1983 se editaron casi 60 elepés de 50 grupos de la Movida, tanto en discográficas establecidas como en sellos recién creados" (Between 1980 and 1983 almost 60 LP's from 50 groups of the Movida were released, in established record companies and in recently created companies"). This represents a fairly significant number of bands that gained popularity in a very short period of time<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> The music scene in Madrid and the way in which record companies sought out new talents is highlighted in Chus Gutiérrez's 2005 film *El Calentito*. In the film, a record label seeks to sign the female punk band,

The dissemination of these new bands via the radio and television was fundamental to their success. It is mentioned in the film that more than 20 radio programs and six television shows broadcasted the new music not just in Madrid but in all of Spain. Paloma Chamorro's television show *La Edad de Oro* is one of the programs that regularly broadcasted performances by up-and-coming bands, and images from the program are shown in the documentary. Jesús Ordovás, of Radio 3, further emphasizes the role of the media in popularizing the bands: "Entonces eso llevó ya a un nivel nacional, a través de la televisión, sobre todo. Si no hubiéramos estado una serie de gente como yo en la prensa, en la radio en la televisión, muchas de estas cosas se hubieran quedado en las salas" ("So, this was taken to a national level, through the television, more than anything. If there wouldn't have been a group of people like me in the press, on the radio or in television, many of these things would have stayed behind closed doors [in the music halls]").

The popularity of bands increased their record sales and boosted concert attendance, as Ordovás points out: "Aquellos grupos empezaban a cobrar dinero también. Lo que hacían gratis, empezaron a cobrar un millón, dos millones, tres millones, hasta cinco millones de pesetas por actuación" ("Those groups began to make money, too. What they did for free before, they started to charge a million, two million, three million, up to five million pesetas per act"). Despite their success, certain people feel that they were taken advantage of, such as Jaime Urrutia of the band Gabinete Caligari: "creo que en algunos sitios en algunas veces, se pasaron, se aprovecharon un poco de la gente que teníamos 21 años" ("I think that in some places, on some occasions, they went overboard,

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Las Siux, a fictional band based partly on Gutiérrez's own experiences in a girl group during the 1980s.

they took advantage of those of us who were 21"). Nonetheless, the commercial success of these bands caused their profits to skyrocket, and local politicians in search of a renewed image of Madrid took note. The PSOE (The Spanish Socialist Worker's Party) began to sponsor concerts in hopes of attracting young voters and also to make the party appear to have a forward-moving agenda. In the film, Manuel "Patacho" Recio, a musician from the band Glutamato Ye-Yé observes: "El PSOE [Partido Socialista Obrero Español] en España tenían ya el poder, y los ayuntamientos contrataban a los grupos que tenían caché" ("The Spanish Socialist Workers Party was in power at the time, and the local government contracted the groups that had prestige"). The documentary shows an image of a "Villa de Madrid" concert poster. Recio observes that the rise and fall of the Movida is linked to the change in leadership in the Madrid government, from the liberal PSOE to the PP (Partido Popular, The People's Party):

Y de repente, en Madrid, se hunde. Y curiosamente todo coincide con que hay un cambio de gobierno, de partidos que cogen el poder, con que hay un cambio de ayuntamientos, que cogen el poder. La Movida se hizo en época de PSOE, digamos, el socialismo, de izquierdas, digamos. Y entonces quizás el Partido Popular en los años siguientes pues no quería saber nada de la Movida [...]

[And suddenly, Madrid sinks. Curiously, everything coincides with the fact that there is a change in government, in the parties who have power, with having a change in mayors who have power. La Movida was done in the era of the PSOE, let's say, during socialism, who tend towards the left, let's say. And then the People's Party, in the following years, didn't want to have anything to do with the Movida.]

The era of the PSOE came to a close with the death of Enrique Tierno Galván, who served as mayor of Madrid from 1979-1986. His role is especially underlined in the memory of the Movida. Jorge Marí points out that Galván is remembered "[...] entre otras cosas por haber sido el máximo impulsor de la 'Movida' desde la política oficial"

("Among other things, for being the main driving force of the Movida from the official political arena"; (137). An iconic photograph of Tierno Galván and Susana Estrada is presented in the documentary. The photograph also appears on the cover of Manuel Vázquez Montalbán's book *Crónica sentimental de la transición* (1985), and is easily one of the most legendary images from this time period<sup>43</sup>. Generally, the PSOE's appropriation of the Movida is an example of the attempt to foment "[...] urban regeneration rooted in the commodification of cultural spectacle [...]" (Salmon 110).

The mix of commercial success and political involvement in the Madrid music industry of the 1980s both expanded its reach and is credited for its downfall. A musician known as Loquillo succinctly defines the practices of consumption that dominated the 1980s music scene: "Y todo el mundo vendía a todo el mundo. Y todo el mundo compraba a todo el mundo" ("Everyone sold everyone else. And everyone bought everyone else"). This rampant consumption is both criticized and embraced by those who reflect upon its meaning in the film. Borja Casani comments on the promotion of frivolous consumption in Spain: "Los sistemas...del consumo promocional, digamos, y del consumo inútil de la limpia del contenido para dar muy bonito el contenedor, estaba a sus comienzos" ("The systems of promotional consumption, let's say, of the useless consumption of emptying the content to make the container very pretty was just beginning"). The young bands with their shocking aesthetics were the perfect image to commercialize, and quickly became very popular—too popular for some. For instance, Fabio McNamara notes that widespread fame took something away from the music industry: "Cuando una cosa se vuelve tan pop, tan populachera, pues se le quita un poco

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<sup>43</sup> I explain the significance of this photograph in more detail in my chapter on museum exhibits.

el misterio, no?" ("When something becomes so pop, so popular, well, some of its mystery is taken away, right?"). What was once 'underground' had risen to the surface and seemed to be everywhere; thus the Movida was no longer for the few privileged people, but for everyone. Not all the participants in the original underground scene felt that being objects of consumption was a negative thing. Alaska unashamedly admits in the film: "Me encanta ser objeto de consumo publicitario, y me da igual ser objeto de consumo masivo que objeto de consumo underground. Me encanta consumir y me encanta que me consuman" ("I love being an object of public consumption, and it makes no difference to me to be an object of massive consumption or an underground object of consumption. I love to consume and I love when people consume me"). Alaska's opinions are often quite different from those of her peers, perhaps due to her continued success even in recent years. At another point, she remarks: "Yo soy muy poco nostálgica, entonces todas estas cosas de recuerdos y tal, yo paso total. Yo creo que no había ningún espíritu distinto al de ahora" ("I am really not nostalgic, so, all these things about memories and such, I pass on them. I don't think there was any different spirit then than there is now"). Still, being an "object of consumption" has benefited her career, while others perhaps feel that their careers were damaged because people lost interest in them. Alaska has been able to continuously reinvent herself, much like Madonna.

Other reasons for the demise of the Movida are suggested by a number of comments in the film. For example, photographer Ouka Leele admits the desire to disassociate from the phenomenon that became known as the Movida: "Y nos preguntaban por la Movida y decíamos ¿qué? ¿Qué es eso? Como todos queríamos

destrozarla y hacerla desaparecer" ("And they asked us about the Movida, and we said, what? What's that? It was like we all wanted to destroy it and make it disappear"). Ouka Leele's choice to use words like "destroy" and "disappear" exemplify the wish that the Movida be put to death. Her comment also reflects that many who were involved in the underground scene in Madrid did not define themselves as participants in what came to be known as the "Movida," preferring the term "La nueva ola" ("The New Wave") instead. Comic book artist Ceesepe suggests that due to widespread promotion by political entities and marketing apparatuses, the Movida became so large that it was normalized: "La Movida se atomizó. Cada uno, digamos, lo saltó. Fue una explosión, y entonces, se normalizó. Los que éramos 3.000 se convirtió en 30.000, 300.000. Y toda España, toda Madrid, ya era la Movida. En París se hablaba de la Movida. La llevamos a [todas partes], ya era una cosa ya general" ("The Movida exploded. We all made it explode. It was an explosion, and then, it became normalized. What was once a group of 3,000 became 30,000; 300,000. And all of Spain, all of Madrid, was the Movida. They talked about the Movida in Paris. We took it everywhere, then it was a general thing").

Pablo Carbonell, a singer from the band *Toreros Muertos*, says that a competitive nature separated those involved in the music scene: "Nosotros, pues nos cargamos un poco la Movida. A causa del negocio, del dinero, dejaron de, insisto, de coincidir todas esas personas" ("We were in part responsible for the demise of the Movida. Due to business, money, all of those people stopped meeting up"). Carbonell suggests that it became a kind of "every man for himself" situation, and that people began to be more interested in personal gains rather than in being a community of artists with common



goals. For various reasons, the music scene began to crumble in the mid-1980s. Borja Casani mentions that the inevitable happened: "Ya en los años 86, 87, empieza un poco a decaer, porque el que no vende, no vende, y el que vende, vende" ("Already in 1986, 1987, it begins to crumble a little, because the one who sells, sells, and the one who doesn't sell, doesn't sell"). Writer Luis Antonio de Villena's interpretation of the collapse of the Movida also includes a reflection on the commercial aspect: "Una vez que se convirtió en producto, el producto ya se había utilizado, llevaba diez años de uso, y caducó" ("Once it became a product, the product had been used, it had been used for 10 years, and then it expired"). Villena's usage of the idea of a product that expired to describe the general phenomenon of the Movida is compelling, because he is probably referring to the political commodification of the Movida by the Madrid government in the early to mid-1980s, which is often blamed for its eventual demise. While the interest in the Movida was waning by the mid-1980s, twenty years later, it returned as a new product: a memory of what once was. The commodification of the Movida is evaluated by Santiago Fouz-Hernández in a 2009 article "Me cuesta tanto olvidarte: Mecano and the *Movida* Remixed, Revisited and Repackaged." Fouz-Hernández posits that recent cultural products, such as the musical *Hoy no me puedo levantar* (2005) which was based on the band Mecano, produced an "[...] idealized and idealizing narrative of the *Movida*, and the group Mecano's contested part in it, [therefore it] is reduced to commodity, the new object cause of desire that fuels nostalgia in its late capitalist incarnation" (167). The Movida "product" was not entirely dead and left to rest in the 1980s, since it was revived in the 2000s once again as a commodity. Apart from being a meditation on the

remains of the music scene of the Movida, the documentary also focuses on presenting what followed it musically.

### From the 1980s to the 1990s: Transformations in the Music Scene

A number of musicians from the 1990s are interviewed during the documentary, and their opinions shed new light on the Movida of the 1980s and its subsequent resurrection in the 2000s. Jaime García, of the band Sexy Sadie, points out that in the 1990s, he and his peers were not looking to what happened during the 1980s in Spain for inspiration, but rather to popular music in English<sup>44</sup>. Images of albums by 1990s bands Nirvana, the Stone Roses, and the Pixies are shown in the film. Among many bands from the 1990s, there was a desire to differentiate themselves from the music of the 1980s and move in a more international direction. Elena Gascón-Vera points out that the Movida was "[...] la última explosión de lo genuinamente español antes de que el país fuera diluyéndose poco a poco en el mundo internacional y perdiendo las características que, para bien y para mal, lo hacían diferente del mundo occidental" ("The last explosion of something genuinely Spanish before the country began to be diluted little by little into the international world, and losing characteristics that, for good or for ill, made it different from the Western world"; 167). This characterization of the Movida is somewhat problematic, because it really was not genuinely Spanish, especially since those who were involved in it constantly refer to how they borrowed many ideas and inspiration from British punk and Andy Warhol's factory, for example.

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<sup>44</sup> This is consistent with the literature in Spain known as "Generation X" literature. The characters in novels such as *Historias del Kronen* (José Angel Mañas, 1994) also refer to cultural referents from the U.S. and Great Britain. While the youth of the 1980s "had projected an image of frenzied creativity, irony, parody and postmodernism," Mark Allinson characterizes the youth portrayed in novels like *Historias del Kronen* as "much less entertaining, its culture hedonistic, escapist and lacking in creativity" (Allinson 271).

Further, Gascón-Vera points out that "La *Movida* estaba llena de contradicciones, por un lado con la llegada de la democracia se legitimó de forma positiva el dicho franquista de *España es diferente*, llevado hasta el límite" ("The *Movida* is full of contradictions, on the one hand because the arrival of democracy legitimized, in a positive sense, the Francoist slogan *Spain is different*, taken to the extreme" ; Gascón-Vera 172). This idea that the arrival of democracy legitimized the Francoist slogan "Spain is different" is mistaken; if anything, Spain's transition to democracy meant that it became like many other western capitalist democracies. Gascón-Vera suggests that during the transition there was a desire to "[...] desgajarse de una Europa indiferente y despectiva [...]" ("split off from an indifferent, despective Europe" ; 172). Yet, in 1977 Spain applied to become a member of the European Union, and officially entered the E.U. in 1986 and joined NATO in 1986, clearly showing Spain's interest in creating ties with the rest of Europe. Further, the use of the slogan in this context is contradictory because it was created in the spirit of affirming that Spain was different because of its underdevelopment. After all, the slogan was created to during Francoism to "[...] achieve its stated need of economic development, [and to accomplish this,] Franco's government hypocritically capitalized on the country's 'blessed underdevelopment' ('bendito atraso'), as Carmen Martín Gaité called it" (Afinoguénova/Martí-Olivella xii). The Moncloa Pact (1977) included many measures to improve the economic climate.

In the 1990s, Spain began to look like many other countries in the world: Spain was no longer different. This is touched on slightly by the musicians in the documentary who looked to the international music scene for inspiration rather than music from Spain.

In the film *La empanada de la Removida*, a young woman remarks that after the 1980s, "[...] llegó un momento de que todo era lo mismo porque no se luchaba por nada" ("There came a time when everything was the same, because no one fought for anything"). Another musician named Carlos Tarqué, of the group Molan, suggests that people vindicated the 1980s during the 2000s because they were so despised during the 1990s. It is valuable to recognize how the cultural scene of the 1980s was rejected in the 1990s, and to understand the reasoning behind this. The idea of "el desencanto" ("disenchantment") is fundamental to understand this.

#### "El desencanto": Disenchantment and its Return

"El desencanto" is a term that comes from a 1976 film *El desencanto*, directed by Jaime Chávarri, in which the mentality of Spaniards born between 1950 and 1960 is depicted (Vilarós 218). The "desencanto" of the late 1970s and early 1980s mainly refers to a disenchantment with politics, but also social issues. Javier Escudero suggests that the disenchantment of this period was connected to the hedonistic behaviors popularized by the youth in Madrid, referring to "una juventud desencantada ante los problemas políticos y sociales, con escaso futuro laboral, y, por lo general, de espaldas a toda inquietud intelectual y espiritual, encuentra en este nuevo hedonismo un escape vital" ("a youth that was disenchanted with political and social problems, with a scarce future for employment, and, generally, with their backs turned to all intellectual and spiritual curiosities, finds a vital escape in this new hedonism" ; 149). Escudero also mentions that economic problems and social issues such as drug addiction and a rise in delinquency contributed to the general sense of disillusion and disenchantment (151).

In terms of politics, there were many internal divisions in the UCD party (Union of the Democratic Center), which existed from 1977-1983, and was initially led by Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez, who resigned in 1981. Many other members of the party also resigned in the early 1980s for various reasons. Noël Valis suggests that the "desencanto" "has very real roots in the sellout of the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) following the 1977 Moncloa Pacts and the party's subsequent opportunism and corruption" (283).

Disenchantment is also manifested in cultural products. For instance, Patrick Paul Garlinger points out that the "desencanto" was a predominant theme in literary and cinematographic narratives in Spain during the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s (4). One example of this is the work of Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, about which José Colmeiro writes in his 1996 book *Crónica del desencanto: La narrativa de Manuel Vázquez Montalbán*. Colmeiro clearly connects disenchantment to the principles of postmodernity, asserting that it is associated with the failure of master narratives. He notes that "el desencanto de la narrativa montalbaniana coincide con el desencanto de los postulados de la modernidad, la crisis de confianza en los sistemas de representación provocada por la percepción de su agotamiento y fracaso final, y la toma de conciencia de la imposibilidad real de avance y progreso infinito y autosuficiente" ("the disenchantment in Montalbán's narrative coincides with the disenchantment with the principles of modernity, the crisis of confidence in the systems of representation provoked by the perception of their exhaustion and ultimate failure, and the realization of the impossibility of advancement and infinite, self-sufficient progress" ; Colmeiro 30).

The 1990s brought on another period of disenchantment (or re- disenchantment) "[...] alcanzado a través de la corrupción, el terrorismo institucionalizado y la lucha por el poder, entre la permanencia ya anquilosada del gobierno socialista dirigido por Felipe González y la nueva derecha dirigida por José María Aznar" ("The disenchantment was achieved by corruption, institutionalized terrorism and the fight for power, between the stagnant permanence of the socialist government directed by Felipe González and the new right directed by José María Aznar"; Gascón-Vera 174).

In the 1990s, the spirit that anything was possible was replaced with the reality that there were limitations to what was possible. Interestingly, this is mentioned in the film by photographer Ouka Leele: "Yo soñé que iba a exponer en el MoMA, en el Prado. Lo que cualquier artista quiere llegar a [ser], luego pasé una época de desencanto" ("I dreamt that I was going to exhibit at the MoMA or at the Prado. What every artists wants to become. Then I went through a period of disenchantment"). While Ouka Leele is referring to a disenchantment with her work, people also felt a sense of being disillusioned during the 1990s on other levels. It seems that after the heyday of the 1980s, another disenchantment was inevitable. Overall, the contemplation of the 1990s in the film serves to create a context for the memory of the Movida, or as Nora might say, to "establish a state of things" (Nora *Between* 19). The disenchantment of the 1990s did not continue into the following decade for a number of reasons. Due to political changes and a renewed interest in the 1980s, in the 2000s the Movida returned, albeit in a different form.

### ¿Una nueva Movida?

After explaining the artistic scene of the 1990s, *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* returns again to discussing the 2000s. Towards the end of the film, a final question is posed: "¿Puede haber una nueva Movida?" ("Could there be a new Movida?") A musician named Yasmin of the group Dirty Princess seems to think so: "En la escena madrileña se puede encontrar un montón de grupos que están surgiendo," ("On the Madrid scene, you can find a bunch of groups that are emerging"), thus suggesting that there are possibilities for a renewed music scene. Performer MGB (Agnes la Sucia), who performed at the En Plan Travesti parties, wishes to establish connections between the practices of the Movida and those of the people involved in the En Plan Travesti parties. He points out that he and his peers belong to small groups of people who see one another often. MGB seems to want to draw parallels between the interdisciplinary character of the En Plan Travesti parties and the Movida, pointing out that everyone he interacts with has an interest in multiple activities such as designing and painting, being a DJ, writing and making films. He also mentions that the En Plan Travesti parties were popular with people who lived through the 1980s: "Viene mucha gente de aquel entonces" ("A lot of people from that time period come to the parties"). While there are indications of a revival of the cultural scene, in the end the documentary suggests otherwise by placing the following text onscreen: "Las fiestas EN PLAN TRAVESTI, una especie de Movida mensual, se celebraron durante 3 años consecutivos [2003-2006]. El 26 de noviembre se celebró el último EN PLAN TRAVESTI. Para algunos medios, con esto se acabó la "Re-Movida" ("The En Plan Travesti parties, a kind of monthly Movida, were celebrated

during three consecutive years [2003-2006]"). The implication that the Removida ended in 2006 is an interesting one, because 2006 marked the year that the large scale commemorations of the Movida began.

*Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* does not develop the idea of a Removida to a great extent. Instead, it leaves viewers with the question of whether there could be a new Movida. As with other aspects of the film, the reflection on the En Plan Travesti parties serves to establish a state of things. To return to José Colmeiro's distinction between historical discourse and historical memory, *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* employs the documentary format to create an archive of documented interviews, objects, gestures, and places that function as places of memory within the film. These items collectively block the work of forgetting the Movida and the subsequent revision of the Movida in recent years. The format of the film also contribute to making the film a place of memory. The subheadings and questions that appear onscreen act as the "voice of God" to authoritatively explain and establish a state of things about the subject matter that is dealt with in the film. *La empanada de la Removida*, the second film examined in this chapter, is quite different, for it points more towards historical memory, which is constantly changing, unstable, and reconstructed. Both the format of this second film and the content are unstable and contradictory. *La empanada de la Removida* proposes that, like the term "Movida," the idea of a "Removida" is also constantly evolving. Before explaining this evolution in depth, some background information on the film is necessary.



*La empanada de la Removida*

*La empanada de la Removida* is a 75 minute film that was directed by Enrique Ruiz-Skipey and released in 2007. Ruiz-Skipey, born in Barcelona, is a "lawyer and economist, and he has lived in Brussels, Damascus and Nicaragua working with international cooperation projects. Since 2005, he has dedicated his talent to the production and direction of documentaries" (Cine de las Américas)<sup>45</sup>. His films have appeared at the Bilbao Gay Film Festival, Documenta Madrid and the Bogotá Film Festival. In addition to being presented at the 2008 edition of DocumentaMadrid, the film *La empanada de la Removida* was also presented at the 2008 edition of Sunny Side of the Doc, a documentary festival in La Rochelle, France. The film focuses on transvestite performances at large parties called "En Plan Travesti" held in Madrid from 2003 to 2006. While the film centers around these parties, it lacks commentary on what it means to be a transvestite in Spain; only at one point in the film does a cross-dressing man admit (while touching his penis) "Soy un macho hetero, un hombre" ("I am a heterosexual male, a man"). The film is resplendent with a vulgarity typical of kitsch representations such as this man's behavior. Other performers seem to insinuate that they are only dressing up for fun, and do not live as transvestites daily, but flaunt a certain vulgarity and excessiveness associated with kitsch. In general, the film may be seen as part of "[...] an international subgenre of documentaries on transvestites [...]" (Kinder *Refiguring* 77).

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<sup>45</sup> I want to thank Enrique for kindly mailing a copy of the documentary to me in 2008 so that I could write about it in my dissertation.

Prior to analyzing the film, it is important to contextualize the meaning of the "Removida" in the film and elsewhere. The idea of a "Removida" has been used in newspaper articles that comment on the boom in commemorations about the Movida in 2006-2007. An article from *El País* uses the term in this sense to introduce a series of revival concerts performed by bands from this period: "La re-Movida. Del Madrid bullicioso y libertino de los ochenta, reaparecen estos días otra serie de grupos para contribuir a los fastos en recuerdo de la movida" ("The Re-Movida. From the noisy and libertarian Madrid of the 1980s, lately another series of groups are emerging to contribute to the celebrations that remember the Movida"; Iñiguez 38). The term is used differently in other cases. For example, an article titled "Llega la «Removida»" emphasizes how "la Movida madrileña sigue inspirando a los jóvenes creadores" ("The Madrid Movida is still inspiring young creators"; Amado *Llega* 52). In this sense, the "Removida" refers to a new generation of artists who claim to be inspired by the aesthetic of the Movida, such as designer Carlos Diez who affirms: "será una especie de 'removida' en la que celebraremos el espíritu festivo de la Movida" ("It will be a kind of 'Removida' in which we celebrate the festive spirit of the Movida"; Amado, *Llega* 52). In the case of *La empanada de la Removida*, the term "Removida" is similar to the latter usage of the term; the "Removida" is taken to mean a revival of the practices, behaviors, and aesthetics popularized during the Movida in the cultural scene of Madrid in the 2000s. For instance, a young man interviewed for the film remarks that "La Removida es como recuperar la actitud que había en la Movida en Madrid de 'todo vale,' de nos vestimos como nos da la gana para salir, y todo por divertirse" ("The Removida is like recuperating the attitude that there

was during the Movida in Madrid that 'anything goes,' that we can all dress however we want to go out, and all of it for having fun"). However, considering the specific socio-historical circumstances surrounding the original Movida, one can surmise that it will not be reproduced, and, ultimately, that the idea of a Removida fails to be convincing.

Perhaps the most accurate definition of the Removida is given by Santiago Fouz-Hernández, who refers to the Removida as "[...] digging up and stirring—in the case of the past and more specifically the *Movida*—and also in the literal sense of revisiting the *Movida* period" (167). Fouz-Hernández concentrates on the revisiting of the past, but not necessarily on the repetition of the past, which is the aspect of the Removida as defined in the film that I find most unconvincing.

The film suggests the notion of a "Removida," a sort of replay of the past, and centers on the accounts of people who were not around during the Movida but who draw inspiration from its memory in the present. The idea of a "Removida" is also clearly linked to the concept of kitsch, which I will discuss more in the forthcoming pages. The film is punctuated with performances from the En Plan Travesti parties and interviews with people who share their opinions about the Removida phenomenon. Part of the synopsis of the film explains its purpose: "Una nueva generación que apenas balbuceaba o recién nacía en esos años nos relata y puntualiza las similitudes existentes entre el hoy y el ayer en un movimiento que algunos se empeñan en tildar como Re-Movida mientras que a otros les escandaliza el término" ("A new generation that could barely even babble or were newborns during those years insist on calling it the Removida while others are shocked by the term" ; Omepetemagicfilms.com).

Indeed, much of the film centers around the debate about the term "Removida," and whether or not the En Plan Travesti parties are related to the Movida of the 1970s and 1980s. However, the film lacks a sense of historical contextualization. I believe this lack of contextualization produces two interpretations of how the film may be "read" by spectators. First, as Marsha Kinder notes, "Instead of providing a mastery of knowledge, [films like this] demand active participation from their spectators to fill in the gaps and assess the film's relationship to history" (Kinder *Refiguring* 97). The spectator thus has to work to figure out where the film fits into the history of the Movida and the Removida, which can be disorienting if the spectator lacks any sense of general background on this period. Without this knowledge, the spectator might dismiss the value of the film, or not understand it at all, which brings me to another potential interpretation. The second interpretation is that the film is a manifestation of kitsch, and therefore the historical contextualization is purposely absent. "Kitsch" is defined (as a noun) as "art or *objets d'art* characterized by worthless pretentiousness" or as a verb, "to render worthless, to affect with sentimentality and vulgarity" (Oxford Dictionary). More generally, kitsch is also associated with poor taste and excessiveness. In her book *The Culture of Cursilería*, Noël Valis astutely describes the presence of kitsch in Spain, among other related terms such as "lo cursi" and "camp." All three terms are what Valis refers to as "[...] narratives of marginality that play a significant role in larger narratives presumably taking stage. All three categories are closely linked in post-Franco Spain to gays and transvestites" (Valis 294). These categories also apply to the marginalized, short-lived En Plan Travesti parties that are the subject of the documentary *La empanada de la Removida*.

Generally, it is not surprising that manifestations of kitsch returned in the imitations of the Movida era, since the original Movida was very much associated with kitsch and camp as well<sup>46</sup>.

Valis discusses the origins of the term "kitsch," which originated in Munich between the 1860s and 1870s, and notes that the word "kitsch" was not used in Spain until the 1970s, appearing in a poetry anthology *Nueve novismos* [Nine of the newest] written by Castellet (Valis 291). Valis observes that "Like the myth of utopia, kitsch ultimately attempts to eradicate time and history. Unlike utopia, kitsch is not up to the task. Behind kitsch lies the fear of death" (290). I argue, then, that *La empanada de la Removida* is an example of kitsch because it purposefully attempts to eradicate history by not including a linear historical narrative to contextualize the film. The notion of the fear of death is very compelling when thinking of the idea of the "Removida" proposed in the documentary, because the Movida is not allowed to die if it is constantly being revived. The revival of the Movida is debated in *La empanada de la Removida*. Similar to the opinions expressed in *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño*, some people in this film believe there are a number of parallels that can be drawn between the cultural scene in Madrid during the 2000s and that of the past. Others wish to disassociate themselves completely from the Movida, either by claiming to have more in common with the 1990s or by focusing only on living in the present.

Unlike *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño*, this film does not have a precise, coherent narrative. The dialogue in the film sometimes rambles on, but at other points

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<sup>46</sup> See, for example, Alejandro Yarza's *Un caníbal en Madrid: La sensibilidad camp y el reciclaje de la historia en el cine de Pedro Almodóvar*. Madrid: Ediciones Libertarias-Prodhufo, S.A., 1999.

lucid accounts and opinions are presented. It does not say how the En Plan Travesti parties began nor does it give the reason for why they ended. Rather, it consists of anecdotal remarks about the Movida and the Removida shared by people of varying ages and backgrounds<sup>47</sup>. Their observations are intertwined with footage of performances from the En Plan Travesti parties and footage of the process of a man whose stage name is La Toyota making an empanada for his 44<sup>th</sup> birthday party. The initial takes in the film introduce the complex relationship between the Movida and the Removida.

In the beginning of the film, the following is written onscreen:

Madrid, Autumn 2006

In the most fun and outrageous parties there's a rumour that a new cultural movement has been born. Some have called it the "Removida" because of its similarity with the "Movida" of the 80s...But others are not happy with this name<sup>48</sup>.

This introduction is worth mentioning because it contains an inherent contradiction between the new and the old. It claims that a "new" cultural movement has been born, but the name for this new phenomenon suggests a repetition of the past. This contradiction becomes the main thread of the film. The introduction establishes a narrative based on kitsch as well, where kitsch is "[...] 'insincere, destroying its models by trying to create them through recreation and attempting to fill the void with more void'" (Alas Mínguez 12 qtd in Valis 292). The "model" for the Removida in this case

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<sup>47</sup> While some of the people featured in the documentary are identified by their stage names, many of the individuals who share their opinions are unnamed. Therefore, I describe people by their age or their appearance when their names are not given.

<sup>48</sup> I have a copy of the English version of the DVD, so this quote is featured onscreen in English. Everywhere else, I have transcribed the quotes in their original Spanish from the film, because the English translations provided in the subtitles are often inaccurate.

would be the Movida, which is at once recreated and destroyed by the differing opinions in the film *La empanada de la Removida*.

One of the preliminary quotes in the film is quite intriguing in light of this idea of the creation and destruction of the Movida and the Removida. One of the transvestite performers states: "La Removida son los hongos de la Movida, somos el moho" ("The Removida is the fungus of the Movida, we are the mold"). This unpleasant characterization of the Removida as fungus or mold suggests that it is an unwanted growth that is feeding off of the Movida. This characterization suggests what Nora calls the "capacity for metamorphosis" as well, because there is a sense that the Movida has grown another appendage, the Removida. The idea of the Removida being the mold that grows from the remains of the Movida may be connected to the relationship between kitsch and death. Noël Valis develops the association between kitsch and death in the following: "Celeste Olaquiaga suggests that 'kitsch is one of the constitutive phenomena of postmodernism.' Its 'eclectic cannibalism, recycling, rejoicing in surface or allegorical values...are those that distinguish contemporary sensibility from the previous belief in authenticity, originality, and symbolic death'" (41-42, qtd. in Valis 291). Like the performers' rendering of the Removida as mold, the use of the word cannibalism also relates to the idea of one thing feeding off of another in order to survive.

The recycling of the Movida in *La empanada de la Removida* is clearly connected with the recycling of dead or nearly dead concepts. As Valis points out: "[Leopoldo Alas Mínguez] says that kitsch works 'with dead materials, with cadavers' (9). I take this to refer, for example, to recycled materials that figuratively and literally come out of the

dustbin or the garbage heap. Paradoxically, however, this 'eclectic cannibalism' has the effect of neutralizing the more troublesome aspects of death" (Valis 291). The Removida phenomenon is working with the dead materials from the Movida, and neutralizes the death of the Movida by keeping it partially alive.

The other characterizations of the Movida and the Removida further reflect how places of memory constantly undergo transformations, demonstrating "an endless recycling of their meaning and an unpredictable proliferation of their ramifications" (Nora *Between...* 19). For instance, while La Toyota is making his birthday empanada, he shares his reflections on the connection between the Movida and the idea of a Removida.

A ver la Removida, como a todo, hay que ponerlo un nombre. Porque si no, nadie se aclara con, de que estamos hablando. Como las modas tienen ciclos y ahora estamos en el ciclo en que se están volviendo los ochenta, y realmente están volviendo a los ochenta a nivel de la música, a nivel de imagen y todas estas historias. Pues claro como en Madrid hubo la Movida, ahora la de la segunda Movida, o a lo mejor, la Removida, suena como más divertido, ¿no? Y yo creo que es eso, es el nombrar un movimiento que hay ahora, nombrarlo de alguna forma. Hay gente que no le gusta, el nombre de Removida. A mi me hace gracia, no es que no me gusta o me gusta, me hace gracia. No tiene nada que ver con la Movida de los 80, por supuesto. Pero bueno, es una forma de que la gente también identifique de que en Madrid se están moviendo cosas, y se está volviendo a lo mejor a una etapa en que Madrid era el centro, realmente de moda de España.

So, the Removida, like everything, you have to put a name on it. Because if you don't, nobody understands what we're talking about. Since fashions have their cycles, and right now we're in the cycle in which the eighties are coming back, and really there is a return to the eighties in music, and in image, and all that. So, just like in Madrid there was the Movida, and now the second Movida, or maybe better said the Removida, it sounds more fun, right? I think that's it, naming a movement that is happening right now, naming it something. There are people that don't like it, the name Removida. I think it's funny, it's not that I like it or don't like it, I think it's funny. It has nothing to do with the Movida of the 80s, of course. But you know, it's a way that people can realize that in Madrid things are



happening, and there is a return to the era where Madrid really was the center of fashion in Spain.

La Toyota believes that on a superficial level, the term Removida is adequate, and even comical. This is also a reflection of the kitsch aesthetic because La Toyota only talks about the name on a surface level. The political circumstances of the 1980s and the 2000s are absent from his opinions of the Removida, but he does mention the context of the 1990s: "En los noventa decayó mucho, los ochenta por supuesto eran lo más que había. En los noventa fue Barcelona y ahora vuelve a ser Madrid. Madrid ahora está bastante interesante a nivel nocturno y a nivel Movida, con lo cual yo creo que, lo de la Removida es simplemente una forma de llamarlo y claro, inspirado en lo que fue" (In the nineties it deteriorated a lot, the eighties were of course the best period. In the nineties [the center] was Barcelona and now it's Madrid again. Right now, Madrid is really interesting in terms of nightlife and in terms of the Movida, which I think that, the Removida is simply a way of naming it, and it was inspired in what the Movida was). He speaks of the return of the music and aesthetics of the 1980s, but also of Madrid resuming the role as a center of cultural activity. Since La Toyota says the Removida was inspired by the Movida, he admits to the recycling of the term.

Others have different opinions about the term Removida, for example, a group of men interviewed in a bathroom (presumably at one of the En Plan Travesti parties) says "No existe la Removida. Existe la Prohibida, que es lo más" (The Removida doesn't exist. Only La Prohibida exists, who is the best). La Prohibida is probably the most recognized musician and performer from the recent scene in Madrid; she has also performed throughout Latin America. She began performing seriously in the mid 1990s,

and refers to performing in drag as her "verdadera vocación," (true vocation) and early on in her career as a performer she performed with Alaska, the well-known Movida-era performer who now performs with the band Fangoria (Biografía, la Prohibida). This connection between Alaska, one of the original figures from the Movida, and la Prohibida, supports the idea of a Removida, or at least that of a common ground artistically between the performance scene of the 1980s and the more recent performances such as the En Plan Travesti parties.

While there are certain recognizable figures like La Prohibida, there is a sense that the Removida does not consist of a specific group of people. A member of a group of performers called "Pandemia" states: "No hay un movimiento coherente. No hay nada en concreto. Entonces, pues si le quieres llamar Removida pues como que le quieres llamar, no sé, café con leche, no sé. No es nada especial" (There is no coherent movement. There is nothing concrete. So, you can call it Removida or you can call it whatever, I don't know, coffee with milk, I don't know. It's nothing special). This opinion indicates that the term Removida is meaningless since there is no specific, coherent movement. In addition, this opinion is a manifestation of kitsch because kitsch "[...] enables the expression of conflicted, ambivalent feelings [... toward master-narratives]" (Valis 291). There is a resistance to creating a master narrative about the Removida, interestingly, just as there was with creating such a narrative about the Movida. Similar things were said in the past about the term "Movida"—many of those who are said to have participated in it negate its existence. Another performer with long green hair known as Roberta in the film concurs about the erroneous use of the term "Removida": "Que es una etiqueta que

alguien se inventa y que de repente catalogan a muchas personas dentro de esa etiqueta, personas que además, pueden ser muy dispares" (It's a label that someone invents and then all of the sudden many people are categorized under that label, people who, what's more, can be really different).

The desire to place groups into certain categories has been debated previously. Although he primarily addresses the viability of the label "Generation X," José Colmeiro's comments on the viability of generational categories as a critical instrument might be applied to the use of the terms "Movida" and "Removida." Colmeiro wonders how much the desire to create generational groups actually comes from editorial apparatuses and certain sectors of literary criticism instead of from factors that actually unite the writers of a "generation" (Colmeiro *En busca* 7). With regards to the usage of the terms "Movida" and "Removida," it seems that they are also employed as promotional terms, whether by media outlets or political entities. Colmeiro notes that the desire to "generationalize" is part of the literary history of Spain in the 20th century, such as the *Generación del 27* and the *Generación del 98*; he suggests that this need to place writers into neat categories based on commonalities is a way to silence or gloss over conflicting elements that do not fit as easily into the generational story<sup>49</sup>.

Interestingly, the performer Roberta talks about his opinions about the recent commemorative boom of the Movida, stating that important people were left out of the story: "Y además cuando se habla de la Movida de Madrid, no se reivindica precisamente lo que se había de reivindicar, que es a Fabio McNamara a Las Costus, y un montón de

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<sup>49</sup> José Ortega y Gasset outlined his concept of literary generations in Spain in the 1930s in *Entorno a Galileo*, 1933. His concept of generations is still evoked at times. (See *La generación de la democracia*, by José Luis Velázquez and Javier Memba, (1995).)

cosas de que la gente, de las que la gente no habla" (And you know what else, when the Movida in Madrid is talked about, what really should be vindicated isn't vindicated, which is Fabio McNamara and Las Costus, and a bunch of things that people, people just don't talk about). This comment is compelling because it speaks to the issue of how certain people are always left out of generational categories. However, it is somewhat of a misleading opinion, because Fabio McNamara appeared prominently in the media reports about the commemorative events, and as mentioned previously, Las Costus appear not only in the film *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño*, but also in a documentary specifically dedicated to their lives and work, *Costus, El documental* (2007). Thus it seems that Roberta is actually enacting a kitsch mentality by exhibiting a worthless pretentiousness. She is pretentious about her position in the cultural scene in Madrid in the 2000s as well. Roberta is generally dissatisfied with the connection established between the 1980s and the cultural scene of the 2000s, preferring to connect the more recent scene with the 1990s instead:

Me parece que todo lo que está pasando en Madrid, tiene mucho más que ver con la década de los 90 que con la década de los 80, porque en la década de los 80, todos éramos pequeños, o la mayoría no habían nacido. Y que hayan clubs, si que hayan conciertos y que hayan la gente saque discos, tiene más que ver que Alaska abriera El Morocco en los 90, con que las "Diabéticas Aceleradas" se hicieran shows, con que Subterfuge abriera un sello independiente. Es decir que es más el heredero de eso que con los 80. ¿Qué coño tenemos que ver nosotros con el Rock-Ola? O sea, nada. Los que iban, El Rock-Ola era un sitio en que cuatro aburridas que tocaban la batería. Es que no entiendo.

I think that all of what's happening in Madrid has a lot more to do with the nineties than with the eighties, because in the decade of the eighties, we were all kids, or most of us weren't even born yet. The fact that there are clubs, and concerts, and people are releasing albums, has more to do with the fact that Alaska opened [the club] El Morocco in the nineties, with the fact that [the group] the "Accelerated Diabetics" did shows, with the fact that Subterfuge started an

independent label. Which is to say, it's more the inheritor of that than of the eighties. What the hell do we have to do with Rock-Ola? I mean, nothing. The ones who went there, Rock-Ola was a place where four boring people played the drums. I just don't understand.

One potential answer to Roberta's question is that while there may only be loose connections between the 1980s and the 2000s, the term "Removida" was invented for profit, as one performer suggests: "Para mi la Removida es un término que se han inventado otra vez para hacer merchandising. Merchandising de lo que fue el pasado y de ganas de ganar dinero" ("For me the Removida is a term that has to do with merchandising [commodification]. Commodifying what was the past and also the desire to make money).

Whatever the reason for the popularity of the 1980s, Roberta feels that there is too much focus on this period, even to the point of mistaken references:

"Y que luego además, está ese puto rollo de los 80, que es, ay, ¿te gusta Bowie? Sí, y Ziggy Stardust en los 80. No fue en los 80, fue en los 70, imbécil. O sea, todo es como los 80. Pues, y que pasaron cosas fantásticas en los 80. Y en los 50, y en los 40 y en los 30 y en Egipto. Pero bien pasaron cosas después, que no sólo existen los 80" ("And then, this fucking thing about the eighties, it's like, oh, do you like Bowie? Yeah, and Ziggy Stardust in the eighties. It wasn't in the eighties, it was in the seventies, idiot. I mean, it's like everything is the eighties. Right, fantastic things happened in the eighties. And in the fifties, and in the forties and in the thirties and in Egypt. But things happened afterwards, it's not like only the eighties exist). Roberta's comments point toward a desire to remove such extensive emphasis on the 1980s and pay attention to what happened in other time periods as well. There seems to be an obsession with comparing things to the

1980s or returning to this time, perhaps because it was one of the more exciting times culturally and politically in the last thirty years.

Others in the film also reiterate the wish to focus on the present. A transvestite known as Nacha simply states "La Movida ya tuvo su tiempo, y ahora estamos en otra época" ("The Movida had its time, and now we are in another era"). A woman with pink hair shares a comparable opinion: "Pues dicen que vuelven los ochenta, pero que estamos ya en el 2006 [...] ahora estamos viviendo el 2006, que todo se repite como la moda, se repite, se repiten los ochenta" (So they say that the eighties are coming back, but we are in 2006 now, right now we're living in 2006, and everything repeats, like fashion, it repeats, and the eighties are repeated"). This woman emphasizes the fact that the present (2006) is more important than the past, but does acknowledge the repetition of the previous moments. Similarly, another woman in the film remarks "[...] siempre se vuelve a lo anterior, es una actitud" ("There is always a return to the past, it's an attitude"). Both statements refer to the repetition of the past, reflecting Nora's proposal that places of memory undergo endless recycling.

In this process of endless recycling, certain aspects of the past are often left out. On the whole, the comments in *La empanada de la Removida* lack political contextualization. However, a group made up of young men and one woman, attendees of the En Plan Travesti parties, offer some intriguing comments about the Movida and the idea of a Removida. The woman's observations are particularly compelling, since she is one of the few people in the documentary who refers to the importance of bearing in mind the differences in historical context between the two periods. She remarks:

La Movida también era una cuestión cultural y que eso se está volviendo a ver, pero no tanto al nivel que lo había antes. [...] Sí que es verdad, que la época no es lo mismo, porque ahora mismo, en teoría, tenemos todas estas libertades, se están intentando volver a reivindicar, pero no es lo mismo que cuando se pasa de una etapa en la que no se tenía ninguna libertad a la que de repente 'todo vale.' [...] Que sí que es cierto que no es lo mismo en el contexto histórico que cuando lo hubo en la Movida.

The Movida was also a cultural matter that's coming back, but not as much as on the level that existed before. Yes, it's true, the era is not the same, because right now, in theory, we have all these freedoms, and they are trying to be vindicated again, but it's not the same as going from an era in which no one had any freedom to a time in which all of the sudden "anything goes." It's true that it's not the same historical context that existed during the Movida.

The woman realizes that while there may be some commonalities between the innovations of the artistic scene of the past and that of the present, they are fundamentally different in terms of scale and the political circumstances of the two periods. As mentioned previously, the transition from a dictatorship to a democracy is quite distinct from the change from a conservative to a liberal democratic government. The woman's remarks are one of the few instances in *La empanada de la Removida* where a historical or political contextualization is hinted at, yet she is not really an authoritative voice in the film. Her name is not given, nor was she even around during the original Movida.

Towards the end of the film, we return to La Toyota's home, where s/he compares the Movida era to the Removida. Unlike many of the other people who are interviewed in the film, he is forty four years old, so he lived through the 1980s. He remembers that he was ostracized for his appearance when he was younger: "Yo me acuerdo cuando yo empecé a ponerme el pelo de colores y todas estas historias, a mi me decían de todo [...] En Vigo yo era el raro del pueblo. Ahora cualquier chico lo pone y ni es el raro del pueblo ni nada de nada. Sino simplemente se lo pone, y ya está" ("I remember when I

started dying my hair different colors and all that, and people said all kinds of things to me. In Vigo I was the weird guy in town. Now, any kid colors his hair and they're not the weird guy in town or anything. Instead, they dye their hair and that's it"). He speaks more about the freedoms that exist in the present because he has an appreciation for them:

Antes sí, había muchas cosas, por las que protestar, que cambiar...y ahora por suerte tenemos muchas cosas, ya muchas cosas conseguidas. A lo mejor de aquella época, que bueno, que podemos disfrutarlas. Y ahora yo creo que el rollo Removida es más lúdico que contestatario a nivel social. [...] En aquella época todo era mucho más reaccionario y hay muchas historias. Porque aquí nos habíamos quedado muy muy encerrados, lo cual fue una forma de que la gente también abriera su mentalidad, ¿no? Y creo que sirvió mucho para que la gente abriera su mentalidad.

Before yes, there were a lot of things to protest about, to change...and now, luckily we have a lot of things that have already been achieved, and were achieved in that era, that now, we can enjoy. And I think now the whole thing about the Removida is more playful than contestatory at the social level. In that period everything was a lot more reactionary, and there are a lot of stories. Because here we had been really enclosed, which meant that people had to open their minds eventually, right? I think it helped a lot that people started to open their minds.

Since he experienced the period of the transition to democracy firsthand, La Toyota has a different perspective from the other people who are interviewed in the film, the majority of whom were born during the late 1970s or early 1980s. He appreciates the changes that have occurred since then and understands what they mean. Clearly, La Toyota's experience in the past affects his understanding of the present, which encourages spectators to think about the relationship between these two periods (Kinder *Refiguring* 79).



At the close of the film, performer Nicolás Grijalba of the group *Aviador de Luxe* reiterates the connection between Pedro Almodóvar and the *En Plan Travesti* parties:

Vino una vez Pedro Almodóvar a *En Plan Travesti*. Creo que comentaron que le recordaba muchísimo a sus tiempos de juventud, pues supongo que pues porque vería por allí alguien con una bata [...] y unos rulos. Pues sí, se parece mucho. En el fondo pues no somos muy diferentes. [...] No creo que esto llegue a consolidarse como fue la *Movida* porque la *Movida* empezó en las alcantarillas pero luego el rendimiento monetario fue grande, y yo creo que la *Removida*, y la época en la que vivimos es mucho más feroz comercialmente que la de antes, no puede dar ese salto. Es decir en las alcantarillas estaremos siempre y en las alcantarillas nos quedaremos. Y yo creo que se respira mejor en el fondo allí.

One time Pedro Almodóvar came to one of our *En Plan Travesti* parties. I think that people said that he said it reminded him a lot of his youth, I suppose because there was probably someone there with a robe and some rollers in. I don't think this will be able to reach the level of the *Movida* because the *Movida* started in the sewers and then the monetary investment in it was large, and I think that the *Removida*, and the era in which we live is much more commercially ferocious than the previous era, and it can't make that jump. Which is to say, we'll always be in the sewers and we'll stay there. And in the end, I think we breathe better there anyways.

Interestingly, Grijalba does not seek fame but prefers to remain underground. In saying that he prefers to remain in the "alcantarillas," Grijalba embraces the kind of worthlessness that is associated with kitsch. He would rather identify himself with the lowest of the low, in the sewers, rather than try to make the jump into high culture.

If the performers hailed as part of the *Removida* do remain underground, then ultimately, the idea of a *Removida* will probably not be noteworthy in the future. However, some suggest this possibility, such as one younger man: "Pero, o sea, que si tu piensas se valora, que ahora mismo se valora la *Removida*, o sea, quizás dentro de 20 años se volverá a valorar lo que nosotros [hacemos]" ("But, I mean, if you think about how right now the *Removida* is being valued, you know, maybe in 20 years they will

value what we do again"). This is unpredictable, reflecting the final point Nora makes about places of memory: they demonstrate an "[...] unpredictable proliferation of their ramifications" (Nora *Between...* 19). The man is also pointing to the unpredictable nature of the future of memories, and reiterating the fact that memories are always changing and being recycled. During the 2006-2007 commemorations, the Movidita was polished and presented as high culture, a status that it did not enjoy in its initial phases. While in both films there is an attempt to connect the "En Plan Travesti" parties to Pedro Almodóvar, who has successfully made the transformation from being one of the foremost producers of low culture to being a producer of high culture, the parties still remain at the level of kitsch. The format of *La empanada de la Removidita* even seems to be purposefully thrown together, as if it is *trying* to be low culture by embracing and exploiting the use of kitsch in the film. The film resists the standards of quality documentaries that include subheadings to identify each person in the film and a clear, linear narrative of events. It recycles the past on purpose. Interestingly, the term "Removidita" can also be translated to mean "removed," and in the end, it seems that the Removidita is removed from the context of the original Movidita. Still, it is valuable to evaluate how the past can be used to incite changes in the present with initiatives like the En Plan Travesti parties.

### Conclusion

Both films show that there are many different versions of the stories told about the past. In *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño*, cultural critic Francisco Umbral says the following about the Movidita: "Todos estos fenómenos duran un tiempo y luego se desvirtúan" ("All of these phenomena last for a certain amount of time and then they lose

their virtue"). The invention of the term "Removida" and its multiple definitions show that the virtue of phenomena like the Movida sometimes returns, albeit in a metamorphosized form. *La empanada de la Removida* even shows that lack of virtue (kitsch, worthlessness, and poor taste) has at least *some* virtue or worth. As places of memory with very distinctive purposes, the two films demonstrate the complications in relating to the past and seeking to understand history. The films show the wide-ranging dimensions of how places of memory function in contemporary Spain. As Jo Labanyi points out, "[...] all cultural forms—whether lived practices or artefacts and performances—have an underlying narrative: culture can be defined as the stories people tell each other to explain what and where they are. [...] Culture is a site of power that is always negotiated and contested" (Labanyi 5). The Movida and the Removida constitute an assemblage of various practices and performances, and the stories that are told about the Movida and the Removida demonstrate the constant search for identity and meaning through memory. Considering the narratives that spring from the two films I have analyzed here, it is clear that the meaning of these cultural phenomena is widely disputed and negotiated constantly. In the next chapter, I consider more personal accounts of memories of this period through the fiction and non-fiction narratives about the Movida.

## Chapter Three

### *La Movida* Re-leída: Mourning, Melancholia and Working Through Literary Memories

There are several compelling parallels between Freud's concept of mourning and melancholia and the recent representations of the memory of the Madrid Movida. Freud defined mourning as the "reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on" (Freud 243). Paul Julian Smith's 2006 book *Spanish Visual Culture: Cinema, Television, Internet* briefly touches upon Freud's theories on mourning and melancholia in a chapter on the re-location of the Movida. Smith points out that in Luis Antonio de Villena's novel, *Madrid ha muerto: esplendor y caos de una ciudad feliz de los ochenta* (*Madrid has died: Splendor and Chaos of a Happy City in the 1980s*, published in 1999 and reissued in 2006), which I analyze in this chapter, "[...] the lost object is not Francisco Franco, the source of the *mono* for many cultural critics, but rather the Movida itself, a time unambiguously described as one of life, liberty, and pleasure<sup>50</sup>" (Smith 68). This is also true in Charlie Miralles's novel *1964 después de Cristo y antes de perder el autobús* (*1964 After Christ and Before Missing the Bus*, published in 2007). Through an evaluation of these two novels, I prove that what is mourned is clearly the period of the Movida rather than Francoism and also provide a more nuanced view of the role of mourning and melancholia in the memories of the Movida.

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<sup>50</sup> El "mono" can be briefly defined as withdrawal syndrome, which I will discuss in more detail in this chapter. In this quote, Smith is clearly engaging with the work of Teresa Vilarós, *El mono del desencanto*, in which she posits that the lost object that Spaniards mourn is Francisco Franco.

In my analysis of Villena's novel, I connect the concept of melancholia to Barbie Zelizer's idea of the subjunctive voice, suggesting that the mourning process cannot be completed because the protagonist in the novel is too caught up in remembering 'what might have been' rather than what happened. Conversely, I show how Charlie Miralles's novel exemplifies the Freudian concept of "working through," which is part of the mourning process that leads to "[...] the individual accepting the reality of the loss, continuing the connection with memory, and moving back into life" (Jones np). While Miralles mourns the past, he is able to detach himself from his losses and move forward, providing a more effective way of dealing with the past. Miralles thus brings forth a new perspective on the way the Movida era is remembered. I chose to evaluate these two novels because they provide distinctive perspectives on how mourning and melancholia is manifested in the memory of the Movida.

On the one hand, those who declare the Movida definitively dead have mourned its loss, and seemingly moved on to other pursuits, for when "[...] the work of mourning is completed the ego becomes free and uninhibited again" (Freud 245). This is the ideal outcome of the mourning process. On the other hand, dwelling on the melancholic memories of the Movida allow it to stay alive somehow, trapped in a limbo between life and death. Further describing the process of mourning, Freud notes that "Each single one of the memories and expectations in which the libido is bound to the object is brought up and hyper-cathexed, and detachment of the libido is accomplished in respect of it" (Freud 245). The notion of "cathexis" is relevant when analyzing the recent surge of commemorations about the Madrid Movida. Cathexis, from the Greek *kathexis* (meaning

"retention") is defined as "The concentration or accumulation of mental energy in a particular channel" (*Oxford Dictionary*). The substantial number of commemorative events and products about the Movida demonstrate an acute concentration of mental energy on this particular period. It seems that each new product stakes a claim to another fresh perspective on the past, creating a confusing web of viewpoints about what exactly this period means. Employing what Paul Julian Smith calls a "retrospective perspective," these cultural products offer meditations on the versions of memories about the Movida that are worth examining further (70). Specifically, while some of the products celebrate the glory days of the Movida, others mourn its loss and the death and destruction left in its wake, or even ponder the possibilities of how things may have turned out differently. Both novels offer reflections on distinctive ways to deal with the memory of the urban youth culture of Madrid in the Movida era. They are quite different novels in that Miralles's novel is obviously an autobiography, while Villena's novel mixes fiction and nonfiction through the creation of a fictional protagonist. There are also class differences exhibited in the two novels. Miralles hails from a working class background while Rafa, the protagonist in Villena's novel, is from an upper middle class background. Generally, the two novels demonstrate that "emotion is inseparable from location" (Smith 10). I will begin with a brief summary of literature created to remember this period before moving on to my reading of these literary works.

## Literature and the Movida

The Madrid Movida is not known for producing "great literature"<sup>51</sup>. The most popular texts written during this period were lyrics to songs, fanzines like *La Luna de Madrid* and *Madrid me mata* and film scripts. Journalist Leopoldo Alas, who writes for the newspaper *El Mundo*, remarks something similar: "Literatura, simplemente, no hubo, a excepción de la poesía, los ensayos y las letras de canciones de Eduardo Haro Ibars" ("There was simply no literature, with the exception of poetry, essays, and the lyrics of the songs by Eduardo Haro Ibars" ; LA MOVIDA 626). While the literature from the Movida may not be of great consequence, many literary works about the memory of the Movida have appeared in the last decade. These recent works can be divided roughly into two categories: first, non-fiction, journalistic texts such as *Corazón Ágatha* (2000) by José María Plaza; *Alaska y otras historias de la Movida (Alaska and Other Stories of the Movida)* by Rafa Cervera (Plaza & Janés 2003); José Manuel Lechado's text *LA MOVIDA: Una crónica de los 80 (La Movida: A Chronicle of the 1980s)*, published by Algaba Ediciones, 2005) and Silvia Grijalba's book, *Dios salve a la Movida (God Save the Movida)*, published by Espejo de Tinta, 2006)<sup>52</sup>. Second, different novels have been written recently that either mention the Movida or use it as a backdrop for fictional or semi-autobiographical purposes, including the two I examine here. References to many

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<sup>51</sup> Yet there were notable works of literature that have since been studied extensively. Perhaps the best example is Eduardo Mendicutti's novel *Una mala noche la tiene cualquiera (Any Girl Can Have a Bad Night)*, published in 1982. The novel was narrated by a transvestite, La Madelón, and her musings the night of 23-F, 1981, when Colonel Tejero headed an unsuccessful coup attempt in the Spanish Parliament. Interestingly, Mendicutti was not among the names in the literature section of the LA MOVIDA catalog from 2006.

<sup>52</sup> In the future I plan to complete a more detailed analysis of these popular culture books.

of these newer literary works were included in the catalog from a series of commemorative exhibits titled simply LA MOVIDA from 2006-2007, one of the eight categories of materials exhibited was "Literature<sup>53</sup>."

The first category of texts contain images of memorabilia from the Movida as well as broad accounts of what the Movida meant. For instance, *Corazón Ágatha* (2000), a book written by José María Plaza about fashion designer Ágatha Ruiz de la Prada, includes a number of images and quotes from Ágatha about her participation in the Movida. The text *Alaska y otras historias de la Movida* by Rafa Cervera is a general history of the Movida, focusing on one of its muses, the musician Alaska. José Manuel Lechado's text *LA MOVIDA: Una crónica de los 80* includes photographs of Lechado's own memorabilia collection from the 1980s as well as some items garnered from friends. Silvia Grijalba's book *Dios salve a la Movida* is based on a supplement originally created for the newspaper *El Mundo* and consists of no images, only texts, culled from testimonies of people who lived through the Movida. Some of these testimonies are taken from excerpts of autobiographies or interviews such as José Luis Gallero's *Sólo se vive una vez: esplendor y ruina de la Movida madrileña*, (*You Only Live Once: Splendor and Ruins of the Movida Madrileña*) (1991). On its jacket, the book claims that "La Movida siempre se ha estudiado desde el punto de vista de la memoria. Los implicados en aquel movimiento sociocultural que revolucionó la escena musical y artística de la España de los ochenta, de la Transición, han contado la historia como la recordaban, con el maquillaje de la vida y del recuerdo" ("The Movida has always been studied from the

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<sup>53</sup> The other categories were: the plastic arts, photography, music, graphic design, architecture and industrial design, fashion, and film.



point of view of memory. Those who were implicated in that sociocultural movement that revolutionized the music and artistic scene of 1980s Spain, of the Transition, have told the history how they remember it, with the cosmetic cover of life and of memory" ; Grijalba np). What is fascinating is that the sentences that follow claim that this book is different, and somehow more objective (perhaps due to Grijalba's training as a journalist): "*Dios salve a la Movida* cuenta la historia de esos protagonistas (desde los artistas hasta los locales emblemáticos, pasando por los medio de comunicación) recurriendo a las fuentes de entonces, a las declaraciones de aquel momento, sin maquillaje, sin el tamiz de la memoria y sin la intoxicación de las filias y fobias que el tiempo suele echarnos encima" ("*God Save the Movida* tells the story of those protagonists (from the artists to the emblematic locales to the media) drawing from the sources from that period, from the declarations from that moment, without cosmetic touch-ups, without the sieve of memory and without the intoxicating effects of the loving inclinations and the phobias that time tends to burden us with" ; Grijalba np). This seems to be a somewhat negative summary of the way in which the Movida is remembered. To claim that a book about the memory of the Movida is unaffected by the great sifter of memories is rather bold, for memory is by nature subjective. Inevitably, there are subjective opinions and memories included in Grijalba's text, despite her claim of journalistic objectivity. The tone of texts like Grijalba's differs greatly from that of the novels by Luis Antonio de Villena and Charlie Miralles. Both authors are implicated personally in their texts, albeit in distinctive manners.

### Luis Antonio de Villena: Participant or Voyeur?

Though he may not have had a direct connection with the Movida, Luis Antonio de Villena has written about it fairly extensively in recent years. In addition to the novel *Madrid ha muerto*, Luis Antonio de Villena also wrote about the Movida in a chapter in his book *Madrid: Itinerario personal, sublime y canalla de la villa y corte (Madrid, Personal Itinerary, Sublime and Despicable of the Town and the Court*, published in 2004). However, his authority as an author of literary works has been contested by a number of people, who question whether he is able to create authentic accounts of the Movida since he was not really involved in the phenomenon and belongs to a slightly older generation that came of age before the era of the Movida; he was born in 1951. For example, Leopoldo Alas mentions Villena explicitly in the following: "Había escritores treintañeros que despuntaban con fuerza, como Luis Antonio de Villena, Vicente Molina Foix o Fernando Savater, entre otros, pero nada tenían que ver con La Movida. Más bien eran sus *voyeurs*" ("There were writers in their thirties who excelled with a certain force, like Luis Antonio de Villena, Vicente Molina Foix or Fernando Savater, among others, but they didn't have anything to do with the Movida. They were more like *voyeurs*"; LA MOVIDA 626). The notion of Villena as a voyeur is not entirely an exaggeration. In the final words of *Madrid ha muerto*, Villena admits that he was not a product of the Movida. He acknowledges that he enjoyed writing of the "días impúdicos, nocturnos y caritativos" ("indecent, nocturnal, and charitable days") but in the end states: "Pero no, no soy su hijo" ("But no, I am not their son"; Villena 235). Villena thus establishes himself as

distant from the Movida, not a "son" or a product of it, but perhaps some other relationship that he never fully develops.

In spite of this lack of detail, others have expressed opinions about Villena's relationship to the Movida. Writing about the literature from this period in the LA MOVIDA exhibit catalog, Agustín Tena suggests that Villena may not have been a child of the Movida, but proposes another type of familial relation: "[...] fue sin duda testigo, como demuestra este texto. Mas tal vez fuera también si no padre, por lo menos tío carnal de aquella generación. Pertenciente, igual que Luis Alberto de Cuenca, a una generación de poetas cultos posterior a los de Castellet, Villena siempre estaba (y sigue estando) en la *pomada*" ("He was a witness, without a doubt, as this text demonstrates. But if he was not a father of this generation, at least he was an uncle, related by blood, of that generation. He belonged, like Luis Alberto de Cuenca, to a generation of learned poets posterior to those of Castellet; Villena was always (and still is) in the thick of things" ; LA MOVIDA 582). Villena has commented that the novel includes information that proves he was a witness of the events of this period. In 2006, Villena noted that his novel "[...] tiene mucho de ficción verosímil, pero no menos de crónica directa" ("it has a lot of plausible fiction, but also a great deal of direct reporting") pointing out that many of the events in the novel could have happened, but did not, *and* that some of the information is "direct," thus implying its veracity (Villena, LA MOVIDA 619).

To lend believability to the novel, Villena draws on specific events that occurred in the 1980s such as Andy Warhol's visit to Madrid, parties at the well-known arts supporter Juan March's home, and concerts by popular bands from this period. He also

includes important figures from this period in his narration, such as filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar, musician Alaska and photographers Pablo Pérez Mínguez and Alberto García Alix. He mentions the titles and years of many of Almodóvar's films in the novel to reinforce the chronology of events presented, and often describes well-known photographs from this time period in detail. Villena creates a portrait of Rafa, the protagonist of the novel and a socialite of sorts who rubbed shoulders with many of the significant personalities of the Movida. However, when looking back on his past, Rafa is unable to move beyond it, and becomes hindered by his melancholic disposition.

Mourning and Melancholia in *Madrid ha muerto: esplendor y caos de una ciudad feliz de los ochenta*

Rafa's melancholic disposition is described in part by Paul Julian Smith in his book chapter "The Movida relocated: press, chronicle novel." I add to Paul Julian Smith's assessment of the Movida as the lost object in Villena's novel in two ways. First, by analyzing the construction of the narrator of the novel, Rafa Antúnez, in more detail, I show the depth of the expression of melancholia for the Movida in this text. Second, I discuss how the lost object is not only the Movida, but, more specifically, the sense of what *might have happened* during this period. By dwelling on the possibility of what might have happened in the past, Villena's novel presents a melancholic perspective on this period. The intense degree of focus on the lost abstraction of the Movida in this novel allows it to be prolonged, which traps it in a melancholic state.

The struggle between love and hate for the lost object (the Movida) that Freud describes is evident in Luis Antonio de Villena's novel. Through its complex reflections

on mourning and melancholia, the novel renders the Movida at once dead and alive. Rafa's melancholia is expressed through his constant exploration of what might have happened in the past. Therefore, in the novel, "subjunctivity...becomes a voice or trope through which to remember" (Zelizer 167). The subjunctive voice (which is to say, the possibilities that people think of when recalling the past) thus takes a primary position in memory. In the process of remembering, these "spaces of possibility" are often those in which many people choose to dwell. It is often this lost abstraction of what might have been that is mourned when examining retrospective stories about the Movida. These moments of subjunctivity offer some of the richest points for reflection, because they originate from the existence of unfulfilled desires and unanswered questions, which are often more interesting to consider than the reality of what really did happen.

Villena also uses the technique of an unreliable narrator, which contributes both to Rafa's characterization as a melancholic and also opens up space for exploring many different possibilities, even leaving the reader left to wonder about what really happened. Paul Julian Smith points out that Villena "draws openly and knowingly on a particular literary tradition, the picaresque. [...] And while Lazarillo was asked to confess his life story to an archbishop, Rafa is invited to tell his tale by none other than Pedro Almodóvar. [...]" (68). Pedro Almodóvar once again appears as a synecdoche for the entire Movida, for Villena suggests here that it should be Almodóvar who would tell the story of the Movida, since he is quite often seen as the ultimate authority from this period. Nevertheless, Almodóvar has become so important and busy that when Rafa is approached by Agustín Almodóvar (Pedro's younger brother and colleague at El Deseo

films) Agustín says that "su hermano no tiene tiempo para escribir ese libro" ("his brother does not have time to write that book" ; Villena 7). It is as though Villena is hinting that Almodóvar should not be considered the representative of the entire Movida period, and that others could also tell a good story about this time<sup>54</sup>.

Paul Julian Smith also points out that "Villena exploits another literary technique familiar from the picaresque: the unreliable narrator" (Smith 69). For example, at the beginning of the second chapter, Rafa admits: "La verdad es que he mentido" ("The truth is that I lied" ; Villena 41). One is left to wonder about exactly what Rafa was lying about in the first chapter. The fact that Rafa is an unreliable narrator also provides further evidence that he is a melancholic, for in his extensive self-criticism, he portrays himself as "[...] petty, egoistic, dishonest," characteristics typical of a melancholic (Freud 246).

In addition, the technique of using an unreliable narrator is consistent with the concept of using the memory of the past to explore a variety of possibilities of the way an event may have occurred. In her article "The Voice of the Visual in Memory," Barbie Zelizer develops the idea of the "subjunctive voice of images," which plays an important role in images by their ability to represent "impulses of supposal, hypothesis, and possibility" (163). Zelizer believes that images can be examined not only at a superficial level, but from a deeper perspective, one that delves into an exercise of hypothesis or supposal. She notes that "[...] our leap into the third meaning of the image, into an embrace of conditionality and hypothesis, is worth pondering for what it suggests about

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<sup>54</sup> Another criticism of Almodóvar being made to represent the entire Movida is made by Chus Gutiérrez, the director of the film *El Calentito* (2005) that I explain in my chapter on filmic memories of the Movida.

the boundaries of memory. For it may be that memory rests not only upon the boundaries of the familiar but upon the boundaries of the impossible." (*ibid* 180). Zelizer's ideas may also be applied to memories portrayed in narratives like the ones in Villena's novel that explore hypotheses and possibilities about what might have happened in the past.

Paul Julian Smith suggests a further relationship between memory and unreliable narration:

The fallibility of memory thus merges with the unreliability of narration. But this is not the historical amnesia supposedly typical of the transition. Rather it is a lapse consistent with cultural geography, according to which "life histories" are dynamically and unstably constructed from the intersection of lived time, represented time, and urban space. (Smith 69)

Smith points to the instability of memories, emphasizing how they are constantly evolving. In his article, he draws a connection between emotion and location, arguing that "[...] the city can be a space for an informal democratic process which transcends parliamentary politics" (Smith 10).

Just as urban settings are constantly evolving, many studies prove that one of the main characteristics of memories is that they are unstable, and always being revised. For example, Jonah Lehrer points out various experiments on memory that show how "[...] every time we remember anything, the neuronal structure of the memory is delicately transformed [...]" (85). The predominant use of fiction in relation to memories in the novel thus plays an important role, since memories eventually often contain more fiction than truth. Moreover, fictitious accounts contribute to the exploration of possibilities: "this make-believe is a fundamental human activity. It includes game playing, role-playing, daydreaming, and many other such activities, as well as literature proper" (Miller

68). Thus literature is a space in which visions of how a situation may have turned out differently can be explored.

### Experimenting With What Might Have Been in Narration

Villena himself is not really considered to be a "participant" of the Movida—he viewed it from the sidelines, at best a witness of this period. However, the narrator in his story, Rafa, allows him as a writer to explore *what it might have been like* to be involved in the action that was happening on the front-lines—to be a part of the Madrid avant-garde. Leonard Kriegel addresses this desire to explore the "what-if" in an article about autobiography, and Thomas Larson expands on his ideas in his book *The Memoir and the Memoirist*: "Many writers are forced 'to relive the past that is never quite the past one wanted.' The person I never became haunts me and raises the bottomless query: how can the reality of what didn't happen be as strong as the reality of what did?" (Larson 116) This query is present in Villena's novel. Larson goes on to quote Leonard Kriegel, "Between who one is and whom one might have wanted to be can also be the source of the writer's deepest, most useful, tensions, a maelstrom of turbulent and uncharted waters" (Kriegel 210 qtd. in Larson 116). Villena's novel *Madrid ha muerto* may be read as an exploration of who the author himself might have wanted to be; instead of reliving the past that he never quite wanted, he chooses to relive another, using fiction as a device to "[...] experiment with possible selves" (Miller 69). He creates this alternate version of the past through the experimenting with these possible selves, and relies heavily on conjuring up images of the parties his narrator attends and the photographs he views throughout the novel. Using these techniques, Villena creates a text where the reality of



what did not happen is as strong as the reality of what did. He weaves fictional accounts with accounts of what actually *did* happen during the Movida, but includes his narrator (whose life is perhaps a projection of what Villena wishes he could have done or been) who explores the fictional and nonfiction realms of 1980s Madrid.

It is possible to suggest that Rafa's life is a projection of Villena (the author's) desires because of the confusion between Rafa the narrator and Villena the character in the novel. Agustín Tena remarks that the confusion evoked by the narrator Rafa and the character of Luis Antonio de Villena creates an effect of having one narrator with two voices:

Estamos en realidad ante un narrador a dos voces: la del escritor que viene de Palencia, Rafa, y la del poeta exquisito, Rafa. El primero cita con frecuencia al segundo. Y no sólo lo cita, Villena es un personaje más y no el menos importante: presenta a Rafa a los *vips* y le cuenta cien chismes que le hacen comprender dónde se mueve. Las dos voces son una sola, y más que confundirse acaban por fundirse. (Tena 582).

In reality, we are presented with a narrator with two voices: that of the writer from Palencia, Rafa, and that of the exquisite poet, Rafa. The first one frequently cites the second one. And he not only cites him, Villena is yet another character, and not the least important: he introduces Rafa to the VIPs and he tells him all the gossip that helps him understand his situation. The two voices are one, and more than being confusing, they end up fusing.

Generally, Villena's novel is filled with examples of exploring possibilities of the past. Rafa often meditates on the lost possibilities of his life. He wonders who he might have been, and often what has become of the friends who cease to form part of his life. Rafa often wishes he was someone else. After talking about photographer Pablo Pérez Mínguez, a real person from the Movida era, Rafa explains what he might have been: "¡Ojalá—me parece que lo digo en serio—hubiera yo sabido ser fotógrafo de lujo y

carota lúdico con tarjetas platino!" ("I wish—I think I am saying this in all seriousness—that I would have known how to be the fun-loving photographer with platinum credit cards!" ; Villena 53). There is a sense of longing expressed by Rafa—he entertains the possibility of what he might have been, someone more glamorous than he turned out to be.

Rafa not only ponders the idea of pursuing another career, but also toys with other aspects of how he perceives himself. His reflections on whether he is homosexual appear throughout the novel: "Pero mentalmente he sentido la nostalgia del maricón perfecto. De que me gustaran igualmente los chicos..." ("Mentally, I've felt nostalgia for being the perfect fag. For equally liking guys..." ; Villena 61). However, Rafa never reveals the truth of whether or not he is gay. He even addresses the reader directly to make clear that he will remain silent on the subject: "Oigo tu vocecita, lector, pidiendo como todos—como yo mismo hago—más carne: ¿no irás a decir, Rafa, que nunca te lo hiciste con ninguno, no? [...] por el momento, cabrito preguntón, guardo silencio" ("I hear your little voice, reader, asking like everyone does, like I myself do, asking for more dirt: You're not going to say, Rafa, that you never did it with a guy, are you? [...] For the moment, you question-asking swine, I'm keeping silent on the subject" ; Villena 61). Addressing the reader produces a specific effect: Rafa asks the reader to explore the possibility that he might be gay, but he leaves the reader suspended in the question, preferring to remain silent and thus leave room for the reader to wonder what the truth may be. Later, Rafa describes a sexual encounter that began during a threesome with his lover, Lía and another man named Pedrito. Rafa and Pedrito ended up being lovers for a few days, and

Rafa admits he has not had any encounters with another man since then. However, Rafa continues to dwell on this moment, and on the possibility that Pedrito would return: "Pero si Pedrito volviese [...] seguramente yo también volvería a esa sexualidad de iguales que no ha sido la mía pero que siempre me ha rodeado y que he llegado a mirar, alguna vez, incluso con envidia de transgresión [...]" ("But if Pedrito came back [...] surely I would also come back to that sexuality of equals [homosexuality] that has not been mine but has always surrounded me, and that I have come to see, at times, even with envy for its transgression" ; Villena 133). Once again, Rafa lingers for a moment on the question of what could happen, using the subjunctive voice to explore his sexuality. He utilizes what happened in the past to wonder what he may have been like, or what he still could be like, if things turned out differently.

Rafa's memories of his friends also provide him with a space to express his hypotheses of what has become of them. Upon remembering a friend of his, he remarks: "¿Qué habrá sido de aquella piba? Nunca he vuelto a verla, me parece. Como si la tierra, generosa al fin (con ella y con tantos otros indefinibles), se los hubiera tragado sin contemplaciones en lugar de dejarlos envejecer o sucumbir o ser barridos, sin misericordia, por un tiempo áspero cada vez más lejos de su vida..." ("What ever happened to that chick? I haven't seen her again, it seems. It's as though the earth, being generous in the end (with her and with so many others), has swallowed them up without thinking twice instead of letting them get old, or having them succumb, or be swept up, without mercy, by a harsh time that was ever further away from their lives" ; Villena 50).

Since he never saw her again, he imagines her as forever young, suspended in a kind of Neverland.

Rafa also entertains the possibilities about whether former Madrid mayor Tierno Galván understood what he was saying when he exclaimed famously at a rock concert "Colocarse y al loro," ("Get high, and quick") which Rafa translates to mean "[...] atentos, chicos. Drogaos y pasadlo bien" ("Listen up, kids. Get high and have a good time" ; Villena 59). To have a politician state such a thing to a large crowd is almost unheard of, but his words became one of the creeds of this era. The question of whether Galván understood what he was saying has been debated by a number of people, including Blanca Sánchez, the curator of the 2006-2007 exhibits titled simply "LA MOVIDA." Rafa admits that while he and others have wondered if Galván knew the true meaning of his words, in the end no one knows for sure: "¿Sabía o no sabía Tierno, se atrevió o no se atrevió? Nadie podrá decirlo hoy con certeza" ("Did Tierno know, or didn't he? Did he dare, or didn't he dare? Today, no one can say for sure" ; Villena 59). Since there is doubt surrounding Galván's exclamation, it is infused with opportunities to contemplate subjunctive possibilities: did he understand what he meant, or did he simply say something that someone told him was slang that young people would relate to? These questions are unanswered, and remain only speculations.

The ambivalence of exploring possibilities of the past also relates to melancholia. When the narrator, Rafa, is not musing about what has become of his old friends or wondering who he might have become, he often displays melancholic behavior. One of the main differences between mourning and melancholia is that melancholia is "[...]

complicated by the conflict due to ambivalence" (Freud 256). The ambivalence that Freud mentions is derived from an inability to complete the mourning process, for in melancholia, "[...] countless separate struggles are carried on over the object, in which hate and love contend with each other; the one seeks to detach the libido from the object, the other to maintain this position of the libido against the assault" (Freud 256). Rafa's disposition corresponds to the tensions between mourning and melancholia, for he alternates between love and hate for the memory of the Movida era. Between his detailed descriptions of his sexual encounters, the parties he attended, his drug and alcohol usage, and the realistic portrayal of the social milieu of the Movida era, Rafa voices nostalgic and melancholic reflections. Due to his extensive self disclosure in the novel, Rafa exemplifies an important characteristic of a melancholic, the presence of the "[...] trait of insistent communicativeness which finds satisfaction in self-exposure" (Freud 247). The lies and the unanswered questions Rafa shares serve to augment his intensive self-exposure in the novel. His self-exposure also relates to the way that memory functions, because something is always left out of memories. By exposing the fissures in his own memory, Rafa is implicitly commenting on the impossibility of capturing the absolute truth when remembering anything.

Furthermore, Rafa focuses his energy on memories of his past, demonstrating how "The complex of melancholia behaves like an open wound, drawing itself to cathectic energies" (Freud 253). Rafa seems to want to nurse his wound, the loss of his past, by focusing his energy on the loss of his friends, of the unbridled freedom and experimentation he enjoyed. However, everything he recalls from the past reminds him

that it is lost: "Each single one of the memories and situations of expectancy which demonstrate the libido's attachment to the lost object is met by the verdict of reality that the object no longer exists [...]" (Freud 255). Rafa repeatedly acknowledges his displeasure that the past has been lost, that it no longer exists. He constantly describes the past as a brilliant, idyllic time: "Noches de fulgor, de joyas y piel. Noches calientes, siempre. Así era. Con besos que sabían a whisky con *coca-cola* y a farlopa, con obviedad" ("Nights of brilliance, of jewelry and leather. Hot nights, always. And so it was. With kisses that tasted of whisky and Coca Cola and of blow, obviously" ; Villena 137). One can almost imagine Rafa waxing nostalgic about his wild nights, and it is clear that his libido is attached to this lost period of his life. However, this sort of description is often followed by a lamentation: "Claro que había drogas, sexo y brillo, pero—evidentemente—se tenían que acabar. El orden jamás tolera la Felicidad" ("Sure, there were drugs, sex, and sparkle, but—evidently—this all had to end. Order never tolerates Happiness" ; Villena 137). While Rafa fondly remembers his past and seems to become caught up in these memories, he is always sobered by the realization that the Movida-era is over.

Rafa refers to how "El orden" does not tolerate happiness, most likely referring to the 1990s politics of the *Partido Popular* (The People's Party, known by the letters "PP" in Spain), led by people like José María Álvarez del Manzano (mayor of Madrid from 1991-2003) who dedicated himself to eradicating activities like drinking in the streets, which is commonly referred to as *el botellón*<sup>55</sup>. At one point, Rafa mourns his friend

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<sup>55</sup> "Botellón" literally means "the big bottle," but it refers to the phenomenon of drinking in the streets with a group of people, usually at night. It is still a common practice in many Spanish cities.

Félix's death, and associates the death of radicalism with Manzano: "¡Acojonados, Félix! De verdad. Tú te has muerto, tío. Para que no te matase ahora el alcalde de Madrid, un blandón del PP, que no hubiera podido resistirte la mirada ni un segundo tan sólo" ("Freaking out, Felix. Really. You died, man. So that the mayor of Madrid, a weak, bland guy from the PP couldn't kill you. He wouldn't have been able to resist your stare for even a second"); Villena 23). The former mayor is mentioned at another point in the novel as well. While Manzano's name is not mentioned, he is clearly referred to here: "Madrid ahora es una ciudad sin alma, regida infinitamente por un alcalde paleta. Madrid—aqueel Madrid—ha muerto" ("Today Madrid is a city without a soul, governed by a small-town mayor. Madrid—that Madrid—has died"); Villena 226). Manzano was a departure from former mayor Tierno Galván, who sought to connect the politics of his party, the *Partido Socialista y Obrero Español* (PSOE; The Spanish Socialist Worker's Party) with the youth culture of the 1980s. For many, Galván's death in 1986 marked the end of an era. In the following, Rafa describes how much the social and political situation has changed since the 1980s:

Lo dicen todos—seamos exactos, casi todos—: vivimos tiempos muy sombríos y la basura (real y moral) está rebasando el mundo. Tiempos de terrible derecha camuflada con democracia. Oscurísimos tiempos. Así es que, al recordar, inevitablemente, uno siente nostalgia. Sobre todo de aquellos días dorados, tan atrás, que tú no sabías que lo eran. Cuando todo parecía abrirse. Ahora ocurre exactamente al contrario. (Villena 205)

Everyone says it—well, to be exact, almost everyone—: we live in somber time, and trash (real and moral) is overtaking the world. These are times of the terrible right, camouflaged with democracy. Really dark times. And so it is that, in remembering, inevitably one feels nostalgic. More than anything for those golden days, so far away now, that you didn't even know what they were. When everything seemed to open up. Now the situation is completely the contrary.

According to Rafa, the politics of the 1990s are a far cry from the 1980s, when the transition to democracy was in process and it seemed that everything was beginning. He realizes that, at the time, he did not appreciate the freedom he was afforded by more liberal politics. Rafa remarks at different moments that the Madrid of the past was better, with a greater amount of freedom: "[...] este otro Madrid de mi vida feliz" ("That other Madrid, when my life was happy") and "Madrid había sido la libertad" ("Madrid had been freedom" Villena 48; 290). Paul Julian Smith comments on Rafa's concept of freedom: "It is a freedom that, although lost, is wholly identified with the city" (Smith 71). Rafa suggests that his life was once full of happiness and freedom, but these feelings have ceased to exist. Smith's assertion also fits in with his concept of the connection between urban space and emotion. Rafa's comment reflects a great sense of nostalgia for the tragic loss of free expression. Even the title of the novel, *Madrid ha muerto, esplendor y caos de una ciudad feliz de los ochenta*, suggests that 1980s Madrid is dead. Interestingly, the phrase itself, "Madrid ha muerto" is attributed to designer Manuel Piña, who would later die of AIDS (Smith 67).

From Rafa's perspective, it becomes evident that everything was better in the past, even the cocaine: "[...] era buena, auténtica y no la basura cortada y asquerosa que llegó a ser" ("it was good, authentic, not the disgusting, less pure trash that it became later" ; Villena 38). Television was also better "[...] la televisión [era] más vanguardia, tan distinta a la tele mierda de ahora" "Television was more avant-garde, so different from the shitty TV of today" ; Villena 139). Rafa is constantly faced with the reality that the things that he loved in the past do not survive. It seems that everything he talks about



was more pure and more innovative, or at least, that is the way he remembers it. He is clouded by his melancholic state, unable to let go of an idealized, romanticized past. Later, Rafa talks about Andy Warhol's emblematic visit to Madrid, describing Warhol as "[...] aquella celebridad de la modernidad absoluta (es decir, me temo, de la modernidad ya muerta) [...]" "(that celebrity from absolute modernity (which is to say, I fear, from the modernity that is now dead)" ; Villena 31). Again, there is a sense that what was once alive and well is now mourned and lost forever. Rafa summarizes his ideas, which could be related to the entire era of the Movida: "Eso les ocurre a las manzanas bonitas—decía el poeta—, que se deslucen y pudren en lo que pasa un suspiro" ("That's what happens to the pretty apples—the poet said—the ripen and they rot in an instant" ; Villena 31).

Rafa also exhibits other features of a melancholic, such as "[...] a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment" (Freud 244). These feelings are due to the fact that Rafa has incorporated the lost object into his own ego; he is paralyzed in his melancholia. Rafa vacillates between narrating events in the past and reflecting upon them from the present, often in a self-deprecating manner, such as in the following passage:

¿Cómo—me pregunto hoy—podíamos beber como esponjas y hablar y gastar bromas y sobrevolarlo todo, entre tanta gente, compitiendo al fin, y con una música excesiva y brillantemente atronadora? Me lo pregunto—idiota de mí—con voz de amargado y voz de viejo. Y esa voz (paternal y papista, lo supe siempre) me es odiosa. (Villena 42).

How—I ask myself today—could we drink like sponges and talk and tell jokes and brush past it all, among so many people, competing in the end with excessive, brilliantly deafening music? I ask myself—I'm such an idiot—with the voice of a bitter person, the voice of an old man. And that voice (paternal and papist, I always new that) is hateful to me.

Rafa's thought process is typical of a melancholic, which is distinguished from mourning because it includes "[...] a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings [...]" (Freud 244). Rafa is self-deprecating and reproaches himself with phrases like "idiota de mí." Additionally, he displays self-hatred, thus clearly making him a melancholic, since "The disturbance of self-regard is absent in mourning [...]" (244). Rafa seems judgmental of himself as well, presenting yet another example of self-villification by extending "[...] his self-criticism back over the past" (Freud 246). The characterization of Rafa as a melancholic can be extended even further, for his self-reproaches are really indicative of "[...] reproaches against a loved object which have been shifted away from it on to the patient's own ego" (Freud 248). The loved object (or abstraction) in this case is the freedom and abandon that Rafa felt during the 1980s—he shifts his reproaches on to his own ego by focusing on self-criticism, having incorporated the lost object into himself. At other moments, Rafa exercises the same self-deprecating behavior: "[...] vuelvo y voy, entre la nostalgia y la ira. Porque la nostalgia, a secas, es un sentimiento cochino" (Villena 70). In the latter, Rafa criticizes himself for experiencing nostalgic feelings, even though he allows himself to entertain these feelings on various occasions. At another moment, while listening to a 1980s pop song by the group *Mecano* on the radio, Rafa admits, rather melancholically,

that the song triggered memories of a life that no longer exists. This time, he projects his melancholic meanderings onto the memory of his friend Javi:

[...] La cancioncita me ha puesto melancólico y tonto igual que un viejo. Y me he acordado de ti, Javi, estés donde estés, con una especial cercanía, coño. Ojalá seas feliz [...] te echo de menos. Luego no he vuelto a salir de noche. No como antes, desde luego. El mundo está podrido y anda cabeza abajo y beodo. [...] Sólo he querido añorarte y recordarte, junto a una lata de cerveza. Una chorrada, ya lo sé" (Villena 74-75).

The little song has made me feel melancholic, and stupid just like an old man. And I remembered you, Javi, wherever you are, with a special intimacy, damnit. I hope you are happy. [...] I miss you. I haven't gone out at night since then. Not like before, anyways. The world is rotten, and I'm walking around with my head down, inebriated. [...] I just wanted to miss you and remember you, together with a can of beer. Foolish nonsense, I know.

It is interesting that Rafa speaks directly to his friend Javi in this passage, because it seems to be a cathartic experience for him. He attempts to work through his memories, but in so doing, Rafa displays melancholic behaviour, expressing self-reproach for his sentiments by calling himself "tonto igual que un viejo" ("stupid, just like an old man") and his thoughts "una chorrada" ("foolish"). He also points out that nothing is the same anymore, that the world is rotten, and personifies the world as a drunk person walking around with their head down. There is once again a sense that everything used to be better when Rafa was younger, and that the present does not measure up to the vivacity of the past. Rafa is obviously trying to get over the loss of Javi, who may be dead, and is at least figuratively dead to Rafa. Pablo Sánchez León has commented on the importance of establishing a dialogue with the young people who died during the transition: "Desde la distancia, que hemos de reconocer, con un pasado desaparecido, es posible en cambio recuperar tal vez un diálogo con estos muertos. Somos nosotros los que lo necesitamos,

no ellos" ("From a distance, which we have to recognize, with a disappeared past, it is possible to recuperate a dialogue with the dead. It is us who need it, not them" ; 179). Rafa attempts to move beyond the loss of his friend, and needs to establish a dialogue with him, but is unable to do so, trapped in his melancholia.

Rafa also expresses "[...] cessation of interest in the outside world, [...] and an] inhibition of all activity" when admitting that he does not go out at night anymore (Freud 244). Later in the novel, Rafa again exhibits this lack of interest in activity: "Pero a lo mejor es que yo ahora—cuando todo anda chungo y en capas demolidas—tampoco tengo apetito o posibilidades de ver o encontrar, como antes" ("But maybe it's that right now—when everything is crappy and in ruins—I don't have the appetite or the possibilities to see or to find things, like I did before") ; Villena 140). Rafa seems to feel that everything has deteriorated, and that he no longer has the desire to open up to others or to take risks. At other moments, Rafa conveys that his true experience of life is in the past: "La *vida* para mí (y acaso para Manuel Piña y para tantos más, caídos, resistentes o héroes) podría haber sido aquel Madrid estruendoso y bello de la libertad. [...] No hace falta ser estrictamente viejo—ni mucho menos—para sentirse apartado de la vida. Ahora tengo rabia pero también miedo" ("*Life*, for me (and maybe for Manuel Piña and for so many more, fallen, resistant, or heroes) maybe it could have been that roaring, beautiful Madrid, full of freedom. [...] You don't need to feel old to feel distant from life. Now I feel rage, but also fear") ; Villena 227). Through this statement, Rafa communicates that he is completely withdrawn from his current life, uninterested in his present state and

even ridden with fear. He literally says that he feels far from life, which is a glaringly obvious mark of how he has ceased to care about the present.

Additionally, Rafa experiences an inner conflict typical of melancholics.

Commenting on Freud's *Mourning and Melancholia*, Thomas Ogden points out the following:

Thus the melancholic experiences a conflict between, on the one hand, the wish to be alive with the pain of irreversible loss and the reality of death and, on the other hand, the wish to deaden himself to the pain of loss and the knowledge of death. The individual capable of mourning succeeds in freeing himself from the struggle between life and death that freezes the melancholic. (Ogden 140).

An example of this conflict occurs when Rafa's friend Sapi becomes ill due to the complications of the AIDS virus. Rafa sees Sapi very little towards the end of his life, and does not go to see him when he dies, stating that "[...] prefería mantener en mí su imagen de siempre, estrafalaria, ácida, viva [...] tampoco acudí al entierro" ("I preferred to maintain my image of him, eccentric, acidic, alive [...] I didn't go to the burial"); Villena 164-65). Rafa even goes as far as to equate Sapi's death with the death of Madrid as he knew it: "Vi poco a Sapi al final, a aquel compañero de universidad que me había abierto las puertas de un Madrid loco que se iban a cerrar casi coincidiendo con su muerte" ("I saw little of Sapi towards the end, that friend from college who had opened up the doors of a crazy Madrid, doors that would close almost at the moment of his death"; Villena 164). Rafa does not want to accept Sapi's death and prefers to deaden himself to the pain of loss and the knowledge of death by not attending the funeral.

Whether talking about deaths of friends or of a certain way of life, Rafa is unable to cope with death. Instead, he withdraws from life and takes refuge in his memories of the past,

or what might have happened in the past. Rafa even admits that he feels protected when he retreats into his past: "El falso nocturno de un Madrid alucinado, divertido y ebrio— loco y feliz—me protege como un gran manto, como un escapulario principesco" ("The false nocturne of a hallucinatory Madrid, fun and inebriated—crazy and happy—protects me like a great blanket, like a princely scapular") ; Villena 229). For Rafa, the past is a safe haven, and he seems to prefer to reside there rather than in the present. According to Thomas Ogden, withdrawal from the present and the self-deprecation really show that Rafa is deadening himself, exhibiting "[...] a form of ambivalence involving the struggle between the wish to go on living and the wish to deaden oneself in an effort to be with the dead" (Ogden 142). Rafa appears to always live his life in the present (the 1990s) half-heartedly. His constant comparisons of the past and the present do not allow him to be fully alive, because the present never quite matches up to his memories.

At a certain point, Rafa and his friends realize that they need to grow up and leave Neverland behind them. Rafa begins to think that maybe, at 32, he should start doing something with his life. Rafa's friend Dei decides to go to California to begin a Master's Degree, a move that was set up for him by his father. Dei remarks that he wants to go, because he is afraid of becoming stagnant. In considering Dei's decision, Rafa again reflects on the possibilities of the past: "¿Tendría razón? Era cierto ese extraño miedo— poco frecuente al parecer—de quedarse ahí, parado para siempre en la fiesta?" ("Does he have a point? Was it true that there was that strange fear—infrequent, in any case—of staying there, stopped for eternity in the party?" ; Villena 199). Rafa's words are

interesting, because his reminiscences throughout the novel render him frozen in the past, forever stuck in a melancholic state, recollecting better times.

At a later point, Rafa finds out that his girlfriend, Lía, will also be going to pursue studies in the United States. His reaction to the loss of his friend and his girlfriend typifies a melancholic response, since in this response, "[...] hate and love contend with each other; the one seeks to detach the libido from the object, the other to maintain this position of the libido against the assault" (Freud 256). Rafa states that "[...] la idea de mudar de amigos y sobre todo de obsesión erótica me producía un sentimiento de liberación y de melancolía a la par, que crecía por días" ("The idea of changing friends, and above all else the erotic obsession, produced a feeling of freedom and melancholy at the same time, that grew for days" ; Villena 200). Rafa expresses a desire to detach himself from his friends, but also wishes to hold onto them, even mentioning that he feels melancholic. In the latter, Rafa is at least aware of his depressed state, but sometimes appears to be a prisoner of his emotional situation. For instance, Rafa articulates his melancholia at various points towards the end of the novel, and continues to convey self-deprecating feelings: "Me sentía melancólico porque Lía y Dei estaban a punto de marcharse a Estados Unidos. [...] Me parecía malgastada y tonta mi pobre vida" ("I felt melancholic because Lía and Dei were about to leave for the United States. [...] I felt like my life was ill spent and stupid" ; Villena 210). Rafa believes his life will not go anywhere, and he is hopeless: "[...] todo iría cuesta abajo, desesperado, caótico e inepto" (Everything would go downhill, be chaotic and inept") ; Villena 211). Ultimately, Rafa's melancholia hinders him from growing. At some level, he is aware of this, noting that

someone once told him "Te resistes a la madurez, Rafa" ("You are resisting maturity, Rafa" ; Villena 211). Rafa prefers to remain in Neverland, not wanting to grow up and leave his brilliant past behind him. Rafa's character seems to pave the way for the generation of the 1990s and their "peterpanismo cultural" ("cultural Peterpanism") (Colmeiro 9).

Rafa repeatedly acknowledges his displeasure that the past has been lost, that it no longer exists. Paul Julian Smith notes that Villena's novel is "drenched in mourning, melancholia, and masochistic nostalgia, [and] it evokes the pleasures of the 1980s from the perspective of the supposed horrors of the following decade, when sadness and emptiness had replaced the joy and plentitude of a golden age" (Smith 67). However, his process of working through his memories serves a purpose, since all of his struggle inevitably loosens "[...] the fixation of the libido to the object by disparaging it, denigrating it and even as it were killing it" (Freud 257).

There is an attempt to kill the past at the end of Villena's novel. As in much of the rest of the novel, in the ending, the past is mourned and characterized as tragic. The ending of Villena's novel *implies* that the mourning process is complete: the Movida is dead and buried, the ego has "[...] succeeded in freeing its libido from the lost object" (Freud 252). In other words, "In order to grieve the loss of the object, one must first kill it—that is, one must do the psychological work of allowing the object to be irrevocably dead, both in one's own mind and in the external world" (Ogden 141). If the mourned object is the Madrid Movida, Rafa attempts to kill it, trying to render it irrevocably dead at the end of the novel.



In spite of this effort, Rafa does not seem to want the Madrid of his past to die. He does not entirely free his libido from the lost abstraction of 1980s Madrid, and is instead frozen in a melancholic state. Even though he imagines that he and all his friends will board, the boat of the dead "¿Por qué no sube la ciudad a la barca de los muertos? ¡Que suba a la barca de los muertos!" ("Why doesn't the city board the boat of the dead? It should board the boat of the dead!" ; Villena 231). It appears from his comment that Rafa wants to "kill" the Madrid of his past, but at the same time, wants to keep it alive, reflecting an ambivalence between life and death. Just after this comment, Rafa states "todos han muerto o hemos muerto, como aquella ciudad, y quien lee haría bien en considerarlo todo remoto y novelesco. Así, de repente—si el recuerdo no fuera tan fuerte—, yo mismo podría tener la sensación de habérmelo inventado todo" ("They have all died, or we have all died, like that city, and whomever reads this would do well in considering all of it remote and novelesque. So it is that, suddenly—if the memory was not so strong—, I myself might have the sense that I invented it all" ; Villena 231). The city of Madrid does not end up dying entirely, for it remains vividly alive in Rafa's memory. This ambivalence runs through the entire novel. In the first chapter of the novel, Rafa states that he is the perfect person to "[...] escribir ese libro sobre la vida y la muerte de todo aquello, porque yo había estado vivo y ahora—como casi todos los demás—estaba prácticamente muerto" ("[...] write that book about the life and death of all that, because I had been alive then and now—like almost all the rest—I was practically dead" ; Villena 7).

Thus I have a quibble about Paul Julian Smith's assertion that the novel "ends unambiguously with death and disappointment" (Smith 70). This final death is written into the text in a somewhat ambiguous fashion. A summary of the final chapter in the index of the novel suggests the "final death" of Madrid: "Como una escena del antiguo Egipto. La barca de los muertos. Anubis, el barquero. Madrid/Tebas—la ciudad que fue—sube a la barca. No hay retorno. Nunca lo hubo" ("It's like a scene from old Egypt. The boat of the dead. Anubis, the boatmaster. Madrid/Tebas—the city that once was—boards the boat. There is no return. There never was" ; Villena 238). It appears that there is no looking back, for the past is dead, and everyone is carried away, never to return to that time—but this is only the case if one reads the index. The inclusion of this index is out of the ordinary, and contributes to the ambiguity of the novel. Perhaps the index draws from the picaresque novel where summaries of different episodes are included in the text. For instance, in *Lazarillo de Tormes*, each chapter begins with a short description of what happens to Lazarillo in the episode.

The ambiguity throughout Villena's novel has a broader meaning when considered among the commemorative events and products about the Movida era created in recent years. By constantly entertaining the possibilities of what might have happened during the Movida, those who remember this period in this way are trapped in a melancholic state, unable to complete the mourning process and remove the monkey from their backs. The continuous creation of commemorations about the Movida indicates that this period will not be put to rest, for it will continue to be mourned and celebrated through various creative expressions. Nevertheless, melancholic figures like

Rafa show that dwelling too much on the grandeur of the past ends up cutting off individuals from the possibilities of the present. Unlike Villena's novel, Charlie Miralles's autobiographical novel tells a story that exemplifies an individual who wishes to move towards the future without being held prisoner by his past.

Another perspective: The Movida remembered in *1964 Antes de cristo y después de perder el autobús*

*1964 Antes de cristo y después de perder el autobús* (2007) is an autobiography written by Charlie Miralles about his life from childhood to adulthood in Madrid<sup>56</sup>. Unlike Villena's novel, which focuses almost entirely on the period of the Madrid Movida, *1964...* discusses the author's life from the 1960s until the late 1990s. The novels are quite different in that they were written by authors from distinctive generations. The novel begins in 1964, the year of Miralles's birth. Miralles was thus part of the generation who were adolescents during the Movida, while Luis Antonio de Villena, born in 1951, was part of a slightly older generation. Born in the hospital at the jail where his father worked as the director, throughout his life Charlie struggles with issues of freedom and containment. In his novel, Miralles describes his complicated familial relationships with a tyrannical, physically abusive father and a mother who was largely absent due to mental illness.

Miralles's novel also has an important web-based component, for it was advertised on YouTube as well as on Miralles's blog. The novel has become more interactive, because Miralles features some of the reactions to his novel on his blog and

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<sup>56</sup> In the novel, Charlie goes by his birth name, Carlos. When referring to him as the author of the book, I call him Charlie, but I retain the name Carlos when quoting and discussing the text and events within the novel.

also mentions how it has been promoted. Tying technology to the printed word expands the novel's reach and gives it new, changing meanings. These constant modifications parallel the process by which memory is constantly updated and revised. Apart from being featured on numerous television and radio programs throughout the past few years since its publication, the novel was awarded a prize at the 2009 edition of the Pop Art Festival in Cáceres, Spain.

The author's blog mentions that he has plans to potentially create a film adaptation and a theatrical version of the novel. A blog posting from July 28, 2009, titled "¿1964 al teatro de la mano de Federico [Placenti]?" ("Will *1964* go to the theater, written by Federico Placenti?") mentions that the play would be called "Movidas," and also provides the following synopsis: "Años 80 en Madrid. Dentro de los cambios sufridos por aquella época, cambios sociales políticos y musicales, nace la movida madrileña y con ella un cambio profundo dentro de la juventud en aquellos días" ("1980s Madrid. Among the socio-political and musical changes that happened during that era, the Madrid Movida was born, and with it, a profound change among the youth of those days"); Miralles 7.29.09). Interestingly, the theatrical adaptation would focus entirely on the portion of the novel that deals with the Movida, perhaps because this would make it the most attractive consumer product.

A YouTube video created by the author titled "Orígenes y desenlace de *1964 después de Cristo y antes de perder el autobús*" ("The Origins and denouement of *1964 After Christ and Before Missing the Bus*") claims that the novel was "Basado en hechos reales" ("Based on real events"). Similar to Luis Antonio de Villena, Miralles includes

observations about real events from this period. These events include Miralles's memory of Franco's death in 1975, the assassination of Miguel Angel Blanco by ETA in 1997, and several events related to the Movida era, which are the focus of my analysis. However, Miralles's interpretation of this era differs greatly from Villena's, because Miralles reflects more on the negative effects of his behaviors during the time. Miralles describes the novel as tragicomic: "Es un libro que está cargado tanto de tragedia urbana como de un humor muy canalla [...]" ("It is a book that is as full of urban tragedy as it is of a despicable kind of humor" ; Valero 2). As Paul Julian Smith has pointed out, emotion and location are related—here, this connection is also made when evaluating the events in Miralles's novel. The novel thus adheres to the contradictory nature of the Movida and the way it has been remembered—both as a very comical and a very tragic period of time. However, the humor that appears in the novel is used as a way to work through the events of Carlos's past, instead of remaining in a melancholic, stagnant state like Rafa, the protagonist in Villena's novel.

The portion of the novel that details Carlos's adolescence is described on the novel's back cover: "La adolescencia le llega en plena Movida madrileña, entre pandillas arropadas por la música y el consumo de drogas" ("His adolescence arrives in the middle of the Madrid Movida, among gangs cloaked in musical tastes and drug consumption"; Miralles np). Unlike many depictions of the Movida era, Miralles focuses on the bleak aspects of this period including gang violence and the effects of drug abuse. In this honest portrait of his past, Miralles is able to come to terms with the past and move forward, something that Villena's narrator does not achieve by being trapped in a

melancholic state. Villena and Miralles thus deal with the memory of the Movida in very distinctive ways. Instead of dwelling on the past in a melancholic sense, Miralles chooses to deal with tragedy through humor, noting that "[...] hay gente que entraría más en la melancolía, [...] pero en mi caso, con todo lo que nos pasó en mi familia desarrollamos un humor medio canalla" ("Some people would more fall into melancholy, [...] but in my case, with everything that happened in my family, we developed a kind of wicked humor" ; Valero 2). Miralles realizes that, considering what happened to him, he could choose to be overcome with melancholy, but his family used humor as a coping mechanism instead. Therefore, Miralles exhibits the ability to *work through* what he experienced rather than to let it paralyze him. In other words, "[...] he remembers his past, understands his current predicament [...] and internally integrates himself. He is working through in words" (O'Shaughnessy 148). The process of working through is arguably part of the mourning process, for in this novel, "mourning is [...] a linear movement from loss, to working through, to acceptance and memory formation and moving on" (Jones np). Miralles goes through this process in its entirety rather than becoming ensnared in the web of melancholia that seems to have no exit for Rafa, the protagonist in Villena's novel. Before examining the aspects of the novel that deal with Miralles's adolescence, I will briefly describe his reaction to the death of Franco in the novel in order to contextualize Miralles's autobiography.

#### The Death of Franco from a Child's Perspective in 1964...

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, Paul Julian Smith states that in Luis Antonio de Villena's novel, "[...] the lost object is not Francisco Franco, the source

of the *mono* for many cultural critics, but rather the Movida itself, a time unambiguously described as one of life, liberty, and pleasure" (Smith 68). This is also true in Miralles's novel. While Villena does not explicitly mention Franco's death, Miralles describes the impact that the event had on his father and how he interpreted the death from a child's perspective:

El 20 de noviembre de 1975, me despertó en la cama un pequeño alboroto en el pasillo de casa. Pedro, con una sonrisa pícara, me dijo que Franco había muerto y que nos daban cinco días de vacaciones. Encontré a mi padre que lloraba delante de la televisión con un pañuelo en la mano para quitarse las lágrimas porque «los hombres no lloran». Se vistió de traje y me llevó de la mano a visitar la capilla ardiente que habían colocado en el Palacio Real. Por el camino, me hablaba de la pérdida que había sufrido el país. —Tienes que ser fuerte, hijo, tú eres la sangre de la nueva España. [...]—Cuando veas al Excelentísimo, haces una inclinación de cabeza— me ordenó mi padre—, ese señor ha dado su vida por salvar España. Es lo mejor que hemos tenido. (Miralles 89).

On November 20, 1975, a loud, noisy movement in the hallway woke me up. Pedro, with a mischievous smile, told me that Franco had died and that they were giving us five days of vacation. I found my father crying in front of the television with a handkerchief in his hand to wipe away the tears because 'men don't cry.' He dressed up in a suit and he took me by the hand to visit the chapel of rest that they had set up in the Royal Palace. On the way there, he talked to me about the loss that the country had suffered, saying 'You have to be strong, son, you are the blood of the new Spain. [...] When you see his Excellency, make sure you bow your head,' he ordered me, 'that man has given his life to save Spain. He is the best we've had.'

It is clear that Carlos's father mourned the loss of Franco; normally a stoic, violent man, he was reduced to tears at the notice of the death of the Generalísimo. Carlos's brother Pedro was unaffected by the event—only excited that he had five days off, which in the mind of any child would be welcome news. While Carlos's father told him to be strong, it is almost as though he might be telling himself to remain strong and calm, since the

way he understood the world was changing more than Carlos's eleven year old yet undeveloped worldview. Still, Carlos was at least somewhat affected by the event. Carlos explains the scene when he and his father reached the Palacio Real and joined the enormous line of people waiting to pay their respects to the Caudillo. The show of emotion left an impression on Carlos: "Toda esa gente tenía un denominador común: el llanto. Doce horas estuvimos viendo llorar a gente. Eso es algo que no se olvida en la vida" ("All of those people had a common denominator: the crying. We were there for 12 hours watching people cry. That's something that one never forgets in a lifetime" ; Miralles 89). Here, Carlos depicts the collective mourning that was experienced by many Spaniards on the occasion of Franco's death. However, Carlos does not personally mourn this event. He acknowledges its importance and notes that he will not forget it, but he actually celebrates it on some level, because to be against Franco also meant being against his father. This sentiment is expressed when Carlos talks about the days following Franco's death, noting that on the television at his house, "[...] sólo se podía ver la transmisión de la capilla ardiente del Generalísimo. Habían instalado una cámara fija detrás del ataúd que mostraba un plano medio de la gente que se paraba delante del muerto" ("The only thing that was shown was the transmission of the chapel with the eternal flame for the Generalísimo. They had installed a still camera behind the coffin that showed a medium shot of the people who stopped in front of the dead man" ; Miralles 91). While Carlos observes that most people saluted Franco or genuflected and crossed themselves when stopping at his grave, he is pleased when something different happens:



Lo mejor era cuando se veía pasar a un individuo con pelo largo que se detenía a mirar el cadáver. En ese instante mi padre saltaba como un felino del sofá para gritar que ése era un rojo de mierda y que lo que quería era comprobar si Franco estaba muerto. —Menos mal que está muerto porque si no te iba a cortar el pelo. ¡Maricón! Que no sabéis hacer nada—decía mi padre al joven de la tele. (Miralles 91).

The best was when we saw an individual with long hair that stopped to look at the cadaver. In that instant, my father jumped up like a feline from the couch to scream that guy was a fucking commie who just wanted to make sure that Franco was dead. 'It's a good thing he's dead, because if not, he'd cut your hair. Faggot! You don't know how to do anything!' my father said to the young man on TV.

This description provides an example of someone who did not mourn Franco's death, but rather celebrated it, a scene that Carlos puts on a pedestal by calling it "lo mejor." Carlos appears to enjoy seeing his father's furious reaction to the long-haired visitor, and he also mocks his father by portraying him as an animal screaming at an inanimate object. Later, Carlos notes that even though his father was upset after Franco died, he still subjected him to violent beatings if he received bad grades. After a particularly bad beating, Carlos resolved to stand up to his dictator-like father and falsify his grades, thus putting to death the oppression imposed on him by his father. Carlos's reflections about the past are focused more on the years of his adolescence. It is important to analyze this portion of the novel in order to understand what happened to Carlos as an adolescent during the period of the Movida, and how he later dealt with the consequences of his actions and was able to work through his past rather than hold on to it like the protagonist Rafa in Villena's novel.

## The 1980s: Death and Violence

In the often watered-down, commercialized commemorations of the Movida, it seems that the vivacity of the period is remembered more than the violence and deaths that were commonplace during this time. Miralles offers a more balanced view of this period, describing his personal experience of the 1980s: "[...] unos años 80 llenos de efervescencia artística pero también de drogas y peleas callejeras" ("[...] the 1980s were full of artistic effervescence, but also of drugs and street fights" ; Valero 1). Or, as Carlos says in the novel: "Broncas y alcohol venían conmigo a todas horas" ("Fights and alcohol followed me at all hours" ; Miralles 183). The section of the novel on the 1980s begins with a description of violent behavior that was commonplace in his neighborhood: "En los 70, había varias bandas callejeras que controlaban las lindes del barrio, pero había alguien más peligroso que las pandillas juveniles: un joven de estatura y atlético cuerpo llamado Carlitos" ("In the 70s, there were a lot of street gangs who controlled the neighborhood: but there was someone who was more dangerous than the juvenile gangs: a young, tall guy with an athletic body named Carlitos" ; Miralles 163). Among Carlitos's violent behaviors were beating people in the head with shoes, strangling them, or cutting them. One night, "Carlitos fue abatido de un tiro por un policía de paisano en uno de las patios de Aurrerá en una fría noche de enero, mientras tomaba una copa con un colega" ("Carlitos was taken down by a shot from a neighborhood policeman at one of the patios of Aurrerá on a cold January night, while he had a drink with a friend" ; *ibid* 163). While Carlos does not comment further on Carlitos's death, it seems clear that Carlitos was not killed for a particular reason. Maybe the police just wanted to do away

with him since he was a violent presence in the neighborhood. As I mention in my chapter on museum exhibits, Pablo Sánchez León has noted that the mortality rate of the young people of the transition (those between age 15 and 20 in 1975) is much higher than that of the cohort immediately before them, noting that the mortality rate is significantly higher in males (168). Some of the causes of death include the high rates of deaths from drug and alcohol abuse, traffic accidents, AIDS, and suicide<sup>57</sup>. Instances of violence and death are quite ubiquitous in the novel. Carlos recounts one particular group who were "navajeros amantes de los Rolling Stones [...] en esa pandilla eran todos malos de nacimiento. No tenían aspiraciones en la vida, ni ganas de vivir" ("Knife carrying, Rolling Stones lovers [...] in that gang they had all been born bad. They had no aspirations in life, no desire to live" ; Miralles 164). After discussing this gang, Carlos states: "El sida, la cárcel, la sobredosis o la muerte violenta en las calles hicieron que la pandilla se separara en los años que siguieron" ("AIDS, jail, overdosing or violent deaths in the streets made it so that the gang would separate in the following years" ; Miralles 164). This frank statement gives the impression that these deaths are simply a fact of life. The depiction of this group adheres to the idea of the Movida as a time when "presentismo" was the focus—living in the present was the most fundamental aspect of many young people's lives, even if this meant they would suffer fatal consequences. Carlos has a similar attitude to that of his peers: "Nuestro lema era: 'Muere joven y tendrás un bonito cadáver.' Devorábamos litros de alcohol y todas las drogas ilegales del

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<sup>57</sup> This trend continued into the 1990s: "In 1990 Spain had the second highest recorded number of AIDS-affected people in Europe. Moreover, the rate of contraction has been increasing exponentially. HIV/AIDS incidence in Spain is mostly located in the lowest social classes, and particularly among the young and the unemployed. Some 66 per cent of those diagnosed are intravenous drug-users—which is double the figure for most other European countries" (Graham/Sánchez 415).

momento" ("Our motto was: 'Die young and you'll have a pretty cadaver.' We devoured liters of alcohol and all the illegal drugs of the moment" ; Miralles 174). He and his friends took their *carpe diem* attitudes seriously, practicing these behaviors to the limit.

While he displays this casual attitude towards death at certain points, on one occasion, the constant deaths appear to have an effect on Carlos: "El tiempo transcurría vertiginosamente. Perdíamos amigos por la droga, por peleas absurdas, por accidentes de tráfico y por suicidio. Íbamos a los funerales compungidos y, después de dar el pésame a los familiares de nuestro compañero fallecido, ahogábamos nuestras penas en cerveza y anfetaminas" ("Time passed in a dizzying manner. We lost friends to drugs, to absurd fights, to traffic accidents and to suicide. We went to the funerals feeling remorseful, and after paying our respects to the families of our deceased friend, we drowned our sorrows in beer and amphetamines" ; Miralles 230). Even though he and his peers saw their friends dying, it seems that they were unable to break the vicious cycle of substance abuse—they did not mourn the deaths, but drowned themselves in drugs and alcohol instead.

Carlos also talks about his admiration for different thieves in his neighborhood, Argüelles, one of whom claims "[...] yo robo con elegancia [...]" ("[...] I rob with elegance [...]" ; Miralles 165). He creates an image of the dangers of street life during this time: "Para sobrevivir por las noches, debías estar en la calle para enterarte de todo y defenderte de delincuentes como los hermanos Saavedra y Miguelín [...]" ("To survive at night, you had to be in the street to find out everything and defend yourself from delinquents like the Saavedra brothers and Miguelín" ; Miralles 166). The latter

description reflects a sinister environment where one had to be preoccupied with survival, which contrasts with other more vibrant portrayals of Madrid nightlife in the 1980s.

Carlos also speaks of the rivalries between the various groups in Madrid, such as the rockers, the mods, and the punks (among many others). He recounts an instance when he and his friends were beaten up by a group of rockers, which reflects the hostility between the groups: "Eres un punk de mierda—dijo el jefe de los rockers lanzando un segundo puñetazo a mi boca" ("You are a fucking punk—said the leader of the rockers, giving me a second punch in the mouth" ; Miralles 181). There were other violent, radical groups as well, such as an organization called "Primera línea," ("First line") which Carlos describes as follows: "Eran falangistas que con puños americanos, bates de béisbol y boinas negras iban a la caza del rojo por las noches [...]" (They were Falangists [the right-wing Spanish Fascist movement formed in 1937] with brass knuckles, baseball bats and black beres who went hunting for commies at night [...]" ; Miralles 182). At one point Carlos and his punk friends decided to organize a huge street fight between the punks and the rockers in the Plaza de España in Madrid. After creating a large scene, they were detained by the police and interrogated, but eventually the police let them go.

There were numerous other consequences of the widespread violence during this period. One of the more notable examples of this was the closure of the iconic club Rock-Ola, which Carlos and his friends referred to as "nuestro santuario" ("our sanctuary") ; Miralles 227). Carlos tells of why the club was closed:

Una lluviosa noche de borrachera, nos enteramos de que la policía había cerrado el Rock-Ola por una pelea entre mods y breakers en la que murió un rockero. Cuenta la leyenda, que Simón, el rockero negro, nos buscaba esa noche para

darnos una paliza y que al no encontrarnos, terminó desahogándose con los mods que acabaron con su vida. (Miralles 230)

One rainy drunken night, we found out that the police had closed Rock-Ola because of a fight between the mods and the breakers in which a rocker died. The story goes that Simón, a black rocker, was looking for us that night to give us a beating, and when he didn't find us, he ended up taking it out on the mods, who ended his life.

Carlos's account of what happened that night depicts this violent scene in terms of subjunctivity. Simón was looking for Carlos's group, whom he could have beaten up, but instead he found another crowd, the mods, who ended up killing him. There is a sense that Carlos and company may have been the victims of Simon, or, the converse, that Carlos's group could have killed Simón. Exploring the possibility of what might have happened in this situation also gives a sense that Carlos and his group were lucky to have evaded violence that night. Carlos does not brood over the closure of the club or even the fact that he may have been badly beaten up had Simón found him, he simply states the facts about the past. While a great deal of Carlos's narration centers around descriptions of his troubled youth, he also remembers how he enjoyed many aspects of 1980s Madrid.

#### Punk and Los Positivos

Carlos fondly recalls the role that music played in his life during this period:

"Corrían los años 80 en Madrid con cambios políticos, sociales y musicales en nuestras vidas. En Inglaterra la nueva ola hacía furor en la radio con artistas como Elvis Costello, The Police, The Jam y Joe Jackson. En nuestro país empezaban a sacar la cabeza gente como Kaka de Luxe, Nacha Pop y un sinfín de grupos con muy buenas ideas" ("In the 1980s in Madrid there were a lot of political, social and musical changes in our lives. In England there was the outbreak of the new wave on the radio with artists like Elvis

Costello, The Police, The Jam and Joe Jackson. In our country a lot of groups began showing their faces, like Kaka de Luxe, Nacha Pop and a ton of groups with really good ideas"; Miralles 171). Music has a very important role in Carlos's life; he recalls his first encounter with punk music as a religious experience, a romance, and a drug. In short, punk was his salvation: "El punk consistía en acordes mal interpretados que para mis oídos eran notas celestiales y para mi alma virgen mensajes de salvación" ("Punk consisted of some badly interpreted chords that for my ears were celestial notes, and for my virgin soul, messages of salvation" ; Miralles 172).

His passion for music inspires him to form a band with friends, called "Los Positivos," which was inspired in part by the band the Sex Pistols. Carlos explains how he and his friends borrowed from their aesthetic: "Como los Sex Pistols habían usado la cara y el lema de la Corona inglesa en *God Save the Queen*, su primer disco, a nosotros se nos ocurrió la idea de escribir al Rey de España para pedirle que se hiciera una foto con nosotros. Esta foto sería la portada de nuestro disco" ("Just like the Sex Pistols had used the face and the motto of the English crown in *God Save the Queen*, their first album, it occurred to us to write to the King of Spain to ask him to take a picture with us. That picture would be the cover of our album" ; Miralles 177). This inclination to draw inspiration from foreign influences was commonplace during the Movida, especially if it meant that the cultural products created in Spain would be elevated to the same level as those from other European countries. However, while Spanish punk was heavily influenced by British punk, they were quite different due to the varying historical circumstances in both countries (Fouce *El futuro...*62).

### Carlos's Transformation: Beyond *pasotismo*

While he is involved in plenty of anti-establishment activities, Carlos also joins the military service and appreciates the fact that he has the right to vote in a democracy. When he joins the military, Carlos follows in the footsteps of his father, who he generally despises. Still, he is drunk when he makes the decision: "Íñigo y yo recibimos una carta del Ministerio de Defensa para reclutarnos y, en medio de una borrachera, sentimos la llamada de la patria" ("Íñigo and I received a letter from the Ministry of Defense to recruit us, and, in the middle of a drunken episode, we felt the call of the Fatherland" ; Miralles 206-207). Suddenly his life changes drastically and Carlos is thrust into a life of order and regiment.

Interestingly, Carlos embraces his political rights. While fulfilling the requirement of 15 months of military duty, he mentions that he was proud to vote:

El 28 de octubre de 1982, la población española tuvo la oportunidad de dar un giro a la vida política y social. Era la primera vez que podía votar y gocé de unas cuantas horas de permiso para ejercer mi obligación. Me acerqué al barrio para votar en el colegio Fray Luis de León. Mi papeleta llevaba el símbolo del PSOE y fui uno más de los que contribuyeron a que este partido obtuviera la mayoría absoluta y pudiera gobernar los siguientes años (Miralles 213).

On October 28, 1982, the Spanish population had the opportunity to make a change in the political and social life [of Spain]. It was the first time that I could vote, and I enjoyed having several hours of permission to leave to exercise my obligation. I went to the neighborhood to vote at the Fray Luis de León school. My ballot had the symbol of the PSOE [The Spanish Socialist Worker's Party] on it, and I was one more who contributed to this party winning the absolute majority and making it so that they would govern for the following years.

The fact that Carlos voted in the 1982 election is very important when considering a stereotype typically associated with the youth during the transition: that of a *pasota*, someone who is apathetic and does not care about being involved in politics, someone



who only cares about getting drunk and doing drugs. While Carlos engages in drug use, he does not entirely fit the definition of a *pasota*. Historian Pablo Sánchez León further defines the *pasota* as someone who exhibits "[... una] falta de compromiso con las nuevas instituciones democráticas y los valores a ella supuestamente aparejados" ("a lack of engagement with the new democratic institutions and the values that are associated with these institutions"; Sánchez León 169). Sánchez León makes it clear that the label *pasota* was a way to damn the generation of the transition, and that it did not clearly explain why some young people were not interested in voting (171). He points out that abstaining from voting was also a political gesture, and that in the 1979 elections, many young people elected not to vote not simply because they were not interested in voting, but because they did not feel that any party represented them well (Sánchez León 172). Further, Sánchez León cautions against stereotypes like that of the *pasota*: "Estereotipos sociales como el del pasota son, una vez convencionalizados, ejemplos de ingeniería cultural colectiva de un enorme poder de estigmatización, de exclusión, de marginación" ("Social stereotypes like that of the *pasota*, once made conventional, are examples of collective cultural engineering with an enormous power for stigmatization, exclusion and marginalization" ; Sánchez León 175). Carlos's thus works to break this stigmatization, and brings forth a new perspective about the way that this era is remembered. Carlos's memories of what came after this period also provide an interesting contextualization of his process of working through what happened to him in the 1980s.

## 1992: Beyond the 1980s

One of the final sections of Miralles's novel is aptly titled "1992. Camino, después de un largo camino" ("1992. I walk, after a long journey"). The early 1990s were a pivotal period in Spain since they were the years in which the country solidified its identity as an international destination and an integrated part of Europe<sup>58</sup>. The 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, the opening of the Expo in Sevilla, and the naming of Madrid as a European cultural capital were three symbolic events that contributed to Spain's newfound identity. 1993 marked the signing of the treaty of Maastricht, a treaty that signified "[...] tanto en el imaginario colectivo español como en el consenso político del momento el cierre de la política cultural y económica de expansión española en Europa seguida en la época de la transición" ("In the collective imaginary as well as in the political consensus of the moment the securing of the political culture and the economics of expansion in Spain in Europe following the era of the transition" ; Vilarós 3). While these events contributed to the consolidation of Spain's identity as a stable country integrated into Europe, there were issues that soon introduced fissures into the newly constructed edifice, such as economic difficulties resulting from less than anticipated returns from the celebratory events of 1992 and political scandals. Indeed, "One day soon the party would be over, but meanwhile carnival would provide an effective distraction from what had been the negative consequences of the PSOE's economic policies for many, and also from the gathering gloom of inescapable oncoming

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<sup>58</sup> Helen Graham and Antonio Sánchez have noted that "When we speak of Spain joining Europe, we should be clear that, rather than an abstract democratic ideal, what Spain joined is a specific political and economic entity which has at its centre (both commercially and ideologically) the market" (411).

recession" (Graham/Sánchez 413). Thus began another period of "desencanto," or disenchantment<sup>59</sup>.

Teresa Vilarós has written extensively about "el mono" ("the monkey") in relation to the transition to democracy (and beyond) in Spain in the book *El mono del desencanto. Una crítica cultural de la transición española* (1998). Vilarós notes that "En el caso de España, y más específicamente en el caso de la escritura de la historia del fin del franquismo, lo impensable reprimido toma la forma de un Mono colgado a la espalda. Un mono—o monos—que vive, respira y se hace presente en esta intersección fisural, en este espacio negro, lapso, punto o pasaje que va del tardo al posfranquismo" ("In the case of Spain, and more specifically in the case of the writing about the history of the end of Francoism, the unthinkable repressed [object] takes the form of a monkey on the back. A monkey—or monkeys—that lives, breathese, and makes itself present in this fissured intersection, in this black space, this lapse, point, or passage that goes from late to post-Francoism" ; 8). For Vilarós, the transition period in Spain was a period in which the past was repressed. This repression was especially pronounced with regards to the memory of the Spanish Civil War, which was purposefully suppressed to quell the tensions between the opposing sides.

In the novel *1964....*, Carlos embodies someone who was suffering from "el mono"—withdrawal syndrome—after emerging from the 1980s. He is persecuted by his own ghosts of drug addiction and his problems in finding work. At one point, Carlos calls his brother Elías, who lives in the Canary Islands, and begins to cry: "Por favor,

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<sup>59</sup> Another period of disenchantment was sparked earlier, during the later years of the transition to democracy, from 1979-1982, "[...] anticipated by the film *El desencanto* (Chávarri, 1976)" (Graham/Labanyi 421).

quiero salir de aquí...si no lo hago, cualquier día me encontrarán en la calle muerto. Le hablé de mi depresión, del paro y de que necesitaba salir de Madrid. Preferí no mencionarle mi adicción" ("Please, I want to get out of here...if I don't do it, any day now somebody will find me dead in the street. I talked to him about my depression, about being unemployed, and that I needed to get out of Madrid. I preferred not to mention my addiction" ; Miralles 271). Carlos is overcome; he is drowning in all of his personal problems, but at least he reaches out for help. It is his first step in overcoming his issues and he begins to work through them, even though it is a difficult process.

The problems that Carlos mentions were not unique to his situation. They were also common on a collective level in Spain. The problem of unemployment, for example, has been especially common for many young people in Spain for quite some time. Unemployment was on the rise in the late 1970s, and was exacerbated in the 1980s and into the 1990s. Pablo Sánchez León gives an explanation of unemployment during the 1980s that is worthy of note, pointing out that in 1979, people between the ages of 20 and 24 experienced an unemployment rate of 20%; by 1981 the rate of unemployment was up to 30% (176). While the economic situation for young people improved briefly in the 1990s, with an unemployment rate of 16% in 1991; the recession of 1992-1993 brought the rate to 24% in 1994 (Muñoz de Bustillo Llorente 217). These numbers were even higher for young people. According to Eurostat, in 1995, the unemployment rate among Spanish youth between the ages of 15 and 24 was a staggering 40% (Agencia EFE). Sánchez León proposes that the stereotype of the *pasota* implicitly affected the attitudes about youth unemployment: "¿No sería que, de manera implícita, se asumía que el paro

entre los jóvenes era un efecto lógico derivado de sus actitudes culturales y políticas" ("Couldn't it be that, in an implicit manner, it was assumed that unemployment among young people was a logical effect, derived from their cultural and political attitudes?" ; Sánchez León 177). Sánchez León is suggesting that maybe young people were blamed for being unemployed, because they had been stigmatized as people who were uninterested in politics, and that they lacked interest in participating in democracy because they were more interested in doing drugs or getting drunk. He suggests that nothing was done to change the unemployment situation because it was simply blamed on young people. This negative attitude towards youth in Spain as well as a higher unemployment rate for the younger population has continued to be pervasive into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

To deal with being unemployed and with his addictions, Carlos ends up leaving to live with his brother Elías for a time in the Canary Islands. This act of physically separating himself from his social life in Madrid is an important step for Carlos to begin working through his problems. After going to live with Elías, Carlos's life appears to improve, but he still struggles with his addiction: "Todo parecía ir bien, no necesitaba la coca para vivir, la sustituía por cervezas que me tomaba a escondidas porque creía que me apaciguaban el mono" (Everything seemed to be going well, I didn't need coke to live, but I substituted it for the beers I drank in hiding because I thought they calmed the monkey on my back" ; Miralles 271). At this point of the novel, it seems that no matter how hard he seems to try, Carlos cannot repress his addiction or his past. Even so, while he has traded one substance for another, at least Carlos is trying to make changes in his

life and work through his addiction. He speaks of his experience with hindsight, knowingly stating that at the time he *thought* drinking beer would calm the monkey on his back, only to realize later that this was not the case. Carlos is not the only one struggling; every day he watches a group of junkies from the window who fight with one another about their heroin supply. While observing them, Carlos feels like he is much better off: "Desde la ventana me sentía seguro, creía estar curado, no necesitaba esnifar, me conformaba con empezar a beber a las nueve de la mañana y así calmar los temblores" ("From the window I felt secure, I thought I was cured, I didn't need to sniff, I just started to drink at 9:00 in the morning to calm the trembling" ; Miralles 272). Carlos at least recognizes that he is no longer in the same situation as the drug addicts he watches every day. In a way it is as though he feels better about himself while watching them fight from his bird's eye view, but it does show that Carlos is beginning to process his addiction and separate himself from other addicts.

While Carlos may not have the willpower to stop consuming alcohol, his body soon rebels against him. He ends up in the hospital for kidney failure at the age of 27, which was apparently unrelated to his excessive drug use, but does force him to stop drinking. During his stay in the hospital, Carlos begins to change, physically and mentally. Since he has to undergo various treatments for his illness, his body changes: "Me metamorfoseé en una rana gigante, gorda y llena de granos" ("I metamorphosized into a giant frog, fat, and full of pimples" ; Miralles 274). He also describes changes in his mental state: "Mi cerebro no pensaba como antes, me sentía como si hubiera salido de una película en la que el mundo de las drogas había sido una pesadilla sin sentido" ("My

brain did not think the same way that it did before, I felt like I had come out of a movie in which the world of drugs had been a meaningless nightmare" ; Miralles 275). Carlos is altered completely by his illness, and his life will never be the same as it was before. The doctors advise him that he contracted a strange virus that caused his kidney failure, and that he is alive due to a miracle (Miralles 275).

Carlos then returns to Madrid, where he is forced to face the prospect of starting an entirely different life, beginning with living in his father's home again. Upon his return, Carlos is intimidated by the future: "Era como una jodida pesadilla" ("It was like a fucking nightmare" ; Miralles 276). Nonetheless, Carlos commences his new life by reflecting upon the nightmare of his past. For the duration of his stay in the hospital, he felt as though he had forgotten many things, and even asked a doctor why he seemed to have these lacunae, to which the doctor responded: "Eso es destrucción de la memoria [...] como un vídeo en el que borras lo que no quieres ver" ("That is destruction of the memory [...] like a video in which you erase what you do not want to see" ; Miralles 278). At this juncture, Carlos realizes that he has repressed parts of his past that he did not want to deal with, but he had to face them in his idle time in the hospital.

Carlos contemplates his past in a way that Rafa, the protagonist in Luis Antonio de Villena's novel, does not. Instead of dwelling on the past, he seeks to move beyond it: "[...] sabía que había hecho mucho daño a bastante gente además de mí mismo. [...] Siempre hay gente que vive en el pasado sin mirar hacia delante sintiéndose muy a gusto con trifulcas y enredos, y que hacen de los malos momentos su mejor manjar. Me harté de pensar y cogí el teléfono para llamar a Lourdes" ([...] I knew I had hurt a lot of people

in addition to myself. [...] There are always people who live in the past without looking forward, feeling really good thinking about their turmoil and complications, and they make their bad moments their favorite thing to chew on. I got sick of thinking about it, and I picked up the phone to call Lourdes" ; Miralles 278). First, Carlos is able to recognize the mistakes of the past and to realize that he needs to do something to remedy them. His description of those who hang on to the past sounds very much like people who are trapped in a melancholic state, unable to let go of the past. Carlos does not allow himself to become melancholic about his past. He simply gets sick of thinking about it, which is really a way to stop dwelling on the past. Even his decision to call his sister, Lourdes, to clarify something that she said about him to his father, demonstrates a desire to take action rather than be overtaken by his regrets. Despite the fact that his discussion with his sister does not go well, it is a step for Carlos to work through the past.

Carlos also reconnects with his old friends, which is difficult for him because his appearance has been altered so drastically. They hardly recognize him, and he has to explain everything that has happened to him since being diagnosed with his illness. Yet even in this touchy situation, Carlos demonstrates a certain resolve: "Explicué lo que tenía, les dije que mi vida había dado un giro de ciento ochenta grados y que no estaba dispuesto a irme de este planeta sin luchar" ("I explained what I had, and I told them that my life had changed 180 degrees, and that I was not ready to leave this planet without a fight" ; Miralles 280). Carlos could easily allow himself to slip into the position of being a victim of his past and become caught in self-deprecating behavior, but he chooses not to do these things. He is making an example of himself in some sense. Carlos also works



through his addiction, for when his friends want to celebrate his return to Madrid with a line of cocaine, he refuses it immediately (Miralles 280). When he encounters his old friends, Carlos realizes how different they are, and wants to start his life anew: "Sólo quería que me curaran los médicos y abandonar de nuevo Madrid. Quería irme a un sitio donde pudiera inventar un pasado y relacionarme con la gente sin ser señalado" ("I only wanted the doctors to cure me so I could leave Madrid again. I wanted to go to a place where I could invent a past and have relationship with people without being pointed at" ; Miralles 281). Carlos wants to move on from his past, and not be defined by it so much. He wants to create a new story for himself and attach his libido not to his past, but to his future.

Although Carlos wants to move on, his past still haunts him<sup>60</sup>. It turns out that during his period of excessive drug use, he borrowed money from a group of mafiosos who have found out that he is back in Madrid. They come to his father's house to collect the money that Carlos owes them, and threaten that if he does not pay them back, they will do something to harm his father. Carlos is in dire straits once again, and even says "Sentí que quería morirme" ("I felt like I wanted to die" ; Miralles 286). He ends up having to borrow the money from his brother Elías and his father since he cannot work due to his illness, but promises to pay it back once he is able to work. When he meets up with one of the men, a drug dealer, he pays him the money and feels that he will be able to start his life anew: "[...] noté un alivio general que sería el comienzo de una nueva vida" ("I felt a general relief that it would be the beginning of a new life" ; Miralles 292).

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<sup>60</sup> At this point in the novel, Carlos's name changes to Charlie. To avoid confusion, I continue to refer to him as Carlos.

Carlos does struggle somewhat with his new position in life, and tries to help some of his friends who are still addicted to drugs to no avail. In the end he decides to cut off contact with all of his former friends. In general, Carlos exhibits a determination to move on with his life: "Tenía muchas ganas de vivir y de trabajar" ("I really wanted to live and to work" ; Miralles 293). Once again, it is clear that Carlos wants to work through his problems and move beyond his past, rather than being consumed by these things. After working at a couple of jobs where he had a difficult time, he finally found a job at Vips, a café where he worked as a server. Once he finds this job, he is finally able to work to pay off the debts of his past. In 1995, an opportunity for him to work at a newspaper called "Segundamano" ("Second Hand") arises. Interestingly, he finds out about the position through an old friend from "la era del punk" ("The/my punk era" ; Miralles 297). Carlos is a changed person—even though he and his father still do not get along well, since his father's health is deteriorating, he assumes responsibility and decides to continue to live with his father and care for him.

Though his debts from the past are paid, the past is still very present to Carlos. On an interesting note, it is in his adult life that he meets a couple of the significant personas who were involved in the Movida, radio producer Jesús Ordovás and performer Fabio McNamara. Unlike the protagonist in Villena's novel, Carlos's interactions during the 1980s were not with the most famous people. However, Ordovás and McNamara appear as characters in Miralles's novel with whom he interacted professionally. He says the following about McNamara: "junto a Pedro Almodóvar, había sido uno de los pioneros de la Movida madrileña de los años 80" ("Together with Pedro Almodóvar, he

had been one of the pioneers of the Madrid Movida of the 1980s" ; Miralles 331). As in many of the recent representations of the Movida, Almodóvar is evoked as a synecdoche for the entire Movida. Carlos's interactions with these figures seems generally positive, but other aspects of his past haunt him.

During the 1980s, Carlos is involved in different gangs and groups, and at one point a friend asks him to recount his experience as a skinhead for a documentary. He agrees on the condition that they will distort his voice and his image, but for some reason the television channel forgets to change his voice for the program, and Carlos realizes that people recognized his voice and must deal with the consequences. Shortly after this episode, Carlos is exploring the possibility of finding a job in the music industry, and he meets a woman who remembers him as "un punk que me daba mucho miedo" ("A punk that scared me a lot" ; Miralles 302). When he is in the hospital for an operation related to his illness, he shares a room with a man named Javi who he remembers from the past, but he is afraid that Javi will remember that Carlos once threatened him during his rebellious punk phase. Even though his past remains a part of his personal history, Carlos does not let it define him entirely. He ends up getting married and living a successful life in various lines of business including being a music producer and working in the pornography industry.

### Conclusion

While Miralles's novel depicts many tragic aspects of his life, and specifically of the period of the Movida, it ends with a sense of persistence, a resolve to live. In the epilogue of the novel, he admits: "[...] volvería a vivirlo todo. No me arrepiento de nada.

Bueno, sólo haría un par de cambios..." ("I would live it all over again. I don't regret anything. Well, I would make just a couple of changes..." ; Miralles 345). His outlook on the past is generally positive; he does not dwell on his mistakes. The last quote in the novel is telling as well. Miralles closes with a Vince Lombardi quote: "Los momentos más oscuros de nuestras vidas no deben ser enterrados ni olvidados, más bien son un recuerdo que debe permanecer para servir de inspiración y para recordarnos la fortaleza del espíritu humano y nuestra capacidad para superar lo intolerable" ("The darkest moments of our lives are not to be buried and forgotten. Rather, they are a memory to be called upon for inspiration, to remind us of the unrelenting human spirit and our capacity to overcome the intolerable" ; 346)<sup>61</sup>. By concluding his novel with this quote, Miralles proposes that remembering the past is important. He remembers the darker moments of his adolescence and early adult life but sees them as learning experiences.

In an interview, Miralles stated that he wanted to represent the people in his novel as "[...] unos supervivientes, pues en cierto modo es un homenaje a todos ellos y a todas las personas que salen adelante" ("[...] survivors, in a certain sense, it is an homage to all of them and to all of the people who keep going" ; Valero 2). For Miralles, the survivors of this period are not simply surviving, but moving on with their lives. Miralles keeps the memories of the past alive, but is able to work through them. He does not allow his

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<sup>61</sup> Vince Lombardi was a former Green Bay Packers football coach.

memories to hinder him from growth, whereas Rafa, the protagonist in Villena's novel, is obviously ensnared in the web of his memories, unable to break free.

The two strategies that Miralles and Villena employ to portray the past express distinctive ways in which to process the effects of past events on the present. The novels tell personal histories that relate to the larger question of how History is produced.

Long before Freud wrote on mourning and melancholia, in 1873, Friedrich Nietzsche wrote his seminal work *On the Use and Abuse of History and Life*, which in some sense anticipated what Freud would later write. Nietzsche claimed that "we need history," and proceeded to explain why this is so:

[...] We need it for life and for action, not for a comfortable turning away from life and from action or for merely glossing over the egotistical life and the cowardly bad act. We wish to serve history only insofar as it serves living. But there is a degree of doing history and a valuing of it through which life atrophies and degenerates. To bring this phenomenon to light as a remarkable symptom of our time is now every bit as necessary as it may be painful. (1)

Villena's "history project," filtered through the mouthpiece of the narrator, Rafa, is an example of representing history in a way that atrophies and degenerates. Rafa turns away from life, using his own history as a refuge to avoid moving forward. Characters like Rafa demonstrate how *not* to deal with the past, which is perhaps the most valuable lesson to be learned from the depiction of a person who is paralyzed in a stagnant, melancholic place. Miralles uses his story to "serve living," and he successfully wrestles the monkey from his back by working through his past with words. In both novels, the past remains as a powerful force. Rafa will not let the past die, but clings to it in a futile attempt to grasp what has ceased to exist. Miralles does not entirely put the past to death, but detaches himself from it by viewing it from a distance. The history of the Madrid

Movida is evoked in both novels, and there are important lessons to be learned from each way of recreating history. In both cases, the resuscitation of the past serves a purpose. Even the fact that Rafa dwells on 'what might have been' is significant. Jo Labanyi has noted that while she previously she criticized writers from the generation of 1898 as well as Américo Castro, Camilo José Cela and Juan Goytisolo "[...] for constructing a mythical view of history as 'what might have been,'" she eventually began to "reread this repeated manoeuvre as a strategy for rehabilitating the ghosts of history: that is, recreating in spectral form that which the history of modernity has consigned to oblivion" (*Engaging* 6). Both texts rehabilitate certain ghosts of the Movida, thus further intensifying the complicated relationship of the Movida to life and death, and the spaces in between these two extremes. The ghosts of the past are given life and also put to death in the films I evaluate in the following chapter.

## Chapter Four

### "Voices and Visions: The Madrid Movida Revisited in Film"

The films *La mala educación* (Bad Education), (2004), directed by Pedro Almodóvar, and *El Calentito* (2005), directed by Chus Gutiérrez, recreate various moments of the Madrid Movida by situating the actions of the films at least partially in 1977, 1980, and 1981. In *El Calentito*, the era of the Movida occupies a central position, while in *Bad Education* the Movida is used as a backdrop and to contrast with the 1960s the other period in which the film is set. Since the Movida era plays only a secondary role in *Bad Education*, my analysis focuses more on the film *El Calentito*. Despite their differences, both films demonstrate how this moment in the past can be put to work in varying ways. The characters in both films exhibit attitudes typical of the time period and their lines are carefully chosen to express these attitudes and mores. Both directors use subtle and more obvious references to the period of the Movida in their films, including certain music, costumes and works of art that serve to recreate the ambiance of the era.

While at times both films express some nostalgia for the Movida, they ultimately move beyond nostalgic representations of the past by being examples of Fredric Jameson and Julieta Omaña Andueza's concepts of "pastiche" as well as Jameson's concept of "postnostalgic narratives." In order to understand postnostalgia, it is useful to begin by defining "nostalgia." Svetlana Boym defines it as follows: "nostalgia (from *nostos*—return home, and *algia*—longing) is a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed. Nostalgia is a sentiment of loss and displacement, but it is also a romance

with one's own fantasy" (xiii). In particular, Chus Gutiérrez expresses some nostalgia for the bygone period of the early 1980s in the introduction to the script of her film.

However, she ultimately moves beyond nostalgia in diegesis of the film *El Calentito*. For Boym, "nostalgia is [...] an abdication of personal responsibility, a guilt-free homecoming, an ethical and aesthetic failure" (xiv). Both *Bad Education* and *El Calentito* move past nostalgia because they do not attempt to create a romantic view of the past, but rather are critical of the periods they represent, therefore taking responsibility for the past.

In *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991), Fredric Jameson develops the concept of pastiche: "pastiche is, like parody, the imitation of a peculiar or unique, idiosyncratic style" (17). A broader definition of the concept of "pastiche" is "an artistic work in a style that imitates that of another work, artist, or period," or "an artistic work consisting of a medley of pieces taken from various sources" (Oxford Dictionary). This dual definition of pastiche is essential to my analysis of the two films I consider, because both films emulate the period of the Madrid Movida and contain a medley of elements from different sources. The concept of pastiche is sometimes criticized for being superficial. For instance, Linda Hutcheon discusses the "pasted depthlessness of the postmodern" (17). Jameson also points to its shallowness, pointing out that pastiche is different from parody because it is a "neutral practice" that is devoid of parody's tendency towards humor and satire, or what he calls "blank parody" (17). While pastiche may not necessarily contain elements of humor or satire, it is not a totally neutral practice, for the new permutations produced in the



multiple imitations generate critical assessments of the past. I show that the use of pastiche, particularly the combination of elements contained in each film, is mobilized in a critical manner to create postnostalgic narratives.

Additionally, Jameson is critical of facile imitations of the past. He suggests that pastiche results from the fact that "[...] the producers of culture have nowhere to turn but to the past: the imitation of dead styles" (17-18). While Jameson seems to have a negative opinion of the pastiche, the imitation of "dead styles" in the films I look at prove that simulations of the past can serve an important purpose in the present by bringing back these "dead styles" to re-define the way in which we understand them. This becomes clear when considering the following distinction, established by Julieta Omaña Andueza. She states: "la diferencia entre el 'pastiche' y la simple nostalgia de todo lo antiguo radica en la idea de que el 'pastiche' busca más redefinir aquella manera en que vemos lo antiguo, y no simplemente revivirlo" ("The difference between the 'pastiche' and a simple nostalgia for the days of old lies in the idea that the 'pastiche' seeks more to redefine the way in which we see the past, and not just to simply relive it" ; Omaña Andueza 5). In this sense, pastiche can be equated with postnostalgia, because pastiche moves beyond simple nostalgia. Of course, not all types of pastiche are directly related to postnostalgia, but I see pastiche as a technique that sets the postnostalgic narrative into motion.

Jo Labanyi has justifiably pointed out that "[...] the prevalence of pastiche can be problematic when it is used, not to ask questions about what is being legitimized by particular cultural representations, but to reduce history to a storehouse of exploitable

images: as these become yet more commodities to be consumed, history is gutted of its dialectical power" (Labanyi 18). Marvin D'Lugo eloquently discusses an example of this type of problematic use of pastiche as well as the concept of postnostalgia in a chapter entitled "Postnostalgia in *Bad Education*. Written on the Body of Sara Montiel," included in the volume *All About Almodóvar: A Passion for Cinema* (2009). He affirms, "If *Bad Education* were merely an evocation of the past as cinematic camp, the film would be little more than an elaborate exercise in visual and narrative stylistics" (D'Lugo 376). D'Lugo's point could also be applied to *El Calentito*—if it were a simple evocation of the past, it would be reduced to mere imagery. However, the instances of pastiche and of postnostalgia in the two films I analyze are used to challenge the representations of the past, thus maintaining and even reinforcing the "dialectical power" of history that Labanyi references.

Specifically, the interpretations of the past presented in the two films analyzed here challenge spectators to view the past differently by presenting the possibilities of what might have happened rather than what actually did happen. I relate these possibilities to Barbie Zelizer's concept of the subjunctive voice, concluding that by being examples of "pastiche," the films move beyond nostalgia and offer a new reading of the memory of the Madrid Movida. As Zelizer posits:

It is possible, even probable, that images function in memory precisely through contingency, when meaning settles not at the image's original point of display but over time in new contexts that are always altered, sometimes playful, and often contradictory. By playing to the contingent aspect of a depicted event or issue, the image's capacity to speak for the past changes in its relation to the events it depicts." (161-2).

Here, the term "contingency" goes beyond the here and now of what is depicted in images to delve into the realms of "possibility, qualification, imagination" (*ibid* 161). Contingency also introduces aspects of chance and relativity, and seeks to complicate and modify what we see. Zelizer's notion of contingency is therefore directly related to Omaña Andueza's notion of pastiche and to the concept of postnostalgia, because the imitations of the past inevitably involve rearranging the past, creating new ways to evaluate events. Pastiche representations introduce the subjunctive voice through images and provoke us to think about the possibilities of what *might have happened* in considering different historical events.

Further, the notion of pastiche is related to Fredric Jameson's concept of "postnostalgia." Jameson initially discusses how nostalgic films paved the way for postnostalgic ones: "[...] it is because the formal apparatus of nostalgia films has trained us to consume the past in the form of glossy images that new and more complex 'postnostalgia' statements and forms become possible" (287). According to Jameson, postnostalgic narratives demand "historical judgments" and "evaluations of moments of the past" rather than the uncomplicated consumption of "glossy images" (288). D'Lugo elaborates on Jameson's explanation of postnostalgia, defining it as "a formal visual-narrative strategy that seeks to free its audience from the pull of 'pastness' by developing a form of narration that works as a diagnostic apparatus through which to view and question one's relation to the representations of the past" (376). In short, instead of being held captive by the romance of the past, postnostalgia creates a distance from the past, creating a space for critical inquiry. D'Lugo further notes that "[...] 'post' of

postnostalgia [...] as an internalized perceptual distance that enables the individual to see beyond the trap of memory, to look beyond the ideological structures that mask the recollections of the past in recognizable but distorted forms" (383). The "trap of memory" that D'Lugo refers to could be equated with Boym's definition of nostalgia as a romance with one's fantasy. Postnostalgic narratives are more critical and objective than nostalgia, and do not distort the past with fanciful, romantic memories but rather seek to analyze the past with a reflective distance.

*Bad Education* represents a kind of "auto-pastiche" since Almodóvar imitates some of his own earlier work in the film. My analysis of the way in which the period of the Madrid Movida is depicted in *Bad Education* adds to D'Lugo's interpretation of postnostalgia in the film. Specifically, I discuss how the past is re-imagined in the film by focusing more on the negative aspects of this period through the character of Ignacio, a frail drug addict who is a nothing like the carefree, hedonistic characters in Almodóvar's early films. The presence of the character Ignacio in the film alters the commonly held perception of the Movida as an uncomplicated period of time. Ignacio also introduces the contingent aspect of memory in the depiction of this period. Almodóvar's interpretation of this period reflects the pastiche in the sense that it provides a very distinctive picture of the Movida period from his early films, allowing us to re-think the way we see this particular time in Spanish history and creating a postnostalgic narrative. *El Calentito* is in part a pastiche of Almodóvar's work because it imitates his style. The film is also a pastiche in the sense that it incorporates a blend of images and texts from this period to recreate it, the most powerful one being the insertion of the coup

d'état attempt that took place on February 23, 1981. The film reconstructs the coup attempt and examines the possibilities of what might have happened had the coup been successful.

As D'Lugo contends, "in a postnostalgic narrative, the text freezes the representation of the past, transforming it into an object of analysis that will enable the reading subject to scrutinize critically the distortions and contradictions inherent in historical representation" (*Postnostalgia...* 376). Both films question the distortions and contradictions in the representation(s) of the Madrid Movida over the last thirty years, offering distinctive viewpoints about the depiction of this significant cultural moment. In so doing, the past is not put on display in an uncritical, nostalgic manner, but rather for transformative purposes that enable spectators to engage critically with the representations of the past they present.

In this chapter, I will begin with a brief synopsis of each director's importance in contemporary Spanish film, followed by a discussion of what the two directors proposed to do with their films, and how each director views the presence of the Movida in their respective film. In so doing, I will analyze how the two directors express a slight degree of nostalgia for the sense of possibility that was experienced during the early transition to democracy and embodied specifically in the Madrid Movida. Following this information, I will focus first on the film *El Calentito* and then move to an analysis of the film *Bad Education*.

## Gutiérrez and Almodóvar: Contextualizing the Directors

Filmmaker Chus Gutiérrez was born in Granada in 1962, and she began her career in cinema in the early 1990s. *El Calentito* (2005) is Chus Gutiérrez's sixth feature film, and was well-received in Spain. The film was nominated for several awards in Spain, such as a Goya Award in 2006 for Best makeup and hairstyles, and it also won a Best New Actor award for Núria González at the Málaga Spanish Film Festival in 2005 (IMDb). Outside of Spain, the film won jury prizes for Best Actress, Best Film, and Best Score at the Monte Carlo Comedy Film Festival, and also an award for Best Score from the Toulouse Cinespaña Festival, all in 2005 (IMDb). *El Calentito* was also screened at the Rio de Janeiro International Film Festival in 2005, the San Francisco International LGBT Film Festival, and at the Instituto Cervantes in New York. Gutiérrez has also directed the films *Sublet* (1992), *Sexo oral* (Oral Sex) (1994), *Alma gitana* (Gypsy Soul) (1996), *Insomnio* (*Insomnia*) (1998), *Poniente* (2002), and, most recently, a seventh feature film, *Retorno a Hansala* (*Return to Hansala*) (2008). In addition, she has directed several television episodes for programs such as *Ellas son así* (*They are like that*) (1999). A 2003 video installation entitled "El viaje inmóvil" ("The Unmovable Journey") created by Gutiérrez was featured at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León (The Contemporary Art Museum of Castille and León, known as MUSAC). The museum explains Gutiérrez's work as follows: "In addition to receiving different awards in national and international festivals, she has worked with some of Spain's premiere filmmakers such as Joaquín Jordá, Fernando Trueba and Icíar Bollaín. Her work tackles the complexity of personal relationships within markedly engaged

social contexts" (MUSAC np). The film *El Calentito* exemplifies the latter quote by creating a complex web of personal relationships that are put to the test by the social context of the attempted coup d'état on February 23, 1981.

Born in 1951, Pedro Almodóvar's trajectory is quite different from Gutiérrez's, for he began his career as a filmmaker in the 1970s, a much more conservative period in Spain when filmmakers were limited in their freedom of expression. Almodóvar moved to Madrid to study film from Castilla La Mancha in 1968, just before Franco closed the doors of the National School of Cinema. Nonetheless, Almodóvar was able to make films with a Super 8 camera in the mid-1970s. These short films remain unpublished, such as *Folle, folle, folléme Tim*, from the mid 1970s. Almodóvar's first two feature films, *Pepi, Luci, Bom y las otras chicas del montón* (*Pepi, Luci, Bom and the Other Girls from the Heap*) (1980) and *Laberinto de pasiones* (*Labyrinth of Passions*) (1982) personify the early days of the Madrid Movida. Almodóvar has directed seventeen feature films since 1980, the most recent being *Los abrazos rotos* (*Broken Embraces*) (2009). Many of his films have been nominated for multiple awards both in Spain and abroad. For example, *Bad Education* (2004) won 11 awards and was nominated for 30 other awards, however, the film was not as successful as *All About my Mother* (1999) and *Talk to Her* (2002) (Fuentes 430). Marsha Kinder has remarked the following about Almodóvar's significant role as a Spanish filmmaker:

Emerging as the self-appointed film laureate of the socialist era, Almodóvar was keenly aware of his historic role in this process of refiguring. As he expressed it when I interviewed him in 1987: "I think my films...represent...this kind of new mentality that appears in Spain after Franco dies...Everybody has heard that now everything is different in Spain...but it is not so easy to find this change in the Spanish cinema. I think in my films they see how Spain has changed, above all,

because now it is possible to do this kind of film here, ...a film like *La ley del deseo*. (Kinder *Refiguring* 3-4)

Almodóvar's acclaim both in Spain and abroad is well known. The majority of texts written about the field of Spanish Cultural Studies mention something about Almodóvar's importance, and numerous scholarly articles and volumes have been devoted to Almodóvar's work, most recently with *All About Almodóvar: A Passion for Cinema*, edited by Brad Epps and Despina Kakoudaki and published in 2009. In this volume, Epps and Kakoudaki note that "in the last thirty years, Almodóvar has been, by turns, an experimental voice of the Spanish *Movida*, a social and political provocateur, a cultural iconoclast, an enfant terrible, a punk, a queer, and a quirky genius whose appeal transcends national boundaries and generic formations" (2).

Pedro Almodóvar's renown in Spain and abroad has influenced many other Spanish filmmakers, including Chus Gutiérrez, even if she does not want to acknowledge this influence outright. In spite of Gutiérrez's reticence to admit the similarity between the film *El Calentito* and Almodóvar's work, it is true that (as Kinder points out) Almodóvar's success created a hospitable environment for a film like *El Calentito*, arguably both in Spain and abroad. Marsha Kinder notes the following of Almodóvar's unique combination of attributes and success:

[...] by 1991 Almodóvar had directed six of Spain's all-time top thirteen film exports to the United States. This model of commercial success was not lost on other Spanish filmmakers, who realized that Almodóvar's combination of historical recuperation and sexual mobility was transferable. Even if they were not consciously following his lead, his global success created a more hospitable environment for the reception of their films abroad—particularly if their representation of Spain was consistent with the way his films had refigured it (Kinder *Refiguring* 4-5).



Gutiérrez both recuperates a period in Spanish history and deals with sexual mobility in a variety of ways in her film. She pays homage to Almodóvar by including a clip of one of his performances (of the song "Suck it to me") with Fabio McNamara at the club Rock-Ola, which Almodóvar refers to as the university of the Movida. In the film, it is made to look as though the duo is performing that night at El Calentito. Inserting this footage into the film is an example of how often, elements from the extra-diegetic reality are included in films to reinforce the connection to reality (Thibaudeau 237). In this case, by including the performance of "Suck it to me" in the film, the band in *El Calentito* is associated with the underground scene in Madrid. In addition to this performance, a fictional Fabio McNamara appears in the *El Calentito*. Fabio's lines in the film are typical recreations of the way he spoke in the film *Laberinto de pasiones* (1982) and reminiscent of Patty Diphusa, the character created by Pedro Almodóvar for the periodical *La luna de Madrid*. In *El Calentito*, he talks loudly and explains "me he metido media farmacia," which parallels the Fabio portrayed in *Laberinto de pasiones* who cries out "qué overdose!"

There is also a reference to the band Alaska y los Pegamoides in the film. Alaska is still a very well-known performer in Spain (she now performs with the band Fangoria) and has been called the "muse" of the Movida. Alaska, whose real name is Olvido Gara, also appeared in Pedro Almodóvar's first feature film, *Pepi, Luci, Bom y las otras chicas del montón* (1980) and was a member of a band in the film as well. While Gutiérrez has stated that she was not inspired by Almodóvar, there are some similarities between the band Las Siux and Alaska, both from her character Bom in Almodóvar's film and as a

performer in the band Alaska y los Pegamoides. Bom was a lesbian, like Carmen in *El Calentito*, and both Bom and Carmen fall in love with women who come out of the closet in the two films. As in *El Calentito*, in *Pepi, Luci, Bom...*, there is a scene that depicts someone who must forcefully have sex with a fascist policeman. One of the most famous songs by Alaska y los Pegamoides, "Horror en el hipermercado," (1980) is "performed" at *El Calentito*. *El Calentito* is thus a pastiche of Almodóvar's work, both in the sense of imitating his work as well as the fact that it includes an amalgamation of elements taken from various sources and combined in the film.

Despite these overt references to Almodóvar's work in *El Calentito*, Gutiérrez resists the comparison between her work and that of Almodóvar. In an interview, Gutiérrez did not wish to acknowledge the connection at all, stating, "Alucino un poco, aparece un personaje transexual y ya decimos que es cine de Almodóvar. Ahora resulta que Almodóvar es la Movida, es los transexuales, es los personajes que están un poco en la olla, lo es todo" ("I am a little amazed—a transsexual character appears [in a film] and we say that it is the cinema of Almodóvar. Now it seems that Almodóvar is the Movida, he is transsexuals, he is all the people who are part of the scene, he is everything" ; Guillén 2). Gutiérrez's comment is compelling on different levels. First, as is the case in many of the cultural products I examine in this dissertation, Almodóvar is often represented as a synecdoche for the entire Movida. Gutiérrez takes the Almodóvar-synecdoche relationship to another level, noting that his name is also synonymous with transsexuals, with famous people, and with *everything*. She expresses dissatisfaction with what she sees as an overstatement of everything being all about Almodóvar. In view

of all the overt and subtle intertextual references to Almodóvar's work that she includes in her film, her disavowal of Almodovar reads as disingenuous. If she had not included any of these references to his work, her comments might be more believable. By citing Almodóvar's work within the diegesis of her own film, she is reinforcing the fact that Almodóvar represents the Movida. If she had wanted to distance herself from his work, it might have been more appropriate to remove these explicit allusions to Almodóvar from the film. Nonetheless, these references, along with other elements that Gutiérrez incorporates, serve to recreate the memory of this period. Both Almodóvar and Gutiérrez have reflected on their creative processes and reasoning for creating films situated during the era of the Movida.

#### Almodóvar and Gutiérrez: Memories of the Movida

Both directors note that the euphoria of the Madrid Movida was an important aspect of the social climate during the transition to democracy, a period of time that was itself full of opportunities. Before it occurred, the end to Franco's long-time dictatorship was highly anticipated. Many people thought about what might happen when it would finally end, thereby projecting into the future their desires for freedoms not allowed them during the dictatorship. Thus before it even began, what would become known as the transition to democracy was a time that was infused with great potential. In the introduction to the script of the film *El Calentito*, director Chus Gutiérrez discusses what the transition to democracy meant to her: "Un país no sale todos los días de una dictadura de cuarenta años y se encuentra con la posibilidad de transformar la mentalidad y la vida de todo un pueblo. Yo creo que en esa época se respiraba una mezcla de euforia y miedo,

pero por primera vez en mucho tiempo la gente podía soñar con un futuro diferente" ("It's not an everyday occurrence that a country emerges from a 40-year long dictatorship and finds itself with the possibility of transforming the mentality and the life of its people. I think that in this period, we felt a mix of euphoria and fear, but for the first time in a long time, people could dream of a different future" ; 8). Gutiérrez emphasizes the spirit of possibility evident during the transition—the idea that things could change and that a different future was possible.

Pedro Almodóvar is also interested in the moment of the early 1980s for the sense of openness to newfound freedoms. Commenting on *Bad Education*, he has stated:

La película tampoco supone una reflexión sobre la movida madrileña de principios de los ochenta, aunque gran parte transcurra en el Madrid de esa época. Lo que me interesa de ese momento histórico es la borrachera de libertad que vivía España, en oposición al oscurantismo y la represión de los años 60. Los primeros ochenta son, por ello, el marco ideal para que los protagonistas, ya adultos, sean dueños de sus destinos, de sus cuerpos y de sus deseos.  
(ClubCultura)

The movie is not a reflection about the Madrid Movida of this era. What interests me about this historical moment is the drunken freedom that was being experienced in Spain, in opposition to the darkness and repression of the 1960s. The early eighties are thus the ideal frame for the protagonists, now adults, to be the masters of their destinies, of their bodies, and of their desires.

Almodóvar uses the Movida as a background for the film, and as a point of contrast between the 1980s and the 1960s. While the entire film may not be a reflection on the Movida, there are a series of reflections on the time period, and what is most interesting about the moments of the film in Movida-era Spain are the instances of the "subjunctive voice" (Zelizer 164). Additionally, Madrid in the early 1980s serves as "[...] the framing site from which nearly all other actions [in the film] are presented as flashbacks [...

therefore] 1980 is transformed into the starting point of a mystery plot involving both individual memory and cultural history" (D'Lugo *Postnostalgia* 361). Thus the choice to make this moment in Spanish history such a central point in the film is quite significant—all the actions in the film revolve around this pivotal moment, which was arguably one of the most crucial moments of Almodóvar's own life. The new freedoms that came about during this period offered a great deal of potential and the ability to act on desires. The attitude of "todo vale" prevailed during this moment: anything could happen in the streets of Madrid. Gutiérrez also emphasizes the significance of the spirit of the Movida, giving a more detailed account of what Almodóvar referred to as the "drunken freedom" of the early 1980s: "Estábamos contagiados de la necesidad de pasárnoslo bien, de recuperar la libertad, de ser tú mismo, de no tener miedo a intentar una forma de vida que no era la establecida, la que nos habían contado que tenía que ser. Experimentábamos con las drogas, con el sexo, con la música y con nuestros sueños" ("The need to have a good time was contagious for us, we wanted to recuperate freedom, be ourselves, not be afraid to try out a new kind of life that was not the established one, not what we had been told that it had to be like. We experimented with drugs, with sex, with music, and with our dreams"; 9). Gutiérrez expresses nostalgia for the *sense of possibility* that was experienced during the early transition to democracy and embodied specifically in the Madrid Movida. Gutiérrez expresses the desire felt by many to go against the grain and the rampant experimentation that was practiced during this period. Thus the film celebrates the new freedoms of the Movida moment, and Gutiérrez's comments in the script also mourn the loss of these feelings.

Similar to Almodóvar, Gutiérrez emphasizes the importance of the ability to leave the past behind in order to focus on new and distinct possibilities. At the end of her introduction to the script of *El Calentito*, a tinge of nostalgia is evident in Gutiérrez's words: "el espíritu del Calentito está lleno de una energía renovadora, libertaria, ingenua y loca de una época en la que vivir era más fácil y más barato, donde teníamos una necesidad imperiosa de compartir sueños, donde no importaba demasiado dónde ibas a llegar sino el camino que ibas a recorrer" ("The spirit of El Calentito is full of a renewed, libertarian, naïve, and crazy, energy during an era in which living was easier and cheaper, when we had an imperative need to share dreams, when it didn't matter as much where you were going but rather the journey that you would take to get there" ; 9). The nostalgia that Gutiérrez expresses is for a time when everything was easier and less expensive and when people did not think as much about the consequences of their actions but about what they were interested in doing. This memory of the era of the early 1980s reflects how "at first glance, nostalgia is a longing for a place, but actually it is a yearning for a different time—the time of our childhood, the slower rhythms of our dreams" (Boym xv). She idealizes this time gone by, yearning for a time in which it seemed that anything was possible. However, while Gutiérrez may wax nostalgic about this era, in the film *El Calentito* the representation of the past goes beyond nostalgia and is, in the end, clearly a postnostalgic narrative. In both *El Calentito* and *Bad Education*, "the past is presented as a site for a complex imaginative encounter, combining fantasy, emotion and critical judgment, to which the knowledge that it can never be fully retrieved is essential" (Cook 11). The latter quote elucidates the combination of elements included in

both films analyzed in this chapter, including the exploration of the possibilities of the past and the way in which the two films challenge the way the past is written. The "critical judgment" that Cook refers to relates to the critical distance that D'Lugo discusses in defining postnostalgic narratives. Interestingly, it seems at first glance that Gutiérrez did not wish to establish a clear distance between her life and the events depicted in the film *El Calentito*. However, by making the decision to situate the film in 1981, Gutiérrez ultimately creates this separation with her own past and also redefines the way this moment is remembered.

#### The genesis of *El Calentito*: Reconceptualizing the Past

The idea for the film *El Calentito* is loosely based on a series of events and experiences from the director Chus Gutiérrez's life, making the film somewhat autobiographical. Gutiérrez explains the elements from her past that partially inspired the setting and the events in the film in the beginning of the script for *El Calentito*. Her mother owned a bar in Madrid that opened in 1986 called El Calentito, which was originally a churros bar, but was later converted by Chus's sister in 1990 into a nightclub similar to the one depicted in the film. Paul Julian Smith has suggested that the club El Calentito was a "named for a fictional nightclub clearly modelled on Rock-Ola" (72). However, Gutiérrez herself explains that El Calentito actually did exist as a nightclub, albeit in 1990, when the Movida had been "pronounced dead" for at least five years. However, Paul Julian Smith's assertion is not entirely erroneous, because many of the important performances of the Movida took place at Rock-Ola. In the film *El Calentito*,

these are incorporated as though they had taken place at the club El Calentito, such as one of Almodóvar and McNamara's famous singing routines.

The fictional girl group band in the film, Las Siux<sup>62</sup>, is based on a band that Gutiérrez and her friends formed in New York in 1984 known as the Xoxonees<sup>63</sup>, which was a flamenco rap group, a very different musical form from the punk rock style of the group in the film. The Xoxonees continued in Madrid in 1987 and broke up in 1990 after they produced a record. Interestingly, the events of the director's real life do not coincide very much with the Movida, since the band Las Xoxonees was started in New York and arrived in Madrid at a time that would really be considered post-Movida. This demonstrates that Gutiérrez was not trying to produce a direct recreation of her life, but rather a portrait of what might have been, which exemplifies what Barbie Zelizer has referred to as the "subjunctive voice of images." The subjunctive voice plays an important role in examining images for their ability to represent "impulses of supposal, hypothesis, and possibility" (163). While Zelizer refers to photography in her work, I apply her ideas to film. In the process of remembering, these "spaces of possibility" are often those in which many people choose to dwell. Thus "subjunctivity...becomes a voice or trope through which to remember" (Zelizer 167). The most potent sequences in the film dwell on the possibilities of the past, on *what might have happened*, rather than on what actually occurred. This is tied to the notion of how the past is re-defined and critically examined in postnostalgic narratives, by considering the possibilities brought forth powerfully by centering the film around the attempted coup d'état that took place on

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<sup>62</sup> It is possible that Gutiérrez took the inspiration for the name "Las Siux" from a British punk rock band formed in 1976 called Siouxsie and the Banshees.

<sup>63</sup> The name may refer to a song by Alaska y los Pegamoides entitled "Las chochonis."



February 23, 1981. This event is also depicted in Eduardo Mendicutti's 1982 novel *Una mala noche la tiene cualquiera*, (Anyone Can Have a Bad Night), and there are several parallels between this novel and the film *El Calentito*.

#### Redefining the Past: Repression and Unrest

The film fits into Omaña Andueza's notion of how the use of pastiche seeks to redefine how we think of the past in a number of ways. First, the identification of the Movida with the city of Madrid is somewhat exaggerated. Although the Movida did become widely popularized and well known, the number of people who participated in it was quite small. The film *El Calentito* does well in showing resistance to the kinds of people who were involved in the Movida by positioning Sara, a conservative, naïve teenager as the protagonist of the film. It is through Sara's eyes that the public is exposed to the club El Calentito and its cultural scene. Therefore, the film reminds us, despite the fact that it is a fictional account, that not everyone in Madrid participated in the Movida—in fact, only a very small group of people did. Since the images of the Movida have been widely circulated as the principal images of the late 1970s and early 1980s culture in Madrid, other images have been left out. There was also a certain amount of social and political unrest during this period, not only with the coup attempt but also in other areas, which is also sometimes diminished in narratives of this period.

*El Calentito* commences with the off camera voice of a Spanish newscaster discussing current events. The camera zooms in on the television screen, which reads "Madrid, 1981" in order to situate us within the time period. The newscaster states the following: "También abordó el Ministro el tema de la muerte del miembro de ETA José

Ignacio Arregui. 'Yo creo,' afirmó, 'que la policía no le mató.' La muerte de Arregui..." ("The Minister also covered the theme of the death of ETA [Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna, "Homeland and Liberty"] member José Ignacio Arregui. 'I think,' he affirmed, 'that the police did not kill him.' The death of Arregui..."). José Ignacio Arregui was a "suspect in the killing of two Civil Guards," and died in a prison hospital in mid-February, allegedly because he was tortured; "when news of Arregui's death was made public, a two-day period of rioting began in San Sebastian, Vitoria, and Bilbao" (Brittanica Online). The placement of this social and political unrest at the beginning of the film serves as a subtle way to set the stage for the upheaval that occurs later. Thousands protested Arregui's death, and the inclusion of this particular news clip in the film serves to demonstrate the social unrest and the presence of the Basque separatist movement and its demand for autonomy in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This brief news broadcast is one of many elements that makes the film a pastiche and also a postnostalgic narrative, because it provides a historical context that provokes an "evaluation of moments of the past" (Jameson 288).

The year 1981 marked six years since the death of Francisco Franco and three years since the 1978 Constitution was instituted. While many changes had occurred in Spain since the death of Franco and during the transition to democracy, the past was not dead yet. Besides the radical punk scene depicted in the film, *El Calentito* also demonstrates the constituent of people who were resistant to all the changes that took place during the transition, preferring that things return to the way they were during the dictatorship. The representation of radical, moderate and conservative points of view is

an important characteristic of the film, because the film attempts to remind viewers that the ideals of democracy were not immediately accepted by everyone. The portrayals of the Movida often focus only on the hedonistic youth culture present during this period, which comes through in *El Calentito*, but is not the only focus of the film. The inclusion of a variety of viewpoints and the representation of political events in the film help to clarify some of the "[...] distortions and contradictions inherent in historical representation" and enable the spectator understand some of these contradictions, thus creating a postnostalgic narrative (*Postnostalgia...* 376).

The position of queers in Spain was still somewhat precarious in the early 1980s, which is something that is often forgotten when remembering this period. At one point in the film, the owner of the bar *El Calentito*, Antonia, receives a complaint (delivered by two policemen) from the neighbors on the fifth floor of the building. The neighbor happens to be an ex-Guardia Civil (Civil Guard) who is very much at odds with Antonia and her lifestyle, which will become more apparent as the plot of the film unfolds. In order to avoid punishment for the complaints, Antonia must perform oral sex on the policeman, something which she has apparently had to do previously. This scene shows an aspect of repression in the film and demonstrates that during this period, while transvestites were able to express their identities more openly, they still experienced difficulties. Gutiérrez's decision to include Antonia's character is pivotal in that she represents someone who experiences conflicts because of her identity. One misconception about the period of aperture following the dictatorship is that suddenly everything changed and people could express themselves as they pleased without

complications. This was not the case, and Antonia is a representation of this fact. While transvestites were not mentioned in legal discourse, punitive legal measures against homosexuals were in place well into the transition. The Law of Social Danger and Rehabilitation, established by Franco in 1970, was not abolished until 1981, when homosexuality was eliminated "as a category of social danger subject to security measures" (Pérez-Sánchez 31).

Nonetheless, the choice to include Antonia and also her friend Vero in the film is significant, because they are people in transition, which serves as a metaphor for the transition to democracy that was happening at the time. While they are discussing the idea of creating an association for transvestites, Vero says to Antonia at one point "lo nuestro sí que es una transición" ("Our thing is definitely a transition"). Antonia and Vero thus represent projections of "the transvestite's body onto the national body" (Pérez-Sánchez 94). Like La Madelón, the transvestite protagonist in Eduardo Mendicutti's novel *Una mala noche la tiene cualquiera* (1982), the transvestite Antonia in *El Calentito* is an example of "deploying...transvestism as a trope for the new Spanish democracy" (Pérez-Sánchez 61). Further, "[...] transvestism and what it represents in *Una mala noche*—that is, living with ambiguities and contradictions, negotiating opposing forces but refusing to go back to a previous, nefarious state—is the true condition of Spanish democracy" (Pérez Sánchez 110). Equating the transition with transvestism functions on two ambiguous levels, for transvestism can be seen as a symbol of freedom and openness, or as a marker of the superficiality of the new regime under which the old regime continues (Colmeiro "España al borde..." 33). This double meaning of the transition and

transvestism also reveals the complications I have mentioned previously about whether the transition signified rupture or continuity.

In any case, remembering the fact that it was not easy for many people to be fully accepted into Spanish society during the transition is important, especially because sometimes the Movida is seen as something that was assimilated into Madrid's cultural map with relative ease. Due to the fact that the Movida was commodified in its later years, it seems that we may have been left with a certain aspect of that memory: that those involved in it were simply puppets for the local government. Showing representations of people who had a difficult time during the transition years because of their identity (and who were especially threatened by the 1981 coup attempt) is an important reminder of the ground-breaking changes that were occurring during this period. The presence of Antonia and Vero in the film, and their reactions to the coup attempt, contribute to the postnostalgic narrative in *El Calentito* by engaging spectators in questioning what might have happened to them had the coup been successful.

#### Resistance to Change: Conservative Ideals in *El Calentito*

José and Margarita, an elderly couple that lives above the bar El Calentito, refuse to accept Antonia's transformations. Their resistance to Antonia's lifestyle is built up until it culminates in a climactic scene towards the end of the film. Early in the film, José insists on calling her Antonio instead of Antonia, calls her an "engendro," ("freak") and says that "esto era una cafetería como Dios manda hasta que a ti te dio por ponerte sujetador" ("this was a cafeteria, as God would want it to be, until you decided to put on a bra" ; Gutiérrez 57). José and Margarita represent an oppositional force in the film, and

they also embody the intolerant ideals of the Franco regime. José and Margarita are not the only ones who have trouble accepting Antonia's new identity. Antonia's teenage son Jorge still calls her "papá" and is embarrassed that Antonia picks him up from school, afraid of the ridicule of his friends. Some members of Sara's family were also opposed to the societal transformations that were happening during this period.

In particular, the conservative ideals of the past are embodied in the character who plays Sara's mother in the film, Ana, a dictatorial matriarch. Her character can be equated with a female version of Francisco Franco (or maybe a sort of Pilar Primo de Rivera) and she is one of several characters in the film who cling to the conservative ideals of the past. Interestingly, Sara's meek, humble father Antonio usually sides with Sara and is much more understanding than his wife. Antonio and Ana's relationship takes on a reversal of gender roles, which is also present in other aspects of the film.

Another opposition of sorts is established with the contrast between Sara and her brother Nacho. One problem with the film is that it seems to create caricatures of certain types of people that are rather exaggerated. Like his mother, Nacho also represents conservative ideals—he listens to military marches full blast in his room and sports a sweater emblazoned with the red and yellow Spanish flag, while his room is decorated with a Spanish flag. Generally, Sara's mother Ana is resistant to change, and wishes she could control her daughter. At one point in the film, after Sara has begun to spend time with a new group of friends, Ana interrogates her daughter about her activities. In this scene, Ana is standing up by the window, and her face is partially in the shadows, an effect that adds to the characterization of Ana as a sinister figure and also suggests her

darker side, which will emerge later in the film. Ana asks Sara two questions: "no te estarás drogando, ¿verdad?" and "Y eso...¿ya lo has hecho?" ("you are not doing drugs, right? And that...have you done it?" ; Gutiérrez 90-91). The "eso" refers to sex, a word that Ana is unable to utter in the presence of her daughter, even when Sara asks her "¿El qué?" ("What?") to which Ana responds "Pues 'eso'...¿qué va a ser?...Eso" ("Well, 'that,' what do you think? 'That'" ; *ibid* 91). Ana breathes a sigh of relief when she finds out that Sara has not had sex: "¡Ave María Purísima! ¡Ay, Dios mío!, esto con Franco no pasaba" ("Hail Mary! Oh, my God! This never happened with Franco" ; *ibid* 91). The phrase "esto con Franco no pasaba" is an expression of yearning for a time when many things were kept under wraps and when order was enforced through strict surveillance of social morés. The conflict between Sara and her mother captures the tension that existed during the transition between traditional values and the spread of the advances of modernity and even questions of postmodernity (Escudero 151). Sara's experiences in the bar El Calentito expose her to a lot of things that did not happen with Franco, but rather, reflect the onslaught of modernity and postmodernity. The setting of the bar also takes on a great importance because it establishes the events on the night of February 23, 1981, a crucial moment in which the traditions of the past and the developments of the future arrived at a decisive crossroads.

### Entering El Calentito

Sara's first experience at El Calentito is quite intense. After escaping her oppressive mother, she accompanies her boyfriend, Toni, to the bar El Calentito. When they arrive, Toni greets Vero, a good friend of the owner, Antonia, and also a transvestite.

When they arrive at El Calentito, there is a separation of colors that is demarcated by the door to the club. The people outside the door are featured in color, while those just at the door are featured in black and white. This color shift can be read as an attempt to show that we are now entering the "authentic" black and white past or crossing the threshold into the past. When inside the club, the color returns, and we hear the sound of screaming and grunting that characterizes the music of Las Siux, the punk band who is performing that night along with several other bands, such as Alaska y los Pegamoides, one of the most famous and recognizable groups from the Movida.

The experience of going to El Calentito shocks the naïve, conservatively-dressed Sara since it is filled with punks and tattooed characters typical of early 1980s Spain. The ambiance of the club reflects the heady nightlife and the "todo vale" ("anything goes") motto of the Movida. Before the image of the band Las Siux is shown, a close-up of Sara's face reveals her shock at seeing them. Las Siux are dressed in punk style, with bright, torn, tight clothing, ripped fishnet stockings, chunky studded silver jewelry and safety pins that hold their clothes together<sup>64</sup>. The demeanor of the band members starkly contrasts with Sara's demure manner. Sara's comfort level is soon further challenged by her boyfriend, Toni, who begins to grope her as they watch Las Siux perform. Sara resists Toni's advances, and he leaves her alone with the pretext that he is going to get a drink, but he goes and finds another woman to satisfy himself instead.

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<sup>64</sup> The aesthetic of their clothing can be traced in part to the punk style developed and commercialized by British designer Vivienne Westwood in the mid-1970s. "The style most often associated with Punk involves bondage trousers worn with ripped T-shirts with anarchic slogans and boots. Hair and make-up was an integral part of Punk—hair was dyed violently bright colours and made to stand up on end, and facial piercing (particularly cheeks and noses) became popular." Amy de la Haye and Cathie Dingwall, *Surfers, Soulies, Skinheads & Skaters* (New York: Overlook Press, 1996), p. 13. (qtd. in Bell-Price)



It is at this moment that Antonia, the transvestite owner of El Calentito, first appears. She looks concerned after witnessing the encounter between Toni and Sara. Bereft because Toni has abandoned her, Sara begins to drink to console herself. Meanwhile, bandmember Carmen happily accepts a small bag of cocaine from a friend at the bar. Carmen also encourages Sara and her friend Marta to snort speed with her at another point in the film. The presence of drugs and alcohol is an important part of recreating the Movida era, although the darker effects and consequences of the "todo vale" attitude are absent from the film, which contrasts with the role of drug abuse in *Bad Education*. Only inexperienced Sara really feels the effects of her night of binge drinking at El Calentito; she ends up vomiting in the bathroom of the bar, only to discover her boyfriend in the stall next door having sex with the woman he picked up that night. Sara is crushed, and falls asleep in the bathroom, where she is later discovered by Carmen, with whom she wakes up the next morning in bed in a strange place.

#### Beyond El Calentito

Sara soon discovers she was rescued by Carmen and Leo, two members of the band Las Siux that she saw the night before. Sara has no idea how she got there, and as she walks down the hall, she is surprised by a gilded frame with a portrait of Francisco Franco on the wall, dressed in a military uniform. However, Franco is wearing some other elements that have been added to poke fun at him. These elements are called "unos pequeños retoques" ("a few small re-touches") in the script (Gutiérrez 36). Franco sports a red, blue and green party hat, a curly grey mustache, and large, gawdy black and white earrings. The portrait of Franco is an example of a parody, which is synonymous with

"ironic quotation, pastiche, appropriation, or intertextuality" according to Linda Hutcheon (93). Hutcheon also establishes the distinction between nostalgic and critical parodies of the past: "but this parodic reprise of the past of art is not nostalgic; it is always critical. [...] through a double process of installing and ironizing, parody signals how present representations come from past ones and what ideological consequences derive from both continuity and difference" (93). Therefore, her definition of parody relates to Jameson's concept of postnostalgia. Perhaps this distinction is made because nostalgia implies a sense of longing for the past to return, while critical parodic representations, like postnostalgic ones, are based on maintaining a critical distance from the past.

After Sara's encounter with the portrait of Franco, she begins her transition from her own conservative the past into the future. It turns out that Sara's drunken mishap becomes beneficial for everyone, because Chus, a band member of Las Siux, quit the night before. Carmen and Leo need a third band member to attend their appointment with the record company that very morning. Despite her complete lack of experience, they recruit Sara to replace Chus. The next scene, in the waiting room of the record company, features a radically changed Sara: she looks like another member of Las Siux, complete with a spiky black wig, dramatic makeup, torn stockings, black patent leather boots, a short plaid skirt, metal jewelry, a tight vest and fishnet stockings on her arms. Thus begins Sara's transformation from a geeky virgin to a punky sex symbol in less than 24 hours.

Las Siux are greeted by Señor Matas, the agent at the record company. Señor Matas's words to the women embody the commodification of pop culture that was

prominent during the early to mid-1980s, which was especially commonplace during the later years of the Movida: " ...Para esta temporada tenemos previsto lanzar un nuevo grupo femenino...Una respuesta española al éxito que en el extranjero están teniendo algunas formaciones de chicas..." ("This season we will be launching a new female group,...Spain's answer to the success that some all female groups are experiencing outside of Spain" ; Gutiérrez 44). The appearance of the commodification aspect of the Movida is historically accurate, because many record companies sought out underground bands in Spain in order to profit from their new image of a youthful, alternative culture.<sup>65</sup> While the commodification by the PSOE would not arrive until 1982, both record companies and the Madrid government saw similar potential for selling an international image of Madrid abroad. Before they sign a contract with the record company, Señor Matas wants to see the band perform live, which presents somewhat of a problem since Sara has never performed with them. They agree on a date anyway: February 23, 1981, which turns out to be a pivotal date in contemporary Spanish history.

### February 23, 1981

The climax of the film represents the most important exploration of the subjunctive voice within the diegesis. The culmination of the film centers around the historical event of Colonel Tejero's attempted coup d'état on February 23, 1981. The coup attempt took place on the night of February 23, 1981, known simply as "El 23-f" or "El Tejerazo" in Spain. The coup was led by Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Tejero, a disgruntled military officer who, along with 200 armed members of the Guardia Civil,

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<sup>65</sup> I discuss this further in my chapter that deals in part with the memory of the music scene during this period as depicted in the documentary *Madrid, la sombra de un sueño*.

stormed the Spanish Congress of Deputies during the process of electing Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo as the new Prime Minister. The Parliament and the Congress were held hostage for 18 hours and the coup ended the next morning; no one was harmed.

*El Calentito* focuses on the death of Francoism, and in so doing, presents us with moments to reflect on what might have been "had death not occurred," but it also celebrates the death of the past and the continuation of the freedoms the Madrid Movida is known for popularizing (Zelizer 167). The film demonstrates how the subjunctive voice can be used as a device to examine distinctive ways of remembering the Madrid Movida, therefore creating a postnostalgic narrative. Like Mendicutti's novel, the film "[...] vocally denounces gender and sexual oppression; successfully vindicates gender and sexual freedom; and firmly validates the truly democratic respect of differences by counterpointing the gains of democracy against the potential losses for queers that a return to a Francoist-style dictatorship would bring" (Pérez Sánchez 104). The film and the novel not only depict the potential losses for queers, but also the entire nation. As José Colmeiro suggests even the title of Mendicutti's novel suggests this generalization: "la situación de crisis ('una mala noche') se aplica a uno y a todos ('la tiene cualquiera'). La historia personal del travestí y la historia colectiva de la nación se superponen de manera inseparable" ("the crisis situation ('a bad night') applies to one and to all ('anyone'). The personal history of the transvestite and the collective history of the nation are superimposed in an inseparable manner" ; 30 "España al borde..."). Therefore, many people considered the potential losses that may have occurred if the coup had been successful. "El 23-f" is a day that people in Spain remember especially for its

possibilities: what if the coup had been successful? How would Spain be different today? These questions are entertained in Mendicutti's novel and in the film *El Calentito*. Gema Pérez Sánchez writes that the first-person narrator of Mendicutti's novel, La Madelón, "a male-to female (MTF), hormone-taking transvestite who, in a long monologue [...] tells her version of the historical events that took place on the most dreaded night of her life (and of most Spaniards): February 23, 1981" (93). "El 23-f" was a pivotal event during the transition to democracy, and everyone who was alive during that time remembers what they were doing on that night, similar to the importance of JFK's assassination in the minds of those who were alive during that moment of U.S. history.

Gutiérrez expresses her satisfaction regarding the decision to have the film coincide with the 1981 coup attempt: "creo que la mejor aportación que hicimos Juan Carlos Rubio, mi coguionista, y yo, fue trasladar la historia a 1981 y hacerla coincidir con el golpe de estado" ("I think that the best contribution that my co-scriptwriter Carlos Rubio and I made was to move the story to 1981 and make it coincide with the coup d'état" ; Gutiérrez 8). This decision also gives the film historical value; situating the film on the night of the attempted coup anchors it within the collective memory of Spaniards who lived through that important moment. Gutiérrez explains her opinions of the coup attempt: "Realmente se vivieron unos momentos de desesperación y angustia que por suerte ahora podemos mirarlos con sentido del humor. La entrada de Tejero en el Congreso es una de las imágenes más patética y burdas de nuestra historia contemporánea" ("Really, we lived through some moments of desperation and angst that luckily we can view now with a sense of humor. Tejero's entrance into the Congress is

one of the most pathetic and crude images of our contemporary history" ; 9). Looking back on the event, Gutiérrez is able to judge it as a pathetic image of Spain's past, but she also points out that the night of the coup attempt was filled with angst about what might happen. In addition, Gutiérrez's opinions about the coup attempt reflect a "postnostalgic narrative," because her opinions demonstrate that the past has been transformed "into an object of analysis" (*Postnostalgia...* 376).

Addressing the impact of "El 23-f", Gutiérrez explores these possibilities: "Si el Golpe hubiera triunfado, todo lo que estaba empezando, todos los cambios que se estaban produciendo, se hubiera esfumado en cuestión de segundos" ("If the coup had succeeded, everything that was beginning, all the changes that were being produced, would have gone up in smoke in a matter of seconds" ; Gutiérrez 9). Here she uses the subjunctive voice to explore the prospect of what might have happened if the coup had succeeded—it represented the possible end to something that had just begun.

The choice to center the events of the film on the attempted 1981 coup is also significant because it contributes to the role of the pastiche in the film. Much of the action in the film is based around the "what-if" dimension of "El 23-f". The film not only depicts the footage from the coup, but also builds a story around it. As with photographs, news footage can sometimes "aid the recall of things and events past so effectively that [it] become[s] the primary marker of memory itself" (Zelizer 160). The footage from "El 23-f" is an example of how "we come to remember whole events through condensed images that reduce complex and multidimensional phenomena into memorable scenes. Often they are memorable because they activate impulses about how the 'world might be'

rather than how 'it is'" (*ibid* 164). In the case of the coup d'etat, the result might have been different. The fledgling democracy may have been toppled that night, and perhaps another war would have started, or maybe a different dictator would have taken power. Therefore, in *El Calentito*, we not only see the footage of the coup d'etat and the subsequent televised speech of King Juan Carlos; through the different characters in the film, we also see how people may have reacted to the coup. Gutiérrez focuses on the moments of desperation and angst by having the characters in the film perform them, allowing the spectators to entertain what might have happened had the coup succeeded. Though the coup was unsuccessful, the attempt shook the Spanish people. *El Calentito* addresses the fear felt that Spain's young democracy would come to an end. This fear was quite real, for it was frightening to entertain the idea that, were the coup successful, Spain would return to a military dictatorship, or at least to a more conservative regime.

#### The Reaction to the Coup in *El Calentito*

The initial presentation of the coup attempt in the film occurs in the bar, El Calentito. Las Siux are talking when a hysterical Antonia interrupts them with the news: "¡Un golpe de estado! ¡Un golpe de estado! ¡Los militares han dado golpe de estado! ¡Nos van a matar a todos!" ("A coup d'état! A coup d'état! A coup d'état! The military men have done a coup d'état! They will kill us all! ; Gutiérrez 98). A radio broadcast which is presumably an original or an accurate recreation states the following: "[...]A las 18:23 de la tarde han tomado el Congreso un centenar de guardias civiles armados. En las calles se respira una tranquilidad absoluta" ; ("At 6:23 pm one hundred armed civil guardsmen took over the Congress. There is complete tranquility in the streets" ;

Gutiérrez 99). Antonia yells at the radio: "¿Tranquilidad absoluta? ¡Tu puta madre! ¿Pero cómo se puede hablar de tranquilidad, cuando el gobierno entero está secuestrado por un grupo de psicópatas con tricornos?" ("Absolute tranquility? Your fucking mother! How can they talk about tranquility when the government is sequestered by a group of psychopaths with three cornered hats<sup>66</sup>?" ; *ibid* 99). She is outraged by the idea that the Congress has been taken over by disgruntled military officers, and immediately begins to imagine what could happen to her if the coup is successful.

In contrast, the members of Las Siux are concerned only with the fact that they were supposed to give a concert that night. While Antonia drowns her sorrows in a large bottle of alcohol, Sara suggests that they perform the concert that night as planned<sup>67</sup>. The other bandmembers are excited about performing that night—Leo exclaims "¡¡Chicas, la lucha está en el escenario!!" ("Girls, the fight is on stage!" ; *ibid* 103). Their stance on the situation thus differs quite a bit from Antonia, who seems to be more aware of what she might lose. Antonia's attitude differs greatly from that of the younger people, exhibiting a telling generational difference. Since Antonia lived through much of the dictatorship, she experienced the consequences of the repression that characterized those years firsthand. However, people who were teenagers or in their early twenties (like Las Siux) may not have felt the effects as much since they were children or adolescents when the dictatorship came to an end.

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<sup>66</sup> The 'tricornio' hats were worn by the members of the Spanish civil guard.

<sup>67</sup> Interestingly enough, there were concerts that night in Madrid: photographer Miguel Trillo comments that "hubo conciertos y al día siguiente se escribió la crónica de esos conciertos" ("There were concerts, and the day after reviews were written about those concerts" ; Trillo qtd. in Lechado 12).



On the other hand, Antonia is aware of the threat the coup attempt poses, and remembers what it was like to be punished for subversive actions. She evokes the past when she frankly states the following to the bandmembers: "Vais a acabar todos en el Valle de los Caídos"<sup>68</sup> ("You will all end up in the Valley of the Fallen" ; *ibid* 102). The implication is that they will end up dead, just like the soldiers who died in the construction of the Valle de los Caídos monument, many of whom were anti-Franco Republicans. Antonia is exasperated by their flippant attitude, and finally exclaims "¿Queréis dejar de hablar de vuestro concierto?! ¿No tenéis ni idea de lo que es vivir bajo un régimen militar siendo una trans! ¿Voy a tener que chupársela a toda la tropa!" ("Would you quit talking about your concert?! You have no idea what it's like to live in a military regime being a transvestite! I'm going to have to suck off all the troops!" ; *ibid* 99-100).

To a greater extent than the members of Las Siux, Vero and Antonia are afraid of the return of a repressive past—Vero later tries to convince Antonia to come with her to London in case things become worse in Spain. The fear of persecution is also evidenced in a conversation between Antonia and her son Jorge. Jorge asks Antonia what she will do, and is aware that "las cosas se pueden poner muy jodidas" ("things could get really fucked up"). She replies that their only choice is to "tirar pa'alante" ("keep going" ;

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<sup>68</sup> "The Valley of the Fallen (*Valle de los Caídos*) is located in the Sierra de Guadarrama some 8 miles north of El Escorial. The complex was built between 1940 and 1958 and is a monument intended to commemorate all those who died on both sides during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). About 40,000 Nationalist and Republican soldiers are buried here. However, the Valley of the Fallen is inevitably associated with Franco's regime since the late General is buried inside the basilica and he was the one who ordered its construction" (Feel Madrid.com, The Madrid City Guide.) El Valle de los Caídos is a controversial monument for many because there are not explicit acknowledgements of the Spanish Civil War. It is more a monument to Franco himself than to the soldiers who died there, and it is said that many (mostly Republican) soldiers died in the construction of the monument, making it a very large mass grave.

Gutiérrez 114). A similar account is given by La Madelón in *Una mala noche la tiene cualquiera*, who states that night "What would happen to us? They might revert to the way it was before. [...] They'll surely end up killing La Madelón" (Mendicutti 16-17). Like Mendicutti's character La Madelón, what Antonia and Vero discuss on the night of the coup attempt "...conveys the sense of fear and urgency that queers must have experienced at that historical juncture" (Pérez-Sánchez 104). Antonia, Vero and La Madelón thus demonstrate a unique "understanding of the significance of the aborted coup" (Garlinger 368).

Pérez-Sánchez makes a very pertinent point in noting that bringing issues of gender and sexuality to the forefront during the Movida "makes them legitimate grounds on which to build a larger political program," arguing against the claim that the Movida was largely apolitical<sup>69</sup>. The emotions expressed by Antonia and Vero in *El Calentito* emphasize the political aspects of the period, just as La Madelón did in Mendicutti's novel. Pérez Sánchez's new reading of the political gestures in Mendicutti's novel can also be applied to *El Calentito*. These two examples demonstrate how pastiche seeks to redefine the way in which we think of the past. This is particularly evident when considering the erroneous generalization that many people who were involved in the Movida were apolitical.

There are other scenes in the film where the tension between those who wanted a return to the past and those who were terrified of its return is made clear. For Antonia,

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<sup>69</sup> In the film *El Calentito*, Ferdy, Leo's boyfriend, is involved in some kind of secret underground political movement. On the night of the attempted coup, he finally admits this to Leo, and the two of them destroy the political propaganda he has been harboring. The representation of a young, subversive person who is involved in politics also goes against the generalization that young people were largely apolitical in the early 1980s, especially those involved in the underground culture of the Movida.

the past is still very present, which she expresses in the following: "Cuarenta años aguantando al Generalísimo y a la Collares<sup>70</sup>...Te digo yo que ya hay mucha gente en su casa desempolvando la banderita con el Águila Imperial" ("Forty years putting up with the Generalísimo (Franco) and [his wife, Carmen Polo, nicknamed 'the one with the necklaces']...I'm telling you there are a lot of people in their houses dusting off the Imperial Eagle flag" ; *ibid* 100). Antonia uses the flag as a synecdoche for the dictatorship, and considers the fact that there still existed people who wished things would return to the way they were during the former regime. On the afternoon of February 23, Antonia goes to a small market to purchase numerous provisions. A woman approaches and states her opinion of the coup attempt: "Menos mal que las cosas ya se van a poner en su sitio de una vez...¡Arriba España!" ("At least things are going to be put back into their rightful place. Hail Spain!"; *ibid* 105). She raises her arm in a fascist salute and looks around her for others to follow her lead, and they do: the man next to her raises his hand to his temple in a military salute and says "¡Arriba!" ("Hail") Eugenio reluctantly conforms and raises his arm to salute the customers. The woman at the store is an example of one of the very people that Antonia feared—someone who was proud to be able to dust off her flag and use her fascist salute in public again. This scene demonstrates the constituent of people who wanted things to return to the way they were during the dictatorship as well as being resistant change during the transition.

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<sup>70</sup> Antonia uses nicknames for Franco (known as "El Generalísimo") and his wife Carmen Polo, known as "la Collares" because always she wore sizeable necklaces and it is rumored that she was feared by jewelers because she never paid for the jewelry she acquired from their shops. The use of these nicknames is yet another example of parody in the film *El Calentito*; she is obviously criticizing Franco and his wife by ironically using only their nicknames and saying that she spent 40 years "aguantando"—putting up with them.

On the evening of the coup, like Antonia, Sara's parents are much more worried about the situation than she is. Sara explains to her parents on the phone that she must participate in the concert at El Calentito. Ana promises that if Sara comes home for dinner, she will be allowed to go to the concert that night. In spite of her promise, Ana's true sentiments eventually surface. The return to repression is evident in Ana's treatment of her daughter Sara. Even though Ana agreed that she would let Sara leave after she came home for dinner, as soon as Sara walks in the door, Ana informs her that she will not be going out that night. While Ana tries to prevent Sara from leaving, her husband Antonio finally stands up to her, reminding his wife that she promised Sara she could leave that night.

Sara finally bursts out of her house and rushes to El Calentito in defiance of her mother and of the prohibitions imposed that night. Due to the recent turn of events, it is announced on the radio that "Todo personal afecto a los servicios públicos de interés civil queda militarizado. Quedan prohibidas todas las actividades públicas y privadas de todos los partidos políticos, prohibiéndose igual las reuniones superiores a cuatro personas" ("All personnel affected by public services of civil interest is militarized. All public and private activities of all political parties are prohibited, as well as meetings of more than four people" ; *ibid* 106). Military rule is enforced and the freedom to congregate is prohibited, briefly taking away people's civil rights granted to them under the 1978 Spanish constitution. Including this aspect of the events that took place on the evening of February 23, 1981 is significant, because it shows how quickly democratic rights were

suspended. Despite these prohibitions, the group decides to go on with the plan to perform at El Calentito that night.

When the concert attendees show up at El Calentito, they have somehow been informed to use a password for entering the bar that night, "se sienten coño" ("sit down, damnit")—a clear reference to the coup, for Colonel Tejero yelled this phrase when he forcibly entered the Congress. The ironic quotation of Tejero's order is another example of a parody, for a phrase that was used in a serious, threatening context is reappropriated in a very different context. According to Linda Hutcheon's definition of parody, "For artists, the postmodern is said to involve a rummaging through the image reserves of the past in such a way as to show the history of the representations their parody calls to our attention. [...] But this parodic reprise of the past of art is not nostalgic; it is always critical (93). Making use of Tejero's exclamation serves to criticize Tejero and his efforts to thwart the fledgling democracy, thus creating the critical distance that is incited in postnostalgic narratives.

Tejero's coup attempt is presented in another significant instance in the film, also in an ironic manner. The night of February 23, the bar begins to fill with people, including Señor Matas (the representative from the record company). Las Siux begin to sing one of their big hits, "Cantamos fatal" ("We sing horribly"). Their exuberance is soon cut short by the arrival of José, an ex guardia civil, and his wife Margarita—the dissatisfied neighbors from upstairs who are more than happy with the attempted coup. They hope that Tejero's coup will restore the "order" of the past, but in the meantime, they take matters into their own hands. Vero, who is guarding the door, is met by the

angry couple, José and Margarita. José points his gun at Vero and brushes past her with Margarita in tow. What follows is the couple's very own small-scale coup d'etat at El Calentito. Similar to Colonel Tejero's coup attempt, José shoots his gun and yells "¡Todo el mundo al suelo! ¡He dicho que todo el mundo al suelo!" ("Everyone on the ground! I said, everyone on the ground!") while his wife encourages him to fire another shot (Gutiérrez 130). The people at El Calentito panic, and as they land on the floor, Margarita hurls insults at them: "¡Drogadictos! ¡degenerados! ¡maricones! ¡comunistas! ¡cabrones!" (Drug addicts! Degenerates! Faggots! Communists! Assholes!" ; *ibid* 131).

Margarita's insults are revealing, for they exemplify her opinions of the people assembled at El Calentito that night: she sees them as the scum of society, and disapproves of their behaviors, whether involving drug use, sexual orientation, or political views. While the Movida is now for the most part accepted as being a legitimate artistic and cultural moment, it is important to recognize that in its early years, (the late 1970s and early 1980s), the cultural products created by those involved in the "Nueva Ola" and many of the social practices this constituent engaged in were indeed subversive. This subversiveness is sometimes lost in many recent commemorative cultural products about the Movida. These recent, watered-down representations of the Movida create a certain idea of the past that, as Marvin D'Lugo notes, "mask the recollections of the past" (D'Lugo 383). Thus including José and Margarita's vehement opposition to countercultural activities creates a postnostalgic narrative by including a variety of distinctive points of view. As spectators, we are able to analyze the past in a more critical manner since the past is unmasked and exposed in the film .

The performance of José and Margarita's coup attempt redefines the way we see the past. Instead of simply showing footage of Tejero's coup in *El Calentito*, the choice to create fictional characters who personify people who had views similar to those of Tejero is very effective. Throughout the film, the spectators are introduced to the growing tension between Antonia and her neighbors, which culminates that night in *El Calentito*. Antonia is the only person who refuses to move to the floor, despite José's orders. He points his gun directly at her and asks incredulously "¿Qué pasa? ¿Que no me has oído?" ("What's going on? Didn't you hear me?") to which she responds calmly: "Sí, te he oído, pero eso no quiere decir que me voy a tirar al suelo" ("Yes, I heard you, but this doesn't mean I'm going to fall to the ground" ; *ibid* 131). Antonia's actions also mirror the actual coup attempt; a famous photograph shows the defence minister, Manuel Gutiérrez Mellado, standing in defiance after Tejero ordered everyone to the ground. Antonia stands up to José and Margarita once and for all, refusing to acquiesce to their request that she fall to the ground like everyone else. She implores José to put the pistol down, and Margarita encourages him to simply shoot Antonia, because after all "¡No es más que un engendro!" ("She is nothing more than a freak!"; *ibid* 131). For Margarita, Antonia is nothing more than a freak of nature that deserves to die; she angrily demands her husband to shoot her: "¡Dispárala, mátala!" ("Shoot her, kill her!"). José further threatens Antonia, degrading her by saying "ahora, no eres tan gallito, ¿verdad Antonio?" ("Now you're not so brave, right Antonio?" ; *ibid* 131). It is of note that José pointedly refers to her as Antonio instead of Antonia, denying Antonia her preference to be called by her new name, which is part of her new life as a transvestite. However, the tables are

quickly turned: Jorge, Antonia's son, yells "¡Nooo!" while Antonia proceeds to kick the pistol out of José's hand; in the meantime, Vero shouts "¡El Rey, El Rey está en la tele, está dando un discurso!" ("The King, the King is on TV, he is giving a speech!" ; *ibid* 132). What Vero does not realize is that she somehow got hold of José's pistol, and is wildly shaking it in her hand as she yells the news to everyone. Antonia signals to her to let her know she is holding the pistol, and when Vero finally realizes it, she points the gun at José and Margarita, and shouts "¡Fachas, fuera de aquí! ¡Fuera!" ("Fascists, get out of here! Get out of here!"). Vero uses José's gun against him, thereby producing a role-reversal and stripping him of his power. Everyone else in the club joins in and the elderly couple hurriedly make their way out of El Calentito, increasingly aware of their failed attempt to cause disorder. In this scene, like La Madelón in Mendicutti's novel, Antonia and Vero become the essence of democratic ideals of freedom of expression and the celebration of difference (Moreiras Menor 87). Deploying Antonia, Vero and Las Siux in the film as the "winners" and those who triumphed after the coup portrays them as spokespeople "for all those who had much to win if the coup failed" (Azancot 16).

After José and Margarita are forced out of El Calentito, the camera shifts to focus on the television that Vero brought with her, on which footage is broadcast from King Juan Carlos's speech, given on the morning of February 24, 1981. The visual effect of alternating between Juan Carlos's speech and the faces of the people at El Calentito (the King and his subjects) causes the speech to be inscribed on their faces, and the protagonists experience catharsis after the speech is completed. Juan Carlos states: "...La Corona, símbolo de permanencia y unidad de la Patria, no puede tolerar en forma alguna



acciones o actitudes de personas que pretenden interrumpir por la fuerza el proceso democrático que la Constitución, votada por el pueblo español, determinó en su día a través de referéndum" ("The Crown, symbol of the permanence and unity of the Fatherland, cannot tolerate in any form actions or attitudes of people who try to interrupt by force the democratic process, that the Constitution, voted for by the Spanish people, determined on its day by referendum" ; *ibid* 132).

The use of the actual footage of King Juan Carlos's speech in the film is an example of what Barbie Zelizer has called a "visual marker." For Zelizer, these visual markers are used "for subjunctive ends and thereby become well suited for representing complex events...[thus] we come to remember whole events though condensed images that reduce complex and multidimensional phenomena into memorable scenes. Often they are memorable because they activate the impulses about how 'the world might be' rather than how 'it is.'" (Zelizer 164). The King's speech is an example of a condensed image that represents the event of "El 23-f", and it has been argued that if he had not made this important statement, the coup may have succeeded.

#### Concluding *El Calentito*

While it is pertinent to remember what really *did* happen—Spain's young democracy triumphed that night—this scene is also a reflection on what might have happened. The dimension of "what might have been" is explored and allows the spectators to delve into the realm of the subjunctive and to entertain a number of different possibilities. For instance, democracy might not have been restored; things might have gone back to the way they were in the past, perhaps to a conservative form of governance

or even another dictatorship. In *El Calentito*, José might have shot someone, Antonia might not have taken his gun from him or stood up to him, the King's speech might not have interrupted the night's events. The coup might have been successful, but King Juan Carlos's speech ended the speculation. These musings of what might have been are some of the most pivotal and tension-rattled moments in the film.

Generally, *El Calentito* represents the return of the past—the coup d'état attempt in 1981 signified a potential return to a conservative government. Yet, while the past is partially re-lived, it is also put to death. Teresa Vilarós has pointed to the important deaths during the transition to democracy: Franco's death in 1975, the death of Francoism with the constitution in 1978 and the more dramatic death of Francoism with the failed coup d'etat in 1981. (Vilarós 32). The significance of "El 23-f" is highlighted by José Colmeiro:

Quizás el único amago de ajuste de cuentas colectivo con el pasado autoritario tuvo lugar tardía e inesperadamente el "El 23-f", con el que definitivamente se cerró una época del pasado, un final simbólico que marca también el final de la transición. Durante un día se entreabrió el armario y se pudo ver que el esqueleto estaba definitivamente muerto [...] (Colmeiro 20).

Perhaps the only sign of a collective settling of the score with the authoritative past took place late and unexpectedly with February 23, with which an era of the past was definitively closed, a symbolic end that also marks the end of the transition. During one day, the closet was opened and it could be seen that the skeleton was definitely dead.

In *El Calentito*, it is Antonia who looks most deeply into the closet to remember the past, and she also seems most relieved to recognize that the skeleton of the past is dead.

Similar to Colmeiro, Rosa Montero also sees the failure of the coup as a moment of closure, but goes beyond this, mentioning the importance of the 1982 election results:

The failure of the attempted coup marked the end of the transition: a year later the PSOE came to power, bringing an influx of new political blood untainted by involvement in the Franco regime. With the access to power of this new political class, the risk of a coup receded: democracy was finally established, if still in its infancy and in need of consolidation. (316).

The performance of this "final death" in the film exemplifies part of Fredric Jameson's definition of postnostalgic narratives. The presentation of the coup attempt is "the kind of event which specifically demands historical judgments of its participants: narratives of historical trajectories, as well as evaluations of moments of the past nostalgically reevoked but necessarily rejected or reaffirmed" (288). The coup attempt is performed, the possibilities are entertained, and then the coup is rejected by the film's end. The overthrow of the newly implanted democratic government is put to an end with King Juan Carlos's speech. The remnants of the Franco regime are rejected, and democracy is reaffirmed. In the case of *El Calentito*, the rejection of the coup and the reaffirmation of democracy represent a postnostalgic narrative. The film moves beyond nostalgia because it allows us to examine the historical moment of the "El 23-f" coup attempt by transforming it into an object of analysis rather than a simple recollection of the past.

The fictional realms of the film allow spectators to become more involved in what they are viewing, something which Pam Cook discusses: "these modern-day reconstructions tell us more about our relationship to the past, about the connections between past and present, and our affective responses. They can also inspire viewers to seek further knowledge and understanding" (Cook 2-3). While the footage of the speech is inserted within the fictional diegesis of the film, it serves to lend a degree of reality and challenges Spanish spectators to remember where they were during "El 23-f", and also

serves as a reminder of what was at stake during this juncture. The film was arguably not only for people wishing to recall their adolescence, but it was also important for a younger generation of spectators who did not live through this period. The inclusion of actresses in *El Calentito* who had recently starred in popular television programs with adolescent and young adult appeal made the film attractive to younger audiences.

Verónica Sánchez, who plays the leading role of Sara in *El Calentito* had a leading role in the popular Spanish television series *Los Serrano* (a sort of modern-day *Brady Bunch*), and the actress Lluvia Rojo (who plays a minor character, Chus, in the film) had a secondary role in the television series *Cuéntame cómo pasó*, which is similar to the television series *Wonder Years*. It is sometimes said that the generation of Spaniards born during the early years of democracy do not understand the dictatorship or the significance of "El 23-f" since they have grown up in a democratic country. However, viewing a film like *El Calentito* would serve as a reminder to this generation of what might have happened, and help them to redefine the way they see the past by providing them with the postnostalgic narrative portrayed in the film.

The final scenes of *El Calentito* provide an interesting take on the memory of the Movida era, because the last word of the film is "libertad" ("freedom"). This final word symbolizes the celebration of many types of freedoms (democratic, social, and sexual) that were reinforced because the Spanish democracy was maintained. Nevertheless, the freedoms espoused at the end of the film epitomize a "live for the day" freedom without consequences. My one criticism of the portrayal of unbridled freedom in *El Calentito* is that this depiction distorts the historical representation of the Movida period. The film

fails to include many of the dire consequences that came with the abuse of these freedoms such as the large number of deaths from AIDS, drug overdoses, and suicides. It freezes the past during a time when these losses had yet to arise. Perhaps this was done on purpose, but it does lend the film an overly celebratory view of this period. Pedro Almodóvar's film *Bad Education* shows a very distinctive illustration of this period, interestingly setting his film in 1980, but still including the "darker side" of this era.

#### Introduction, *Bad Education*

As the director and writer of *Bad Education*, Pedro Almodóvar creates a loosely autobiographical account of not only of the Movida era (1977 and 1980 in the film) but also 1960s Spain. As Víctor Fuentes has remarked, "[...] *Bad Education*, inasmuch as it focuses on a gay Spanish director who comes to fame during the raucous years of the Madrid *Movida* (as in *Law of Desire*), is also shot through with autobiographical references" (430). However, Almodóvar is quick to deny this claim: "As the director has reminded fans and critics: '*Bad Education* is not an autobiographical movie' (Hirschberg 43), it lies between autobiography and fiction, personal experience and partly 'plagiarized' invention, and is more properly an autobiographical metafictional and a metacinematic movie" (Fuentes 432). At times, Almodóvar both acknowledges and denies that the film may be autobiographical. In *Bad Education*, the young film director Enrique Goded (played by Fele Martínez), is clearly the character that is inspired by Almodóvar's life. In the director's commentary for the film, Almodóvar states "Enrique hace cosas que yo suelo hacer, o al contrario, no sé" ("Enrique does things that I usually do, or on the contrary, [I do things that Enrique does], does I don't know" ; US DVD commentary).

His comment is vague—he recognizes that he and Enrique share commonalities, but then seems to reject that, ending with the ambiguous statement that he does not know. On the other hand, Marvin D'Lugo states that the film is clearly autobiographical: "With no small irony, therefore, he has, as mentioned, situated the center of the plot in the suggestively autobiographical Madrid of 1980, the very year and place of the premiere and of his first commercial feature" (D'Lugo 383).

Fuentes discusses some of the similarities between the films *Law of Desire* and *Bad Education*, since the latter definitely represents a return to the former; both films center "[...] on the life of a gay director during the heady first years of Spanish democracy" (Fuentes 431). These returns are increasingly common in Almodóvar's most recent films. For example, *Volver* (2006), (whose title literally means "return") is a return to *What Have I Done to Deserve This?* (1984) and *Broken Embraces* (2009) returns to *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (1988). Not only does *Bad Education* return to *Law of Desire*, but also to the director's earlier work. Almodóvar's rendering of the years 1977 and 1980 in the film *Bad Education* undoubtedly pays homage to some of the campy aesthetics he became famous for with his first films *Pepi, Luci, Bom...* and *Labyrinth of Passion* with transvestite characters like Paca, played by Javier Cámara, and Gael García Bernal's performance as Zahara. However, he creates a much more subdued portrait of the period, therefore redefining the way we look at the past. As D'Lugo remarks:

Rather than being the ebullient site of sexual liberation as in *Pepi, Luci, Bom*, or of a culture of drugs and sexual cruising in the Rastro, the Sunday morning Madrid flea market, as showcased in the opening scene of *Labyrinth of Passion* (1982), the period now seems emblemized by the shadowy interiors of Enrique's

production office and a subdued sound track that contrast sharply with the raucous street sounds of the early *Movida* films. (*Postnostalgia* 365)

The "subdued sound track" that D'Lugo refers to (composed by Alberto Iglesias) creates a great degree of tension and a sense of hostility from the very first scene, set in 1980.

While the characters in Almodóvar's early work seek to live their lives at full speed, in *Bad Education*, it is just the opposite. In the introduction to the script of the film, Gustavo Martín Garzo asserts that in the film "[...] no hay el mínimo atisbo de alegría. De hecho, todos sus personajes se están muriendo" ("there is not even the smallest inkling of happiness. In fact, all of the film's characters are dying" ; 9). Specifically, the sinister murder of drug-addicted Ignacio towards the end of the film provides a stark dissimilarity from Almodóvar's early films. Furthermore, in contrast to the *carpe diem*, "presentismo" ("present-ism") attitudes present in Almodóvar's early films, *Bad Education* provides a portrait of people who were still haunted by the past. This is shown through the relationship between the two main characters in the movie that began in a repressive Catholic school in the 1960s. While the characters in Almodóvar's early films are consumed with where they will get their next fix or where the next party or sexual encounter will be, the characters in *Bad Education* participate in these activities but are also conscious of the role that the past has in their lives. Thus the film can be read as Almodóvar's revision of the past, a conscious self-referential vision of the past that he himself lived and famously orchestrated, a kind of auto-pastiche since he imitates his own work. As Víctor Fuentes affirms, "[...] the starting point of *Bad Education* appears to be Almodóvar's own lived experience as passed through the sieve of his open and complex imagination" (431). Fuentes's assertion relates to Zelizer's concept of "contingency" by

providing images of the past that explore the realms of possibility, qualification, and imagination (161). Almodóvar's interpretation of this period is also a pastiche in the way that Omaña Andueza has defined it, because *Bad Education* provides a very distinctive picture of the Movida period from his early films, allowing us to re-think the way we see this particular time in Spanish history. As D'Lugo affirms, "Almodóvar has recycled his and Spain's obsession with a repressed and fetishized past into a self-conscious acknowledgment of where he was in 1980 and how, through the evolution of a style and a conception of filmmaking, he has moved to a critique of his own past and the culture out of which his cinema has taken shape" (D'Lugo 383). The use of pastiche in the film therefore has a critical edge.

*Bad Education* moves between different time periods in Spain, beginning in 1980 but flashing back to 1964 and to 1977. The part of the film that focuses on the 1960s and the sexual abuse of young boys by Catholic priests has received a lot of popular attention, but I will focus mostly on the part of the film set in 1977 and 1980. Commenting on the presence of multiple time periods in the film, Marvin D'Lugo states that while viewing *Bad Education*, "the spectator's task is to piece together these fragmented episodes into a coherent 'story,' one that, while it makes sense as fiction, also holds a recognizable symbolic value as collective history" (*Postnostalgia*...358). In my view, Almodóvar's recreation of the Movida era has symbolic value for the collective memory of this period in history. Almodóvar's final images of this moment reflect ruin and excess rather than the often superficial, facile representations of this period that ignore the darker aspects of this moment. While D'Lugo discusses many nuances about the importance of how



Almodóvar was critiquing the repression of the past during the transition to democracy in *Bad Education*, he does not go into detail about the critical assessment of the Movida that is present in the film, which I address in this chapter.

Pedro Almodóvar has said that *Bad Education* is not a commentary on the Madrid Movida, it certainly includes a certain interpretations of this moment in Spain. D'Lugo has pointed out that "questions of history per se are never openly addressed in *Bad Education*. Instead, they are part of an intricate narrative structure marked by striking shifts among specific moments from the past that have particular historical and social resonance for Spanish audiences" (*Postnostalgia...* 358). The period of the late 1970s and early 1980s shown in the film is resonant with Spanish audiences since it marked the period of the transition to democracy and also the Madrid Movida. D'Lugo also points out that 1977 marked the first democratic elections in the postdictatorship period (360). Víctor Fuentes has also commented on the presence of multiple historical moments in the film, which create layers that are woven together with the characters with multiple identities and also various locations in the film:

[...] The duplicity and doubleness of the story and the characters contribute to a nonlinear cinematic experience, full of flashbacks and flash-forwards to different times (1964, 1977, 1980-81) and different places (Madrid, Valencia, Galicia), in which points of view proliferate and real and imagined events collide in ways seldom seen before on the big screen. (Fuentes 436-7)

*Bad Education* is rich with elements of the subjunctive voice in its plot structure. The film uses what is almost a narrative trick in order to explore what could have happened in the lives of its protagonists by presenting one version of the past only to later trump this past with the "real" past. A review of the film after it was screened at the

Cannes film festival notes that due to the incorporation of a "series of Brechtian twists and turns...things become murky, and many scenes, we learn as we go along, are enactments of stories, scripts, and tall tales told within the main film itself. Truth and fiction intertwine and become impossible to separate" (Brunette). Many of these twists and turns are exhibited in the main character, played by Gael García Bernal, who has four different names—his multiple identities play upon the different possibilities that his character embodies in the film. Each of his personalities or the characters that he plays represent different dimensions about what might have happened in the past. He first pretends to be his brother Ignacio (who prefers to be called Ángel<sup>71</sup>, his acting name) and visits Enrique Goded, now a young film director, at his studio, called "El Azar" ("Chance"). In the director's commentary, Almodóvar notes that the décor of the studio in the film is inspired by that of his production company, El Deseo, further suggesting autobiographical similarities, even stating "esta es una copia de mi despacho durante muchos años" ("this is a copy of my office that I had for many years" ; US DVD commentary). Almodóvar also notes that the décor is very representative of the aesthetic of the 1980s, which is clear from the vibrantly colored walls, the assortment of kitsch-like plastic flowers and other objects, and by the inclusion of paintings on the wall by artist Sigfrido Martín Begué, a friend of Almodóvar's since the Movida era.

When they meet in the studio, Ignacio/Ángel presents Enrique with a script called "The Visit," and, "although Enrique does not 'see' in the man who calls himself Ignacio/Ángel the boy he once knew and loved at the Catholic school, he takes the story

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<sup>71</sup> As in *Talk to Her*, where the main character (played by Javier Cámara) is named "Benigno," but is far from benign, Ángel is not angelic in the least, but rather one of the most sinister characters in the film.

home, where he reads it and, in good directorial fashion, visualizes it" (Fuentes 437). Ignacio and Enrique were childhood friends, and the now grown Ignacio/Ángel presents Enrique with a copy of a script he has written about their childhood in Catholic school and the sexual abuse they encountered at the hands of Father Manolo. Their meeting, after so many years of absence, represents a great deal of possibility and of what might happen between them as adults. In the end, "Ignacio's story is presented on-screen as imagined—and later, as it turns out—filmed by Enrique" (Fuentes 437). Ignacio's story is explored both via this *mise-en-abîme* and also in Enrique's real life. In the director's commentary, Almodóvar equates the use of the film within a film technique to Russian dolls, which are continuously opened in the film to reveal story after story (US DVD commentary). When Enrique returns home that evening to read the script, it transports him back to the past, to a bar in 1977 where he witnesses the performances of Paquita/o (Javier Cámara) and Zahara (Gael García Bernal). Zahara is the stage name of Enrique's childhood friend, Ignacio. To add to the twists and turns of the plot, the younger Enrique is played by a different actor, Alberto Ferreiro. Zahara's performance of the song "Quizás, quizás, quizás" is an imitation of Sara Montiel, which is analyzed by Marvin D'Lugo in depth. Zahara goes home with Enrique that night, and another misrecognition occurs, but this time Zahara/Ignacio realizes that s/he has encountered Enrique, her first childhood love. D'Lugo points out that misrecognition is an "[...] integral aspect of the noir world evoked in the plot" (374). While Paquito and Zahara had planned to rob Enrique, the revelation of Enrique's true identity startles Zahara into changing her mind. Zahara offers Paquito some dope as a recompense for having Paquito wait while

Zahara/Ignacio takes advantage of Enrique as he sleeps. The voiceover (which becomes a letter that Zahara/Ignacio writes to Enrique) explains the situation, that the scene represents the reunion of the lovers from childhood. In the letter he leaves for Enrique, Zahara/Ignacio asks Enrique to meet in a patisserie. The letter is left right next to Enrique's face, and the text transforms into the text of the typewritten script that the older Enrique is reading, creating an interesting suture of the two distinctive time periods.

The scene then briefly returns to 1980, and then Enrique goes back to reading the script, to the year 1977. Zahara/Ignacio and Paquito sit on the steps of a theater, Cine Olympo, and the pair does two lines of cocaine in preparation for another "visit" in the film. Zahara/Ignacio tells Paquito the story of how they are going to visit Father Manolo, the priest who was responsible for ending the relationship between Ignacio and Enrique when they were boys. Therefore, while the two characters externally resemble some of the characters from Almodóvar's early films due to their risqué behaviors and loud clothing, Zahara/Ignacio is obviously not concerned only with enjoying the present moment, but also with sorting out the past that still tortures him. The fact that the past still haunts Zahara/Ignacio provides a new reading of this time period. Almodóvar intentionally gives Zahara/Ignacio much more depth than the characters in his early films. This depth suggests that Almodóvar wanted to show how there are many more complexities to the people who lived during this period that are lost in the superficial characterizations that proliferate in recent commemorations of the Movida.

In order to deal with the past, Zahara/Ignacio goes to visit Father Manolo at his old school. As Víctor Fuentes has remarked, this visit is also a return to the film *Law of*

*Desire*, for it mimics Carmen Maura's transsexual character Tina who "[...] returns to the Catholic school that she attended as a young boy and confronts the priest who had been her choir director, spiritual counselor, and seducer, just as Juan-Ángel (Gael García Bernal), playing the role of his transsexual brother Ignacio (Francisco Boira), later does in *Bad Education*" (431). When Paquito and Zahara/Ignacio enter the church, they encounter Father Manolo performing the liturgical rite of the act of contrition, which symbolizes the repentance for past sins during or after confession. This symbolic rite reinforces the importance of the presence of the past in Zahara/Ignacio's life, and as he stands in the church, he whispers "por tu culpa" ("it's your fault"), but "culpa" also translates to mean "guilt." The phrase "por tu culpa" is also an inversion of the phrase that a priest normally utters, "por mi culpa" ("through my fault"). With the statement "por tu culpa," Zahara/Ignacio also accuses Father Manolo of ruining something that was important in his life, his relationship with Enrique. Even Paquito becomes quite somber in this scene, and he is the comic relief of the entire film. Zahara/Ignacio proceeds to confront Father Manolo while Paquito busies himself stealing the chalice and other items of value from the church. It is here that we realize that Zahara/Ignacio is actually Juan-Ángel, posing as his sibling. He tells Father Manolo that the real Ignacio died in an accident. Father Manolo is obviously affected by the news that his ex-student has died, for he was especially fond of him. He is later pictured lovingly fingering a photograph of Ignacio as a child in his office as Zahara/Ignacio approaches to confront him. The black and white photograph of the young boy creates a connection with the past, and also shows that Father Manolo is haunted by his personal history with Ignacio.

Zahara/Ignacio presents Father Manolo with his proposal, which is to blackmail the priest. He wants Father Manolo to give him money for surgeries to change his body and to keep quiet about Father Manolo's past crimes. To ensure that his plan works, he shows Father Manolo a story, written by the real Ignacio before he died, that is an exposé of everything that happened between Ignacio and Father Manolo. He points out that someone is very interested in publishing the text, which would obviously create a great scandal in Father Manolo's life.

Father Manolo begins to read the text, and the film briefly moves even further into the past, to the mid-1960s, to Ignacio and Enrique's childhood, before returning again to 1977. It is in this scene that the year in which the scene is situated is revealed. After Zahara/Ignacio gives Father Manolo the text, the priest tells him that it is absolute trash, and that no one will even believe him if it is published. Father Manolo implies that people in Spain would be more likely to believe him, a priest in the Roman Catholic church, than someone like Zahara/Ignacio. Father Manolo is attempting to invoke the ideology of the past to threaten Zahara/Ignacio, but he fails to be convincing, because Zahara/Ignacio reminds Father Manolo that it is 1977, and that things have changed. Almodóvar discusses the importance of the year 1977 in the director's commentary, stating:

Setenta y siete. Dos años después de la muerte de Franco. Yo creo que, el momento en que en España empezamos a vivir de nuevo democráticamente. Es una fecha importantísima para, sobre todo, para estos dos personajes. En efecto, el personaje de Zahara tiene razón. España, en el '77, es una España sincera, democrática, libre, donde la hipocresía del sacerdote va a tener mucho menos eco. (US DVD commentary).

Seventy-seven. Two years after Franco's death. I think that this was the moment in which in Spain, we began to live democratically again. It is a really important date for, more than anything, these two characters. In effect, the character Zahara is correct. Spain, in '77, is a sincere, democratic, free Spain, where the hypocrisy of the priest will resonate much less.

From his comments, it is clear that Almodóvar intentionally situated this portion of the film two years after the death of Franco. This scene in the film also contributes to its overall postnostalgic narrative, for it "[...] freezes the representation of the past, transforming it into an object of analysis that will enable the reading subject to scrutinize critically the distortions and contradictions inherent in historical representation" (*Postnostalgia...* 376). The past becomes an object of analysis in various senses in this scene. First, Zahara/Ignacio's reminder of what the year 1977 meant allows us to analyze the significance of this moment and to consider that even then, there were people like Father Manolo who endeavored to summon the past in order to intimidate others. Father Manolo's reaction also serves as a reminder of the contradictions in representing the transition to democracy. While it was for the most part a peaceful transition, save for the coup attempt in 1981, opposition to the changes it brought forth was not uncommon. The figure of Father Manolo symbolizes this resistance, which can be forgotten in historical representations of this period, therefore bringing back an aspect of the past that is sometimes distorted or forgotten.

Subsequent to the latter scene is another return to the 1960s, and then to 1980, the occasion of another visit in the film. Enrique has finished reading the script, and decides that he would like to direct the film. He invites Ángel/Ignacio back to his office to give him the good news, and so begins another romantic rendezvous in the film. Of the

relationship between Enrique and Ángel/Ignacio, Víctor Fuentes remarks: "another irony is that Enrique, by way of an adult sexual relationship with a man pretending to be Ignacio, relives the loving relationship that he had with the real Ignacio when the two were boys" (438). Enrique thus explores the possibility of what it might have been like if Ignacio had survived. While he is intrigued by Ignacio/Ángel and his story, Enrique begins to realize that Ángel/Ignacio is really impersonating his brother. His initial clue comes from the first time they go out together, when a song that the two loved as children comes on the radio, and Ángel/Ignacio does not remember it at all. Enrique later tells Ángel/Ignacio that he does not think that he is Ignacio, but Ángel/Ignacio refuses to admit his real identity. Enrique does not believe him, and decides to do some investigating of his own, further adding to the mystery characteristic of film noir. He travels to Galicia to look for clues about the truth, guided by an address on a lighter that Ángel accidentally left at his chalet. Playing detective, he asks the barman to direct him to Ignacio's family's home.

When Enrique arrives at Ignacio's childhood home, he is met by his mother, who seems to have been waiting for this visit for a long time, since she knew of the relationship between the two as boys. Enrique discovers that the real Ignacio is actually dead—he died four years ago. Upon entering the house, Enrique sees two photographs on the wall, and Ignacio's mother points to her son Juan, the youngest, which clarifies Enrique's suspicion: Juan is Ángel, who has been impersonating Ignacio. The surprise on Enrique's face is pronounced as he talks with Juan and Ignacio's mother, but he does not give away what he knows. Instead, he continues his role as detective and asks to see



Ignacio's room. His mother admits that Juan burned everything that belonged to Ignacio, which foreshadows what will later be revealed in the film. The camera zooms in on a bowl of ashes at one point, and Enrique is visibly affected by being confronted with the ashes of the past, reminding us once again that the past still haunted people like Enrique during this historical moment. Another important clue is also revealed during these scenes; Ignacio's mother remembers that a man from a publishing company wanted all of Ignacio's writing, but cannot seem to remember the man's name. This man later turns out to be the Father Manolo of the past, who has changed his name to Manuel Berenguer. In the final minutes of their visit, Ignacio's mother gives Enrique a letter that Ignacio wrote to Enrique before he died, and also tells him that Juan found his brother dead, yet again foreshadowing the climax of the film.

The letter is the first instance in which we hear the voice of the *real* Ignacio, who tells us the story of what happened in a voiceover while Enrique drives back to Madrid. I include part of the letter below because it recounts the real story of what happened between Father Manolo and Ignacio, and because it is emotionally valuable to Enrique when he reads it. Ignacio writes:

Supongo que te alegrará saber que sigo escribiendo, ahí te mando un relato que quedaría divino en cine. Me lo inspiró el Padre Manolo. No te lo vas a creer, pero me lo encontré el otro día por la calle, en Valencia [...] He investigado y ya no es cura, se hace llamar por su primer apellido, o sea, señor Berenguer. Trabaja en una editorial, ¡está casado y tiene un niño! Pensé: ¡este hombre está pidiendo a gritos un chantaje! Así que escribí 'La visita,' el relato que te envío. ¡Léelo, por favor! En este momento de mi vida (ya te explicaré) necesito mucho dinero y voy a sacárselo a este hijo puta. Tiene una deuda muy grande conmigo, y ha llegado el momento de pagarla! Bueno escríbeme y te cuento el resto de la historia. [...] Contéstame, por favor. Esta historia sólo puedo compartirla contigo... Te quiero. Tu Ignacio.

You'll be pleased to hear I'm still writing. I'm enclosing a story that would make a divine film. Fr. Manolo inspired it. It's incredible, but I ran into him the other day in Valencia. [...] I've checked up, he isn't a priest anymore. He calls himself by his [first] last name, Berenguer. He works in a publishing house, he's married and has a son. I thought: He's crying out to be blackmailed! So I wrote 'The Visit,' the story I'm sending you. Read it, please. At this point in my life, I need a lot of money, and I'm going to get it from that son of a bitch. He owes me a lot, and it's time for him to pay. Write to me, and I'll tell you the rest of the story. Answer me, please. I can only share this story with you. I love you. Your Ignacio.

The fact that Enrique receives this letter belatedly, well after Ignacio's death, is quite significant, because Enrique is given the chance to entertain what might have happened if he had read this letter, and more importantly, the story "The Visit" much earlier. The moment in which the letter finally reaches Enrique's hands is an example of Barbie Zelizer's concept of contingency, because the letter enters the realms of possibility, qualification and imagination (161). The letter is shown in a new context, not when it was originally written, but years later. As Zelizer notes, "[...] by playing to the contingent aspect of a depicted event or issue, the image's capacity to speak for the past changes in its relation to the events it depicts" (161-2). The appearance of the letter at this point in the film plays on the contingent aspect of Enrique and Ignacio's relationship. In one sense, Enrique reads the letter too late, because he knows that Ignacio is dead. However, reading the letter also gives him the opportunity to consider what might have happened if he had read it before: would he know the rest of the story that Ignacio promised to tell him by now? Would he have reunited with Ignacio? As spectators, we are left to contemplate what might have happened between Ignacio and Enrique had they been afforded the opportunity to meet as adults. The insertion of the multiple twists in the diegesis of the film complicates the way in which we see the past, true to Omaña

Andueza's definition of the 'pastiche,' which "[...] seeks more to redefine the way in which we see the past, and not just to simply relive it" (5). Enrique re-lives part of his past by remembering his love affair with Ignacio, but when he receives the belated letter from Ignacio, he is given the opportunity to redefine the way he sees their past, by thinking about all the possibilities of what might have happened between them.

In another sense, the letter provides Enrique with valuable information, for he realizes that Ignacio's brother Juan (whom he knows as Ángel Andrade) is posing as Ignacio. Despite knowing the truth, Enrique decides to go along with Juan/Ángel's story to explore what might happen between them. Enrique is interested in what motivates Ángel and decides to make his script into a movie with Ángel as the starring role of Zahara. The role of Zahara, the transvestite lead in the film, is only given to Ángel because he convinces Enrique that he is the right person for the role after studying and impersonating Zahara in a nightclub. It is not long before Manuel Berenguer, the Father Manolo of Enrique and Ignacio's youth, drops in on the set of "The Visit." Manuel confesses the story of Ignacio's death to Enrique, which is somewhat similar to the ending of the script Enrique changed. It turns out that Juan/Ángel and Father Manolo had an affair. As we know from the letter, the real Ignacio actually blackmailed Father Manolo in order to get money to feed his heroin addiction and to finance the expensive plastic surgeries he hoped to have to complete his transformation to a male-to-female transvestite.

The vertiginous usage of multiple personalities and *mise-en-abîme* in the film verges on rendering the plot structure unintelligible, because so many distinctive

possibilities and endings are presented. For instance, "however Ignacio's story may have 'really' ended, the ending that the director imposes occurs in the priest's office, where Ignacio is killed by 'brother' José<sup>72</sup>, who looks like a character out of some Gothic or expressionist film. In 'real' life, as Berenguer recounts, Ignacio was killed by his brother Juan" (Fuentes 439). However, Berenguer and Juan were responsible for Ignacio's death. As Víctor Fuentes recounts, "finally, both decide to get rid of Ignacio, who is a far cry from the glamorous, seductive Zahara, but is instead a haggard, angry drug addict struggling to free himself from heroin" (442). Berenguer and Juan both have motives for killing Ignacio. Juan is fed up with trying to help his brother and with seeing how Ignacio's addiction has such a negative effect on his mother and grandmother. Berenguer wants to free himself from having to pay Ignacio to keep quiet lest he blackmail the former priest. Sadly, it is only when Berenguer has decided to kill Ignacio with Juan's help, Ignacio shows a desire to change. When Berenguer first encounters Ignacio again, Ignacio admits "sí, soy yonquí, pero quiero dejarlo, pensé que usted podría hecharme una mano" ("Yes, I'm a junkie, but I want to quit, and I thought you could help me"). Berenguer and Juan eventually give Ignacio a lethal dose of heroin to kill him.

While the murder is a potent moment, perhaps the most interesting thing is what occurs just before Ignacio's overdose. Ignacio's final written words are to Enrique, in another letter. He types "creo que lo conseguí" ("I think I found it/I think I've succeeded")<sup>73</sup>. Manuel Berenguer interrupts his progress on the letter when he delivers

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<sup>72</sup> José is the name given to the Father Manolo of Ignacio and Enrique's youth in the film within the film.

<sup>73</sup> At the end of the film, Juan gives this letter to Enrique, and after the word "conseguí," there is a muddle of typewritten letters that were printed onto the paper when Ignacio's head smashed onto the typewriter. It

him the dose of heroin that kills Ignacio. Ignacio lets Berenguer know that "esto es lo último que tomo" ("this is my last fix"), and tells him that he is quitting and plans to go to a clinic to detoxify. Little does he know that it is indeed his last fix. Instead of being given the chance to fulfill his desires to change, Ignacio's head smashes down onto the typewriter, and he is dead. We are left wondering what he succeeded in finding, and what Ignacio's life might have been like had he followed through with his promise to go to the clinic. The death of Ignacio due to a drug overdose (even though he was murdered in this way) might symbolize the deaths of many people who actually lived during this time. Javier Escudero describes the effects of drug consumption during this period eloquently:

[...] el famoso y aparentemente trivial "Madrid me mata," expresaría de forma literal el fin al que puede conducir un excesivo consumo de drogas. La presunta liberación que, en apariencia, se consigue con la heroína, el hallazgo de ese supuesto reino de la diversión y el placer, conduce pronto, como se desprende de los testimonios de los propios protagonistas de "la Movida," a nuevas formas de explotación y de marginalidad, como la prostitución y la delincuencia, o, incluso, a la autodestrucción. (Escudero 152)

The famous and apparently trivial saying "Madrid kills me," literally expresses the ending to which excessive drug consumption can lead. The presumed liberation that, in appearance, is achieved with heroin, the discovery of this supposed reign of fun and of pleasure, soon leads (as the testimonies of the very protagonists of the Movida admit) to new forms of exploitation and marginality, like prostitution and delinquency, or, even to self-destruction.

Ignacio clearly represents someone on the "other end" of heroin use—he has moved beyond the liberation and pleasure stage to the stage in which he exploits others to support his habit. He even steals his grandmother's pension at one point to support his habit. Eventually, he is destroyed by heroin. Therefore, two of the very people that

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is as though Juan gives Enrique the final written evidence of his brother's death, and also lets him know that Ignacio's last words, and ultimately his devotion, were for Enrique.

Ignacio exploited to support his addiction end up killing him with his own heroin habit. By the end of the film, "Ignacio is dead, even double dead (murdered by Father Manolo's henchman [in Enrique's film] , then murdered by Berenguer and Juan), but he remains tantalizingly alive on-screen in the character of Zahara, an important variation on the figure of the seductress who punctuates so many examples of film noir" (Fuentes 443-444). This Ignacio-Zahara "dead but also alive" observation might also be applied to the memory of the Movida period that Almodóvar was trying to create in *Bad Education*. The negative aspects of this period are put to death, but also remembered in this film, while the powerful cross-dressing performance is kept alive.

While Almodóvar comments on his interest in the freedom during the Movida, the open attitude to experimentation was often taken to extremes, as Javier Escudero rightly mentions. The excesses of the Movida are represented in the figure of Ignacio, and one cannot help but wonder if Almodóvar is commenting on the absurd extremes of the late 1970s and early 1980s by placing drug-addicted Ignacio in the film. The fact that there is a moment of possibility for Ignacio to redeem himself and detoxify might be seen as a statement about some of Almodóvar's peers who succumbed to drug addiction during the late 1970s and early 1980s: what would have happened if they had freed themselves from their addictions? The real Ignacio therefore becomes a figure of what might have been. Since Almodóvar is almost always hailed as one of the most important representatives and creators of the Movida, his *re*-creation of this period is telling: he now sees it with a more sober viewpoint by juxtaposing what might have happened with what did happen.

Almodóvar's return to the Movida period in *Bad Education* clearly represents a postnostalgic narrative, because instead of celebrating this period, he offers a critical analysis of it by casting it in an ominous, film noir setting. Almodóvar thus allows us to "[...] scrutinize critically the distortions and contradictions inherent in historical representation" (D'Lugo *Postnostalgia*... 376). Mainly, *Bad Education* stands as a reminder that the hedonistic social practices in his early films like *Pepi, Luci, Bom y las otras chicas del montón* (1980) and *Labyrinth of Passion* (1982) were not without consequences. Instead of romanticizing these films thirty years later, he chose instead to show the detrimental outcome of taking newfound freedom to extremes, thereby creating a narrative that suggests a more balanced view of the past by moving beyond a nostalgic interpretation to a post-nostalgic rendering of this significant moment in contemporary Spanish history.

### Conclusion

Both *El Calentito* and *Bad Education* represent the return of the past, mobilizing postmodern pastiche "[...] as the return of the past in spectral form" (Labanyi *Engaging* 8). In *El Calentito*, Tejero's coup d'état attempt in 1981 represents a potential return to a conservative regime. *Bad Education* visits many moments in the past, including Francoism, the period of the transition to democracy and the Movida. These visits function on many levels in the film, and each visit serves a purpose, allowing spectators to temporarily spend time in many different periods. The visits are brief, but they all come to an end, putting the past to rest. In both films, while the past is partially re-lived, it is also put to death. Therefore, the past is "reevoked but necessarily rejected or

reaffirmed" (Jameson 288). *El Calentito* focuses on the death of Francoism and *Bad Education* on the death of Ignacio, who arguably represents many of those who died from drug overdoses, suicides, or AIDS during this period. Both of these deaths present us with moments to reflect on what might have been "had death not occurred," offering points of contingency and subjunctivity that allow spectators to contemplate different possible endings (Zelizer 167). Both films are examples of 'pastiche,' because they do not simply seek to re-live the past, but to cast it in a distinctive light that provides new ways of thinking critically about it through their construction of post-nostalgic narratives. The films thus adhere to Linda Hutcheon's definition of postmodern film, that which "[...] wants to ask questions [...] about ideology's role in subject-formation and in historical knowledge" (117). The films challenge the construction of memories of the past by presenting alternative possibilities for the way events in the past may have occurred. They take advantage of the ambiguities in subject-formation to create a space in which critical analysis of the period of the Movida takes place.



## Conclusion:

### Remembering and Forgetting the Past, and Looking to the Future

Throughout my dissertation, I have made several points that I consider to be fundamental to understand the memory of the Madrid Movida. First, that memory, like culture, "is a site of power that is always negotiated and contested" (Labanyi 5). Remembering also involves forgetting: while certain information is retained, other information is inevitably forgotten. Remembering and forgetting are therefore intimately connected. The strong pull of nostalgia sometimes purposefully forgets certain things in the process of romantically remembering others, and this is certainly seen with the way the Movida is (re)membered. Forgetting is often tied to dynamics of power and the desire to marginalize memories or erase stories that do not fit the official discourse about different events. I have also shown that remembering and forgetting are tied to the life, death, and even resurrection and reincarnation of the Movida.

#### The Life and Death of the Movida

The title of José Luis Gallero's book, *Sólo se vive una vez: esplendor y ruina de la Movida madrileña* (1991), encapsulates some of the intrinsic characteristics of the Movida. The title of the book most likely comes from the following quote contained in a section titled "Sólo se vive una vez" ("You only live once") articulated by Borja Casani, the founder of the magazine *La luna de Madrid*:

Se sabe que sólo se vive una vez y se supone que eso significa conseguir experiencias, tener una vida pletórica de emociones. Y cuando llega toda la cuestión del sida, la plaga, digamos, de pronto te das cuenta de que, efectivamente, sólo se vive una vez. Es decir, que te vas a morir, y que la gente se empieza a morir. (Gallero 45)

It was known that you only live once and supposedly this means to have experiences, to have a life full of emotions. And when the whole question of AIDS arrives, the plague, let's say, suddenly you realize that, effectively, you only live once. Which is to say, that you are going to die, that people begin to die.

Casani talks about how his understanding of the phrase "you only live once" changed. At first, Casani and many others during the transition period lived with this *carpe diem* attitude about life. But later, they had to come to terms with the reality of this phrase by witnessing the deaths of many people they knew. The figurative and literal meanings of this phrase relate to the spectrum of interpretations of the Movida and its complex relationship to life and death. I have used this phrase to argue that in one sense, the Movida "only lived once," as a phenomenon that occurred due to a specific set of historical circumstances that will not be repeated. Yet the repetition of the Movida continues, as I have shown through my analysis of various cultural products. This repetition ensures in part that the Movida lives on, but also that it continues to undergo constant modifications. I developed these concepts in my first chapter, "*¿Sólo se vive una vez?: La Movida on Display in Recent Museum Exhibits*," by applying Adorno's "Valéry Proust Museum" to the commemoration of the large-scale cultural festival in 2006-2007 called LA MOVIDA and the 2007 exhibit *Modernos, Urbanos y Hedonistas: Una exposición para entender la Movida madrileña*. I made use of these narratives to connect to the symbolic life and death of the Movida issue of whether museums are mausoleums or places where objects live a "second life." I evaluated the impossibility of a "Removida" by relating it to the concept of nostalgia, since the past that many long for will never return.

The museum exhibits also "[...] contradict the uninhibited counter-culture vibrancy of the Movida with an institutionalized vision of it" (Nichols 3). Be that as it may, this path is often a matter of course with many avant-garde phenomena. They eventually become too passé, or institutionalized, and thus cannot retain their initial shock or innovation permanently. Inevitably, the old fashion is replaced with the next best thing, and the cycle repeats itself. In a discussion of the state of contemporary art in Spain in recent years, Rafael Doctor Roncero, the Director of MUSAC (a contemporary art museum that opened in Castilla y León in 2005) summarizes this point: "All the challenges thrown up by the various avant-garde movements have ended up being tamed and neutralized through their ratification, and even sublimation, by the capitalist system" (Doctor Roncero 11). If the fate of the Movida is considered alongside the fates of other avant-garde movements, it is not at all surprising that it was eventually tamed and neutralized, and therefore the artists who participated in the Movida need not be criticized for the inevitable.

The visions and versions of the Movida I examined at times attempt to smooth out or gloss over not only the counter-culture vibrancy of the Movida, but also other facets of this cultural phenomenon. This relates to Jo Labanyi's conception of the return of ghosts of the past, which she relates to modernity and postmodernity:

[...] there are two fundamental ways in which modernity has rendered popular and mass culture ghostly: by marginalizing it and, in a more complex strategy akin to the psychoanalytic mechanism of disavowal (simultaneous affirmation/denial), by cannibalizing it. It can in some respects be argued that postmodernism, as the cultural expression of post-modernity, is characterized by the recognition—in the spectral form of the simulacrum—of modernity's ghosts [...] (Labanyi *Engaging* 2).

The memory of the Movida has been alternately marginalized and cannibalized. Some wish to say that it never existed, and it has been marginalized by critics like Teresa Vilarós who insist upon its "excess" and "ruin" and even by those who overemphasize its carnivalesque, euphoric aspects. There have also been instances in which the memory of the Movida has been disavowed because it has been cannibalized, taken apart and re-membered, to the point that it is no longer recognizable. The effect of the various forms of "displaying" memory should give us pause. For Doctor Roncero, the very act of displaying and memorializing objects from avant-garde movements has the effect of diluting them: "Once on display, their discourses become mere rhetoric. Now nothing remains but the essence of the strategy that informed them, for they have lost the utopian and revolutionary sense for which they were once conceived" (11). It is in this re-membering, this new space on display, that the Movida appears reincarnated, for it undergoes a rebirth, but in a different body. This is particularly true with the case of the documentary *La empanada de la Removida* [Restirring the Movida Pot Pie] (2007), which creates a kitsch, recycled narrative of the Movida.

While at times the past returns mediated by kitsch, at other points the past is haunting. The ghosts of the past are acknowledged in my third chapter, through an analysis of two novels, Luis Antonio de Villena's *Madrid ha muerto: esplendor y caos de una ciudad feliz de los ochenta* (*Madrid has died: Splendor and Chaos of a Happy City in the 1980s*, published in 1999 and reissued in 2006), and Charlie Miralles's novel *1964 después de Cristo y antes de perder el autobús* (*1964 After Christ and Before Missing the Bus*, published in 2007). I provided an assessment of the way in which the Freudian

concepts of mourning, melancholia, and working through are exhibited in the two novels. In both novels, the protagonists deal with the ghosts of their past by rehabilitating them, but it is how they contend with these ghosts that makes them distinct from one another.

Some of the bleaker aspects and ghosts of this period are not always emphasized sufficiently. The fallacy that the Movida was exclusively a period of carefree, carnivalesque revelry is also exposed through examining the difficulties experienced by transvestites, gays and lesbians (highlighted during the 1981 coup attempt) and the consequences of drug addiction, AIDS, and suicides that cut short the lives of numerous young people during this time. The documentary *Madrid: La sombra de un sueño* [Madrid, the Shadow of a Dream] (2007) and the film *El Calentito* (2005) touch upon these aspects of the Movida.

The political characteristics of the transition to democracy, including the PSOE's involvement with and appropriation of the Madrid subculture(s) and the erroneous assumption that all young people were apolitical *pasotas* are clarified at various points in the cultural products I examine. They also demonstrate that neither the transition to democracy nor the Movida signified a complete rupture with the past. Whether via parody, pastiche, or nostalgia for the past, the spectre of Francoism and the ghosts of the dictatorship return on many levels in each of the texts I evaluate. Ensuring that these points are remembered is fundamental to the memory of this period. I have highlighted some of the dangers of nostalgic renderings of the past that sometimes fetishize the past in the present "[...] seeking an escape to the mythic origins of an artificial past" (Nichols 19).

I prefer instead to see the Movida through the lens of postnostalgic narratives which allow for critical inquiries into the past, as explored in my fourth chapter. In this chapter, I show that the films *Bad Education* (2004) and *El Calentito* (2005) move beyond nostalgic representations of the past by being examples of pastiche as well as postnostalgic narratives. My analysis of these films shows how the pastiche can be mobilized as a technique to set postnostalgic narratives into motion. Both films reveal how the past is always present by visiting different moments, including those that take place during the Madrid Movida. I see the postnostalgic narratives as fundamental to understanding the past, because while nostalgic meanderings into the past serve a purpose, postnostalgic narratives create critical insight about the past.

#### The Future of the Past

The memories of the past, and particularly of the legacy of the Madrid Movida, will play a significant role in the future. In a book chapter entitled "Estigma y memoria de los jóvenes de la transición," Pablo Sánchez León discusses the harm that was done by negatively stigmatizing Spanish youth during the transition. Sánchez León also points out that knowledge of the profundity of history is important for democratic citizens: "La posibilidad de un ciudadano consciente, participativo de la política e implicado en la construcción discursiva de su sociedad, se vincula [...] directamente con la conciencia de una profundidad histórica en los relatos que éste asume del pasado" ("The possibility of a citizen that is aware, who participates in politics and is implicated in the discursive construction of his society, is directly connected to the acknowledgment and consciousness of the depth of historical knowledge of the stories about the past" ;

Sánchez León 174). Therefore, an understanding of many of the facets of the period of the Movida is necessary, especially as it continues to undergo transformations.

### Areas for Future Research

As Jo Labanyi points out, culture can be seen as

[...] a 'recycling' process in which nothing is lost but returns in new hybridized forms, adapting to changed circumstances. This recycling process responds to a view of history as discontinuous but at the same time marked by doublings-up and superimpositions: in short, a view of history that is dynamic but which—unlike that constructed by the master narratives of progress—is moving in many directions simultaneously. (*Engaging...*12)

It will be interesting to see how future representations portray the Movida, and what changes and superimpositions they will make to the image of this time period. One major area for future research would be to examine the memory of the queer aspect of the Movida. While much has been written about the queerness of the Movida since its inception, the legacy of this component of the Movida deserves further research. At first glance, it does seem that the ground-breaking facets of queer culture in Spain in the later 1970s and early 1980s are lost in recent commemorations, and there are a number of reasons why this is the case that would need to be explored in more depth. However, further analysis of the integration of queer culture in present day Spain would be necessary to discover these reasons. The legalization of gay marriage in Spain in 2005 is one of the more recent accomplishments, and Madrid is host to one of the largest gay pride parades in the world.

It is clear that the interpretations of the Movida will continue in many realms. For instance, in the introduction to the LA MOVIDA catalog, curator Blanca Sánchez notes that not everyone was included in the exhibits that could have been. However, she sees

this as an opportunity to create other exhibits: "[...] esto permitirá, espero, hacer nuevas exposiciones con nuevos criterios, dejar una puerta abierta para que algún día otros configuren un proyecto distinto sobre aquel momento" ("I hope this will make it so that new exhibits with new criteria will be created, and it leaves a door open so that some day others will create a distinctive project about that moment" ; B. Sánchez 18).

In the meantime, there are several cultural products that address the legacy of the Movida that I have mentioned only briefly in this study. Many of these areas deserve further consideration. First, an in-depth analysis of non-fiction, journalistic texts that address the memory of the Movida from a number of different angles is worth undertaking. Some of these texts focus specifically on one person or a small group of people who were involved in the Movida, such as *Corazón Ágatha (Agatha's Heart)* (2000) by José María Plaza and *Alaska y otras historias de la Movida (Alaska and Other Stories of the Movida)* by Rafa Cervera (2003). There are also texts on particular bands from this era, such as Jesús (José) Rodríguez Lenin's *Gabinete Caligari: El lado más chulo de la Movida (Gabinete Caligari: The Coolest Side of the Movida)* from 2004. Carlos José Ríos Longares's book *Y yo caí—enamorado de la moda juvenil: la Movida en las letras de sus canciones (And I Fell—In Love with Youth Fashion: The Movida in the Lyrics of its Songs)* (2001) focuses on the memory of a number of bands from this period. I am interested in these texts because they focus mostly on specific individuals or small groups of people who were involved in the Movida, providing more details about certain areas of the culture of this moment.



Other non-fiction texts seek to provide a general overview of what the Movida meant, such as José Manuel Lechado's text *LA MOVIDA: Una crónica de los 80 (La Movida: A Chronicle of the 1980s)*, (2005). This text is a popular culture book, widely available at bookstores and replete with photographs, pictures of ticket stubs, and newspaper articles, making it seem like a scrapbook from the 1970s and 1980s. This text reflects Lechado's desire to collect and archive personal items, since many of the things included within its pages are memorabilia from Lechado's past. Examining this text would allow me to explore the idea of the motivations behind amassing personal collections and how this relates to maintaining personal memories. Lechado also connects his own memories to collective memories of the Movida. In addition, the imagistic content of this book is of particular interest to me, because it will be interesting to explore how the images produce a supplementary narrative in the book and also lend a certain authenticity to the text.

Silvia Grijalba's book, *Dios salve a la Movida (God Save the Movida)*, (2006) is a project that was inspired by a special section about the Movida called "M2" that she wrote for the newspaper *El Mundo*. This book covers several areas of the Movida, including the visual arts, music, television and radio shows, and locales such as the bar Rock-Ola, and it is valuable because it contains a general account of many aspects of the Movida. It is written in a journalistic tone and claims to be an objective depiction of this period and calls itself a "fundamental document" for understanding the Movida. This book interests me because Grijalba emphasizes her objectivity to a fault, as though because she did not live through this time she is guaranteed to be objective about its

memory. I would like to examine how her position as narrator shows the impossibility of being objective about the memory of certain events.

The web-based materials that reflect upon the memory of the Movida is an area that has not been researched sufficiently. I touch upon some of these materials in my chapters, by mentioning the MySpace page for the documentary *Madrid, la sombra de un sueño* and author Charlie Miralles's use of the internet for promoting his novel, but there are many more websites that mention the Movida. For instance, there are forums in which people discuss their memories of this period informally and fan club pages for bands from this period. There are also YouTube videos of Almodóvar and McNamara's performances and other performances from this period, and people comment on the videos, creating an interactive space. A number of blogs that reflect upon the Movida also exist, such as [laMovidaMadrileña.com](http://laMovidaMadrileña.com), and I would like to examine how blogs express both personal and collective memories about this period. These web-based manifestations are interesting because they also represent both the fleeting nature of memory, and the desire to make it permanent.

The legacy of the Movida is mentioned repeatedly in tour books created for English-speaking tourists. It is usually mentioned to explain the history of nightlife in Madrid. I have seen the Movida mentioned in the tourbook "Let's Go" that is very popular in the U.S. with college students and budget travelers. This mention of the Movida in tour books is notable because people outside of Spain create many of the tour books, which could be a reflection of how the effort to mobilize the Movida to create an international image for Madrid in the 1980s was successful. The fact that non-Spaniards

cite it also demonstrates a new level of promotion of this phenomenon—the Movida is no longer only promoted from within.

Along with this future research on the legacy of the Movida in recent and forthcoming cultural products and events, there are aspects of the Movida itself that still deserve closer critical attention. The importance of galleries such as La Galería Juana de Aizpuru, Galería Vijande, and Galería Moriarty in stimulating the work of numerous artists during this period as well as providing meeting places for people to interact and exchange ideas has not been emphasized enough in the writing of the history of the Movida. Blanca Sánchez, curator of the LA MOVIDA exhibits, notes that the work of galleries has not been recognized, and that without them, emerging artists would not have received as much support (21). These galleries were among the first contemporary art galleries in Madrid, and also helped to make Madrid an international destination for contemporary art. Founded in 1981, Galería Moriarty still exists and participates in international art fairs. La Galería Juana de Aizpuru is also still in existence, and continues to represent artists that began their careers in the late 1970s such as photographer Alberto García Alix and Sigfrido Martín Begué. Juana de Aizpuru was one of the founders of ARCO, an art fair that began in 1982 and continues today. While many politicians wished to use the Movida as a way to make Madrid and Spain into an international destination, galleries did this on a private level with contemporary art.

The continued presence of galleries that began in the early years of the transition to democracy shows that the cultural phenomenon that began in part within their walls continues to be significant. As Germán Labrador Méndez has commented, "El pasado

transicional es hoy un lugar de materiales múltiples que se visita constantemente para formar nuestras narraciones, pero ese depósito no está aún agotado, quedan muchos episodios que pueden ser objeto de narración" ("Today, the transitional past is a place with multiple materials that are visited constantly to form our narrations, but this deposit has not yet run dry, there are many episodes that can still be objects of narration" ; Labrador Méndez np). Part of the reason why the topic of the memory of the Movida is so compelling is that it is continuously being re-membered, and I see no reason why this will cease to happen. Undoubtedly, there will be more cultural products introduced in the coming years that will open up new areas for research as the recycling process of the Movida continues.

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