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**A STUDY OF THE CONCEPT AND GENEALOGY OF HOME OWNERSHIP  
WITHIN SPAIN FROM 1950 TO 2008 AS REPRESENTED WITHIN SPECIFIC  
CULTURAL ARTEFACTS**

**BY**

**CLAIRE DAVIES**

**DISSERTATION**

Submitted for a degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Iberian and Latin American Studies at  
Birkbeck, University of London, July 2023

Supervisor Dr Mari Paz Balibrea Enriquez

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## **Declaration**

I confirm that the work presented within this thesis is entirely my own.

## **Abstract**

This thesis uses an urban cultural studies approach to provide an account of the persistence of the concept of homeownership within Spain from the 1950s to 2008 as represented in specific films and novels of the period. Focusing on cultural objects that engage with contemporary developments in the Spanish housing situation, this thesis pursues the rise and continuation of an ideology of homeownership.

Through the representations of homeownership studied, four themes are explored which illustrate the continuance and persistence of the hegemony of homeownership over the period studied:

1. the commodification of the home as a desirable consumer product and the intervention by the State, both the Franco regime and subsequent democratic governments, to grow the Spanish middle-class and to encourage homeownership,
2. the manifestation of extreme behaviour in order to achieve the falsely constructed desire of home homeownership which has ultimately led to alienation,
3. the need for a home to provide ontological security, a refuge safe from the prying eyes of capitalist society and the State and
4. the use of home as a place of resistance or rebellion against the onslaught of capital accumulation or as a way to criticise and resist the neoliberalist governments and their capitalist policies.

This work is the first to undertake a close reading of cinematic and literary texts from the latter half of twentieth century Spain through the prism of homeownership. It is hoped that this new branch of Hispanic cultural urban studies provides an insight into the significant issue of homeownership in Spain, particularly in relation to the hegemonic discourse that promoted it and its effects on the Spanish populace.

## **Acknowledgments**

This project would not have been possible without the support of many people.

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## **Introduction**

This thesis has evolved from my earlier studies in Civil Engineering and my previous role in real estate tax leading to my interest in the use of space, in particular to understand the desire and motivation behind homeownership, combined with my scholarly interest in contemporary Spanish culture, principally cinematic and literary texts. Focusing on cultural objects that engage with contemporary developments in the Spanish housing situation, this thesis pursues the rise and continuation of an ideology of homeownership within Spain from the 1950s to 2008 as represented in specific films and novels of the period.

The promotion of homeownership within Spain can be traced back to 1947 when Franco's government liberalized residency laws resulting in a mass rural exodus to the cities in search of employment. This in turn led to massive urban overcrowding and a dire need for additional housing. Even after Franco's death and the Transition to democracy, the focus on the construction industry as a key driver of economic strategy and, consequently, the need for greater homeownership, persisted. On 1 January 1986 Spain joined the European Economic Community (EEC) which resulted in significant European Union (EU) subsidies leading to the huge construction booms of the latter half of the 1980s and early 2000s and Spain became the country in Europe with the greatest amount of people owning their own home.

Using theories on space and the home, particularly that of homeownership, this thesis uses cultural artefacts to show how the historic, economic and political events within Spain from the

1950s onwards have impacted the concept of homeownership. Consequently, reading Spanish cultural artefacts through the prism of homeownership provides a historically and geographically situated representation of the ideology of homeownership within Spanish society.

This thesis therefore explores cultural artefacts to demonstrate how and why the Franco regime's ideology of homeownership was developed, including providing an explanation of the political landscape and the politically ideological focus on family and homeownership. The cultural products examined for this period have been chosen due to their ability to demonstrate the ideology of the Franco regime, but also to show how others attempted to question the regime's methodology through the use of a cultural medium. In addition, this thesis seeks to analyse the representation of this continued ideology post the Franco regime and the Transition to democracy and its impact on Spain's relationship with the home up until the start of the last recession which started in 2008.

There are a multitude of artefacts that could have been chosen for this thesis, however a close reading of each and the restriction on the length of this thesis puts a practical and realistic limit on the number of works that could have been considered. This is not to say that the themes explored here are not shared by other works, for example works such as *Surcos* (José Antonio Nieves Conde, 1951), *¡Bienvenido Mister Marshall!* (Luis García Berlanga, 1953), *La lluvia amarilla* (Julio Llamazares, 1988), *¿Que he hecho yo para merecer esto?* (Pedro Almodóvar, 1984), to name a few. However, the artefacts that have been selected strongly demonstrate the continuation, or one could say persistence, of the hegemonic discourse of homeownership within Spain from 1950s until 2008 through the three perspectives of (1) hegemony and

commodification, (2) alienation and (3) resistance and refuge. Thus, through the cultural artefacts selected one can start to understand the production of the hegemonic desire for homeownership perpetrated by the Franco regime and subsequent democratic governments.

The thesis has been structured to provide a theoretical and historical background of homeownership within Spain which can be found in Chapters One and Two respectively. These chapters set the scene for the later chapters where the close visual and literary analysis of the chosen cultural artefacts is undertaken.

The concept of homeownership is complex. One could argue that the adoption of a capitalist State by various Spanish governments has led to the hegemonic dominant discourse of the commodification of the home which has manipulated the Spanish populace into desiring their own home and in turn alienated them from themselves. However, it could also be argued that, as an additional layer to the capitalist hegemonic discourse, the home could be used as a refuge from the ravages of capitalist society and potentially a place of resistance against capitalism. Thus, taking these arguments into consideration the case studies have been divided into three chapters, namely Chapter Three is concerning hegemonic discourse and commodification of the idea of homeownership, Chapter Four is concerning homeownership as a form of alienation and Chapter Five is concerning refuge and resistance in homeownership.

I am indebted to the works of Hispanic urban scholars such as Susan Larson, Malcolm A. Compitello, Benjamin Fraser, Ann Davies, Nathan Richardson, Germán Labrador-Méndez et al whose works are studied in greater depth within Chapter One, entitled “Theories on space and home in cultural works”. I also utilize the works of theoreticians of space as a tool for the close

reading of cultural works, theoreticians such as Henri Lefebvre, Edward Soja, David Harvey, Neil Smith, Doreen Massey, Anthony Giddens, Peter Saunders et al and, again, their works are analysed in greater depth within Chapter One.

By expanding the period of review from the 1950s to 2008<sup>1</sup> and by concentrating on the specific concept of homeownership, this thesis encompasses events such as the Franco regime, including the end of the disastrous autarkic period and the later periods of *desarrollismo* and *apertura*, including the adoption of a capitalistic stance that was to characterize the latter half of Francoism and subsequent Spanish governments. This long period also encompasses the Transition to democracy, membership of the EU, the construction booms of both the 1960s and late 1980s/early 1990s and the events that led into the long recession which started in 2008 and lasted until 2015.

The political and historical background to homeownership in Spain is studied within Chapter Two, entitled “History of homeownership in Spain”, which evidences that homeownership played a significant part in the ideological, economic and political policies of Spain and vice versa. Chapter Two provides the statistics which illustrate the significant rise in homeownership during the period of review and the potential historical reasons for this increase. It also shows how much of this was based upon debt, which became unsustainable in 2008 when the sub-prime crisis hit and the façade of a supposedly 94% middle-class Spanish population started to crumble.

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<sup>1</sup> This period of time, although long, can be considered to be part of the same cycle as it shows Spain’s journey into a neoliberalistic form of capitalism. We can see evidence of this within the book *Fin de ciclo: Financiarización, territorio y sociedad de propietarios en la onda larga del capitalismo hispano (1959-2010)* by Emmanuel Rodríguez López and Isidro López Hernández.

Chapter Three is entitled “Hegemonic discourse and commodification of the idea of homeownership: the desire for “una vida normal de ciudadano” (*El Lute: Mañana será libre* (Vicente Aranda, 1987 and 1988), minute 118)”. Following the work of Antonio Gramsci, this chapter discusses the concept of hegemony with respect to homeownership. Throughout this chapter, cultural works demonstrate how the dominant ruling class, i.e. the Franco and successive regimes, promoted the idea of homeownership through the commodification of the home as the ultimate consumer product. Through examining works from 1950 (*Noticiarios y Documentales (NO-DOs)*) until 1988 (*El Lute*) we see the trajectory of the home as a commodity and a marker of success and of reaching middle-class status. Additionally, the reasons for the promotion of homeownership also become clear and are evidenced through the works studied, be it for (1) political stability through a content populace and passing the risk of homeownership onto the individual during the Franco era, (2) the hegemonic discourse of fear of another civil war during the Transition process ensuring Franco’s policies were principally maintained post the Transition to democracy, (3) the bolstering of the construction and tourism industry in a bid to join Europe in the 1980s and (4) the increasingly neoliberal stance of the Spanish governments including the desire of those in power to get rich quick through extraordinary levels of corruption in the 1990s. The concept of women as homemakers and the consequently strong connotations of home for women is discussed within this Chapter with respect to the analysis of the State-controlled NO-DOs and the use of women to sell certain consumer goods and also with respect to the differing roles of Conchi and José within *Las verdes praderas* (José Luis Garci, 1979). Works studied include the NO-DOs and the films *El inquilino* (José Antonio

Nieves Conde, 1957), *Las verdes praderas*, *Colegas* (Eloy de la Iglesia, 1982) and *El Lute I: Camina o revienta* and *El Lute II: Mañana seré libre* (Vicente Aranda, 1987 and 1988).

Chapter Four is entitled “Homeownership in Spain: an aspiration that can cause extreme behaviour”. This chapter leads on from the concepts developed in Chapter Three and uses cultural works ranging from *El pisito* released in 1958 to *El otro barrio* published in 1998. We see how the protagonists of the works studied manifest extreme behaviour in order to achieve a falsely constructed hegemonic desire of homeownership. The concept of women in relation to the home is expanded further in this Chapter with respect to the characters of Petrita in *El Pisito*, Carmen in *El Verdugo* and Ángela in *Deprisa, deprisa* where we further understand the complex role that women play with respect to homeownership. The theories explored are supported by feminist historians of the late Francoist period, including Aurora Morcillo, Inbal Ofer and Victoria Reeser and also the feminist geographer Doreen Massey. Going forward it would be beneficial to undertake a gender-specific analysis of homeownership within Spain given how central the idea of home is to the construction of womanhood in the relevant period. Works studied in this chapter include the films *El pisito* (Marco Ferreri and Isidoro M Ferry, 1958), *El verdugo* (Luis García Berlanga, 1963) and *Deprisa, deprisa* (Carlos Saura, 1981) and the novels *Últimas tardes con Teresa* (Juan Marsé, 1966) and *El otro barrio* (Elvira Lindo, 1998).

Finally, within Chapter Five, entitled “Refuge and resistance”, cultural works, ranging from *Verano Azul* released in 1981 to the eighth season of *El cor de la ciutat* released in 2007-8, demonstrate an alternative or additional potential reason for the desire to own a home, one of a refuge against the outside world and a place of resistance against the hegemonic discourse, in Lefebvrian terms the home becomes a lived space. It also explores how the idea of home,

which had been promoted as the ultimate commodity by the Franco and successive democratic regimes, could be subverted as a counter hegemonic product in order to demonstrate the dangers of capitalism and the absurd and damaging lengths that people were prepared to undertake in order to follow the hegemonic discourse of homeownership. Works studied include the TV series *Verano Azul* (Antonio Mercero, 1981) and *El cor de la ciutat* (Artur Trias, 2007-8), the novels *La piel del tambor* (Arturo Pérez-Reverte, 1995) and *Los girasoles ciegos* (Alberto Méndez, 2004) and the films *El Lute I: Camina o revienta* and *El Lute II: Mañana será libre* (Vicente Aranda, 1987 and 1988).

### **Chosen cultural works**

This section discusses the censorship in Spain during the Franco regime and a short historical background of the development of literature and film post the Franco regime in order to provide a brief understanding of the works available to the Spanish populace at the time of publication/release. A summary of each of the chosen cultural works analysed within Chapters Three to Five are then provided including details of publication, circulation and reception and the rationale behind the choice of each work. Further studies would benefit from concentrating to a greater extent on how the chosen works were received and perceived at the time in order better ascertain the impact of the reception with respect to the ideologies that this thesis uncovers. The summary of works provides some context to the more in depth visual and textual analysis of these works, undertaken in the later chapters.

The regime's censors extensively controlled the content of films and novels during the Franco era such that Spanish culture was defined by the desires of those in power and subject to their



political and economic whims. The regime focused on control and the elimination of any divergence - a homogeny based upon simplistic ideas that followed only the most conservative traditions sanctioned by those in power (Enrique-Monterde, p. 11). The 1966 Press Law did little to actually change censorship within Spain and may have exasperated the situation by making submission to the censor optional, simply putting the onus for staying on the approved ideological path onto the filmmakers and authors themselves and thus encouraging self-censorship.

Due to the imposed censorship a high percentage of world cinematic production did not arrive on Spanish screens or was significantly delayed. The State therefore sought to use censorship to create a society that did not think outside the box. However, despite this, most of the artefacts studied in this thesis which derive from the Franco period are evidence that it was possible to circumvent censorship and provide a subversive message to the audience. Indeed, the majority of works selected have a narrative consistently differing from official versions. The exception would appear to be the State-controlled newsreels NO-DOs, however, even within these supposed “doxa del franquismo” (Sánchez-Biosca, p. 5), we see images that contradict the narrator’s words or the triumphant<sup>2</sup> music being played and, as such, there still appears to be room for a counter-reading of the official message. Steve Marsh agrees that often the subversive message was conveyed through the use of comedy or satire (Marsh, p.192). The benefits of using humour to discuss a difficult and polemic topic were twofold: (1) it tended to have an easier passage through the censors, and (2) difficult topics are more digestible to the

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<sup>2</sup> The music used could be described as triumphant as it is rousing with a heavy use of trumpets and other brass instruments, rather like a fanfare.

audience if done with humour; as they say, many a true word is spoken in jest (Lucas, p. 23). We see this in Berlanga's film *El verdugo* and also within Ferreri's *El pisito*.

In the 1950s, film was more popular and accessible to the masses than literature given the significant level of illiteracy in Spain at the time and simply due to the immense popularity of the cinema. For example, given its popularity the silver screen proved essential for propaganda purposes during all early twentieth century wars. Cinema was one of the only media open to all, and not just the educated few, such that the message the director wished to convey was passed to the popular masses; those that were generally affected by the issues discussed (although, of course, during the Franco regime films suffered from the same censorship as literature). On the other hand, Spanish literature of the 1950s followed a fairly rigid path, but by the 1960s and the period of *desarrollismo*, there was a growing sense of experimentation and novels such as *Tiempo de Silencio* published in 1962 by Martín Santos and Juan Marsé's *Últimas Tardes con Teresa* published in 1966, which pushed the boundaries of style and content. It should be noted that the works chosen for this thesis focus on literature and the screen, be it cinema or in later years the television, as these are cultural forms that I am more comfortable with. And in addition, as argued above, particularly during the Franco era, films tended to have larger audiences and hence be more influential than other media. However, when this field of study is expanded other cultural forms should also be considered. For example, the theatre, which it is understood has not been studied before with respect to homeownership, works of art or even more recent forms of social media, for example, podcasts etc..

In this thesis, I review several films and novels that demonstrate the transition of Spain from the dictatorship of the Franco regime into democracy. It becomes clear that this democracy was not homogeneous across the nation as those marginalised, partially due to geographical boundaries which demarcated someone as privileged or not, were not provided with the same access to the open market and consumer lifestyle. Consequently, studying a society's idea of homeownership can provide us with a greater understanding of the stratification of that society and how the hegemonic desire for middle-class status evolved within Spain. The genre of film that developed from the late 1970s until the mid-1980s (so essentially throughout the majority of the 1973 recession) which shone a window on the problems of the marginalised youth of this time is more commonly referred to as *quinqui*<sup>3</sup> cinema (Florido-Berrocal, p.231). This type of film focused on youth culture and the delinquency that was rife within the city suburbs. As such, it could be argued that this type of cinema was a social documentary of the serious urban issues, both economic and social, that arose during the time of the Transition. The films *Colegas*, *Deprisa, deprisa* and both *El Lute: Camina o revienta* and *El Lute II: Mañana seré libre* all fit within the *quinqui* genre.

The works studied also demonstrate that many of Franco's policies, particularly with regards to the economy and housing, remained and were often expanded post the Transition to democracy. We see within the cultural works studied the hegemonic desire to be middle-class

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<sup>3</sup> The word *quinqui* was used to refer to a sociological phenomenon that started in Spain at the end of the 1970s and into the 1980s. Set against a backdrop of a transitional Spain with many celebrating the onset of democracy, the *quinqui* culture was an alternative sector of Spain. *Quinqui* cinema explored those that missed out on the benefits of change; delinquent juveniles, lives of disposal adolescents, who were excluded from the new wave of capitalism and doomed to be marginalised and abandoned. These delinquents were generally unemployed, often took drugs, particularly heroin, and many suffered from AIDS. They had no future, often due to the earlier repression of their families by the Franco regime, and they did not match up to the images of wellbeing and progress of the newly elected government and the hegemonic capitalist ideology. The *quinqui* explosion was mainly confined to the high-rise housing estates, newly created suburbs on the peripheries of cities created during the *desarrollismo* period of the Franco regime (Florido Berrocal, pp. xi-xiv).

and possess the consumer goods that are evidence of this elevated status, including that of the home. Within later works housing is less of a prominent subject as other events take centre stage, obvious examples being the Transition and entry into Europe, but if one analyses the works closely it is clear that housing is still a very important topic for the Spanish populace and the ideology of homeownership remains part of the dominant discourse. Consequently, the concept of homeownership which is represented within the works studied is not always explicitly dealt with through ownership, but more indirectly as signs and assumptions of ownership, for example a sense of entitlement over space which gives the sense of ownership.

Additionally, due to constraints with respect to word count, certain themes have only been touched on and not explored in greater detail in order that the focus of this thesis remains on homeownership. These include topics such as regional autonomy which was denied by the Franco regime and only reintroduced as part of the Transition following the constitution of 1978 and is still contested to this day. This is alluded to within the TV series *El cor de la ciutat* studied within Chapter Five of this thesis. However, further work could expand on this concept and analyse whether the desire to be autonomous from the central national government meant that the populations of regions such as Catalonia and País Vasco, were less likely to follow the national hegemonic discourse of homeownership than others. Additionally, a comparison of homeownership within Spain as compared to other countries could also be undertaken, for example, Portugal, which was, similar to Spain, also governed by an authoritarian and fascist dictator, Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, from 1933 to 1974. Furthermore, a comparison of homeownership between rural and urban Spain could be studied, particularly given the rural versus urban dichotomy that was so dominant within the first 20 years of Franco's dictatorship (which is discussed in greater detail within Chapter Two).

It should be noted that there is understandably an overlap between the works chosen and the thematic approaches of the chapters with several works covering more than one of the three themes of hegemonic discourse, alienation and refuge and resistance. If this is the case, a decision has been made in which chapter the works are best situated and to discuss briefly the areas related to the other theme in the relevant chapter. Thus, in order to avoid repetition, the synopses of the case studies are included here rather than in each individual chapter. For ease of reference I have followed the order that the works appear within the later chapters.

### **Chapter Three cultural works: hegemonic discourse**

One of the primary propaganda tools of the Franco regime were Noticiarios y Documentales (NO-DOs), always shown at the start of every cinema film. The content of NO-DOs was closely controlled by the State such that Sánchez-Biosca opines that NO-DOs were the authentic voice of the regime (p.5). All newsreels between 1950 and 1973 were considered for this thesis and the ones relating to the home, home construction or home appliances were closely analysed to reveal the ideology of the State with regards to homeownership.

Towards the end of the 1950s, the housing crisis became a 'hot topic' for fiction writers and it was used as a story line in films and literature. One such film directed by the Falangist José Antonio Nieves Conde that concentrated on the housing problem in the 1950s was *El inquilino* released in 1957. This is a story of the González family, a very happy, loving family with four children, two boys and two girls, who live in a flat in Madrid scheduled for demolition as their area is to be gentrified. They are unable to find a new home and, in the original version, end up

living on the street. Consequently, the film shows the acute lack of housing which was an issue for much of the period that Franco was in power. The criticism of the Franco regime is so fierce I would argue that it has strong similarities to films set within the recent 2008-2015 recession such as *5 Metros Cuadrados* (Max Lemcke, 2012). Consequently, soon after its release *El inquilino* was removed from the screens on the demand of the Housing Ministry, which had been created in February of the same year as the film's release. The film was not released again until some years later and only then with significant censorship. After the release of this film the trajectory of Nieves Conde's career was diminished as, due to the criticism of the regime in this film, he was no longer a favoured Falangist director. However, in 1958 *El inquilino* was nominated for Best Film at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. This film was specifically chosen for this thesis as despite its subversive nature, the desire for a home, particularly in the new modern high-rise blocks springing up around Madrid, is paramount which demonstrates that, even when criticising the regime, the falsely constructed hegemonic ideology surrounding homeownership could not be avoided.

*Colegas*, directed by Eloy de la Iglesia and released in 1982, won Best Picture at the Festival de Tomar in its year of release. It shows the hard reality of life as a youth in the *Barrio de la Concepción* of Madrid within *Las Colmenas*, the place where many believe the concept of the *quincis* started (Florido-Berrocal, p.233). The three protagonists, Rosario (Rosario Flores), José (José Luis Manzano) and Antonio (Antonio Flores), represent the youth of the working-class, with no political allegiance as they are not represented by the politics of the time and indeed their plight appears to be ignored during the Transition and later democracy. They can see no way out of their poverty and situation without resorting to delinquency. The desire to have a home, to call their own, away from their dysfunctional families living in overcrowded flats that

they work all hours to pay for, somewhere they can be themselves and bring up the child Rosario is expecting, is a continuous subtext throughout this film. We also see the marginalisation of a whole tranche of society essentially left to rot on the outskirts of Madrid in their overcrowded, sub-standard housing within huge, impersonal estates. These estates become more like prisons, trapping the youth with no prospects of escape for a better future, but also trapping their parents who are crippled by the mortgage repayments during a recession where interest rates reached an all-time high. This film was chosen for my study as it demonstrates that the hegemonic desire to have a home of their own is so powerful that the protagonists are even willing to sell their unborn child in order to obtain one.

A further set of *quinqui* films that were released in 1987 and 1988 respectively are *El Lute: Camina o revienta* and *El Lute II: Mañana seré libre*. These films, both written and directed by Vicente Aranda, are based on the memoirs of Eleuterio Sánchez, nicknamed *El Lute*, published in 1977 and 1979. They follow the story of the protagonist, El Lute (Imanol Arias), who is a member of a family of travelling merchants. Many films of this time looked back to the years under Franco to both understand the situation that they now found themselves in, but also to rewrite history as it should have been, to reveal the truth about the time under the Franco regime that was suppressed by the censors. The films were a huge success in the box office with the first film being seen by more than 1.4 million spectators (Florida-Berrocal, p. 200). The real El Lute was released from prison in 1981 and the film refers to him on his release as now being a normal citizen. This is of particular interest to this thesis as it implies that owning your own home makes you acceptable in society, a 'normal' citizen.

Despite the setting of the first film in the 1960s, the period of *desarrollismo* for Spain, life was very hard for El Lute and his family as they suffered from persecution from the authorities and were not able to benefit from the boom times that the middle-class were enjoying. In order to survive, El Lute stole two chickens and for this crime he received six months in jail. He returned to his common-law wife Chelo (Victoria Abril) and they tried to live an honourable life in the squalor of the *chabolas* surrounding Madrid. However, a member of the local mafia, with the help of the corrupt police, destroyed their flimsy dwelling. El Lute fell in with a group of friends and the three of them ended up committing a burglary where the security guard was shot. The three men were caught and tortured and sentenced to death for their crimes, which was fortunately commuted to thirty years in jail. El Lute managed to escape while being transported on a train. He was on the run for several weeks before he was captured. Through the use of newspaper cuttings, we see how El Lute becomes a legend: a symbol of freedom against the repression by the Franco regime. In the second film he escaped from jail again and managed to stay on the run for a number of years. During this period, we see his devotion to his family and his desire for them all to become normal members of society, not outcasts as they previously were. He uses money he obtained from safe breaking in order to purchase a house and become an accepted member of society. However, eventually the authorities catch up with him and he is jailed once more in 1973. This film is also examined in Chapter Five. The reason these works appear in two chapters is that the representation of the hegemony of homeownership and the house as a place of refuge were equally strong within the films. It was therefore impossible to choose which chapter the works should be analysed.

The film *Las verdes praderas* was directed by José Luis Garci and released in 1979, so just one year after the new constitution and only a couple of years after censorship ceased. The film was



well received winning both Best Actor and Best Supporting Actress at the 1980 Cinema Writers Circle Awards in Spain. The middle-class protagonist José Rebolledo (Alfredo Landa) appears to have it all, with a good job, happy marriage, two children and a second home, which was becoming the norm for the middle-classes at the time. However, José starts to feel that the middle-class lifestyle and the corresponding expectations are just another chore to add to his endless list and feels that he is following what is expected of him rather than simply enjoying life. He finds himself out of place with the middle-class, bourgeois society and discusses his unhappiness with his wife. Following this, for the finale of the film she makes, what turns out to be, a liberating decision to burn down their second home as they leave on the Sunday night. This film was principally chosen as part of my study due to the focus on the second home, which was starting to become one of the main drivers behind the ever-increasing statistic of homeownership within Spain.

#### **Chapter Four cultural works: alienation**

Another further film about the housing crisis is *El pisito*, directed by Marco Ferreri and Isidoro M. Ferry which was released in 1958, a year after Arrese's housing plan and the government reshuffle, but a year before the 1959 Stabilization Plan. *El pisito*, in a similar neorealist style as *Surcos* (José Antonio Nieves Conde, 1951) and *¡Bienvenido Mister Marshall!* (Luis García Berlanga, 1953), uses acerbic dark humour to bring to the fore the topic of the reality of the lack of housing in Madrid and the terrible cramped conditions that people were forced to endure. The film is based upon the novel by Rafael Azcona<sup>4</sup> called *El pisito: novela del amor y*

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<sup>4</sup> Azcona also wrote the screenplay for the film.

*inquilinato* published in 1957. It is about a couple, Rodolfo (José Luis López Vázquez) and Petrita (Mary Carrillo), that have been engaged for a very long fourteen years, primarily because they cannot find a flat in which to start their married life. To Petrita, clearly influenced by NO-DO propaganda and perhaps images of the perfect American dream (both seen on the cinema screen), a flat is a basic necessity in which to start a family. As she waits for Rodolfo to earn the necessary money by which to purchase their flat, their lives are in limbo. Consequently, she is now 42, unmarried and without children, as she has been unable to consummate her relationship with Rodolfo, and probably now unable to have any. In 1960 Marco Ferreri won Best Director and Mary Carrillo Best Actress for *El pisito* at the Cinema Writers Circle Awards in Spain. This film was chosen as part of my study as it demonstrates the extreme lengths that a Spanish citizen was willing to go to in order to obtain the must have commodity of a flat.

In 1963 the critically acclaimed film *El verdugo* directed by Luis García Berlanga, written by the same screenwriter of *El pisito*, Rafael Azcona, was released. The film won the Critics Award at the 1963 Venice film festival. The international exposure led the Spanish ambassador to Italy to call Berlanga a communist. However, this was later corrected by Franco who said “Berlanga no es comunista, es algo peor, es un mal español” (Cañas-Pelayo, p. 168) and he made sure that Berlanga found it very difficult to work in Spain again until the 1970s.

The film follows an undertaker’s assistant called José Luis (Nino Manfredi) who meets Carmen (Emma Penella), the daughter of the State executioner, Amadeo (José Isbert). Both Carmen and José Luis are outcasts from society due to their father’s and own profession respectively. Consequently, they are lonely and find solace in each other. The film denounces the death penalty, particularly the macabre use of the garrotte which was used in Spain as late as 1974.

However, the main message of the film is the lengths someone is prepared to go to in order to obtain a flat. The object of desire is one of the new, modern, high-rise tower blocks that surround Madrid. José Luis, although repelled by the idea of being a 'legal murderer', agrees to become the State executioner on the retirement of Amadeo so that the State provided flat can be obtained. Despite overt appearances, José Luis is not trapped by his wife and young child, nor by his father-in-law, but by the expectations that come with a middle-class lifestyle and by the ostracization his family suffer at the hands of society. The desire to be middle-class drives the protagonist to do things that he would not normally do in order to obtain the coveted security and lifestyle through ownership of his own flat. This film was chosen to be part of my study as it overtly shows the overriding falsely constructed hegemonic desire of the couple to obtain a new flat in the modern, high-rise developments that were being built on the outskirts of major cities in such numbers by private construction firms.

In *El verdugo* we also see, in line with many of the NO-DOs of the 1960s, the expansion of tourism and the idea of leisure within Spain. Although this would appear to not be directly connected with homeownership, tourism had a major role to play with respect to the escalating ideology of ownership. For example, the construction boom also facilitated the purchase of second homes, predominantly by the coast. Additionally, the focus on tourism by the regime ensured that the construction companies and the overall industry continued to grow as airports, new roads, hotels, etc needed to be built.

A further artefact studied is the novel by Juan Marsé, *Últimas tardes con Teresa*, published in 1966 and winner of the Biblioteca Breve prize the year before. The popularity of this novel led it to being made into a film released in 1984. The story very specifically starts in 1956 at the

start of the student uprisings, which partly led to the cabinet reshuffle in 1957. It follows the character of Pijoaparte (also known as Manolo) who feels different from his working-class family and friends who all live within a poor district of Barcelona, Monte Carmelo. He attempts to elevate his status firstly by dating Maruja, who he mistakenly believes to be rich, but later discovers is in fact a maid to the Serrat family, the daughter of which is Teresa. After Maruja suffers an unfortunate accident, indirectly caused by Teresa's middle-class guilt, Manolo courts Teresa. She is reacting against her bourgeoisie upbringing by becoming involved in the university rebellions of the time. Her mistake is to believe that Manolo is a working-class revolutionary who she hopes will give her elevated kudos with her leftist university friends. The owned houses of Teresa in the districts of San Gervasio and Blanes feature heavily in the novel as does the neighbourhood of Monte Carmelo. I use these properties to analyse the sense of entrapment within society's rigid class hierarchy and the overriding desire to become middle-class and achieve the trappings of a lifestyle like that of Teresa and her family. This in turn is used to demonstrate how the home had become a status symbol which feeds into the idea of it as a must-have commodity within, by 1966, the established consumer society.

Another *quinqui* film is *Deprisa, deprisa* that was directed by Carlos Saura and released in 1981. It received international acclaim winning the Golden Bear at the 1981 Berlin International Film Festival and was nominated for Best Picture at the Chicago Film Festival in 1983. The film is about a group of young, apathetic delinquents that live in the south of Madrid. Saura has attempted to epitomise the lumpenproletariat youth of the late 1970s/early 1980s, marginalised and impoverished, living within the big cities of Spain, with the casual use of drugs and desire for easy money. The film opens with best friends Meca (Jesús Arias Aranzueque) and

Pablo<sup>5</sup> (José Antonio Valdelomar) stealing a car which they use to drive to their local bar in Villaverde, an outer suburb of Madrid. Here Pablo meets Ángela (Berta Socuéllamos Zarco) who falls in love and moves in with him. They are joined by a fourth member of the gang, Sebas (José María Hervás Roldán), who helps them commit a series of armed robberies. This group of four friends commit crimes that become more and more risky and their last job goes horribly wrong as three out of four of the friends are shot, with only Ángela surviving. Within this film we see the marginalisation of those not conforming to the norm, that of a middle-class consumer society. These neglected people are forced to the periphery of the cities, only able to look into the city from afar and not able to partake in the expanding consumer market that inhabits the urban centre. In this film the disenfranchised youth are represented as only being able to access the consumer products of the centre through crime as during the long 12-year recession that started in 1973 there were little to no opportunities available, particularly for those under 25 years old. However, despite all this, principally through the character of Ángela, we see the desire to have the middle-class trappings of a consumer lifestyle, epitomised by the ownership of her own flat. Irrespective of her criminal actions putting her outside of normal society she still wants to fit in and have a home of her own.

*El otro barrio* by Elvira Lindo was published in 1998 and tells the story of a 15-year-old boy, Ramón Fortuna, who 'accidentally' attempts to kill four people (being successful with two and also killing a dog, which he did on purpose). However, the protagonist in the story is the *barrio* in which he lives, Vallecas. This is a poor working-class neighbourhood of Madrid in which the whole of Ramón's life has been spent; it has shaped who he is. The other character in this novel

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<sup>5</sup> Valdelomar, who played the role of Pablo, was a real-life criminal. Three weeks before the premiere of *Deprisa, deprisa* he was arrested for robbing a bank and was unable to attend the premiere as he was incarcerated.

is his lawyer Marcelo, who was also originally from the same neighbourhood but escaped through his hard work at school and his career as a lawyer. The book focuses on the differences and similarities between these two characters, explaining the differences in their outcomes through the *barrios* in which they inhabit. This book was interesting with regard to this thesis as the young boy is fascinated by the luxury flat that Marcelo lives in with his wife and clearly desires the same thing, directly comparing it to what he sees as his future and that of his community stuck in Vallecas. The drive for something better, to become middle-class has remained a driver for homeownership from the start of capitalism within Spain in the 1950s and clearly continued into the late 1990s when this book was published.

### **Chapter Five cultural works: refuge and resistance**

Within this chapter the two films *El Lute: Camina o revienta* and *El Lute II: Mañana seré libre* are studied. These films were chosen as they demonstrate how the home is a place free from State surveillance, a refuge where El Lute and his family can be themselves and have greater control over their lives. These films are also analysed with respect to the hegemonic discourse and commodification of the home within Chapter Three. Therefore, please refer above for the summary of these films.

The brilliant short story by Alberto Méndez, *Los girasoles ciegos*, was published in 2004, although is set in 1940s Spain when the Franco regime is reconstructing Spain in its image. According to Lorraine Ryan in her 2016 article the book was popularised purely by word of mouth and in the 12 years between publication to her article sold 30,000 copies, with 31 editions published by July 2012 and multiple prizes awarded. The book was adapted to a

critically acclaimed film in 2008. The story centres around a boy, Lorenzo, whose father was a Republican during the war and is in hiding in a secret space behind a mirror. At the start of the story, home life is a refuge for the boy, a place where he can be himself with his mother and father, compared to the outside world of school and the streets where he has to live a virtual life in which his father is dead and his mother widowed. However, the encroachment of the Nationalists on the streets of Madrid and in his flat turn his home into a place of danger as the State has managed to territorialise his home. This story is interesting for my thesis as it discusses the resistance against the State such that the space of home could be considered a third or lived space (as defined by Soja and Lefebvre respectively – please see Chapter One).

A further work to be studied is one episode of the extremely popular TV series *Verano Azul* directed by Antonio Mercero who had previously won an Emmy for his 1972 film *La Cabina* and significant critical acclaim for his TV series *Crónicas de un pueblo* (1971-4) (Herrera De la Muela, p. 159). The series was produced in 1979 and was first broadcast on TVE in October 1981 with the last episode being aired in February 1982 (Herrera De la Muela, p 157). It was a huge success obtaining audiences of up to 20 million viewers<sup>6</sup> and has therefore been rerun several times since its first release, the latest to commemorate its 40-year anniversary in 2019, and was the first Spanish series to be re-edited to DVD (Herrera-De la Muela, p. 158). The series won the gold TP for the best series in 1981 and Antonio Ferrandis (the actor who plays the part of Chanquete) won the award for the best television actor in the same year.

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<sup>6</sup> Although it should be noted that Televisión Española was the only television network available in Spain until 1983 (various, internet).

The series tells of the adventures of a group of children ranging from the young Tito (Miguel Joven) up to the older Pancho (José Luis Fernández) and Bea (Pilar Torres), the majority of which are summering in a small coastal town on the Costa del Sol (Pancho is the only resident of the village with his father being the local milkman). They form a gang of strong friendships and are joined by two adults, Julia (María Garralón), who has come to the village for the summer in order to recuperate and paint, and Chanquete, who is a retired fisherman living on a boat, La Dorada, set above the cliffs of the village. Surrounding his boat he has cultivated the land to produce a crop of tomatoes, lettuces etc.. The episode that I have analysed is entitled *No nos moverán* and covers the topic of mass tourism and the massive development of the coast that was occurring at this time. It was originally planned to be number 17 in the series, however one episode had to be dropped as they had difficulties filming due to its planned location in a cave, and as such *No nos moverán* became the 16<sup>th</sup> episode aired at the start of 1982. Within the episode, an unscrupulous building company, Promovisa, had spent three years planning to build six tower blocks comprising of apartments and a 20-storey hotel, overlooking the village, but Chanquete's boat is right in the centre of the development where the hotel needs to be situated. He refuses to sell to the company, despite them offering him three times the original asking price and a mansion to move into. When bribes do not work, they resort to turning the village against him, intimidation and violence. Fortunately, the mayor of the town follows his principles and is instrumental in ensuring that the municipality do not reclassify the land from rural to available for development such that the company cannot build accommodation more than three stories high.<sup>7</sup> The children and Julia all support Chanquete in his fight against the destruction of his home to pave the way for this development and while the diggers and

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<sup>7</sup> In 1963, a law was passed to allow local councils to reclassify land for development in order to aid the development of tourism within Spain.



excavators threaten their lives they stand and sing *No, no, no nos moverán*. This television series has a hint of *La Gran Familia* (Fernando Palacios, 1962) in its saccharine portrayal of life; however it covers many serious topics, albeit in a childish buoyant manner. This series, and in particular, the episode studied, demonstrates the impact of tourism on Spain, particularly in relation to the increasing number of second homes purchased during this period. It also looks at the desire for profit at any cost in this ever-increasing capitalistic world and how the community and the home can be used to resist this advancement and retain a more traditional way of life.

A further work to be studied is the novel *La piel del tambor* by Arturo Pérez-Reverte, published in 1995. There are several editions of the book due to its popularity and it was translated into several languages. The sales of this book were huge with more than 350,000 copies sold within 11 months of publication and Pérez-Reverte is the first Spanish writer in recent years to remain on the bestsellers list for 11 months (Manuel López de Abiada, pp. 499-500). *La piel del tambor* was one of Pérez-Reverte's earlier novels, but he had already gained international success in the early 1990s with *El club Dumas*. Previous to becoming an author Pérez-Reverte was a war correspondent for more than 20 years for which he received many awards. In 1994 he dedicated his time to exclusively writing novels and he is considered the most successful writer in terms of sales in the last few decades (Manuel López de Abiada, p. 498). It was this international success which led to many writers being envious of his vast accomplishments, however, in 2003 he was elected by his peers to the *Real Academia Española*. My work is based upon the novel itself, but it was adapted into a TV series called *Quart* directed by Joaquín Llamas, Jacobo Rispa and Alberto Ruiz that was aired in 2007 on Antena 3.

The story starts with the discovery of a hacker called Visperas who has left a message to the Pope on the Vatican's IT system asking him to intercede to stop the development of a seventeenth century Sevillian church called *Nuestra Señora de las Lágrimas*. The message claims that the church has murdered in order to defend itself. The Vatican send a priest, Lorenzo Quart, to discover the identity of the hacker. Instead, he discovers a group of three women, a nun Gris Masala, a duchess Cruz Bruner and her daughter Macarena Bruner, who are willing to risk everything to stop the development of the church, a place they consider a safe haven for themselves and the rest of the congregation. To them the church is a place of tradition that so far has resisted modernization and thus cossets a community free from the march of capitalism. Macarena Bruner is married to the banker, Pencho Gavira, who is proposing to finance the development of the church into a luxury hotel by a Saudi sheik. Through this nefarious character we learn the corruption that is rife amongst the pillars of society we are told to trust and respect; the archbishop, the financiers and the mayor of Seville. The novel can therefore be read as a critique of urban life in the mid-1990s and through the various characters in the book, Pérez-Reverte is able to show the reader the destructive nature of modernity, capitalism and Spanish society. This novel focuses on property speculation which I would argue is extremely important as homeownership under capitalism necessarily brings in the marketplace. Thus, property speculation is closely linked to ownership of the home and as such the framework used within this thesis of the hegemonic discourse under capitalism is still valid.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, with respect to the question of ownership one must consider the strong feelings of belonging to one place that for example a religious community might feel with respect to their place of worship. By the end of the novel the reader is left in a quandary as to who is in the right – the

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<sup>8</sup> One further film of interest with respect to property speculation within the 1990s is *Huevos de oro* (Bigas Luna, J. J., 1993).

defenders or the developers. The lengths that the defenders are prepared to take, with what appears to be complete impunity, are shocking and the reader is forced to question whether the demolition of the church would have been a better course of action. I have included this book within my thesis as it sheds a light on the importance of a place of refuge against the onslaught of capitalism and on the flip side, shows the blatant disregard for humanity, morality and the law by both the capitalistic developers in their drive for greater and greater profits and, unusually, the defenders of the church.

The final cultural work studied is the eighth season of the popular Catalan TV series *El cor de la ciutat* aired between September 2007 and July 2008 on TV3. According to Vilaseca just under 30% of Catalanian sets were tuned into this show five days a week (Vilaseca, 2013, p. 48). This season was the first on Spanish TV to represent Spanish squatters and I therefore wished to study this in order to better understand how a home can be used as a place of resistance against the State and against the hegemonic discourse of homeownership. In the story, a group of young Spanish squatters move into an abandoned factory called can Sarró. One of the *okupas*, Eli Cadenes (Aida Oset), sets up a meeting with the local neighbourhood movement to explain the ideologies of the *okupas* and what they can offer the community. They are generally well received, however, some, in particular the characters of Ivan Crespo (Oriol Vila) and Félix (Francesc Pujol), are unhappy as they wish to develop the site into luxury flats. A long and involved struggle ensues throughout the year of the storyline between the developers, represented by Ivan and Félix, the rest of the neighbours who want to use the site for a community driven project and the *okupas* who want to retain the factory as their home. Eventually the neighbours and squatters win as the site is declared a National Historic Landmark thereby protecting it from demolishment.

## **Chapter One**

### **Theories on space and home in cultural works**

The goal of this thesis is to try and understand the production of hegemonic desires for homeownership within Spain and to apply Spanish cultural artefacts along with cultural geographic theories to explain the phenomenon of homeownership. The theories used to relate cultural manifestations to aid the analysis of human, cultural and social geography are at the core of the spatial turn in humanities and urban cultural studies. It is also clear that this is something that has ignited the work of many Hispanic scholars, who have utilised and developed these theories with respect to Spain. These include scholars such as Susan Larson, Malcolm A. Compitello, Benjamin Fraser, Ann Davies, Nathan Richardson, Germán Labrador-Méndez et al. However, the concept of homeownership has not been studied before and this is therefore an area I wish to develop and explore further. Similar to others who wrote about the spatial turn in humanities and cultural studies within Hispanism, I mobilize the thoughts of spatial theorists such as Henri Lefebvre, Edward Soja, David Harvey, Neil Smith, Doreen Massey, Anthony Giddens, Peter Saunders et al as a tool to undertake close readings of chosen Spanish texts. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to analyse in greater depth the works of both Hispanic urban cultural scholars and theoreticians of space with respect to the space of home and ownership and thus provide a framework for the later analysis of cultural works which are found in Chapters Three, Four and Five.

In general, my work has an explicit Marxist tenor to it, although it should be noted that I do not deal with Marxist thought directly, but through the application of the works of scholars such as

the Marxist urban philosopher Henri Lefebvre and Lefebvrian urban theorists such as David Harvey and Edward Soja, to name just two. These scholars, as well as the majority of the Hispanic scholars outlined below, use a specifically Marxist manifestation when dealing with urbanisation, based upon the premise that material conditions of urbanisation have evolved in dialectic relation to the creation of an urbanised cultural imaginary. To generalise, based upon their theories, there is a sort of dialectical urban circuit where the development of the city influences the creation of cultural works and vice-versa.

When analysing cultural manifestations, similar to the assertions of scholars from fields encompassing cultural geography, cultural studies and Hispanic studies, such as David Harvey, Benjamin Fraser, Malcolm A. Compitello et al I would argue that one needs to consider the social world and its underlying cultural, political and economic processes that could impact the filmmaker/author and hence the cultural work. As such, it is important that a film or literary review takes into account the struggle over urban space so that the intent of directors/authors with respect to dealing with any spatial issue, in particular homeownership, or indeed the avoidance of it, is considered accordingly. Additionally, it is important to understand how the work is received and circulated at that particular time, that is to say the social meanings of cultural texts, how they are appropriated and used in practice, as this can affect their impact.

It is my argument that the home is not just a place in space, but also in itself a type of imagination. This assertion is supported by Gaston Bachelard to whom the home is full of imagined values; it is “seized upon by the imagination and cannot remain an indifferent space subject to the measures and estimates of the world” (p. 19). Consequently, the home, as well as being a physical urban space, is also a lived, virtual space that becomes “imbued with human

characteristics" (p. 67). This is echoed by Michel de Certeau within his book *The Practice of Everyday Life* in that the only special places, those opened up by a memory or story and hence habitable, are one's home which, free from State control, allows one to retain memories and to dream (pp. 106-108). Thus, the space of home is more than just a place, but can be considered a type of imagination, similar to cultural works, and hence lends itself to being used as a tool in the close reading of cultural texts.

It would be wrong to believe that we can fully understand the mechanisms behind the desires and motivations of homeownership simply through close readings of cultural texts. Instead, culture is important when discussing space as a socially constructed reality as it provides a representation of the reality at the time the work was written. Additionally, the writer may deliberately ignore a particular topic within the works, and therefore the absence of a subject matter can be almost as revealing as its presence. Reading Spanish cultural artefacts through the prism of the theories regarding space, place and homeownership, will neither provide either a perfect nor imperfect reflection of homeownership within Spanish society, but a historically and geographically situated representation. The concept regarding the influence that cultural imaginations have on material conditions and vice versa is also supported by Fraser (2015, p. 20) and David Harvey. Harvey, from a geographical perspective, recognises the importance of literature, film etc. when studying the urban and arrives at the confluence of the urban and the cultural from the opposite direction to Fraser, i.e., from a geographical perspective rather than from the perspective of cultural studies. Harvey states that cultural manifestations can be used to understand the urban process and has argued that studying films may be a valuable tool in shedding light on the ongoing theoretic debates about post-modern culture. Within his chapter "City Future in City Past: Balzac's Cartographic Imagination" he

states that novels “have inspired the imagination, influenced geographer’s conception of, for example, the city, and thereby affected material process of urbanisation” (2003, p. 24). These ideas regarding the representation of cultural geography within cultural manifestations is supported by Jeff Hopkins who states:

The cinematic landscape is not, consequently, a neutral place of entertainment or an objective documentation or mirror of the ‘real’, but an ideological charged cultural creation whereby meanings of place and society are made, legitimized, contested and obscured. (pp. 47-65)

Consequently, my work provides readings and interpretations of how the chosen cultural artefacts, using Hopkins’ words, legitimise, contest and obscure hegemonic ways in which the desire to own a home is socially constructed.

In turn, space can be a useful tool to analyse cultural texts, as Germán Labrador-Méndez<sup>9</sup> states: “El pensamiento sobre el espacio constituye así un vector analítico más de los muchos a los que es necesario atender al trabajar con documentos culturales, una nueva herramienta conceptual que requiere creciente atención y conocimientos.” (2013, p. 221). Labrador-Méndez describes how the review of cultural works should combine the cultural and the urban in order to interpret the political processes across cultural practices. One should consider the

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<sup>9</sup> Labrador’s work includes articles such as “Las vidas subprime: la circulación de historias de vida como tecnología de imaginación política en la crisis Española (2007-2012)”, “El precio del espacio: los desarrollos últimos del giro espacial en los estudios peninsulares y la producción de espacio en le España actual” and “¿Lo Llamaban Democracia? La crítica estética de la política en la transición española y el imaginario de la historia en el 15-M” and the book *Culpables por la Literatura: Imaginación política y contracultura en la transición española (1968-1986)* (2017).

impact of the social world both in the creation of the work, but also the lasting social impact of the work on the reader after it has been completed. Additionally, in his work, Labrador-Méndez combines cultural and political analysis of the Spanish phenomenon and this is something that I also wish to employ within my thesis. For example, the policies of the Spanish government with regards to the city/country paradigm, the rural exodus and the resulting housing crisis, the demolition of the *chabolas*, the housing policy of little to no social housing, the decision to join the European Community etc. all had an impact on homeownership within Spain and therefore the political, social and economic processes within Spain during the period under review will go hand in hand with the study of the cultural works.

I am indebted to the works of Fraser who focused on the Hispanic urban struggle within his articles<sup>10</sup> and books<sup>11</sup>, in particular the fusion of geography and cultural studies. He provides a model for integrating urban and cultural studies in order to provide a concerted interdisciplinary approach to analysing the culture of cities. Similar to Fraser, I too mainly use the theories of Lefebvre, which have been extended through the work of Edward Soja, Harvey, Doreen Massey et al, within my study of homeownership in Spain in the latter half of the twentieth century. Lefebvre's work on urban studies is fundamental to studying concepts like the recalibration of Marxian alienation and the trialectics of space.

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<sup>10</sup> In his 2006 article "The space in film and the film in space: Madrid's Retiro Park and Carlos Saura's *Taxi*" Fraser brings together both film analysis and cultural geography and argues that film and city spaces are connected revealing the complicity of cinema with the urban processes of capitalism. Fraser continues his focus on Retiro Park within his 2007 article "Madrid's Retiro Park as publicly-private space and the spatial problems of spatial theory" where he continues to emphasise the development of space as part of a process of capital accumulation.

<sup>11</sup> Fraser's books include *Henri Lefebvre and the Spanish Urban Experience: Reading the Mobile City* (2011) and *Towards an Urban Cultural Studies: Henri Lefebvre and the Humanities* (2015).



Fraser's 2015 book, *Towards an Urban Cultural Studies: Henri Lefebvre and the Humanities*, provides me with further justification for my approach and a framework for undertaking cultural analysis in order to understand the spatial issue of homeownership within Spain. The book is principally theoretical with the textual analyses he undertakes used only to support his theories. It is for a much broader audience, not just Hispanists, but also academics who are interested in urban and cultural studies as an approach to their particular geo-politically defined areas of study, in an attempt to carve out a space for a humanities and social science collaboration when studying the urban phenomenon. This book could therefore almost be used as an instruction manual with respect to urban cultural studies and ultimately creates a new field of study. Despite Fraser's 2015 book being directed to a wider audience, Fraser's work as an Hispanist means that the combination of his works has been instrumental in introducing the phenomenon of urban cultural studies within Hispanism and Hispanic cultural studies. Consequently, Fraser's connection between the urban/spatial and cultural studies from a Marxist/Lefebvrian point of view and his resulting inauguration of urban cultural studies is fundamental to my work.

At the forefront of the spatial turn within Hispanic cultural studies were Malcolm A. Compitello and Susan Larson who have written extensively on the topic of urban culture within Spain, particularly Madrid, and hence pioneered the study of the Spanish urban phenomenon, principally within the *Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies*. Larson and Compitello co-authored the article "Cities, culture...capital? Recent cultural studies approaches to Spain's cities" (2001) which, similar to Fraser, concentrates on the theories of Lefebvre with respect to the capital process of accumulation at play within the urban environment and reviews earlier articles that studied urban literature within Spain. This article provides some guidance on how

and which cultural works to select for my analysis. They broadly criticise the earlier articles for considering the city as an artefact itself rather than as a site where, according to Lefebvre, capital reproduces itself by conquering space. Consequently, the articles reviewed by Larson and Compitello do **not** consider the contest over the right to the city through the resistance to capital and culture's constant commodification by the hegemonic power. In selecting works that are both counterhegemonic such as *El verdugo* and *El inquilino* as well as studying works that follow the dominant discourse such as NO-DOs, I hope that I have shown both sides of the coin with respect to those that resist as compared to those that seek to retain power over the city. Larson and Compitello also criticise the almost exclusive use of high culture within the articles reviewed and hence the fact that they ignore the constant resistance to the dehumanising forces in the city in order to survive. I agree with their assertion that cultural representations selected should include all aspects of city life as cultural representations play a reciprocal role in the creation of the urban in that city planners and architects take their inspiration from cultural works and in turn, the places created by the planners become the context for modern culture (p. 237). This is something I have attempted to do with my selection of works in choosing ones ranging from popular TV shows such as *Verano Azul* to critically acclaimed novels such as *Últimas tardes con Teresa*.

Other Hispanic theorists, Nathan Richardson<sup>12</sup> and Ann Davies<sup>13</sup> have also analysed cultural works to study Spanish space. Both have used cultural artefacts to understand Spain's relationship with space, however Davies has looked at the use of space within the cultural

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<sup>12</sup> Richardson has written, amongst other works, *Postmodern Paletos: Immigration, Democracy and Globalization in Spanish Narrative and Film, 1950-2000* (2002) and *Constructing Spain: The Re-imagination of Space and Place in Fiction and Film, 1953-2003* (2012).

<sup>13</sup> Davies has written, amongst other works, *Spanish Spaces: landscape, space and place in contemporary Spanish culture* (2012).

works she analyses, rather than undertaking a close analysis of them as a tool to understand a spatial issue. Additionally, the implications of homeownership within Spain, be it social, economic or ideological, are not addressed within either of Richardson's or Davies' works. Similar to my thesis, Richardson employs the theories of Lefebvre by stating that within the cultural works he reviews, "the full scale of Lefebvre's trialectics ... is manifest" (2012, p.21). However, in direct contrast Davies argues that Lefebvre would disagree with using films to analyse space as it promotes an "error and illusion over space" (2012, p.7), although later she acknowledges that his theories expose the role of power within space.

In his later book, *Constructing Spain: the Re-imagination of Space and Place in Fiction and Film, 1953-2003* (2012), Richardson explores the relationship between cultural artefacts and the transformation of space and place within Spain from 1953 until 2003, which is similar to the period under review within my thesis. He documents the evolution of cultural works as a response to the restoration and transformation of Spanish spaces that are a result of, often politically motivated, human intervention and how these works invite the reader to reimagine their hegemonic notions of space and place. In 1953 Spain signed a defence pact allowing USA to use Spanish soil for military bases which Richardson describes as a "significant catalyst" (p. vii) that pulled much of Spanish society into the developed and capitalist world. The end date of 2003 is selected by Richardson as the possible start date for the rise of the people in a war of culture and lifestyles that he hopes would lead to a new approach to daily life. I have extended the time frame slightly to between 1950 until 2008, on a similar premise to that of Richardson, in that this period of time, although long, can be considered to be part of the same cycle as it shows Spain's journey into a neo-liberal form of capitalism. Thus, Richardson's and Davies' works could be considered as the foundation for my thesis both in the use of cultural

artefacts in relation to space and also in that I use the same parameters in relation to the time frame used within Richardson's 2012 book, although I have expanded their remit particularly in relation to homeownership.

Some Hispanic authors <sup>14</sup>, such as Labrador-Méndez within his article *¿Lo Llamaban Democracia?* and Fernández's "El nacimiento de un nuevo poder social", linked the 15M<sup>15</sup> protests to the Transition to democracy. According to them, the democracy achieved after the Transition was not a true democracy as it simply continued the policies of the Franco regime. As a result, life for many Spaniards did not alter all that much after the demise of the Franco regime. Their work is therefore important for my thesis as it confirms that the hegemonic discourse with respect to homeownership within Spain continued post the Franco era.

The hegemonic discourse of the Transition, with pressure both from international politics (mainly that of the USA) and from the incumbent Franco regime, was to try to avoid the instability of the Second Republic which had ultimately led to the horrors of the civil war. This meant that the more progressive options were suppressed and, therefore, a cross-political

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<sup>14</sup> Although outside the time period under review, I examine some articles on the 15M protests partly due to the fact that the protests brought the concept of spatial activism to the forefront of the Spanish consciousness. Many Hispanic authors of cultural studies have written useful and enlightening articles on the protests and the *indignados* in 2011. As a consequence, these works helped Hispanists put the spatial question at the centre of the political connection that is always part of cultural studies approaches and, as such, they are part of the spatial turn in cultural studies. These include authors such as Germán Labrador-Méndez (works cited earlier), Ernesto Castañeda ("The Indignados of Spain: A Precedent to Occupy Wall Street" (2012)), Luis Martín Rojo and Carmelo Díaz de Frutos ("El #Sol, revolución: paisajes lingüísticos para tomar las plazas" (2014)), Amador Fernández-Savater ("El nacimiento de un nuevo poder social" (2012)) and Bryan Cameron ("Spain in crisis: 15-M and the culture of indignation" (2014)), to name a few. However, the desires and motivations behind why the Spanish populace purchased their own homes in such significant numbers in the first place, which of course made the housing collapse so much harder in 2008, is not specifically addressed.

<sup>15</sup> On 15 May 2011 protestors, calling themselves *los indignados*, occupied the commercial squares of many Spanish cities. The housing crisis of the 2008 recession was a major driver for the protests with movements such as *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (PAH) and *V de Vivienda* movements, created in 2003 and 2006 respectively, owing their success to them. The protests also brought the housing crisis, particularly for the young, to the fore.

agreement was the preferred option. It has been argued by critics such as the journalist Guillem Martínez, that the hegemonic discourse of fear created a *cultura de la transición* (CT) which controlled and limited life within Spain. He argues that the politicians valued stability over democracy meaning that the Left abandoned their ideologies to become more politically central (Acevedo, throughout). PSOE (1982-1996) were so successful within Spanish politics as they became the dividing line between two political thoughts such that they were therefore able to combine support from the entire populace whether they had originally been Republican or Nationalist (Holman, p.73). Often social reform was forced to take a back seat due to economic factors such as inflation and the relentless push to join the EEC, which culminated in the single European Act in 1986. This ultimately led to the continuation of the Franco regime's policies on housing including a significant lack of investment in social housing and the continued promotion of the neoliberal policy of encouraging private house ownership through such schemes as *Vivienda de Protección Oficial* ('VPO').

In order to further understand the approach I have taken, I now plan to introduce some terms and concepts that will be utilised throughout my thesis.

### **Lefebvre's definitions of space and its application to the space of home**

Given my stated approach of using theories on space as a tool to undertake a close analysis of cultural works in order to better understand the representations of the desires and motivations behind homeownership in Spain, a deeper understanding of Lefebvre is required. Firstly, studying Lefebvre's definition of space, which, within his seminal book *The Production of Space*, he splits into three fields as follows (pp. 33-42):

1. Spatial practice or perceived space which is socially created or imagined space: the space of everyday activities. Social space is the outcome of past actions, it permits and suggests new actions, while prohibits others. It is produced by society and hence the space of the past underpins present day space.
2. Representations of space or conceived space is State designed space and represents power, knowledge and commodification and hence is a symbol of capitalism. These types of spaces often use text and language to control and survey society.
3. Spaces of representation or lived space are appropriated spaces of difference. Often clandestine and underground they are occupied by those who seek alternative spaces and wish to use these spaces for revolution or rebellion: the space of social struggle. As such, they are spaces of political choice and not under the same control as conceived spaces. It is in this space that all spaces could potentially be transformed and understood.

All the above spaces are related and co-exist, you cannot find one without the other and each type of space contributes in different ways to the production of space. It is my contention that the home can be all three types of space and it is this interaction that creates the distinctive space of one's home. The ability of the home to be able to tap into one's emotions and imagination that no other place can to such a great extent makes it a unique space and is why I argue that the home is such a useful tool for close visual and textual analysis of cultural artefacts.

The home is, of course, a place where everyday activities occur and as such is a perceived space, one that is socially created and imagined. The space of home could also be considered a conceived space. It would be foolish not to consider that the house plays a pivotal role within society and that the policies and events occurring outside of the home do not affect lives within the home<sup>16</sup> and vice versa.<sup>17</sup> That the home is not just a passive player within society is supported by Anthony Giddens who asserts that the setting of the house is part of the social interaction of householders (Giddens, 1984, p.375) alongside Peter Saunders' declaration that the processes that occur within the house shape relationships in wider society and vice versa (Saunders, p. 266). This is also supported by Doreen Massey (2001, p. 121) who states that social relations go wider than the home which has always been open and porous. The identity of the home is thereby in large part constructed from the interactions with the outside world. The idea that the home can impact wider society and vice versa ties into the concept of home as being multi-scalar. The feeling of belonging, to having a home, can be applied on both a macro and a micro scale and the processes of home making can be seen throughout these various scales. This, in agreement with the theories of Lefebvre, implies that national politics can be as much influenced by everyday processes occurring in the household as vice versa. Governments tap into the everyday practices of their citizens and adapt accordingly. Jen Jack Gieseeking et al support the idea that space is produced through social practices and material conditions such that macro-scale policies can also affect it (Gieseeking, p. 2). The concept of the State's impact on the home is discussed in greater detail later within this chapter and within Chapter Three when I consider the hegemonic discourse that has led to the commodification

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<sup>16</sup> For example, the 2020 lockdowns and the closure of schools imposed by governments around the world, including Spain, due to Covid-19 clearly affected homelife.

<sup>17</sup> Again, using the events of Covid-19 as an example, in 2021 we heard of the sad news of the death of Captain Tom Moore who from the confines of his own home galvanised the UK nation during the first lockdown in 2020 in supporting the NHS which had a significant impact on wider politics.

of the home in order to control and acquire ideological and economic power by the Franco regime and successive democratic Spanish governments. The impact of the home on society is also discussed, for example, the grassroot neighbourhood movements created in Spain in the latter years of the Franco regime.

The final spatial field of Lefebvre, lived space, is discussed in greater detail later within this chapter and within Chapter Five with respect to the concepts of the home as a space of refuge and resistance.

### **Home and homeownership**

So far, I have been alternating the use of home and homeownership without conceptually separating the two terms clearly as different components of my analysis. As I wish to analyse cultural manifestations through the prism of homeownership, I need to examine and separate these two terms that are nevertheless inextricably linked.

#### *Home*

The home<sup>18</sup> is an emotive word that has many meanings dependent on the context and the user. As James Duncan and David Lambert say in their chapter “Landscapes of Home”, “One would be hard pressed to think of a more important idea to people than that of home” (Duncan, p.382). The home is more of a concept than a word. There is a proliferation of writing regarding

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<sup>18</sup> The idea of a home is very distinct from that of a house. A house is simply a space where someone lives, whereas a home can be imbued with emotions, familial connections and a sense of belonging – it combines a particular place – the house – with social relationships and emotions (Saunders, p. 265).



the meaning of home that encompasses many disciplines, for example, sociology, anthropology, psychology, geography, history, architecture, politics, economics and philosophy. As such, the concept of home is multidimensional and has so many meanings that it can even be contradictory. For example, home can be associated with feelings of comfort and security and/or oppression and persecution, it can be fixed and stable and/or constantly altering, it can be associated with the family and/or an individual, it can create a sense of belonging and/or estrangement, it can be virtual and imaginary and/or a real lived experience etc. Given this, the concept of home is useful as a site for examining both intimate relations and the wider society which is why the subject is so often utilised in the arts.

One generally feels more secure at home (although statistics show that women are actually more at risk at home than in a public place (Duncan, p.384)) which ties into the theories of Gaston Bachelard who, in his book *Poetics of Space*, discusses the importance of feelings with respect to the home and argues that homes have both protective and imagined values, the latter of which soon become dominant when one thinks of one's home. Bachelard considers that one must think of a home as lived space, not just physically lived in, but with one's imagination as well; home is a virtual place, a store for memories which are sited in intimate familial time and place. Each room of a house stirs up different sensations which together unify to provide an intimate experience of living. To him inhabited houses are as much in our soul as we are in them such that our imagination augments the values of the reality of the home. This imagination intensifies the reality of perceived objects in that a home is made up of memories and experiences, one "experiences the house in its reality and in its virtuality by means of thoughts and dreams...an entire past comes to dwell in a new house...we bring our lares with us." (Bachelard, p.27).

This oneiric approach to the home on the surface appears very different to the Marxist approach I said I would be predominantly following. However, if you consider Lefebvre's approach to space in that it is in essence socially created, then one can see that Lefebvre and Bachelard are in agreement in that it is the thoughts and lived experiences of a space that create it. A house becomes a home due to the social interactions which lead to memories and experiences that add to the reality of the house and make it feel homely. Tying this into my arguments behind homeownership within Spain, it becomes clear that the homely nature of your home is a significant factor behind why the home provides the ontological security that an alienated populace seek, which is discussed in greater detail later in this and subsequent chapters. Consequently, Bachelard's definition of the home as being created through social interaction is useful when considering how the home provides a safe mooring amongst an uncertain and potentially turbulent modern world.

Thus, space, of which the home is a part, is created by memories, nostalgia and social relations assigned to it. It is this nostalgia that provides the true meaning of home to its user. For Bachelard, objects in the home are bestowed with a mental, oneiric experience. He argues that every action we take within the home in using these everyday objects adds to this imagination and opens up infinite dimensions of our existence such that loved things take on a life of their own. Blunt and Dowling agree that the home is not just about the physical house as the physical components of home "do not capture the complex socio-spatial relations and emotions that define a home" (Blunt, p.3). As mentioned above, the idea that a home is part of our imagination, part of our human consciousness, lends itself to being used as a tool to analyse cultural works that are themselves figments of the author's imagination. Additionally, the

home, being both a public and private space, somewhere where one can show your true emotions, but also somewhere that indicates your status to the outside world, can be used as an emotive topic that allows an author to both explore intimate emotions as well as wider social, political or economic drivers within many cultural works. The representation of a home within a cultural work can provide an idea of how homes are imagined within society and can also affect the material conditions of society.

The idea of the home being created through nostalgia and memories often leads to the home being considered a familiar place which provides a sense of belonging and a place that connects a person to their past experiences. However, during the Franco regime many Spaniards emigrated abroad in search of work and at the start of the 1973 recession, when this work started to dry up and Spain started to make its first baby steps towards democracy, many returned home. It is apparent within Spanish novels such as *La lluvia amarilla* (Julio Llamazares, 1988) and films such as Almodóvar's *¿Que he hecho yo para merecer esto?* (Pedro Almodóvar, 1984), that the home these migrants returned to was not the same as the one they had left and therefore different to the nostalgic memories that they had of home. The change to a place that people believed could be relied upon to be fixed and familiar may have been disturbing for many people.

The constant changing of space that cultural artefacts demonstrate, supports the work of Massey that has taken the idea of perceived space, space being created through the intersection of social relations, one stage further when she discusses the multiplicity and coexisting heterogeneity of space (Massey, 2015, p.18). In this she means that space does not have a single identity, but instead multiple ones as space is created through social interactions

and is thus constantly changing and means different things to different people. Therefore, the home is not a fixed concept, but constantly changing and as such it is impossible to return to the home of your memories (Massey, 2015, pp. 123-5 and pp. 157-174). Thus, it is clear that space and time are interrelated and thus the space of home within cultural works throughout a set time period can further reveal the continued and changing complicity of such cultural imaginations with the material processes of society over time.

The idea of multiplicity of space throughout time is evident in Spain and its cultural works. For example, the return of Max Aub to his homeland in 1969 to discover that it had radically altered from his memories is brilliantly described in his autobiographical book *La Gallina Ciega*. Another example, this time within social reality rather than from memory, is the reclamation and reterritorialization of the city plazas during the 15M demonstrations in 2011. The previously community squares over time had been converted by the urban processes of capital accumulation to State controlled, commercialised non-places. However, during May 2011 the demonstrators converted the plazas into their homes such that they become spaces full of community, social interaction and rebellion once more. This example also demonstrates that space can be appropriated, or to paraphrase Deleuze and Guattari<sup>19</sup>, reterritorialized politically as a site of resistance against the dominant ideologies.

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<sup>19</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in their book *A Thousand Plateaus* define deterritorialization as the process by which a social relation, called a *territory*, has its current organization and context altered, mutated or destroyed. The components then constitute a new territory, which is the process of reterritorialization (Holland Eugene W., throughout). For example, the 15M *indignados* redefined the commercial hub of the city centres from conceived to lived spaces which was a form of reterritorialization. Additionally, Deleuze and Guattari define a striated space as hierarchical, homogeneous and controlled by the State, much like Lefebvre's conceived space, while in contrast smooth space is open-ended, fluid, heterogeneous and nomadic space, it is the space free from codification and where one can resist political restrictions, much like Lefebvre's lived space (Holland Eugene W., throughout).

Additionally, a home can be seen as a symbol of how one sees oneself. For many people they use their home to express their tastes and, as Gaston Bachelard opines, each home object, be it furniture, decoration or ornaments, can be imbued with emotional meanings. A home is one of the only remaining stalwarts of a private realm, in an ever increasingly intrusive society. As such, it can also be a refuge as it provides privacy and independence and allows one to be oneself and not be judged by society; to be separated from public scrutiny and surveillance; outside Foucault's 'panopticon'. The home can be seen as a place for self-expression and freedom of action. For example, the term *home truth* comes from the sentiment that one is able to express one's true identity only in the private home environment. Thus, coining Soja's phrase, the home could be considered a Thirdspace<sup>20</sup>, where one can be oneself and resist the hegemonic discourse. This idea of a space appropriated from the dominant power and used for resistance ties into the theories of Gramsci, which are discussed later in this chapter.

Within his discussion of Thirdspace, Soja devotes a whole chapter to Michel Foucault's interpretation of spatial practice. In Foucault's 1967 lecture notes entitled *Des Espaces autres* (Of Other Spaces, 1984), he, instead of looking at a space in which we feel at home, looks at spaces in crisis; outside the norms of society, a place that challenges our conceptions of space. He coins the phrase heterotopias to describe these places that connect the real and unreal, where one can have a mixed joint experience of the same location, that mirror other sites and

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<sup>20</sup> Soja's book *Thirdspace* is principally based upon Lefebvre's definition and division of space into perceived, conceived and lived which together comprise social space. Soja links the trialectics of Lefebvre, the hybridities of Homi Bhabha and the marginality and radical openness of bell hooks with that of the heterotopology of Foucault in that they all directly challenge the conventional modes of spatial thinking (Soja, p. 163) and are therefore, in their status as the other, all part of what he defines as Thirdspace. As Soja states "Thirthing produces what might be called a cumulative trialectics that is radically open to additional otherness. To a continuing expansion of spatial knowledge" (Soja, p. 61). Soja's Thirdspace is filled with politics and ideology, where the real and the imaginary intertwine, and is the combination of both First and Secondspace. Within his Thirdspace Soja attempts to avoid the dualities of dividing individual/community, real/imagined etc. as it includes them all.

are linked to them, but also contradict them. We see these heterotopias throughout society and hence also within literature and film and therefore they can be used as a useful tool when undertaking a close visual or textual reading.

I would argue that the home could be construed as a heterotopia. A home is linked to the outside social world through its occupants and visitors that enter and leave the home as part of everyday life, but is also set apart from society through its walls and boundaries. This becomes clear when studying Spanish works such as *La Lluvia Amarilla* and *Los girasoles ciegos* where, in both novels, the world is separated from the home either by inaccessible mountains or by the constraints and rules of society.

### *Homeownership*

Homeownership takes the premise of home one stage further. The difference would appear obvious as it is in the wording itself, that is to say the difference between home and homeownership is of course the private **ownership** of the property that the person lives in. The concept of ownership therefore introduces the marketplace. However, it is more nuanced and complex than that as one could argue that it is the hegemonic dominant discourse which has adopted the idea of a capitalist State that has commodified the home. Thus, in essence, duping the populace into desiring to own their home and hence alienating them from themselves as the hegemonic discourse has created a fantasy surrounding the concept of homeownership such that a person's feelings and ideas of homeownership are not an accurate representation of themselves. The idea of ownership centrally mobilised in this thesis is defined within a capitalist market. Other aspects of ownership of spaces where people chose to live with respect

to desires, aspirations and feelings of belonging are entangled with this central capitalist definition meaning that ownership can be interpreted differently within different cultural artefacts as we see within the examples of the home as a refuge or a place of resistance studied in Chapter Five. However, the frameworks of following a capitalist hegemonic discourse and the commodification of the home remain. For example, when discussing *El cor de la ciutat* we see how the hegemonic discourse has manipulated even squatters into desiring a home of their own. Thus, here the concept of the hegemonic discourse of homeownership runs parallel or perhaps partially independent to concepts of ownership and is therefore worth studying further.

The use of the dominant discourse to, for example, ensure a content populace and hence achieve political stability, can also be linked to the idea of the home as a status symbol and hence the ultimate commodity. Owning your own home conveys a message of class status, of reaching the echelons of middle-class, with all the trappings that this entails, even if this was achieved through debt. There is an implication that owning your own house means that you are capable of making a home, i.e., creating a space that is secure and comfortable, somewhere where you can bring up a family. The status of owning is that of capability and maturity while moving up the property ladder provides a personal identity of success. Lefebvre also states that the relationship between home and ego “borders on identity” (Lefebvre (2), 1991, p. 121) such that studying a person’s home helps one understand their identity. This is not limited to just the home that one physically owns, it is also the neighbourhood that the house is situated in. The home and neighbourhood communicate information about the identity of the family, for example their economic standing, and it can be seen to be a powerful extension of the psyche. Thus, the type of house and its location are used as a social indicator with social housing being

the “lowest threshold of tolerability” (Lefebvre (2), 1991, p.316). Lefebvre uses the term fracture lines which are where people are divided into different zones dependent on their social and economic status, “lines revealing the true - invisible yet highly irregular – contours of ‘real’ social space lying beneath its homogeneous surface” (Lefebvre (2), 1991, p.317). As such, the dominant and hegemonic discourse of capitalism and consumerism with respect to all commodities including that of the home also leads into the idea of representations of class. As Emmanuel Rodríguez López says throughout his book *El efecto clase media: Crítica y crisis de la paz social* “...las clases medias identificadas con la sociedad de propietarios...” (p. 147). This topic is expanded upon within this thesis, particularly within Chapters Three and Four.

Another argument is that many people wish to invest in their own home in order to provide a solid foundation for future family life and protect themselves against any future upheavals or traumas, thus providing a refuge separated from the ravages of a capitalist society and also potentially a place where the capitalistic rules of society can be resisted. The similarities, differences and relationship between the use of the home as either a way of conforming to the dominant discourse, as a place of rebellion against it or even as a combination of the two is something that is teased out in greater detail within the close reading of the cultural texts chosen.

Thus, it is clear that the presence of capitalism and commodification introduces a further convoluted strand that weaves through the complex relationship that the populace has with home. As briefly discussed above, the dominant or one could say hegemonic discourse has led to the commodification of the home and this commodification has duped society into desiring their own home ultimately leading to a feeling of alienation. We also see that there is an



additional layer, where the home can be used as a place of refuge and rebellion against capitalist society. Within the rest of this chapter, I divide my analysis into three areas of inquiry relevant to the cultural representations of homeownership, namely (1) hegemonic discourse and commodification of the idea of homeownership, (2) homeownership as a form of alienation and (3) refuge and resistance in homeownership. The analysis of cultural works is undertaken within Chapters Three, Four and Five of this thesis and each are used to demonstrate one of these separate strands of inquiry respectively.

### **Hegemonic discourse and commodification of the idea of homeownership**

Within Chapter Three I discuss the hegemonic discourse and commodification of the home as a desirable consumer product through the prism of cultural artefacts. The theoretical arguments, including Lefebvre's conceived space and Gramsci's theories of hegemony and commodification that support this, are discussed below.

It has been said that the idea of home is a "core symbol of western culture" (Cieraad, p.11) and State promotion of homeownership can be seen across the globe. For example, Carole Després talks about the promotion of the home as a symbol of the American dream which is supported through government taxes, a plethora of mortgage offers and a relaxation of the land zoning rules (p. 104). This type of space, under State control, falls within Lefebvre's definition of conceived space.

Similar State actions<sup>21</sup> have been taken in Spain where the coercive features of the hegemonic discourse from the 1950s onwards, with particular reference to the Franco regime's methods and motivations behind the drive for homeownership, is an area that I examine further within Chapter Three. I also demonstrate how the hegemonic discourse with respect to homeownership continues post the Franco regime, for example through laws such as the Ley de Suelo passed in 1998 which along with extremely lax environmental policies and open corruption of the local *ayuntamientos* and *cajas de ahorros* allowed huge tracts of land to be developed unchecked (Labrador-Méndez, 2013, p. 228).

It would be remiss to discuss hegemonic discourse without examining the work of Antonio Gramsci who, despite being imprisoned, was one of the major theoreticians of what was later to be called cultural studies. He defined the term hegemony to describe the process of power in which a dominant group does not rule simply by force, but also leads by negotiation in which they secure the consent of the people through cultural means, thus lead by "a combination of force and consent" (Gramsci, p. 210) over the subordinate sectors of society. Thus, cultural representations are crucial in the making of social and cultural orders. In the case of Spain, this can be clearly seen in the form of the Franco regime's short propaganda newsreels called NO-DOs which promoted a way of life ideal to the regime. According to Gramsci, the hegemonic class will first form common interests, leading to general economic interests which then moves into the political and cultural realms. At this point, the dominant group will need to engage with the subordinate classes and hegemony is born (Storey, p. 13). Hegemony involves a specific social group presenting their particular interests as general and applicable to society as a whole

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<sup>21</sup> The legislation passed by the Spanish State with respect to housing during the period under review is dealt with in detail in Chapter Two.

and is thus a lived system of meanings and values. Hence, social forms are saturated with a homogeneous meaning that support the dominant power and the subordinate sectors of society would appear to support and are incorporated into this power structure. However, although there are high levels of consensus, the dominant discourse continually has to alter and modify in order to be successful in countering the constant resistance to their hegemony (Storey, pp. 6-7). A classic example of this is counterculture which goes against the dominant discourse of the State. This is an important concept as many Spanish cultural works, particularly those produced during the Franco era, bring to the fore the complex relationship that the home plays with respect to the hegemonic discourse at that time and consequently this also plays a crucial role within the later analysis of cultural works.

The idea of a dominant class is also adopted by the linguistic theorist Roland Barthes in his concepts of myth and inoculation. Barthes' myth, which is clarified further with respect to television by John Fiske, is used to naturalise and universalise the interests of the bourgeoisie class and as such "it is not a narrative but an associative chain of concepts that works below the threshold of consciousness" (Fiske, p. 135). According to Barthes, all myth is bourgeois and promotes and serves the interest of the dominant class. For example, with respect to homeownership in Spain, it has become common sense to own your own home as the concept has been naturalised by myth. When considering cultural texts, exnominated discourse is that which appears to be the natural and universal. Even if an alternative or radical viewpoint is available this 'radical' speech is controlled in such a way to dismiss this viewpoint and reinforce the exnominated version. This idea of allowing radical voices a controlled moment of speech which ensures the strengthening of the dominant social voice is called the process of inoculation.

Over the past few decades homeownership has become more open and decentralised from the bourgeoisie of Marx' epoch as more and more members of the working-class buy their own home. It has been argued by many Marxist urban theorists that the ownership of housing encourages commitment to and identification with capitalist values (Harvey, 1978, pp. 9-37). Consequently, the working-class family, who traditionally rented, were encouraged through the dominant discourse of capitalist/conservative governments to become homeowners so that they were less likely to revolt against the capitalist State, partly due to having an economic stake in the success of capitalism, but also due to the need to keep up mortgage repayments. As Homer Hoyt succinctly stated back in 1966 "Communism can never win in a nation of homeowners" (Harris, p. 175). Which is echoed by the first Minister for Housing for Spain, José Luis Arrese in 1957 when he stated "Queremos un país de propietarios, no de proletarios..." (López, 2011, p. 1). This concept is central to this thesis as maintaining the social strata and avoiding any popular mass uprisings was something Francoist Spain and post-transitional governments were keen to achieve.

By the 1960s, the Spanish political elite had correctly perceived the social and political ability of pacification produced through the ownership of things, that is to say commodities, with the home being the consummate commodity. This theory is supported by the work of Wendy Wheeler who discusses the politics of Margaret Thatcher who successfully managed to tap into the values of the past in relation to the concept of nation, community and private homeownership. Wheeler opines that the satisfaction of the desires of the populace is necessary for any successful political project, just as much as meeting the actual needs of the

population. One way of achieving this goal is through the promotion of a consumer lifestyle and the availability of commodities; the home simply becomes another commodity to possess.

Indeed, it could be argued that the house has become a commodity fetish, a term coined by Karl Marx to explain how the consumer fails to appreciate the investment of labour that went into a commodity's production. Adam Smith in his book the *Wealth of Nations* (1776) used the example of diamonds, which have a high value but are of little use, as compared to fresh water, which has a low value, but is extremely useful. It is this obscure hierarchy of value that consumers have placed upon commodities that makes them a fetish. Diamonds, of course, may be valuable due to their rarity, but there is no intrinsic reason why rarity should matter so much. By the same token, the commodity of the home within Franco's Spain could be considered a fetish. It was valued much greater than its investment of labour and parts.

Gramsci's theories discuss at length the commodification of countercultural products by the hegemonic ruling classes. As discussed above, the commodification of the home is important to my thesis as it goes some way to explain the significant increase in homeownership in Spain. As referred to earlier in this chapter, despite the nucleus of the dominant ideology remaining, sacrifices to the subordinate classes will need to be made continually to ensure continual hegemony. The constant cycle of commodification and appropriation of lived space is an example of Gramsci's hegemony or compromise equilibrium (Gramsci, p. 211), in that the dominant group allow opposition within counterculture, but only on the premise that the dominant group retains its leadership and economic strength by their co-opting of the 'product' for capitalist profit, often in ways not intended by the original user.

The idea of commodification is discussed by Compitello within the book *Madrid de Fortunata a la M-40* (Baker, 2003) and is based on work by Lefebvre. He looks at the advancement of capitalism in Madrid and how mass culture is each time more controlled by market forces, but, on the other hand, there is an alternative culture trying to resist the process of capitalism and commodification. Larson also discusses within her article entitled "Shifting modern identities in Madrid's recent urban planning, architecture and narrative" (2003) that culture cannot be separated from capital or commodities and as such it is through capital production that culture circulates and hence capital is tied to the urban consciousness. These ideas are based upon work by Harvey, who states that communities need to take political action in order to reclaim their spaces back for themselves. This fight, to be outside the control of the capitalist State, gives rise to something different, something outside the norms of society. This uniqueness has a high value as capitalism is always looking for new products to sell. Hence, capitalism will always be searching for this difference, appropriating it and commodifying it to make more profit. In doing so, capitalism perversely encourages differences and allows divergent communities to occur. These communities cannot be completely controlled which allows a small chink of the possibility of rebellion against the status quo of capitalism and State control over our spaces. This idea of difference is something that may flourish within the home, where the level of State control is lessened. In combining the theories of both Gramsci and Lefebvre, we can see how the home has been commodified by the dominant discourse of the State, but also that the home is somewhere that could be used as a place of resistance to the norms of capitalism. I hope to address this constant push and pull with respect to the process of capital accumulation within the works I have selected to study.

Commodification can also occur within urban space as part of the process of capital accumulation. This concept is dealt with by both Harvey in his book *Rebel Cities: from the right to the city to the urban revolution* (2013) and Smith in his book *The New Urban Frontier: gentrification and the revanchist city* (1996) who discuss how at first, space was accumulated through suburbanisation, but now this type of space has been exhausted so capitalists have been forced to gentrify or commodify existing spaces to continually make the necessary profit required. Gentrification is considered a strategy of the bourgeoisie to consolidate their control over the city by threatening the working-class and forcing them out of the urban centre to the peripheries. In addition, to the “undesirables” being shifted out of the city into suburbs, the displacement of communities from their neighbourhoods destroys the collective and modes of social solidarity and support. Places get redesignated and their nostalgic memories, that once made them what they once were, are lost, meaning that places become homogeneous, without any social meaning. We can clearly see the consequences of gentrification within the film *El inquilino* and the homogeneous nature of places within the film *El pisito* where the soulless, high-rise blocks on the periphery of the city become the desirable places to live. Additionally, the character within the novel *La piel del tambor* of Gris Masala talks about the collective history and memories of old buildings that should be preserved as part of her reason for resisting the gentrification of the church.

The idea of capital accumulation in relation to space is discussed by Compitello in his 1999 article entitled “From Planning to Design: The Culture of Flexible Accumulation in Post-Cambio Madrid”. Using the work of David Harvey, who in turn builds upon the theories of Lefebvre, Compitello discusses that there is a reciprocal cycle where capital shapes the urban consciousness which in turn relates to cultural and social forms – both formed by and formative

of the urban consciousness. As a result, it is important to understand the processes of capital accumulation and urban consciousness in order to contemplate fully cultural and social forms and vice versa.

Maria Kaika in her article "Between compassion and racism: how the biopolitics of neoliberal welfare turns citizens into affective 'idiots'" supports the fact that states have manipulated the populace for their own means. She argues that the European workforce has been forced to adopt their own social welfare through, for example, privately purchasing housing, such that they have signed away an increasingly higher percentage of their own labour and income to, primarily, mortgage contracts. Rather than the State adopting the risk of public welfare this has been passed onto the individual as a 'private welfare investor'; welfare has become a personal responsibility. Isidrio López Hernández and Emmanuel Rodríguez López, in their book *Fin de ciclo: financiarización, territorio y sociedad de propietarios en la onda larga del capitalismo hispano (1959-2010)*, also agree that desire for homeownership has been distorted, amplified and developed during the latter half of the twentieth century by the Spanish government.

By passing the cost and risk of housing welfare onto the population, the State has a greater amount of budget for other things which was particularly fervent in Spain as the incumbent Francoist government wished to bolster a failing economy and hold onto power after the ravages of the civil war and years of a failed autarkic policy. The policy of little to no social housing was continued by later democratic governments after the Transition to democracy. Consequently, in reality, the relatively modern phenomenon of private homeownership is all smoke and mirrors as the Spanish population had been duped into adopting huge levels of debt



and risk that should have instead been the responsibility of a welfare State.<sup>22</sup> Essentially, transferring costs and risks to individuals was part of the ongoing process of neoliberal capitalist markets.

Neil Smith agrees with Gramsci in that as social needs are increasingly met by commodity consumption the working-class and the middle-class are becoming less contradictory and instead are fusing to become a larger “homogeneous middle-class society” (Smith, p. 113). The rising middle-classes in the latter half of the twentieth century meant that homeownership was becoming a reality for many. Those that were unable to afford it desperately wanted to emulate their middle-class contemporaries as a display of their upward social mobility. This hegemonic desire to become middle-class, and as such display all the trappings of a middle-class lifestyle, could be a significant factor to explain why so many Spanish working-class families have, since the late 1950s onwards, turned from renting their homes to private ownership. This led to a burgeoning mortgage finance market as more and more working-class families, wanting to be middle-class and own their own commodified home, bought on credit.

Within many cultural artefacts it is clear that the protagonists wish to purchase a home in order to be accepted within society, to be normalised, for example in the films *El Lute I* and *II* and through the character of Ángela in *Deprisa, deprisa*. This desire to fit within the rules of society is bound up with the assumptions of what is a socially acceptable identity and also with the hegemonic idea of becoming middle-class. The concept of normalisation and being accepted by society is supported by Massey who discusses the concept of the power of the rules of society<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Please see Kaika, p. 1282 and Cardesín, pp. 299 and 302 plus throughout López, 2010.

<sup>23</sup> This argument is developed from those of Foucault who opined that power transcends politics and instead is an everyday occurrence such that the norms or, one could say, rules of society are so embedded that they are beyond

within her article “The spatial construction of youth cultures” included within the book *Cool Places: Geographies of youth cultures*. She opines that space, and its control is part of the process of defining a social category. An example she provides is a high degree of mobility and lack of desire to settle down by the youth of the 1990s, particularly within the UK. These youths were therefore not conforming to the normal rules of society. The inability by the establishment and ‘normal’ society to accept travellers implies that within the hegemony it is not considered normal to not want to settle down in your own home. We see this idea of youth not having a place to call their own and thus being considered outside of normal society within the protagonists of the film *Colegas* as their disruptive homes force them to essentially live their lives and entertain themselves on the streets.

To conclude, based principally upon the theories of Gramsci, I argue, through detailed analysis of cinematic and literary manifestations, that the hegemonic dominant discourse of the Spanish capitalist State from the 1950s onwards manipulated, through Gramsci’s process of consent, the populace into purchasing their own homes (although this statement must be qualified in reference to the work of Saunders, Dupuis and Thorns with respect to ontological and financial security found later within this chapter). The Francoist State desired a content and peaceful populace and homeownership was one tool in which they attempted to achieve this goal. The policies of the Franco regime surrounding homeownership were continued post the Transition to democracy, partly due to a discourse of fear of any further political instability and policies

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our perception and we now discipline ourselves without the need for coercion from others. For example, this is evident in the film *El Verdugo* where the protagonist follows the rules to such an extent that he finds himself as the public executioner.

dictated by the EU. The continued commodification of the home made it a desirable product and it continued to be a marker of success of middle-class status.

### **Homeownership as a form of alienation**

Within Chapter Four of this thesis, I discuss, through the prism of cultural artefacts, that the hegemonic discourse of the Spanish State with respect to homeownership is one factor that has manipulated the Spanish populace into purchasing a home. An individual has been converted into an object, one to purchase a home, by the capitalist modes of production to allow the capitalist machine to derive greater profits. Therefore, although closely linked to hegemony, I have included alienation as a separate chapter as hegemony looks at the actions of the State through the hegemonic discourse whereas alienation looks at it from the opposite perspective, that is to say from the perspective of the effects of the hegemonic discourse on the individual characters within the cultural manifestations reviewed and how it makes them feel. For example, we see the effects of a hierarchical society on Manolo within the canonical novel *Últimas tardes con Teresa*. The theoretical arguments that support this are below.

Integral to my work is that of Lefebvre's recalibrated notion of Marx's alienation in the factory to that of everyday life, particularly to urban life (Lefebvre (1), 1991, pp. 8-10). Marx in *Das Kapital* identified three types of alienation, in broad terms, alienation in the workplace, with each other through competitiveness and with ourselves in that we do not understand our human essence. Lefebvre combined these three forms of alienation and translated them to every aspect of our lives. Consequently, to paraphrase Shields (2005, p. 40) people are

estranged from their activities, themselves and each other, barely experiencing life, just simply moving, as if in a stupor, from one predestined activity/obligation to another.

To Lefebvre, capitalism has eroded our sense of security and our ties with nature and as a result it is the space of everyday life where we feel a lack of belonging and hence where alienation is concretely inscribed (Lefebvre (2), 1991, pp. 49-53, 89, 307-8). Lefebvre contends that alienation's multiple manifestations are experienced and accepted within the realm of everyday life and hence affects the economic, social, political and ideological (Lefebvre (2), 1991, throughout). Lefebvre argues that capitalism has caused alienation to pervade all aspects of our everyday life and connects this urban everyday alienation to his three concepts of space in that the conceived, State governed space, alienates us from lived space (Lefebvre (2), 1991, throughout). However, Lefebvre stated that the ubiquitous nature of alienation in our everyday life, particularly with respect to urban areas, means that it is also the space of everyday life where the struggles to erase alienation need to occur.

Alienation aligns with Lefebvre's definition of conceived space on the basis that it is the hegemonic discourse under capitalism that creates the fantasy of self and society such that the ideas and feelings of a person are not a true representation of themselves, but instead they are converted into an object by the capitalist modes of production. Consequently, the populace is completely alienated by the hegemonic discourse which has interpellated, or one could say duped, society into purchasing a home. However, as discussed above, capitalism places a high value on uniqueness in its search for new products to sell and hence, perversely, encourages a small amount of difference and divergence from the norm. Consequently, despite the populace being duped by the hegemonic discourse, there is still a possibility of resistance against the

status quo. This is discussed in greater detail in the next section on refuge and resistance in homeownership.

Within his 2015 book *Towards an Urban Cultural Studies: Henri Lefebvre and the Humanities*, Fraser states that this expanded “concept of alienation is essential if we are to reconcile cultural products with each other, with the urbanised society in which they are produced and consumed and if we are to formulate an urban cultural studies method” (2015, p. 45). Lefebvre’s concept of alienation is essential for contemporary urban studies in that he updated Marx’s notion of alienation to be more closely attuned to the spatial character of twentieth century capitalism within the urban environment. As cultural production is created by social relations, which are unavoidably structured by the capitalist urban space that surrounds us, then urban space will therefore have a profound effect on cultural production. Consequently, as Lefebvre contends urban alienation is in every aspect of our lives it will therefore have an acute effect on social relations and urban space and hence cultural production. Thus, as cultural manifestations are representative of material conditions of society, understanding the effects of alienation is central to cultural studies.

This idea of alienation links to Marc Augé’s non-places where little to no human social interaction occurs and hence no community is formed. Society is alienated from seeing or understanding their shared experiences and problems. Augé defines a place as somewhere with social identity, social relations and history, in which he includes the home. In turn, places that do not have these attributes he calls non-places. These non-places are where only necessary information is passed to the individual and the only interaction tends to be through language and text generally provided by institutions, rather than individuals. A prime example of a non-

place is an airport or even a satellite commuter town where people only pass through without any meaningful human contact.

These non-places, which are becoming more and more prevalent as technology advances, can alienate a person from the real world as they no longer have any interaction within it and, consequently, a person has no sense of community or of those around them. Augé's approach is more anthropological rather than spatial, but his idea of non-places where there is little to no social interaction is useful for my thesis when considering the alienating spaces of the huge out-of-town tower blocks created by the Franco regime seen in many of the Spanish *quinqui* films of the 1970s and 80s. I would argue that these *polígono de viviendas* built on the peripheries of major cities within Spain could be termed non-places given their impersonal nature and lack of individuality of design. However, we can see within films such as *Colegas* that communities, of a sort, can be created between neighbours within the tower blocks.

Augé also includes shanty towns as a non-place as in his view it is a temporary abode with inhuman conditions. However, I would argue that the *chabolas* of 1950s/60s Spain would not fit into Augé's definition as many *chabolistas* lived in these shanty towns for a considerable length of time and communities were formed particularly towards the end of the Franco era when the grassroots movements started to demand better living conditions.

Non-places are the spaces of super modernity, as time marches on individuals become more and more reliant on technology and human interaction is reduced to a minimum. Additionally, the existence of non-places will increase as the world becomes more globalised, commodified and homogenised. Non-places, as well as being relatively homogenous themselves, also

homogenise their users as it designates them with a shared identity, for example that of passenger at an airport, rather than value their individuality. This links into the hegemony of capitalism where a person is simply a consumer, someone only to purchase commodities, and the demarcation of people as objects rather than their real self is a form of alienation. It is evident within later cultural works that as time and technology continue to advance the concept of non-places is becoming more and more apparent, for example, in *Escrito en un dólar* (Raúl Guerra Garrido, 1986) modern airports and motorways are used to illustrate how capitalism has subsumed the communities of the protagonist's youth. As a consequence, I would argue that the increasing appearance and conversion to these non-places is part of the reason for an increasing need to seek ontological security through homeownership.

### **Refuge and resistance in homeownership**

Within Chapter Five of this thesis, I discuss, through the prism of cultural artefacts, that the home could be considered as Lefebvre's lived space and hence provide a chink of possibility of a rebellion against neoliberal State control. The theoretical arguments that support this are discussed below.

Gramsci's idea of continual resistance to the hegemonic group ties in with Lefebvre's third definition of lived space, a space appropriated back from the dominant ideology, and used for resistance and rebellion. It is my contention that Lefebvre's lived space is the most synonymous with the home, as a space where one can be different and dream, which is clearly demonstrated through my study of cultural works within this thesis, for example the film *El inquilino* and the short story *Los girasoles ciegos*. David Harvey supports the idea that the home is Lefebvre's

lived space by stating that “home is a place which enables and promotes varied and ever-changing perspectives, a place which discovers new ways of seeing reality” (Harvey, 1996, p.104).

Gramsci’s concept of a constant cycle of commodification and resistance is adopted by another Hispanist, Luis Moreno Caballud<sup>24</sup> who discusses how contentment can make you lazy and that the capitalistic system within Spain during the “second phase of Francoism” (2015, p.46) had made everyone individualistic, consumer urbanites. Moreno’s use of socio-political commentary with respect to Spain in his analysis of cultural artefacts is something that I employ within my thesis. Moreno also discusses the desire for there to be a common space where people can collaborate and opinions are considered equally and in his 2012 article he emphasises that it is often the shared experiences of crisis that unite citizens thus creating a community that is more than only based upon where one lives – more than spatial. Moreno talks about resistance by groups such as Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH), squatters and *los indignados* during 15M who are, each in their own way, resisting the hegemonic discourse and creating spaces where anyone can exercise free thought and free culture. However, based upon the theories above of Harvey and Gramsci in that capitalism attempts to commodify and co-opt uniqueness, Moreno is concerned that such spaces may be appropriated by the consumer mass market despite their determination to be different.

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<sup>24</sup> Moreno’s work includes, amongst other works, the articles “Cuando cualquiera escribe. Procesos democratizadores de la cultura escrita en la crisis de la Cultura de la Transición Española” (2014) and “La imaginación sostenible: culturas y crisis económica en la España actual” (2012) and the book *Cultures of Anyone: Studies on Cultural Democratization in the Spanish Neoliberal Crisis* (2015).



A home is a space where one can be free from State control and not judged by society. Simply living your life as you desire, rather than following the status quo, could be seen as a form of resistance against the State. As such, despite possibly purchasing the home due to the dominant and hegemonic discourse of the State, once purchased, the house could provide a place where rebellion against the State may occur. It could become a place of refuge, a place free from the panopticon gaze of the State where the homeowner can be themselves and exert greater control over their own lives which is clearly demonstrated within both *El Lute* films analysed in Chapter Five.

Additionally, De Certeau argues that overriding the State description of a place can be seen as a form of rebellion, allowing space once more to be a practiced place and no longer State controlled. For example, we see the resistance against the State definition of space within the 1957 film *El inquilino* where a street corner is re-appropriated by the protagonist as his home.

Saunders disagrees that the working-class are being manipulated into buying houses by dominant ideologies. He rubbishes the idea that the working-class cannot think for themselves and the belief that people really want to live in “socialist communes...[is]...an insult to the efforts and intelligence of millions of people who work and save and struggle to fulfil their desire to buy a home of their own” (Saunders, pp. 66-7). Instead, Saunders employs the concept of seeking ontological security to combat the increasing alienation in the contemporary world and the innate desire to possess to explain the huge increase in homeownership during the latter half of the twentieth century, in that through possession one has a feeling of security, privacy and the maintenance of sense of self and identity. Indeed, a UK white paper written in 1971 stated that “Homeownership.... satisfies a deep and natural desire on the part of the

householder to have independent control of the house that shelters him and his family,” whereas Margaret Thatcher is purported to have said in 1985 that “the desire to have and to hold something of one’s own is basic to the spirit of man.”<sup>25</sup>

Examining the concept of ontological security further, Giddens defines it in his book *The Consequences of Modernity* as being confident and trusting in the world, which is principally felt in the private realm, i.e., the home. Thus its importance to my thesis, as it is in the home that the feeling of security can be renewed before entering the scary, alienating outside world once more. This provides an explanation as to why house ownership is increasing in the contemporary era as, “homeownership provides humans with a solution to alienation” (Saunders, p. 293). Indeed, Harvey opines that people are conducting a “search for more secure moorings and longer lasting values in a shifting world” (1990, p. 292).

Applying this to Spain, one potential explanation for the increased desire for homeownership is the desire for secure moorings and stability after the upheaval that the populace experienced during the twentieth century, including the civil war, the disastrous autarkic policies of the Franco regime, the rural exodus to the cities in search of work and the long recession following the 1973 oil crisis, to name a few. The considerable change in both their surroundings and values that the Spanish populace would have felt during these periods could have strongly contributed to a feeling of isolation, dehumanisation and disenchantment caused by the demands placed upon them by the hegemonic socio-economic capitalist structure and hence a greater desire for ontological security through owning your own home. For example, we can

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<sup>25</sup> Quoted in Saunders, p. 59 and from the internet at <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106000>

see this within *Deprisa, deprisa* in how the ostracization of the peri-urban youth drives Ángela to purchase her own flat. I would argue that this explanation for the increased desire for homeownership co-exists alongside the Marxist view of the necessity of the home as dictated by the capitalist hegemonic discourse. Perversely, the commodification of the home has meant that it is seen as a safe investment to make as a safeguard against the feelings of alienation created by the hegemonic discourse – to paraphrase Harvey – the commodification of the home has led to it becoming a secure mooring that provides a level of ontological security that the populace seek.

Ann Dupuis and David Thorns research into the meaning of home for older homeowners in New Zealand further supports the theory of the house providing a feeling of security against an ever modernising and shifting world. It became apparent through their research that owning a home in New Zealand was often linked back to the years of depression when many lost their homes. This led to many believing that “homeownership was possibly the best form of cushion and protection from [that] kind of global, macro disaster” (Dupuis, p. 6). My thesis demonstrates how within the cultural works studied, the social inequalities and resulting precarity suffered by the protagonists led them to purchase their own homes in order to achieve a feeling akin to Saunders’ ontological security. This is evidenced within many of the films studied such as *El inquilino*, *El pisito*, *Colegas* and *El Lute* where we see the protagonists’ profound desire for the security of their own home within the turbulent urban landscape. I would argue that these are cultural representations of the material reality in Spain at the time.

Dupuis and Thorns found that owning a home was synonymous with a feeling of security, continuity and family and therefore anyone who has reached middle age without owning a

home is considered “suspect, not fully adult” (Dupuis, p. 2) which ties into the theories of Massey in that not conforming to the spatial norms marks you as other. Additionally, through homeownership, one has more independence and the home can be seen as the sole area of control for an individual. This is illustrated by the desire to act upon and modify one’s dwelling giving the homeowner a physical, mental and often financial tie to their home and providing a sense of achievement, as well as that of control. If you are unable to alter your home as you are a tenant rather than the owner, then you could consider that the home does not truly reflect your identity (Tucker, p. 182). Applying this to Spain, we can see evidence of the inability to truly be yourself under the Franco regime for many, particularly the defeated Republicans. For example, in Rafael Chirbes’ 2013 novel *En la orilla* as a consequence of the treatment Esteban’s Republican father received, Esteban wished to own a place of his own, a private refuge that he could alter to reflect his own ideals and personality.

Thus, homeownership could be seen as a way to protect oneself against the spatial attack of capitalism and the loss of communities, often due to the rise of Augé’s non-places which are discussed earlier. The cultural manifestations selected, where we see the communities destroyed, be it as a result of the rural exodus in the 1950s or the rehousing of the *chabolistas* in the 1960s, tourism and so forth, demonstrate that the protagonists experienced a greater feeling of being outside accepted society, and hence a feeling of being excluded, isolated and ostracised.

When considering the resistance to the hegemonic discourse, it is important to consider a further Hispanic theorist, Stephen Luis Vilaseca, who has extensively looked at one particular form of resistance. He has carried out significant work on *okupas*, using cultural artefacts to

ensure that the motivations behind political squatting are understood fully. He has written about this topic within the book *Barcelonan Okupas: Squatter Power!* (2013) and the article “The 15-M movement: formed by and formative of counter-mapping and spatial activism” (2014). Vilaseca states his work continues the debate started by Compitello and Larson in their 2001 article studied earlier with respect to how to approach the urban in Spain within the field of cultural studies, based extensively on the theories of Lefebvre. Vilaseca’s work on squatters, in turn based upon the work of Harvey, who himself has expanded the theories of Lefebvre, is useful as, similar to the premise of Marx’s *Das Kapital* which has the abolition of private property at its core, squatters are against the hegemonic idea of private property. Hence, their activism against the capitalistic dominant discourse is extremely informative to understand how the hegemonic desire for homeownership originated and the issues that may lie therein.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, using spatial activism to resist capitalism resonates with the theories of Lefebvre and Soja with respect to lived/Thirdspace respectively as the activism creates a space of rebellion and resistance against the dominant discourse. As I argue that the home can also be a space of rebellion it is interesting to examine the differences and similarities within these two counter ideas to spatial activism, that is to say, the activism of squatters who are against private homeownership compared with the form of passive resistance against societies rules and expectations within the safe refuge of one’s own home. This is examined further within works such as the extremely popular Catalan TV series *El cor de la ciutat* where an *okupa* storyline

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<sup>26</sup> To support this argument, I would cite Rojo and Díaz de Frutos who discuss, within their article “El #Sol, revolución: paisajes lingüísticos para tomar las plazas” (2014), how in May 2011 as part of the 15M protests the plazas were reappropriated back from the State and the capitalist market (many of the occupied squares were the commercial hubs of the cities). The *indignados* made the plazas their home and demonstrated to the public a new way of living, free from the neoliberal State discourse. Although this article is after my period of review, I believe it is still relevant as the principle of the home being a place of rebellion is affirmed in that the *indignados* made the plazas, their places of rebellion, their home.

was developed in 2007/8, which Vilaseca also reviews. Vilaseca reviews the storyline as an indicator of the *okupa*'s fight in Barcelona at the same time, however, I expand on this work to highlight the desperation for a home, a place to call your own, a safe place of resistance from the hegemonic discourse.

To conclude, my argument in Chapter Five is that cultural representations support the idea that the home can sit under Lefebvre's definition of lived space either by becoming a refuge for those who wish to live outside the prescribed rules set by the hegemonic discourse, in this way exercising a form of passive resistance or as a place where its inhabitants actively react against the hegemonic discourse as in the case of *okupas* and *indignados*, active resistance.

## **Conclusion**

The combining of urban and cultural studies has been an accepted scholarly route for around the last 10 to 15 years, and my research is clearly indebted to all the rigorous work that has come before. However, no one before this thesis has undertaken a close reading of cinematic and literary texts from the latter half of twentieth century Spain through the prism of homeownership. It is hoped that this new burgeoning branch of cultural urban studies provides an insight into the significant issue of homeownership in Spain, particularly in relation to the hegemonic discourse that promoted it and its effects on the populace. Thus, the chapters that follow mobilize the above theories and concepts to provide close readings of literary and cinematic products from 1950 to 2008 within the three overarching concepts of hegemonic discourse and commodification, alienation and refuge and resistance.

## Chapter Two

### History of homeownership in Spain

The purpose of this chapter is to set out the particular circumstances of Spain from the early 1950s up until the start of the recent recession in 2008 with respect to homeownership. Through the Chapter the transition of the country from a predominantly rental society to that of homeownership becomes clear. The chapter follows the historical and political background to homeownership in Spain in approximate chronological order so that the development of the concept over the years of capitalism and the impact of political policies are made evident. The subheadings are described below.

We see how the Franco regime's modernisation programme enacted from the 1950s, as discussed under the subheading "The move from an autarkic policy", led to a predominantly middle-class consumer society where the home simply became another commodity. The massive rural exodus to the cities, as discussed under the subheading "The rural exodus leading to a housing crisis within Spanish cities" led to the regime eventually developing capitalist housing policies which were, in the main, designed to subdue the working-class through the ideology of homeownership, which in turn helped to stimulate the struggling economy and helped convert the Spanish economy to that of capitalism and a consumer society, as discussed under the subheading "Consumer lifestyles". Some of these policies led to the working-class following the middle-class route and buying their own home often in the excluded and marginalised *polígono de viviendas* developed on the outskirts of the cities where the private construction companies, along with the regime, provided incentives to buy, as discussed under

the subheading “Displacement to the urban peripheries”. The Franco regime’s continued attempts to bolster and grow the economy meant that they heavily promoted tourism and the purchase of second homes which had the additional effect of bolstering the construction and housing markets, this is discussed under the subheading “Homes for tourism”. Later, during the Transition to democracy, the contentment of the now principally middle-class society led to many of the regime’s socio-economic policies remaining intact after the Transition to democracy including the policies on homeownership. This is evidenced by the many levels of State intervention in the housing market which promoted homeownership over renting. These helped to maintain the property cycle and bolster the mortgage finance market. Indeed, it is said that many of the governmental and local policies surrounding housing originated in the era of the Franco dictatorship “desde un punto de vista político, la apuesta por la propiedad como factor de desafiliación y de individuación de la relación entre propietario y capital-dinero viene de largo: fue masivamente ensayada por el Franquismo” (López, 2010, p. 278), as discussed under the subheading “The path to democracy and impact of the 1973 oil crisis and subsequent recession”. In addition, we can see the impact of joining the EEC on Spanish society and how EU money played a key role in the continued stimulation of the housing market which ultimately led to the subsequent housing bubbles. These are discussed in the subheadings “Joining Europe and the 1985 to 1993 housing bubble” and “Housing bubble from 1998 to 2008”, respectively.

It should be noted that the work undertaken by Isidro López-Hernández and Emmanuel Rodríguez-López in their book *Fin de ciclo: financiarización, territorio y sociedad de propietarios en la onda larga del capitalismo hispano (1959-2010)* was pivotal for this chapter as it discusses



Spain's turn towards capitalism in the 1950s based primarily on the housing market and hence homeownership.

### **The move from an autarkic policy**

The hegemonic idea of homeownership in Spain can be traced back to the 1950s when the Franco dictatorship started to modernize the country following an extended post-civil war period that lasted 15 years. The war had left behind a devastated country with a ravaged infrastructure and many cities in ruins. Until the late 1940s there was severe famine and shortages of numerous necessities, including building materials (Cardesín, p. 287). This extended post war period was partly attributable to the misguided autarkic policy of the Franco regime. From being a fairly liberal country, after the civil war Spain closed its borders to foreign culture and investment and became internationally isolated. Instead, the State through the National Institute of Industry took control of how financial and business groups would operate, including the construction sector, and corruption and favouritism was rife (Cardesín, p. 287).

Some could say that it was the Franco regime's lack of proactiveness to reconstruct the devastated country after the war that meant that the regime never caught up with the need for decent, affordable housing.<sup>27</sup> The issue was exasperated by a huge growth in population in the first third of the twentieth century, bigger than that of northern Europe (Vaz, p. 181) meaning that even before the war and without considering the physical destruction of

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<sup>27</sup> After the civil war there was a policy of low-quality public rental housing, but this policy did not last long and therefore had a relatively limited impact, particularly as the regime soon adopted a policy of selling off this stock (Hockstra, p. 130).

infrastructure that the war caused, once the regime took power in 1939 there was already a significant housing problem in Spain. Consequently, the regime embarked on a series of half-hearted financial concessions to stimulate housing construction. In the 1940s there were a few housing plans, for example Madrid's 1946 *Plan de ordenación urbana* (Cardesín, p. 290). However, in most of Spain's cities the urban development plans were of poor quality as they had little to no support from the overarching regime (Cardesín, p. 290). Additionally, the amount of houses developed did not match the level of propaganda deployed meaning that despite four hundred and fifty thousand leaflets being distributed, five thousand and six hundred propaganda acts and two hundred and fifty official award ceremonies, only an average of ten thousand houses a year were built between 1939 and 1954 which was significantly short of the estimated one hundred thousand homes a year predicted to be needed by the General Directorate of Architecture (Vaz, p. 183). Additionally, between 1938 and 1942 not a single unit had been constructed by the *Obra Sindical del Hogar's Servicio del Arquitectura*<sup>28</sup> (Larson, 2021, p. 209).

After the devastation of the civil war, the regime's ideology promoted women as procreators, to provide the demographic recovery the country needed and set the family as the central pillar of social order with women designated the role of homemaker. This was set out in a Charter established by the regime in 1938, based upon the Civil Code of 1889, and was only eventually modified in April 1958. The ideology of the women as homemaker meant that it was frowned upon for women to work. Indeed, the Charter of 1938 was intended to liberate married women

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<sup>28</sup> The Obra Sindical del Hogar was founded in 1936 with the intention of solving the housing crisis within Spain through the construction of publicly funded housing to be sold at low prices.

from factory work<sup>29</sup> (Morcillo, 2008, p. 67). The stereotype of the woman as mother and *ángel del hogar* was a crucial element of Francoist Catholic Spain.<sup>30</sup> The Franco regime looked nostalgically back to the times of the Spanish Empire and Catholic crusades and as soon as they assumed power, the regime united Catholicism with national identity and the concept of the fatherland and the rationale behind gender ideologies was pushed back 500 years to the days of the Catholic monarchs (Morcillo, 2008, p. 28). Within Chapter Three, we see how as late as December 1967 in NO-DO Number 1089A the regime still considered it the woman's place to care for her man and do all the housework when a new type of dishwasher is showcased at the *Hogarhotel* exhibition in Barcelona and described as for the 'solo man' as he clearly cannot be expected to wash his own dishes! This ideology set the home as the domain of the women and within Chapter Four I argue that this, combined with the capitalist hegemony of the home as a must-have-commodity and the real material need for a home, led the female characters within the cultural works studied to be the main drivers behind the desire for homeownership.

Additionally, in the aftermath of the war many of defeated Republicans sought solace and protection in their homes as evidenced within the novel *Los girasoles ciegos* studied in Chapter Five. Many tried to continue their politics behind closed doors, in the relative safety of their own homes, as can be seen through the character of Esteban's father within the novel *En la orilla*. These novels are set at a time where there was severe political repression of the defeated

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<sup>29</sup> However, due to the wage freeze at the end of the 1950s and the number of unemployed increasing from 150,000 to 200,000 (Morcillo, 2008, p. 54), in many working-class families the women needed to work and consequently the female percentage of the workforce increased from 8.9% in 1950 to 13.4% in 1960 (Morcillo, 2008, p. 72). By 1961 the regime was unable to ignore this situation and women working was sanctioned in the Law of Political, Professional and Labour Rights of Women (Morcillo, 2008, p. 67).

<sup>30</sup> Although it should be noted that the fixing of women as mothers and to the hearth and home, but nothing more, was fairly prevalent in almost every Western nation during this decade (Webster, p. x). Indeed, when discussing the UK, Massey talks of "the confinement of women, ideologically if not for all women in practice, to the 'private' sphere of the suburbs and the home" (Massey, 1994, p. 233).

Republicans. This is clearly evidenced in the *Ley de Responsabilidades Políticas* which was passed on 1 February 1939 and lasted until 1945 (Casanova, pp. 220-1). The punishments established by this act included seizure of assets such as people's homes. The repression only served to exacerbate the effects of the civil war and the years of autarky and gave rise to deep cracks within society leading to a rigid class system where the Republicans were treated as second class citizens, as clearly evidenced within *Los girasoles ciegos*.

The start of the hegemonic discourse surrounding homeownership ties in with the change of outlook of the regime from autarky to capitalism. The complete failure of the regime's autarkic policies, in comparison to other European countries which were experiencing rapid growth (thanks, in part, to the Marshall Aid which was denied to Spain (Balfour, p. 268)), meant that from the 1950s onwards Spain started to look outwards. Of great assistance to this new stance was the shift in world politics at the beginning of the 1950s, from fascism to communism as the enemy of the democracies, i.e., the Cold War (Casanova, p. 251 and 261). Thus, the Franco regime, which expressed a significant opposition to communism, became more attractive as an ally of the western liberal democracies. In September 1953, Spain signed the Defence and Mutual Aid Pact with the USA which provided Spain with economic and military aid amounting to approximately \$625 million over six years (Balfour, p. 268), in return for the USA using Spanish soil for military bases. This event was a catalyst, pulling Spain from its premodern post-war living conditions into the modern developed world. We can see the expectation that foreign aid could bring about an improvement to the current impoverished situation of rural Spain in the early 1950s within the film *¡Bienvenido Mister Marshall!* where the inhabitants of the village believed that they would receive some of the Marshall Aid that was provided to most other

European countries after the Second World War and dreamt of what commodities this could bring them.

This outward looking and more capitalistic approach was cemented in 1957 by a cabinet reshuffle allowing in the more outward and forward-thinking Opus Dei members, also known as technocrats (Balfour, p. 268 and Casanova, p. 257). This was due to persistent issues with the economy (for example, wages in the mid-1950s being as little as 35% of their pre-Civil War level (Balfour, p. 268)), and serious social disturbances in 1956, which included striking workers and demonstrating students (as seen within Juan Marsé's 1966 novel *Últimas tardes con Teresa* which is examined in detail in Chapter Four). The reshuffle led to the issue of the Executive Order for New Economic Planning, known as the Stabilization Plan, which was decreed on 21 July 1959. The objective of the plan was "the gradual liberalisation of imports and, at the same time, the liberalisation of their commercialisation in the domestic market" (Casanova, p. 257). This started the period commonly referred to as *desarrollismo* or the Spanish miracle.

As a result of the more capitalist approach, owning your own home became the ultimate commodity to demonstrate success and upward social mobility which is evidenced within the cultural artefacts reviewed in the latter Chapters to the thesis, for example within the film *El verdugo* and the novel *Últimas tardes con Teresa*. The Stabilization plan opened-up the Spanish market to foreign investment and with the previous significant underdevelopment of Spain (during the years of the Civil War and the period of autarky), the cheap peseta and Spain's subdued and cheap working-class, Spain was historically in a weaker position meaning that undertaking business in Spain was cheaper and hence more attractive than other European countries. As such, Spain was ripe for investment by foreign capital (Balfour, p. 269). The plan

also allowed emigration and 1.25 million Spaniards left to work in Europe between 1960 and 1973, many sending money back home (Balfour, p.269). These policies ensured that more money was entering Spain either from foreign investment or remitted home by Spanish emigrants abroad, which helped to bolster the Spanish economy. The emigrants, alongside the permitted Hollywood movies, would tell stories of how their rich European neighbours lived and many Spanish wanted to emulate this lifestyle. The money sent home allowed more Spanish access to the consumer market which was fast developing within the new Spanish capitalist State.

### **The rural exodus leading to a housing crisis within Spanish cities**

When Franco lifted his ban on permanent migration within Spain in 1947 there was a mass exodus to the cities from the countryside in search of work and a better life. The mass rural exodus went against the Franco regime's advocating of the countryside (Richardson, 2012, p. 6) as during the post-war period, the regime vigorously championed the country. Consequently, in Lefebvrian terms, the spaces of representation, or lived spaces, created by the Spanish citizens within the cities following the rural exodus were now contrary to the State's representation of space, or conceived space, which was based on the ideals of the countryside. The Castilian male peasants were considered exemplars of the true nationalist who would bring about political stability and economic solvency as the regime believed that agriculture was the key to economic success (Richardson, 2002, p. 26). Indeed, Franco in a speech in May 1951 celebrated the rural way of life "the seed of the race remains pure and people live their problems and they are not polluted with the city's depravity" (Richardson, 2002, p. 26). I would argue that the regime's policy of setting the family as the pillar of society was another reason

they championed the countryside. Within the context of the city, women were “freer...to escape the rigidity of patriarchal social controls” (Massey, 1994, p. 258) which were so powerful in the smaller rural communities. I would argue that women’s freedom from the confines of the home was something that the regime did not want hence the regime attempted to control space in a kind of “power geometry” (Massey, 1994, p. 265).

The policy of controlling and championing the countryside had worked during the civil war when the Nationalists had laid siege to the cities of Barcelona, Madrid and Valencia. However, once the war was over it was clear that an autarkic Spain could not produce enough food to feed its people. The widespread shortage of food led to severe malnourishment and starvation. These years were called the ‘years of hunger’. However, rather than lose face, Franco chose political stability over economic solvency, by taking the ideological route and promoting the idea of a traditional rural idyll. The regime often compared the depraved and, according to the regime, Marxist, urban dwellers to the pure, religious, industrious, peaceful idea of the Castilian peasant farmer (Richardson, 2002, p. 26).

The regime initially resisted the rural exodus, but eventually even they were unable to go against the huge tide of immigrants entering the cities (four million between 1951 and 1970 (Richardson, 2012, p. 7)) and it became one of the main social concerns of the regime and society. Consequently, in the mid-1950s the Franco regime altered its rhetoric and focused on urban development. They started to call the urban factories “sister industries” to agriculture (Richardson, 2002, p. 27) and in 1955 Franco’s official speeches acknowledged the value of the city life (Richardson, 2012, p. 9). Additionally, in 1956 the Land Act was introduced and in 1957 the Ministry of Housing was created (Cardesín, p. 292). The Land Act decentralized urban

planning to encourage the construction sector and hence stimulate the failing economy. It introduced general urban development plans at local government level and designated land into three categories: urban land, rural land (excluded from urbanisation) and land that was available for development. However, local authorities often colluded with property developers to redesignate rural land to land available for development meaning corruption was rife (Cardesín, p. 291). The redesignation of land is seen within an episode of the TV show *Verano Azul* reviewed in detail in Chapter Five.

Immigration was aided by transportation advancements, for example the high-speed train, *Talgo*, introduced in 1950 which could reach speeds of 120 km/h and allowed many migrants to pack up in the morning and be in the city by the afternoon. The train, as a sign of modernity, features heavily within the film *Surcos* and is seen as a conduit between rural and urban life. Indeed, Richardson comments that when *Surcos* was released in 1951, Spain was on the eve of its “rapid entrance to modernity and beyond” (Richardson, 2002, p. 20). This ties into the reasons behind the period covered in this thesis as the entrance into modernity coincided with Spain’s turn towards capitalism and homeownership in the 1950s.

As migrants left their rural villages hundreds of them became empty, abandoned shells<sup>31</sup> and the cities were unable to cope with the sheer scale of the migration. One region that suffered massive depopulation, as a consequence of the rural exodus and emigration abroad, was Galicia

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<sup>31</sup> One side effect of the rural exodus was that a significant proportion of rural homes were left empty (empty houses as a percentage of total housing stock increased from 4.7% in 1960 to 16.3% in 1981). Indeed, in 1966 one newspaper listed over 100 abandoned villages for sale (Richardson, 2012, p. 7). Many of these eventually became second homes as ownership was retained by the family and the improved standards of living during the years of *desarrollismo* allowed these properties to be used for holidays. By 2001 a significant proportion of the overall housing stock was comprised of second homes, over 16% (Barke, 2008, p. 283).



which is discussed in an article by Alfredo González-Ruibal and the desertion of rural villages is poignantly depicted within the novel *La lluvia amarilla*.

The rural exodus came at a time when industry was showing marked growth. This was concentrated in the Barcelona-Vizcaya-Madrid triangle which saw a huge influx of emigrants while areas such as Andalucía, Extremadura etc., became depopulated (Casanova, p. 259). This massive shift from the country to the city transformed Spanish society. During the 1960s and 1970s nine of Europe's twelve fastest growing urban agglomerations were within Spain (Cardesín, p. 288) such that by Franco's death in 1975 26.6% of the population lived in a province different to that of their birth (Richardson, 2012, p. 7).

City growth in the 1940s was concentrated within the city centre with little to no expansion beyond the city limits. Cardesín attributes this central concentration to the lack of a sufficient transport network and basic facilities such as sanitation and water (Cardesín, p. 290) which was due to the chronic underinvestment by the regime and the sheer scale of what was needed following the devastation of the civil war and the huge influx of people as part of the rural exodus. Indeed, in the early 1950s, solving the lack of housing was never the main priority for the regime, contrary to what the propaganda suggested, as evidenced in the *Noticiarios y Documentales*.

Many of the migrants from the countryside were unable to afford to buy their own property and even if they could, the Spanish cities were unable to absorb and cope with them. Following the civil war, there were many women whose husbands had either been killed or incarcerated, the regime's active discouragement of women in the work force meant that these single

women were forced to find alternative sources of income. Not wanting to lose their family home, many women sublet rooms which led to severe overcrowding. Sometimes a whole family lived in only one room (Carlos-Comín, p. 68) and in 1955 the number of families in Madrid which were renting a single room in larger homes with access to a shared kitchen was estimated to be around 20,000 (Larson, 2021, p. 211). Evidence of the practice of subletting and the severe overcrowding can be seen within *El pisito*, studied within Chapter Four, and was one of the drivers for Petrita and Rodolfo seeking to own their own home.

The lack of rental housing stock was partly due to the *Leyes de Arrendamientos Urbanos* passed in 1946, 1956 and 1964 which essentially froze rents and ensured that the rights were very much in favour of the lessee. This, according to Montserrat Pareja-Eastaway and M. Teresa Sánchez-Martínez resulted in (1) the restriction of mobility for workers, (2) the reduction of new construction for renting as profits were so little, meaning new houses were constructed for sale only and (3) the reduction in quality of rental accommodation. Therefore, ultimately the amount of housing available to rent reduced and people who could afford to bought (pp. 58-9).

The overcrowding, along with the rapidly expanding population within the cities ultimately led to the development of large *chabolas* of self-built houses on the peripheries, or *extrarradio*, of the large cities. By 1955, the number of *chabolas* and caves lived in by some of the inhabitants of Madrid totalled 18,000 (Larson, 2021 p. 210). Many migrants wanted their own home and space, particularly as many had brought their families with them to the city. During the day the materials for these self-built houses would be gathered and then when dusk fell the build would commence so that the construction was at night and out of the gaze of the authorities. By the

morning the family would be occupying the property and legally could not be evicted (Florida-Berrocal, p. 11). This is shown in the film in *El Lute* I analysed in Chapters Three and Five. However, in the film the family had not finished constructing their property and so are not in occupancy allowing the authorities to flatten their home with impunity. The inhabitants of the *chabolas* created their own communities and many resisted being moved to the out-of-town *viviendas*, discussed below, in an attempt to protect their shanty towns from disappearing (Florida-Berrocal, p. 9). For example, this occurred in the area of Orcasitas in the southern area of Villaverde, Madrid, where 2000 shacks were built by immigrants in the 1950s (Castells, p. 243).

The regime considered these *chabolas* politically dangerous and it was this that prompted them to do something about the housing crisis. Indeed, an article in *Informaciones* published on 15 April 1939 stated, “In this belt which suffocates Madrid lives monsters and criminals, the scum of illiterate and barbaric Spain that have been expelled from the countryside...These infected suburbs are a consequence of the weaknesses of failed systems” (Ryan, 2016, p. 86), thus linking the *chabolas* to the roots of sedition and urban degeneracy. They felt that the *chabolas* would be a source of social unrest, particularly as, at the time, workers movements were seeing a resurgence. A further reason for the focus on housing was that as the international markets started to open up during the start of capitalism within Spain, employers wished to stabilize their workforce by providing housing. Finally, a further reason was that the Church was pushing for action to be taken as they were becoming concerned about the threats to the traditional family that the lack of housing could instigate (Vaz, p. 185). Taking all these factors into consideration, in order to house the *chabolistas* and to provide a greater amount of housing for the rural migrants, the regime liberalised the availability to State aid for the construction

industry and gave a series of tax breaks thus increasing the level of housing development by private construction companies, rather than housing being directly built by the State (Vaz, p. 186).

The removal of the *chabolas* became a matter of urgency for the Franco regime and *El Plan de Urgencia Social* was established in Madrid in 1957 which became national policy in 1958 (López, 2010, p. 271). These plans were designed to absorb the greatest amount of *chabolistas* in the smallest time possible. Castells in his 1983 book *The City and the Grassroots*, discusses how, over time, grassroot movements developed within the *chabolas* as they had become people's homes, rather than just a roof over their heads, and communities were formed (Castells, p. 228). These communities would have been formed through the shared experience of emigrating from the countryside and having to adapt to city life, including the hardship of living in the *chabolas*. The destruction of the *chabolas* led to the dispersement of the original communities from both the *chabolas* and the other undesirable *barrios* to huge *polígonos de viviendas* on the outskirts of many Spanish cities which had little to no facilities. The grassroot movements that formed within not only the *chabolas* but many Spanish neighbourhoods demanded improvements in many cities and are discussed in greater detail within the section on the Displacement to the urban peripheries below.

The movement of whole inner-city neighbourhoods and *chabolistas* during the Franco dictatorship to out-of-town housing estates cleared the path for urban gentrification of the city centres which generally only benefitted the more well-off and politically connected Spaniard. Often the original inner-city area was redeveloped to house supporters of the regime (Cardesín, p. 290). We see the gentrification of an inner-city *barrio* within the film *El inquilino* reviewed in

Chapter Three. With regards to the social differences between the newly gentrified city centres and these out-of-town developments, *polígono de viviendas*, we also see Lefebvre's fracture lines where people are divided into different zones dependent on their social and economic status. The *chabolistas* had no choice but to allow themselves to be moved to a 'zone' that the regime deemed they fitted into. This is not to say that the *chabolas* were desirable places to live. The *chabolas* developed out of necessity due to the chronic overcrowding within the cities meaning that people were unable to find or afford housing. Indeed, Lefebvre's fracture lines can also be applied to the *chabolas* where people were forced to live due to their poverty and hence inability to live in more affluent areas of the city.

"Protected" and "subsidized" housing built by the regime (often through private construction firms) was also more beneficial to the well-off rather than those in real need of affordable housing as the commercial construction sector put profits over social responsibility such that the housing was still often unaffordable for those in the lower classes. In addition to the construction of private homes for the growing middle-class, the *Instituto Nacional de Vivienda* established a programme of collaboration with local and provincial corporations who were forced to provide free land and different organisations took on the role of property management. Under this programme more than half a million homes were built between 1940 and 1970, offering homes at affordable rents, but only to State workers or employers of large companies that the regime were trying to encourage. This policy of construction boosted the private construction companies who from 1960 to 1975 built 1.6 million homes at lower rents (Aheto, p. 6). Consequently, the new housing stock was used less to solve the social, affordable housing issue, but more to bolster the regime's support through housing wealthy or privileged social groups, including civil servants and sectors of the real estate industry (Vaz, p. 184). As a

result, the deficit for social and affordable housing grew throughout most of the 1950s, particularly in the big cities, like Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia. It was only by the mid-1950s, when the lack of housing threatened to destabilize the political and international position of the Franco regime, that action was taken.

We can see evidence of the Franco regime's increased focus on construction and homeownership within the government's newsreels, NO-DOs. These clips monopolised film reportage from the start of the Francoist regime in 1943 until 1981<sup>32</sup> and were used as a form of propaganda to publicize the regime's policies to the Spanish populace. For example, one NO-DO examined within Chapter Three concentrates on the construction of *viviendas* in Málaga in 1953 to meet the rising need for urban housing and the increased focus on tourism.

In the latter half of the 1950s we can see how the State finally started to invest in housing with its share of the State budget quadrupling in the period from 1955 to 1960 to 13% (Vaz, p. 188). Indeed, by the end of the 1950s State funding totalled 60% of total spend on construction which decreased to less than 40% by 1964. This is roughly in line with other northern European countries. However, the investment of the Spanish regime in 'social' housing from the late 1950s onwards was focused solely on producing new housing for owner-occupancy, rather than a public rental system favoured by most other European countries, with the majority of rental dwellings being owned by individual private landlords (Hockstra, p. 125). Botelho-Azevedo (p. 278) et al believe that the main reason for the lack of interest by the Spanish regime during this

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<sup>32</sup> As explained above, this thesis concentrates on the period from 1950 as this is when capitalist financial interests became a clear priority within the regime. Although there was some State-led construction before the 1950s this was limited until the economy was opened up to foreign investment as the State and private companies lacked the necessary funds to undertake large construction projects. Additionally, only the NO-DO clips during the Franco regime were reviewed up until the start of the long recession that started in 1973.

period in developing an efficient social and private rental sector was primarily to ensure social stability; as Hockstra opines “The new homeownership society that began to emerge required stable employment in order to assure mortgage repayments; consequently, social and political confrontation eased off” (Hockstra, p. 130). It was felt that an ownership society, a phrase coined by George W. Bush in 2003<sup>33</sup>, would “revolutionize the electoral map” (Cardesín, p. 295) and subdue the working-class population hence avoid any mass popular uprisings that could rock the status quo. Thus, one result of the promotion of homeownership was the political stability that the regime so craved.

A further reason was the challenge entailed in managing a public rental stock as the Franco regime was concerned there could be political conflict between public housing tenants and the State (Botelho-Azevedo, p. 278); the solution being private house ownership (López, 2010, p. 270). Owner occupancy was achieved through a scheme of government subsidies which came in the form of assistance to both the property developer and the home buyer and was designed specifically to boost the construction sector and hence the overall Spanish economy. The system did not require consideration of the home buyer’s circumstances and hence corruption was rife, with, as mentioned above, the privileged sectors receiving the lion share. Despite the increased involvement by the Franco regime in the housing sector from mid-1950s, the lack of affordable housing remained an issue and corruption was everywhere (Vaz, p. 189).

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<sup>33</sup> Bush believed that a country that consisted of a society comprised of heterosexual married couples each with at least two kids living in a stand-alone home with a garden and all the trappings of a middle-class consumer society would be more stable and prosperous. "America is a stronger country every single time a family moves into a home of their own," he said in October 2004 (Karabell, p. 1).

The principal social housing scheme was called VPO (*Vivienda de Protección Oficial*). Properties were sold to homeowners at prices well below the market rate. However, the new owners were unable to sell them above a price set by the government during, what is called, the qualification period. In the 1950s and 1960s this period was between 20 and 50 years (Hockstra, p. 131), although this was later fixed at 30 years in 1978 and has more recently changed depending on the autonomous region within which the property is located. As such, social housing was provided through a policy of homeownership rather than renting from the government. Additionally, as in the long term the owners of the VPOs were able to sell their properties at significant profits, many Spanish families used them as a means of investment. These measures adopted by the regime in the 1950s and still continuing at least until 2008, have helped to create a culture of homeownership that has dominated Spain.

The regime's housing policy was more economic, than social, favouring the development of a profitable construction industry. From the start of the 1960s private developers were the main operators within the industry. By the early 1960s up to 90% of the housing constructed by the private sector was built using subsidies from central government (Aheto, p. 8) and of these 80% of the houses were sold for profit, rather than rented. Therefore, this not only helped solve the massive overcrowding within the cities at the time, but also helped stimulate the construction sector, which, along with an expansion of the finance sector providing credit, led to mass fortunes being accumulated and the formation of huge construction companies that are still continuing to this day, for example Copisa (founded in 1959) and Ferrovial (founded in 1952). This made Spain the most expensive country in Western Europe with respect to the cost of housing versus standard of living, where, at the end of the 1960s, an average dwelling of



seventy-five square metres cost almost ten years of gross national product per Spanish citizen (Vaz, p. 190).

López and Rodríguez state that it was “la actuación decidida del Estado ha permitido crecimientos de escala mucho más eficaces y rápidos que el simplista laissez faire de los apologetas del libre mercado” (2010, p. 267). This is evidenced by the various urban lease laws of 1946, 1955 and 1964 which actively discouraged renting and the move towards neoliberalism at the end of the 1950s which strongly favoured homeownership; “Fue la puesta en marcha de un largo y complicado proceso que...acabó por llevar a la creación de un genuino mercado de la vivienda inscrito en los mecanismos propios del consumo” (Florida-Berrocal, p. 6). Raquel Rodríguez agrees that in Spain no proper social housing stock exists and instead there is a system of controlled rents (pp. 131 and 133).

### **Consumer lifestyles**

The subjugation of the working-classes was a priority for the dictatorship following the history of popular mobilization in Spain. Spain had modernized exceedingly rapidly up until the start of the Civil War which went hand in hand with an increased level of class conflicts. For example, the workers’ general strike in 1934 following the ascension of the right-wing party CEDA (Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Right-Wing Groups) and the ensuing popular backlash against the government’s brutal reprisals (Balfour, pp. 243-253) and, of course, the civil war itself. The Franco regime therefore wanted to avoid any mass mobilizations and to ensure that the working-class did not become political, as had occurred within the first third of the twentieth century. One way of achieving this goal was to maintain a content society through

the availability of commodities, i.e., create a capitalist consumer society. As such, private homeownership, as a form of commodity, became one of the main foci of public policy of the Franco dictatorship (López, 2010, p. 270), in the hope that this would provide social stability and contentment.<sup>34</sup>

Following the cabinet reshuffle in February 1957 the now predominantly Opus Dei government started a drive for austerity which severely affected the ability of the Housing Ministry to develop the level of housing required without significant levels of private investment. In 1961 the National Housing Plan<sup>35</sup> was enacted which focused on promoting the purchase of newly built housing (Fuster, p. 588). As a result, the private construction industry grew to unprecedented levels such that in 1966 nearly one million workers were employed within this sector which accounted for 15.2% of industrial production, making it the second largest industry in Spain at the time (Vaz, p. 188). This led to a huge increase in development, such that the acquisition of a modern flat in one of the often high-rise, new developments was now a possibility for millions of lower-class families. The ownership of your own home became a marker of social position and upward social mobility, providing access to the status of middle-class. Indeed, one advert from the real estate company Urbis in 1960s Madrid promised “You will be proud of your home in Moratalaz because you will find housing in accordance with your social position and the needs of your family” (Vaz, p. 188).

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<sup>34</sup> Gramsci saw the ruling classes maintaining power in two ways. The first would be the rule of consent or hegemony which is the method employed above and discussed within Chapter One, in that the dominant class use persuasion to convince the subordinate classes of its legitimate rule. The other is that of coercion where the dominant class uses brutal measures to force the subordinate classes to accept its rule (Gramsci, p. 210). The Franco regime was no exception to Gramsci’s idea of coercion/consent in that as well as the measures employed above, it also undertook brutal coercive measures to ensure that the populace did not revolt against the regime including incarceration, executions, forced exile etc.

<sup>35</sup> There were previous housing plans, for example the 1954 National Housing Plan, which laid the groundwork for 550,000 housing units to be built over five years. But amid chaos, more applicants were filed than units built, showing the great demand for housing (Larson, 2021, p. 216).

During the Franco regime we can track how the Spanish population transitioned from a predominantly rental society to one where the home became a must have commodity. The rise in privately owned housing was considerable with 45.9% of houses owned in 1950 rising to 51.9% in 1960 and 63.4% in 1970 (López, 2010, p. 269). The reasons for the increase in homeownership were twofold – economic and ideological.

The economic reasons were often State led with various economic incentives provided to both the construction industry and the homeowner in order to encourage homeownership which are discussed throughout this chapter. The ideological reasons could be explained through many factors one being the strong desire for a level of ontological security following the upheavals of the past few decades in Spain. Additionally, the urbanisation of the population opened up greater opportunities for recreation – cinemas, dance halls, cafes – and for consumption with the opening up of department stores. Additionally, between 1957 and 1961 salaries were frozen forcing many Spanish workers to emigrate to Europe and this, combined with the increase in tourism into Spain, exposed many Spanish to other cultures. This exposure to a more commodified way of life led to the desire to be middle-class and live the perfect life, full of the necessary commodities.

In addition, the mass media, particularly magazines and Hollywood movies, started to show the perfect American domestic dream in their adverts and story lines, for example we see this within the film *La gran familia*. Both Spanish and Hollywood films often represented the protagonists as at the pinnacle of success for having achieved the domestic dream. Every film shown in the cinema was preceded by a NO-DO which both promoted the traditional Catholic

way of life alongside the promotion of a consumer lifestyle. Consequently, this type of life became synonymous with happiness and well-being and one that many aspired to.

Commercial films, many from Hollywood, and adverts also helped to propagate new definitions of masculinity and femininity which mimicked the spending patterns of consumers. These representations of the perfect domestic lifestyle went hand in hand with domesticity and consumption of particular commodities, such as televisions and washing machines. The audience wanted to imitate the perfect lifestyle they saw on the screen and hence were encouraged to buy into it by digging deep into their pockets. The 1950s in Spain represented the evolution from a rural to an urbanised society and from autarky to capitalism which changed the role of women as homemaker to that of a consumer-housewife and there was now a new responsibility of the middle-class housewife to use her husband's salary discerningly to make appropriate purchases. The desire for new commodities is evidenced by there being only 600 television sets in 1956 Spain which increased to 40,000 only two years later in 1958 (Morcillo, 2008, p. 56). However, the ability to be a stay-at-home mother was a luxury that principally only the middle-class could enjoy and was used to demarcate them from other social groups. As a consequence, being able to stay at home was an indicator of middle-class status that many yearned for but were unable to achieve.

Spanish society was becoming more and more middle-class with greater than 50% purported to be middle-class by 1970 (Cardesín, p. 299). As evidence of this growth, we can see that in 1960 the percentage of households with electronic domestic appliances was less than 5%, as it was for car ownership. By 1976, 87% of Spanish households had fridges and 49% owned a car. In addition, the shift in the working population from predominantly agriculture in 1960 (42%)

to the service sector by 1976 (42%) also illustrates the upward mobility of Spanish society (Jordon, 2000, pp. 17-8). Indeed, the Franco regime considered the growth of the middle-class in Spain as a great political achievement (Rodríguez, 2022, p. 17) such that according to Emmanuel Rodríguez López the Spanish middle-class only exists as a result of the intervention of the State, “La clase media es el Estado” (2022, p. 55). One of the factors that determines one’s class status is that of homeownership. Thus, the growing middle-class community within Spain during the years of *desarrollismo* onwards could provide another explanation for the massive increase in homeownership within Spain during the same period.

### **Displacement to the urban peripheries**

The dispersement of the original communities from the *chabolas* and other undesirable, generally working-class, *barrios* to out-of-town housing estates called *polígono de viviendas* ultimately allowed for the gentrification of some of the inner-city areas where the *chabolas*/poorer *barrios* used to be situated. Despite some of these new flats being offered at affordable rents, the constructors and the regime mainly promoted these *viviendas* as cheap flats with the provision of assistance for their acquisition, principally in the form of cheap mortgages.

As part of the regime’s policy to demolish the *chabolas* they passed the National Housing Plan in 1961 which allowed for *polígono de viviendas* to be constructed, for example Alcalá de Henares, 20 km from central Madrid (Castells, p. 247). The result was a huge amount of housing being developed on the isolated outskirts of cities with little to no facilities or services (Florida-Berrocal, p. 5). Often the construction of these *viviendas* was the responsibility of the

constructor with little input from the authorities which generally led to the housing being of appalling quality meaning that in 1974 approximately 2.3 million *madrileños* lived in inadequate housing (Castells, p. 217). For example, in Gran San Blas, Madrid, the average flat occupied only 42.5 m<sup>2</sup> and only fifteen years after being completed serious cracks developed and many were pulled down in the 1980s (Florida-Berrocal, pp. 7-8). The regime presented these developments as a resolution to the housing crisis provided by the 'generous' *Caudillo*. However, these modern, compact spaces, as represented in *El pisito*, *El inquilino* and *El verdugo* discussed in the following chapters, often ended up ostracising their inhabitants.

The working-class population displaced to the out-of-town *polígono de viviendas* were often excluded from the burgeoning consumer lifestyle, not only due to their lack of wealth but also physically excluded through moving to isolated suburbs with little transport infrastructure and a lack of basic services. La Mina in Barcelona was, "prácticamente encerrado entre el río, las autopistas y las vías del tren" (Florida-Berrocal, p. 9). Through the new media of communication, television, film etc., now more readily available after the Transition, the inhabitants, principally the youth, saw how their middle-class contemporaries were living and wanted to emulate them. The modernisation of the country was further splitting Spain into the haves and have-nots.<sup>36</sup> Lefebvre referred to new 'towns' such as these out-of-town *viviendas* as the "lowest threshold of sociability – the point beyond which survival would be impossible because all social life would have disappeared" (Lefebvre (2), 1991, p. 316). Indeed, Amanda Cuesta in her chapter *Los Quinquis del Barrio* in the book *Fuera de la Ley* (2015) opines that

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<sup>36</sup> There was a split previously between the victors and the defeated following the civil war as those that were connected with the *Segunda Republica* were impoverished through laws seizing their assets and not allowing them to work, not to mention their marginalisation, exclusion and stigmatization as second-class citizens as compared to those that supported Franco who were strongly favoured and hence flourished.

they were simply “chabolismo vertical” (p. 5). Thus the displacement of the poorer population to these out-of-town estates was a form of ghettoization. Inadequate housing was considered to be one of the primary causal factors for delinquents to turn to crime (Whittaker, p. 682). This is evidenced within the films *Colegas* and *Deprisa, deprisa* analysed in the following chapters.

These out-of-town homogeneous new builds are prime examples of Augé’s non-places that are discussed in Chapter One. However, the lack of services within these huge housing estates was a primary factor in the creation of informal residents’ associations that became legal in the Law of Association of 1964 (Cardesín, p. 292). As Castells demonstrates, these movements, at least in Madrid, appear “to have been a response to the rapidity and brutality of the urban growth” (p. 233).

In 1974 within Madrid 54% of the 4.3 million people that lived there were in inadequate housing while 8.1% of housing stock was empty due to property speculation (Castells, p. 217). Many ex-*chabolistas* who had been shifted out of the city into huge housing estates on the peripheries of the cities along with the burgeoning middle-class residents who had dreamt of a new life in their exclusive residential condominiums promised by the real estate adverts, were unhappy with the quality of the housing that they had purchased, the lack of open space, inadequate facilities and insufficient transport networks etc.. Thus, all spectrums of society took part in neighbourhood movements to ask for better living conditions, including better housing.

When these neighbourhood associations were first established, one has to remember that there was complete restriction of human and political rights under the Franco regime, but these movements ultimately allowed them to undermine the political reality from the bottom up. The

movements retained a connection with the ideology of democracy and were a good way for the underground political parties to reach people without exposure to the oppressive regime. For example, the neighbourhood movement in La Mina, Barcelona, had strong links to the clandestine left political groups (PSUC (the Catalan communist party), PT (*Partido de los Trabajadores*) etc.) and it was coordinated along with other districts through the *Federación de Asociaciones de Vecinos*. Additionally, many of the neighbourhood leaders were electoral candidates in the 1977 elections (Florido-Berrocal, p. 10), which were the first democratic elections after the death of Franco. According to Castells (p. 216) there was a symbiosis between the neighbourhood movements and the underground political parties.

The urban, also referred to as grassroot or neighbourhood, movements that occurred in the neighbourhoods in most Spanish cities are said to have been the largest and most significant urban movements in Europe since 1945 (Castells, p. 215). These movements were formed in order to deal with the issues of everyday life, including that of housing, and encompassed a wide range of the social spectrum, although were most vehement within the working-class districts on the peripheries of the cities. These movements brought about a huge amount of social change including a significant improvement in living conditions, the halting of demolition of city neighbourhoods for gentrification, the redevelopment of *chabolas* into permanent and often low-cost housing, improved neighbourhood facilities, an improvement of transport links etc. (Castells, p. 210). As such, in the late 1960s/early 1970s, before the Transition to democracy many of the previously disenfranchised sectors of society were able to achieve tangible improvements in their lives. Additionally, the previously displaced population from the *chabolas* and undesirable *barrios* which had often lost their modes of social solidarity and support (Harvey, Larbrador-Méndez and Moreno-Caballud) and sustainable form of culture



which had been created through identification with their original neighbourhood (Lefebvre, Bachelard and Labrador-Méndez) were now able to form new bonds and spatial communities. The argument that, thanks to the *Caudillo*, living conditions were better under the regime was now openly challenged.

### **Homes for tourism**

Tourism was used to help improve the economy as far back as the Stabilization Plan of 1959 (Rodríguez, 2022, p. 134) and was also a further boost to the growing construction sector. The additional boost from tourism to the construction sector ensured that the large construction companies went from strength to strength which also helped to fuel the later property booms.

In 1962 the World Bank Report set out a path for Spain which was based on the “articulated subordination of Spain to the EEC” and focused on emigration from rural areas to cities, both in Spain and abroad, and tourism (Cardesín, p. 288). The regime seized upon the idea of increasing tourism. A campaign was launched with the slogan “Spain is different” and Spain became the world’s leading tourist destination (López, 2010, p. 143). As a result, the Franco regime invested heavily in the significant infrastructure required to support tourism including hotels, restaurants, transport, commercial centres, airports etc.. The regime concentrated their investment in the main tourist destinations, with other areas notably not receiving the same investment (López, 2010, p. 143). However, the boost to the infrastructure of Spain did open up previously underdeveloped areas to constructors, who, not only built hotels, restaurants etc. for the tourist industry, but also houses for both foreigners and the Spanish.

A Law for Tourist Areas and Centres of Interest was passed in 1963 which allowed whole municipalities to be declared land available for development (López, 2010, p. 144). This blatant disregard for the environment and the avoidance of any democratic planning process meant that huge areas, such as Marbella and Benidorm, were overdeveloped with massive swathes of construction along the coastline. You can see this great coastal expansion within the novel *Crematorio* by Rafael Chirbes (2007).

The massive housing boom in the last decade of the Franco regime meant that there was an excess supply of housing at this time. Additionally, the rural exodus to the cities had often left the familial rural house empty and the increased transport infrastructure following the Transition to democracy and later entry to the EEC in 1986, allowed the urban population easier access to the countryside and, hence, led to many retaining the rural property as either a speculative investment or as a holiday home. The Transition to democracy and the subsequent boom years engendered a strong sense of political and economic stability and confidence in the future meaning that Spaniards were willing to invest their savings in property. Such that, by 1981, only 70% of housing was a family's principal residence compared to 92% in 1960, with only 62% of housing built between 1971 and 1980 being the principal residence (Rodríguez, 2010, p. 145). By 2002 the number of second or empty homes stood at 160 for every 1,000 Spanish inhabitants (Cardesín, p 298). These factors have led to 3.4 million homes out of a total of 20.9 million dwellings in 2001 being second homes: over 16% of all dwellings with a 37.8% increase over a decade (Barke, 2007, p. 198). The second home boom and its pitfalls is studied within Chapter Three evidenced by the film *Las verdes praderas*.

This could provide another explanation for the continued increase in home construction and homeownership evidenced by more than 400,000 homes being built each of the four years between 1970 and 1973, which led to a significant increase in house prices, greater than that of the whole previous decade (López, 2010, p. 145). This increase in prices was fuelled by the continued exodus from the country to the city, but also due to the opening up of society to consumerism, the result of which included an increased demand for second homes by both foreign tourists and the Spanish.

### **The path to democracy and impact of the 1973 oil crisis and subsequent recession**

Although Franco's regime only officially ended sometime after his death in 1975, the writing was on the wall from the end of the 1960s. It was then that the lack of affordable/social housing, urban facilities and transport infrastructure led to the emergence of grassroots movements and the press finally started to show an interest in these issues. The neighbourhood movements took advantage of the Law of Association passed in 1964 which allowed the meeting of non-political associations and the press saw the Fraga Law passed two years later which led to significantly reduced censorship (Carr, p. 273). The growing dissatisfaction with the regime questioned the State's effectiveness in ensuring the well-being of the Spanish populace which had been defended vehemently through propaganda tools such as NO-DOs. The neighbourhood associations called for resolutions to specific neighbourhood problems<sup>37</sup>, but

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<sup>37</sup> Workers also started to rebel with almost half of all workers involved in strikes in 1970. Many of these disputes involved confrontations with the police and many strikers were imprisoned and tortured. These labour conflicts, along with student movements, led to an extreme reaction from the military and severe punishments, including the death penalty, were handed out to the protestors. The consequences for the regime as a result of this level of repression were extremely negative (Casanova, p. 273).

given their number and geographic spread they highlighted a nationwide housing issue, assisted by the reporting in the national press. In 1969, a survey carried out in Madrid reported that 59% of those surveyed felt that the authorities were not doing what was necessary to solve the problem of building safety and it was estimated that in 1976 the social housing deficit stood at one million dwellings, which was the same as at the start of the regime (Vaz, p. 193).

The path to democracy was assisted by the modernization of Spain during the last two decades of the Franco dictatorship under the guidance of the Opus Dei technocrats (Holman, p. 74). The industrialisation and urbanisation of Spain meant that society had become predominantly middle-class (more than 50% in 1970 (Holman, p. 75)) and had bought into the capitalist led consumer lifestyle, so that economically and socially society was essentially content. This contentment may also have been as a result of the neighbourhood movements that, during the latter years of the Franco regime, had started to enact significant urban change for the better.<sup>38</sup> As such, any form of social unrest was generally a call to alter the political system rather than to overthrow the socio-economic system. This ultimately led to the political structure of authoritarianism becoming a democracy, whereas the socioeconomic structures remained mainly intact (Holman, p. 74). As Labrador-Méndez states “...la transición declaró el nacimiento de una legitimidad política nueva, mientras que, en el plano de la vida cotidiana, lo que podía hacerse o no era, fundamentalmente, lo mismo” (2017, p. 62).

Franco died on 20 November 1975 having done everything in his power to try and guarantee a continuance of his regime. However, the regime’s hold on power was in rapid decline. Economic

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<sup>38</sup> Although many of the results of the neighbourhood struggles did not materialise until the democratic period, urban mobilizations were started in the 1960s, for example in the working-class areas of southern Madrid of Vallecas and Orcasitas (Castells, pp. 224-228).

effects, such as the global recession caused by the detrimental economic impact of the OPEC embargo causing the first oil shock<sup>39</sup>, combined with outdated economic models meant that Spain suffered a dramatic reduction in economic growth in the 1970s and early 1980s. The annual average GDP dropped from 7% between the years of *desarrollismo* (1961-1973) to only 2.3% during the first three years of the Transition (Maxwell, 1995, p. 6). Inflation dramatically increased reaching 26.4% in 1977 and unemployment rose sharply meaning that by the 1980s over 20% of Spaniards were unemployed (Maxwell, 1995, p. 7).

Consequently, economic policies had to be taken in order to try and stabilize the economy. One of the priorities of the Transition was a relaunch of the depressed construction sector and the decentralisation of the administrative structure in 1976 (Rodríguez, 2010, p. 137) which saw many of the powers, particularly over urban development, transport and the environment being transferred to local autonomous governments (López, 2011, p. 5). The Moncloa Pacts, the foundational document of the economic Transition, were signed on 25 October 1977 and agreed by all parties. It saw the parties on the left having to acquiesce to economic policies that led to wage freezes, the devaluation of the peseta and measures to curb the massive inflation in exchange for a promise of fiscal, legal, institutional and social reforms (Casanova, p. 311). One of these reforms included the introduction of a property tax (Casanova, p. 311) in the form of a wealth tax if you owned property in Spain. These pacts essentially led to the parties on the Left having to accept that any reforms they may wish to enact would be constrained by the capitalist market economy, which ultimately led to many of the policies originated during the Franco regime simply continuing without check.

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<sup>39</sup> The second oil shock was in 1979 following the Iranian revolution.

The dominant capitalist ideology of a consumer society was thus continued past the Transition to democracy as considered by Moreiras-Menor in her book *Cultura Herida: Literatura y cine en la España democrática*. She discusses how Spanish society altered from being below a hegemony of totalitarian power to a State hegemony of consumerism as part of the Transition to democracy. This latter hegemony she argues was just as powerful as the former, but was now invisible (pp. 67-8). She goes on to discuss the alienation of post-modern Spanish society from reality. Moreiras-Menor opines that,

La dominante cultural de la posmodernidad se produce de forma simultánea a la hegemonía de lo que Guy Debord denominó, allá por los años sesenta, la sociedad del espectáculo cuya estructura se produce alrededor de la imagen como forma final de la reificación del producto de consumo (p. 71).

Thus, the hegemonic capitalist ideology of consumerism led to Spanish society feeling “alienación producida por la realidad del espectáculo” (Moreiras-Menor, p. 72).

Juan Carlos succeeded Franco as head of State and he was committed to democracy. After lengthy negotiations a new constitution was ratified in 1978, which recognised the autonomy of the regions and divided Spain into seventeen autonomous regions. The constitution also recognised the right to housing for the Spanish citizen and that public authorities should avoid land speculation such that capital gains were achieved by the public (Cardesín, p. 293). However, as we can see within *Crematorio* and *La piel del tambor*, a lack of involvement by the

authorities in land speculation was not adhered to and many figures in authority were found to be corrupt in respect to land development.

During the winter of 1975, the impact of the 1973 recession really started to take hold and protests were held against the path of the Transition and economic measures. Despite the protests, the recession continued until the mid-1980s and despite laws such as, the 1976<sup>40</sup> Social Housing Act (Aheto, p. 10) and *La Ley de Reconversión* in 1981, the construction of affordable homes and industry continued to decline (López, 2010, pp. 149-50). The economic crisis led to thousands of jobs being lost in the construction industry and it diminished rapidly. To try and bolster the economy, the State intervened in the housing market by using the construction of subsidized housing to help create employment (while still promoting private homeownership) and by linking the financing of housing to the finance markets. This was achieved through schemes such as the VPO, which offered incentives to construction companies and opened up the concept of mortgages and tax breaks, thus encouraging house ownership (López, 2010, p. 272). For example, in 1978 a law was passed to help those with subsidized housing buy their home using public credit (López, 2010, p. 273). These measures stimulated not only the housing market, but also created a secondary mortgage market and eventually led to the housing bubbles of the 1980s and 1990s. Additional measures taken by central government included the 1981 Mortgage Market Regulation Law which introduced variable interest rates, allowed financing up to 80% (rising to 110% during the 1997-2008 housing bubble) of the value of the home and extended the repayment periods for mortgages

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<sup>40</sup> Also in 1976, the Law for Political Reform, which established universal suffrage, was passed of which 94% of voters approved in the later referendum (Carr, p. 274). New political parties were formed and Adolfo Suárez formed the Unión de Centro Democrático (UCD) which won the elections held on 15 June 1977.

(Cardesín, p. 300). This allowed access to credit for low- and middle-class income households meaning that now homeownership was open to a much larger section of society.

The prolonged oil crisis that had started in 1973 and lasted essentially until the mid-1980s (Llopis, p. 3) had meant that many of the people, generally the working-class, that had been moved to the *polígono de viviendas* in the outskirts, or *extrarradio*, of the large Spanish cities, such as Madrid, Seville, Barcelona and Bilbao, were now unemployed and suffering significant poverty. The crisis hit the youth particularly hard and approximately 60% of those unemployed between 1974 and 1986 were under 25 years old and looking for their first job (Florida-Berrocal, p. 239). This level of unemployment was particularly prevalent in the isolated *extrarradio* suburbs due to the lack of publicly provided schooling and transportation to get to work. We can see how the lack of facilities and infrastructure meant that the youth of this period were trapped, both physically and emotionally, with nothing to do and no way of escape through legitimate employment. *Cine Quinqui*, for example the films *Colegas* and *Deprisa, deprisa*, show a different side to the Transition, which within the media had been shown as a complete success, where the plight of those abandoned in the neglected *extrarradio* suburbs had been all but forgotten.

The people in these outlying districts were unable to benefit from the jubilation during and following the Transition. However, they were party to some of the new, less desirable pastimes that came from the emergence of the country from the repression of the Franco regime with the result that these suburbs turned into ghettos riddled with drugs, principally heroin, prostitution and crime. The governments of the Transition chose to ostracise these areas and, rather than provide assistance to the clearly, crumbling communities, instead chose to combat



the rising delinquency through penal punishment, in place of education and rehabilitation. Indeed, some of the teenagers living in these suburbs during the 1970s and 1980s spent more time in prison than out (Llopis, p. 7) and many died of AIDS or drug overdoses (Florida-Berrocal, pp. 24-25). Labrador-Méndez refers to the alarming mortality rate among the young post-Francoism and details disturbing statistics of the significant increase in fatalities for both males and females between the ages of twenty and forty (2017, pp. 153-6). Labrador-Méndez refers to “la generación bífida” when discussing the youth of the Transition as some had found power (referring to Felipe González) and some had found death. Labrador-Méndez opines the heterogeneity between the two types of youth at this time is not due to history, but he attempts to explain the difference as a problem of language, particularly the language used in defining your identity. Labrador-Méndez believes that some youths tried to construct their identity based on what had previously existed while others tried to create something new. The former accepted their place in society, their branding, and didn’t try, or were unable to, change it and hence improve their situation. For example, he states that many youths who were children of Republican parents were unable to connect with “los sueños republicanos” after the death of Franco (2017, pp. 156-159) and simply remained downtrodden. His theories can therefore be linked to the idea that the situation and type of home that the person had been raised in could affect your future and class status.<sup>41</sup> For example, those raised on the outskirts of the cities in the huge *polígono de viviendas* were at a considerable disadvantage to the privileged youths that had grown up within the cities with greater access to opportunities for education and jobs. The location of their home not only determined their class and hence status within Spanish

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<sup>41</sup> For example, their housing situation may be a reflection of the historical Republican status of their families due to the repression and marginalisation they suffered during the Franco regime.

society, but also restricted their upward social mobility by denying them access to opportunities that were available to the youth in other more affluent *barrios*.

Whittaker agrees that the delinquency that we see within many of the *quinqui* films of this time was due to the uneven development of Spain during the miracle years from 1959 to 1973. Much of the working-class were confined geographically to the margins of the city within huge *polígonos de viviendas* thus promoting a feeling of alienation to these disenfranchised people. Indeed, these out-of-town suburbs of high-rise blocks often sat in an almost unreal half-way place between the city and the rural and, like the *chabola* in *Surcos*, could be considered as a gate way to the city for those entering it from afar.

After the Transition to democracy many of the previous economic migrants returned to their memory of home only to realise that their memory had imagined something much grander and more idyllic. This supports Bachelard's oneiric image of home where imagination intensifies the reality. Doreen Massey considers returning 'home' in her book *For Space*, discussed in Chapter One. The Galician migrants returning home studied by Alfredo González-Ruibal were thus disillusioned by the reality of the family homes they had returned to; having moved onto new pastures themselves and away from their peasant roots, they were embarrassed by the reminder of their heritage. This led many to build new homes, often amongst the ruins of the original family home, in order to demonstrate that they were no longer peasants. The façade of the home, as the face displayed to society, was very important to the returning Galicians who wanted to show their elevated status to middle-class. González-Ruibal's article demonstrates that the ownership of one's home, the type of home etc., is seen as a symbol of imagined self-identity and status within Spain; to show how middle-class one has become.

In the 1980s tenure rents were attacked and tax breaks as part of the *Real Decreto 2/1985 de Medidas de Política Económica* (Pareja-Eastaway, p. 55) were given for first and second homeowners. Drilling down into greater detail, one form of political intervention within the housing market was the *Decreto Boyer Ley* of 30 April 1985 which was an attempt to liberalise and hence stimulate the rental market and hence further bolster the economy which, at this time, was still at the tail end of a recession. The liberalization of the economy was in order to prepare Spain for the integration into Europe, which happened the following year in 1986 (Rodríguez, 2010, pp. 145-6). However, the result was that rents increased; for example, in Madrid rents increased threefold between 1983 and 1989 (Cardesín, p. 300) and hence the demand for private homeownership increased. The tax breaks provided in 1985 through the Boyer Decree also partly explain the massive increase in second homes during the 1980s (Pareja-Eastaway, p. 55). Additionally, the government reduced the amount of subsidized rents through a system of means testing and no further provision of public housing was provided. Instead, the opportunity of purchasing rental houses with credit and tax breaks was established (López, 2010, p. 277). Consequently the introduction of the Boyer Directive in 1985 only made it more appealing to investors, thus further increased the attractiveness of owner occupation (Mangen, p. 98). The poorer sections of the population were left with few options. It was too expensive to rent, but there was little to no social housing to fall back on. They were forced to take on excessive mortgages, heavily encouraged by the government, which they were unable to afford, in order to purchase their own homes. As a consequence, many people in Spain (57% of the population) couldn't afford to move house and have remained within housing which was constructed in the massive housing boom under Franco from 1950 to 1970 and this housing comprises 47% of Spain's present housing stock (Rubio del Val, p. 15).

During the PSOE government (1982 to 1996), a welfare State began to take root in Spain and public spending on things such as education, healthcare, welfare, unemployment and pensions increased from 14% of Spain's GDP in 1975 to 25% in the mid-1980s (Vaz, p. 294). Having said this, PSOE continued the Franco regime's housing policies and did not spend on public housing. González's four terms in office saw a virtual disappearance of social housing for rent. For example, in 1986 122,600 protected houses were constructed however, this figure was reduced to 67,800 by 1995 (López, 2010, p. 279). Instead, the VPO scheme was heavily bolstered such that families took on significant amounts of debt to own their property. Despite the huge property boom within the years 1985-1990, social housing construction fell considerably such that by 1990 95% of total housing subsidies were in relation to the VPO scheme and new starts within the social rental sector were at only 3%; the rental sector housing stock made up only 15% of total stock. Opportunities to rent were the most restricted within western Europe and it was common that those in most urgent need of housing subsidies were side-lined as corruption in the system was rife. In general, the construction sector was promoted to both satisfy the needs of the population for housing and also to bolster the economy and fit in with global economic objectives (Rodríguez, 2010, p. 150).

### **Joining Europe and the 1985 to 1993 housing bubble**

From the late 1970s political policies were increasingly made with a goal of attaining entry into the European Community. Spain had been attempting to become a member of the EEC since 1977 and aligning its markets with the requirements of membership meant that Spain underwent a partial deindustrialisation and was encouraged to concentrate its economy on

construction, services and finance. The Treaty of Accession of Spain and Portugal was signed on 12 June 1985 culminating with Spain's official entry into the EEC on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1986 (Casanova, pp. 323-336). The entry into Europe on 1 January 1986 aided the economic recovery of Spain from its long recession, which commenced in 1973 and lasted until 1985, as it resulted in a positive impact on investment and competitiveness as Spain was considered a cheap investment due to its relative underdevelopment, particularly compared to the northern European industrial States. Additionally, Spain received huge EEC subsidies which it was able to use to develop its infrastructure opening up previously unattractive areas of Spain to property developers.

As a consequence, during the late 1980s there was a massive flow of monies into Spain's property and construction industry (López, 2010, p. 133). This led to a boom time between 1985 and 1993. The price of land and property increased significantly<sup>42</sup> and the hype around the property market meant that everyone wanted to jump on to the property ladder and invest for their future, often as a form of pension, either as their principal residence, second home or as part of property speculation. However, much of this was based upon debt. By 1981 73% of Spanish families owned their own home (López, 2010, p. 159) having increased from 63% in 1970. This statistic further increased to 78% in 1991 (López, 2010, p. 159) at the height of the 1985-1993 property bubble. The State also helped create this property bubble with a mix of legislation, for example, the 1985 Boyer directive, tax breaks and relaxed planning rules (López, 2010, pp. 275-6), the lack of public housing and the increased availability to credit (López, 2010, pp. 267-9).

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<sup>42</sup> For example, between 1985 and 1990 the price of land, housing and offices within the Madrid municipal multiplied by four, a larger growth than any other large city on the planet during this period (López, 2010, p. 158).

Moreiras-Menor (pp. 72-4) opines how during the period of *apertura* under the Franco regime, objects like the home became commodities, but during the 1980s the Spanish citizens themselves became commodities in order to renovate the image of Spain to the outside world. The desire to be included within the privileged EU club meant that the ideal citizen was a good consumer, who actively participated in the creation of a national market, including that of the housing market, which is capable of competing in the international market. It could therefore be argued that entry into the EEC by Spain also fed into the hegemonic idea of homeownership (López, 2011, p. 2). Part of the explanation provided by Labrador-Méndez (2013) for the hyper-development of Spain was due to the Spaniard's desire to catch up with Europe and the neoliberal desire to make profit. The Spanish saw how the richer and more developed countries within Europe lived and wanted to emulate them, thus feeding into their desire for the status of homeownership.

As previously discussed, the Franco regime's earlier focus on developing the infrastructure of Spain was done purely in the interests of encouraging tourists meaning that huge swathes of Spain still had little to no road or rail networks. However, in the early to mid-1980s EU money was used to develop a huge infrastructure of roads and railways (López, 2011, p. 5). This not only assisted the economy in the form of jobs and circulation of capital, but also connected previously isolated areas allowing for the development of housing and evened out the cost of land for development. Indeed, between 1986 and 1991 public spending on infrastructure was 5% of GDP (Cardesín, pp. 301-2).

When the 1985 to 1993 housing bubble burst it was due to a growing external deficit, the devaluation of the peseta<sup>43</sup> and a lack of solid foundation for growth so that by the early 1990s the Spanish economy was facing another recession. This recession was ended by a significant devaluation of the peseta to make the country more competitive and not a change in the modes of production. Consequently, construction and real estate continued to be the largest sector within the Spanish economy. It has been said (Fernández, Daniel) that this made the later 2008 recession even more severe. Going forward Spain's economy was being determined at the European level with the Maastricht treaty of 1992 laying the foundation for the monetary union and the neoliberal dogma. The criteria within the treaty included the deregulation of the labour market and a reduction in public spending which helped the Spanish economy to recover (López, 2010, pp. 178-84).

### **Housing bubble from 1998 to 2008**

From 1998 until 2008 the Spanish economy grew quicker than any other European country (5% per annum between 1998 and 2000 (López, 2011, p. 3)) which was partly due to the massive expansion of the construction industry creating more than four million homes along with a significant investment in the necessary infrastructure to fuel the “economía del ladrillo” (Cardesín, p. 297). Joining the European Economic and Monetary Union in 1999 ensured that there was a continued focus on the promotion of the construction sector (Rodríguez, 2010, p.

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<sup>43</sup> The alignment of the Spanish economy with the economic and monetary union of the EEC in 1992 on signing of the Maastricht Treaty meant that in 1993 Spain was now finally fully integrated within Europe. However, the full economic and monetary alignment of Spain meant the Bank of Spain had to intervene to ensure that the peseta stayed within a specified margin of the value of the other members' currencies. The instability in the European markets due to the rejection of the treaty by the Danish in June 1992 and the significant costs of German reunification, meant that the peseta had to be reduced in value by 5% in September 1992 (Maxwell, pp. 136-7).

151). The property boom went hand in hand with a significant increase in private finances, principally due to the increase in the value of property. However, this huge increase in net worth came at a cost. Similar to the earlier boom there was a corresponding increase in credit, primarily in the form of mortgages.

In 1994 the amount lent on mortgages had grown to 24,000 million euros which increased significantly to 300,000 million in 2007, translating to an average mortgage of 130% of disposable income by 2008 and 40% of all privately-owned main homes were mortgaged (Cardesín, p. 299). This huge level of credit, along with the stagnation of salaries, meant that the risk to individual families had significantly increased; they had essentially become a form of social insurance for the economy. The main mortgage lenders were the *cajas de ahorros* which were often run by the same councillors who would grant planning permission.

In 1993 only 216,000 houses were built, but this increased steadily to 337,700 houses by 1997. 1998 saw the start of the housing bubble in Spain and the level of construction increased rapidly to 535,000 houses in 2000. The central phase of the housing bubble was between 2003-2007 where the number of houses built increased to 836,800 in 2006 (López, 2010, p. 192). This long housing cycle can partly be put down to the euphoric effect of adopting the euro in 2002. Only in the year 2007 did we see the first fall in the number of houses constructed when 536,000 houses were built (López, 2010, p. 192). The significant rise in houses being built during this boom period cannot be explained solely by the immigrant population which tended to rent, nor did it correspond to domestic demand given (1) the ageing population of Spain, (2) the later age that the young were leaving home (twenty-eight for women and thirty for men in 2000, six years later than in 1980) and (3) the lowest birth rate in the EU (Cardesín, p. 298).



It was, of course, in the interests of both central and local governments that house prices continued to rise as this had a direct effect on employment, given that the construction sector was one of the greatest employers – 14% of the population in 2006 (Cardesín, p. 297). Clearly, if house prices decreased, as, for example, occurred in the 2008 recession, then the profits of the construction companies would decrease. In order to try to recoup some of the lost revenue redundancies would often ensue. Less people in work means less circulation of capital and in a capitalist State such as Spain, the free flow of capital is necessary for the continued health of the economy. As a result, house prices are directly linked to the health of the economy, “Los precios de la vivienda se han convertid...en el mejor indicador del estado de salud económica de los modelos de crecimiento basados en los efectos riqueza” (López, 2010, p. 195). In addition to bolstering a capitalist economy, homeownership is important to the State as it can be used to increase tax revenues through taxes levied on the sale and reclassification of land, e.g. IVA (equivalent of UK VAT) and Stamp Duty on the purchase of land and property, capital gains tax on the sale of land and property etc. and taxes levied on real estate operations, e.g. income tax on the construction workers, corporation tax on the profits of the construction company, IBI (equivalent of UK council tax) and wealth tax. All these taxes are paid to either the central government or local *ayuntamientos* and help bolster their budgets which can then be spent on improving services etc. (or go to line the pockets of corrupt officials).

Consequently, government policies continued to encourage the construction sector and homeownership. For example, the 1998 Land Act, commonly referred to as the build anywhere law, ensured that huge tracts of previously unavailable land were granted planning permission. Additionally, autonomous communities were free to pass their own land laws and, together

with non-existent environmental policies, this meant that most land was up for grabs if the local *ayuntamientos* could be persuaded of the 'advantages'. This approach, of course, was assisted by the decentralisation programme into autonomous regions that occurred before and during the Transition to democracy. In 1998 tax breaks were provided for those that bought a house, and hence renting was fiscally penalized. Additionally, much of the publicly owned houses were sold to their tenants resulting in a dramatic reduction of subsidized housing units, dropping from 24% to 9% between 1994 and 2006 (Cardesín, p. 300). The State also assisted the influx of migrant workers<sup>44</sup> which bolstered the construction sector, thereby allowing the construction companies to cut costs on building properties and hopefully pass this saving down to the purchasers. All of these measures meant that the rise in privately owned property was staggering reaching 87.1% in 2007 (López, 2010, p. 269) with seven million Spanish households owning two homes or more (López, 2011, p. 3). Between 2003 and 2006 Spanish house prices rose a staggering average 30% per annum (López, 2011, p. 4). By 2007 Spain boasted the highest homeownership rate and the lowest public housing rate in the western world, the latter of which is practically non-existent (Aheto, p. 2) as the number of rented homes between 1950 and 2001 decreased from 3.2 to 1.6 million and social housing was at just 2% (Cardesín, p. 300).

The huge increase in housing prices over this period had meant that many were kept out of the housing market, particularly the young who were forced to live with their parents for longer. This led to movements such as *V de Vivienda*, which started as an email that circulated on the internet in 2006 asking that people convene in the main city plazas on 14 May 2006 to stage a sit-in in order to protest against the catastrophic situation of housing in Spain. Thousands of

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<sup>44</sup> A complex system of residency permits and the use of open European borders allowed the migrants to easily enter Spain.

people took to the streets. The use of the internet was perceived as an open space that allowed anonymity and multiplicity, a horizontal space where no-one fought for hegemony, but everyone was treated equally and worked together for a common goal. (Fernández-Savater, pp. 674-5). Another movement was PAH (*Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca*) which owed a lot of its success to the 2011 15M protests, but it had already done some fantastic work against evictions. Its current form emerged in 2009, but had been part of a broader social movement campaigning for access to decent housing since 2003. The movement has managed to block evictions, occupy empty apartment buildings and make the public aware of those causing injustice (Romanos, p. 297).

When the housing bubble burst in 2008, there were nearly a million unsold homes on the market and Spanish household debt had risen to an astonishing 84% of GDP (López, 2011, pp. 8-9). The *cajas de ahorros* were in financial difficulty and a bailout was announced that reduced the number from 45 to 17 and an austerity programme was launched in May 2010 (López, 2011, p. 9). The fragility of the model was laid bare, with extremely low social expenditure, fallen wages (40% of the population were taking home less than €1,000 per month (Cardesín, p. 299)), the existence of a labour market based on a high percentage of temporary contracts and the young having to delay leaving their parent's home until their thirties due to the huge cost of housing compared to wages (house prices had, for example, increased more than 120% between 2002 and 2005 alone, meaning that by 2006 a 90m<sup>2</sup> home would cost eleven years of the average salary (Cardesín, p. 300)).

The 2008-2015 financial crisis predominantly occurred due to aggressive lending tactics targeted at low-income home-buyers, which, when the housing bubble burst, caused a plunge

in the value of any mortgage-backed derivatives resulting in severe damage to financial institutions across the world. Spain was hit particularly hard due to its unsustainably large housing bubble since the mid-1990s which saw house prices rise 200% between 1996 and 2007.<sup>45</sup> The hegemonic discourse that had encouraged homeownership had led to many taking on unsustainable mortgages and many Spaniards were unable to continue to make mortgage repayments with Spain's harsh mortgage laws meaning that some continued to suffer from huge debts despite the banks repossessing their homes (in 2012 alone 52,000 families lost their homes (Cardesín, p. 302)). The suddenness of the 2008 recession revealed the falsity to the implication that the home owning Spanish middle-class (at this time said to be 94% of the population (Cardesín, p. 299)) were now permanently prosperous; in reality, they were deeply in debt.

## **Conclusion**

It is clear from the above summary that in the period under review the State played a significant role in developing a hegemonic discourse encouraging homeownership. This started with the Franco regime in their desire for political stability and to stimulate the failing economy and due to their aversion in dealing with and holding social housing stock. However, the policy of homeownership was continued post the Transition to democracy as evidenced by the many political interventions within the housing market by later democratic governments.

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<sup>45</sup> Spanish Ministry of Housing at <https://web.archive.org/web/20090416102402/http://www.spainrei.com/MiV-Spain-Property-Prices-95-07yearly.htm>

However, the State was not alone in developing the narrative of homeownership. Since 1953 the Franco regime started down a capitalist path that was adopted and strengthened by subsequent democratic governments. Capitalist society also strove for homeownership as a way to feed the capitalist machine that desired greater and greater profits. By the 1960s, the Spanish populace were encouraged to invest in their homes, and indeed second homes, as a form of pension. The desire to become middle-class and enjoy the trappings of a consumer lifestyle that their European neighbours were seen to be enjoying only further encouraged homeownership, which became the norm within Spanish society.

The State intervention with respect to housing, the impact of capitalism and Europe and the resulting discourse surrounding homeownership are represented within the films, novels and TV shows analysed within the Chapters Three, Four and Five.

## Chapter Three

### Hegemonic discourse and commodification of the idea of homeownership: the desire for

#### **“una vida normal de ciudadano”<sup>46</sup>**

This chapter undertakes a close visual or textual analysis of chosen cinematic and literary texts in order to demonstrate the hegemonic discourse with respect to homeownership and the commodification of the home within Spain during the period under review. The works were chosen as through close analysis they provide representations of the hegemonic discourse that ultimately manipulates the characters into purchasing their own home. In this analysis it becomes clear that the hegemonic discourse is all-pervading which ultimately led to the commodification of the home, the depiction of the home as a marker of middle-class status and the emergence of the second home as a new marker of success. The works span the period from 1950 to 2007 and demonstrate the continuity of the hegemonic discourse from the Franco regime to successive democratic governments after the Transition.

Throughout the whole of this chapter, we see the State influence on the housing market. This is evident within the Franco era through the propaganda of NO-DOs, the gentrification of the city under the Housing Ministry's 1957 *Plan de Urgencia Central de Madrid* and its effects on the displaced inhabitants as seen within the film *El inquilino* and the displacement of many urban inhabitants to out-of-town *polígonos de viviendas*. The inhabitants of these out-of-town housing estates continued to be marginalised after the Transition to democracy as evident

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<sup>46</sup> *El Lute: mañana será libre*, minute 118.

within the film *Colegas*. Also evident within this Chapter is the all-pervasive nature of the State hegemony such that it was considered normal to own your own home as seen within both of the *El Lute* films and the encouragement of the second home market as part of the continuation of the Franco regime's policies towards tourism and to bolster the construction industry as evident within *Las verdes praderas*.

We see the desire for political stability by the Franco regime leading to the overt promotion of capitalism and the home as a commodity through media such as NO-DOs, which portrayed the ideal way of life for a Spaniard, that is according to the Franco regime. The first part of this chapter entitled "State Propaganda" studies NO-DOs as the primary propaganda tool of the Franco regime used to convince the Spanish populace to buy into the commodity market, including the home.

The reality was that during the 1950s onwards the working-classes were marginalised and displaced to the outskirts of the city due to the eradication of the *chabolas* and/or the gentrification of the inner-city. As Harvey would argue, this was part of the process of capital accumulation where capitalists were forced to commodify existing spaces to continually make the necessary profits required. The displacement of communities would have destroyed the collective and any mode of social solidarity and support. Additionally, the continued promotion of a consumer society, along with greater access to international influences and commodities, led to the Spanish populace aspiring to middle-class status, which included the must-have commodity of the home. We see the effects of the above policies within the film *El inquilino* which I study in the following section entitled "The reality behind State propaganda". Both this and the earlier NO-DO section cover the period of the Franco regime, however, *El inquilino*, in

direct contrast to the NO-DOs, is critical of the regime. Thus, in studying both NO-DOs and *El inquilino* it is possible to see both sides of the coin with respect to housing and homeownership during this era.

Despite the Transition to democracy, we see how poorer sectors of society continued to be neglected and marginalised by the State which perpetuated the segregation of society into classes, or as Lefebvre called them fracture lines where geographical space is divided depending on class. Notwithstanding this, the hegemonic desire for commodities and social mobility which translates into a desire for homeownership is still evident within the films of the 1980s partly due to the aspiration to escape from the housing estates. The third section of this chapter entitled “The entrapment of the hegemonic discourse” undertakes a close visual analysis of the film *Colegas* to show how the poorer marginalised young protagonists of this film are represented as trapped within these out-of-town housing estates which have not lived up to what was promised by the Francoist State.

Due to the continued hegemonic discourse surrounding homeownership, owning a home became a symbol of being normal, of being accepted in the burgeoning bourgeoisie society. This is clearly demonstrated within the films *El Lute I: Camina o revienta* and *El Lute II: Mañana seré libre* studied within the fourth section of this chapter entitled “The security of being normal”.

I argue that the *El Lute* and *Colegas* films demonstrate the continuation of many of the Franco regime’s policies particularly with respect to homeownership as a result of the continued drive towards neoliberalism post the Transition which in turn led to the ongoing desire for the home as the ultimate commodity. Additionally, the division of society continued, particularly based



upon where you live, which ultimately led to the aspiration to own your own home in a good neighbourhood as a marker of having reached middle-class status. The continuation of Franco's policies post the Transition can also be seen in the efforts to prolongate the *cultura de pelotazo*, the get rich quick culture, including the abuse of land reclassification with legal impunity, for example, the coastal exploitation, started in the 1960s and 70s by the Franco regime, and continued by PSOE to accelerate capital accumulation and help boost the capitalist economy.

Most coastal exploitation was as a result of an increased focus by the State on tourism and second homes which together became one of the main reasons for the continued growth in homeownership in Spain from the late 1970s onwards. Both tourism and second homes were actively encouraged by the State as it bolstered the construction market and hence overall economy. If you wanted to keep up with the expectations and conventions of the now predominantly middle-class Spanish society a second home was a must. Within the final section of this chapter entitled "Tourism and second homes" I study the effects of the burgeoning second home market in the film *Las verdes praderas*, using the novel *Crematorio*<sup>47</sup> as a more recent contextual example.

It is generally acknowledged that *Crematorio* was "casi profétic[a]" (Moreno-Caballud, 2012, p. 541) of the ensuing 2008 recession and its resonance with all the works studied in this chapter show that the seeds of an extreme levels of capitalism, demanding profits at any cost, the homogenisation of society, the idea that you can buy happiness etc. that Chirbes so wonderfully

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<sup>47</sup> Please note that I use *Crematorio* as a framework text. I have not analysed it in detail as many others have already done, but I use it as an aid to demonstrate certain points.

describes in his 2007 novel, were actually sown 50 years earlier within Francoist Spain and continued despite the Transition to democracy.

### **State propaganda**

The NO-DOs are a perfect example of State propaganda and how the Franco regime wished to portray a society of consumers and homeowners. From studying these newsreels, it is clear the State used them to show the regime in a good light and to provide a prototype of the perfect Spanish family for the rest of the nation to follow. This model included the ideal of homeownership and owning the correct commodities, indeed, subliminally the ideal goal was to become middle-class. These ten-minute newsreels were shown at the start of all cinema films and consequently their impact was extensive.

When NO-DOs were first released, Spain's fascist allies, the Germans, were on the brink of losing at Stalingrad and ultimately the Second World War. Consequently, the Spanish regime's propaganda became more defensive and concerned with maintaining stability and distributing the regime's ideologies concerning religion and politics. As a result, when NO-DOs emerged at the start of 1943 Sánchez-Biosca opines that "...NO-DO se comporta como la auténtica voz estándar del régimen, sin aristas ni conflictos, la doxa del franquismo" (p. 5).

Early on, the influence of the NO-DO clips would have been wider than the written word i.e., the medium of books and newspapers (Sánchez-Biosca, p. 3) due to the high level of illiteracy in Spain at the time. In Spain television came later than the USA and other European countries with the first Spanish broadcast not being until October 1956. In 1960 only 1% of Spanish homes

had a TV which increased to only 13% in 1964 and 32% in 1966 (Morcillo, p. 54). Therefore although, in time, the television would become the main medium that influenced the Spanish populace, this influence was very limited until the late 1960s.

The propaganda nature of the NO-DO films was often disguised within the mosaic of genres that they disseminated “NO-DO se comporta con una desidia que rima bien con su ausencia de furor propagandístico” (Sánchez-Biosca, p. 3). This became one of the most recognizable features of NO-DOs which, instead, portrayed the ideology of the regime through representation of the perfect life within the Francoist State. As a result, NO-DOs, which were fully controlled by the State, were very powerful and were used to ensure that the populace believed that they were being kept up-to-date with current affairs, whereas in fact they were often out-of-date “...preferiendo lo que podríamos denominar noticias de época a las más rigurosamente actuales.” (Sánchez-Biosca, p. 5). This is also seen during the analysis of the NO-DOs in the following paragraphs. They ensured that the ideology of the Franco regime was easily spread nationally on a weekly basis, in effect, they were a tool of homogenisation encouraging the Spanish populace to follow the ideology of the regime.

Soon after the decline of the Franco regime following Franco’s death in 1975, NO-DOs fell out of favour, mainly due to their association with the dictatorial regime, stopping altogether in 1981. However, they are an important record of the thought processes behind the regime and the information they wished to portray to the Spanish populace.

If one looks through the archives, now held by RTVE, one will see the plethora of NO-DOs that contained the construction of homes as a subject matter. As far as I am aware, I am the first to

study NO-DOs with homeownership<sup>48</sup> as the main focus. Using the RTVE archive of NO-DOs all summaries of films between 1950 and 1973 were studied to select the NO-DOs relating to homes, for example construction of homes or exhibitions of home appliances, which serve to demonstrate the expanding consumer society. The short films selected were then viewed in their entirety.<sup>49</sup> From this review I have derived some lines of interpretation and, given spatial concerns, demonstrate these interpretations through the close visual analysis of some chosen episodes.

Within these parameters, I studied 107 newsreels surrounding the subject of home, not including the numerous reels of other public works, for example railways, tourism etc.. In 1957 alone, which is the year of a significant cabinet reshuffle, the year of the establishment of the new Housing Ministry and only one year after the Land Act was introduced, there were ten

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<sup>48</sup> Vicente Sánchez-Biosca's article "NO-DO y las celadas del documento audiovisual" was an invaluable source of background information concerning the creation of and general content included within NO-DOs.

<sup>49</sup> The NO-DOs selected from 1950 until 1973 were 392A (10/07/1950), 396A (07/08/1950), 409B (06/11/1950), 415A (18/12/1950), 449A (13/07/1951), 474A (04/02/1952), 478B (05/03/1952), 480B (17/03/1952), 532A (16/03/1953), 532B (16/03/1953), 541A (18/05/1953), 549A (13/07/1953), 552B (13/08/1953), 560B (28/09/1953), 564B (26/10/1953), 567A (16/11/1953), 570A (07/12/1953), 571B (14/12/1953), 581B (22/02/1954), 603A (26/07/1954), 606B (16/08/1954), 616B (25/10/1954), 632A (14/02/1955), 633B (21/02/1955), 634A (28/02/1955), 644B (09/05/1955), 655B (25/07/1955), 656A (01/08/1955), 667B (17/10/1955), 668B (24/10/1955), 670A (07/11/1955), 676B (19/12/1955), 706B (16/07/1956), 727B (10/12/1956), 728B (17/12/1956), 748B (06/05/1957), 751B (27/05/1957), 759B (22/07/1957), 760A (29/07/1957), 761B (05/08/1957), 764A (26/08/1957), 769A (30/09/1957), 790B (24/02/1958), 783A (06/01/1958), 792B (19/03/1958), 800B (05/05/1958), 802A (19/05/1958), 813A (04/08/1958), 814B (11/08/1958), No-Do from 18/08/1958, 840B (09/02/1959), 847A (30/03/1959), 847B (30/03/1959), 852A (04/05/1959), 858B (15/06/1959), No-Do from 01/01/1959, 860B (29/06/1959), 901A (11/02/1960), 902B (18/04/1960), 912B (27/06/1960), 916B (25/07/1960), 917B (01/08/1960), 929B (24/10/1960), 930B (31/10/1960), 934B (28/11/1960), 939A (02/01/1961), 943C (30/01/1961), 946A (20/02/1961), 950A (20/03/1961), 958C (15/05/1961), 964B (26/06/1961), 969A (31/07/1961), 975A (11/09/1961), 990A (25/12/1961), 991C (01/01/1962), 998B (19/02/1962), 1005C (09/04/1962), 1012B (28/05/1962), 1032A (15/10/1962), 1033C (22/10/1962), 1037C (19/11/1962), 1049C (11/02/1963), 1060B (29/04/1963), 1065C (03/06/1963), 1089A (18/11/1963), 1098A (20/01/1964), 1144A (07/12/1964), 1176A (19/07/1965), 1178C (02/08/1965), 1195A (29/11/1965), 1219C (16/05/1966), 1221C (30/05/1966), 1221B (30/05/1966), 1225B (27/06/1966), 1269B (01/05/1967), 1286A (28/08/1967), 1290A (25/09/1967), 1295A (30/10/1967), 1296A (06/11/1967), 1302A (18/12/1967), 1303A (25/12/1967), 1310A (12/02/1968), 1337A (19/06/1968), 1428A (18/05/1970), 1506A (15/11/1971), 1571A (12/02/1973) and 1575A (19/03/1973).

newsreels concerning the topic of building new flats. This year, 1957, along with 1953, had the most newsreels on housing with 1961 a close third with nine newsreels on housing. It is no coincidence that *El inquilino*, which is studied in the next section of this chapter, was first released in 1957, when housing was clearly an issue to the Spanish populace and the development of inner-city areas, or some could say gentrification, was at its peak. Within my analysis, the contrast between the State propaganda within the NO-DOs released in 1957 and the criticism of the regime's housing policies depicted within *El inquilino* should become apparent.

I argue that the NO-DOs followed a pattern. Generally, the promotion of the State by showing the extent of public works being undertaken took prime position in these weekly newsreels. For example, looking at the specific newsreels concerning the building of new homes we can see that this topic was almost always the lead topic and on the rare occasions it was not shown first it was then always second, hence it was predominantly given the most importance. This was generally followed by a religious piece to promote Catholicism, which was integral to the Francoist State, for example *Semana Santa*. Then followed by a mixture of international or national news and/or a short documentary on societies abroad, although generally something that tended to tie in with the regime's ideology, for example a look at how the Americans celebrated Easter (which was incorporated post the 1953 signing of the Defence and Mutual Aid Pact and illustrated the desire of the regime to achieve a closer diplomatic relationship with the USA). There was generally always some local news included, for example a parade or a traditional celebration of a Saint's Day and also some news on sport, to promote the fit and

healthy lifestyle that the regime desired of its male<sup>50</sup> populace. However, it is clear, from as early as 1951, that the building of new homes took prime position within the NO-DO films and hence it demonstrates that it was important for the regime to be seen to be tackling the urban housing crisis and also to encourage the populace to buy into the idea of homeownership.

More specifically studying the numerous newsreels in which we see the opening and/or construction of new housing, I argue that a type of formula was developed. The numerous films on this topic tended to discuss the location, the amount of housing being provided, the cost of the development, the services provided, often including the number of shops located in the development, an aerial pan over the new, modern blocks, followed by a blessing by the Church and finally an official opening, providing the lucky recipients with the keys to their new homes.

The first newsreels of the 1950s concerning construction were essentially to do with public works. For example, Number 392A on 10 July 1950 discusses the last eleven years of construction to rebuild industry following the destruction wrought by the civil war and Number 394A on 24 July 1950 is concerning the building of a new airport. It was only on 13 August 1951 in Number 449A that there was the first mention of the construction of protected housing for the Navarra villages. This newsreel shows the ruins caused by the civil war and how a group of workers were using traditional building techniques and styles to rebuild the houses. This is very different to the later newsreels showing concrete monoliths as the new must-have modern construction, which we see from the late 1950s onwards.

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<sup>50</sup> Female sport under Francoism was a more contested territory, with the Falange promoting it through the Sección Femenina, but Catholic powers, in particular Cardinal Segura, considered “women’s physical education to be “scandalous and lewd”” (Ofer, p. 105).

When studying the NO-DO summaries I could not find a single one in the 1950s concerning the rural exodus, which the regime, after spending so long championing the countryside, initially resisted. As such, I argue that it was not something that they wished to publicise within their NO-DOs. There are many early NO-DOs which continue to celebrate the countryside, for example NO-DO number 412A released on 27 November 1950 which shows Franco visiting the olive growing region of Alcalá de Guadaira and NO-DO number 468B released on 24 December 1951 which shows 170 USA tractors being sent to Spain (which is re-enacted in a dream scene within the brilliant film *¡Bienvenido Mister Marshall!*). It was only in 1955 that the regime started to recognise the value of the cities in Spain in its official speeches, particularly with respect to industry (Richardson, 2012, p. 8). The preference for the countryside is still evident within a clip released on 1 August 1955 in NO-DO number 656A where over a hundred houses with small plots for self-subsistence (*huertas*) are built in rural Spain to house rural families and the work of the countryside during the civil war is applauded.



Fig. 1: Señor Arrese bulldozing the *chabolas* in NO-DO 764A.

One thing that the regime was unable to avoid was the existence of the *chabolas* on the outskirts of the major cities. However, the NO-DOs were carefully constructed to show the regime solving the issue of the *chabolas* and providing new housing, rather than any negative view inferred from their existence that could reflect badly on the regime. NO-DO 1098A released on 20 January 1964 shows the Ministry of Housing holding a press conference with respect to the total eradication of the *chabolas* in Spain and their plan to move the *chabolistas* to new housing, with amenities such as shops and churches. We see the actual demolition of the *chabolas* in many of the NO-DOs studied, the first was in Number 603A released on 26 July 1954 and the last was in Number 1219C on the 16 May 1966. In the former NO-DO we see the *chabolas* destroyed by what looks like a large amount of explosive and how *chabolistas* have been moved to “modern and comfortable” (603A, 26/07/1954, minute 1) homes nearby in a newly created suburb of Madrid. In a NO-DO released on 26 August 1957, 764A, in order to underline the official message that the existence of the *chabolas* will not be tolerated, we see the first Minister of Housing himself, José Luis Arrese, driving the bulldozer to knock down the self-constructed housing within a suburb south of Madrid (see Figure 1). Similar to NO-DO 603A, new homes were provided in the newly created suburb of San Fermín. Later NO-DOs also covered this topic, for example, we see the complete demolition of the district known as La chimenea in 1962 (NO-DO 1005C). The clip of the 1962 NO-DO first shows us a bustling town full of houses and then we are shown the flattened ruins of these houses with only the chimney remaining which is soon dispatched with explosives. The music is triumphant as the regime is clearly pleased to have removed the *chabolas* which they considered to be potentially dangerous: a hot bed of revolutionaries. The narrator explains how the *chabolistas* have been rehoused in the San Blas district of Madrid in dignified and comfortable housing, while showing a shot of three children sat at a dining table doing schoolwork. The focus on the family is



apparent throughout the NO-DOs as the regime continues to promote traditional and religious ideologies. In this NO-DO, the regime is seen as solving the housing crisis and providing the perfect family with a clean, light and modern home.

Within the NO-DOs that show the destruction of the *chabolas*, for example numbers 1219C (16/05/1966), 1098A (20/01/1964), 1005C (09/04/1962), 975A (11/09/1961), 764A (26/08/1957) and 603A (26/07/1954) we rarely see the communities that have been displaced. The repeated images are of bulldozers completely flattening the old *chabolas*, often with fires breaking out, such that the area looks like somewhere that has been mercilessly bombed, which jars against the often-triumphant music playing, juxtaposed against images of brand-new flats and houses that have been constructed thanks to the Housing Ministry. In No-Do 975A, yet again the music is triumphant as the regime is fulfilling its wish to destroy the *chabolas* and be seen to be solving the housing crisis with the *chabolistas* being rehoused in modern, high-rise flats in the Torre Blanca district of Sevilla. The only time we see the new inhabitants of the newly constructed flats is within NO-DO 975A when we see them cleaning their new houses, NO-DO 1005C (discussed above) and later in 1966 in NO-DO 1219C when the keys to the new flats are handed out to the lucky recipients. None of the newly displaced families are interviewed or indeed talk at all in the clips, it is solely the narrator stating facts and figures about the new urbanisations. Indeed, particularly within NO-DOs 975A and 1005C, the settings and the activities of the displaced families appear staged and not a realistic representation, with the children positioned in the latter NO-DO at the table doing their homework clearly not reading, but flicking through their books, with one boy doing so backwards.

In an attempt to tackle the housing crisis, the regime started to encourage the construction of new housing from the 1950s onwards. This new housing was heavily promoted within the NO-DOs at the time and became the must-have commodity from the late 1950s onwards as evidenced in the representations we see within *El inquilino* (1957), *El pisito* (1958) and *El verdugo* (1963). To even further press home the regime's point of view that houses were the future of Spain and ultimately that owning your own home was desirable, we can often see within the NO-DOs, for example Number 667B from 17 October 1955, Franco himself presiding over the inauguration of new flats.

In 1957 we see the release of the housing plan by Arrese in a meeting he holds with the press in a NO-DO released on 24 February 1958 and his *Plan de Urgencia Social*<sup>51</sup> was discussed further on 5 May of the same year. The plan involved more than 40,000 flats to be built on the outskirts of Madrid. This plan was expanded in 1959 with a development of a new city called Parque Aluche which was to be built within striking distance of Madrid, just over five miles from the city centre. Given the timings, I would argue that it is the destruction and construction as a result of this Housing Plan that is alluded to within the film *El inquilino*.

On the 1 January 1959 an extended documentary,<sup>52</sup> a propaganda NO-DO film of just over seventeen minutes, was released to reveal the urgent social plan of the housing ministry to build 60,000 homes in Madrid. This was to be aided by private investment and according to the narrator they were to be situated in the centre and on the periphery of Madrid. However, when

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<sup>51</sup> Please note that this housing plan was actually released in 1957; the NO-DOs often lagged behind actual events by some months.

<sup>52</sup> Documentary titled *Sesenta mil viviendas – Plan de urgencia social de Madrid* can be found at [Documentales Blanco y Negro: SESENTA MIL VIVIENDAS - PLAN DE URGENCIA SOCIAL DE MADRID | RTVE Play](#)

viewing the plan of Madrid, shown within this film, as to where the new housing would actually be situated, it was primarily on the outskirts of the city. The housing was to be built on a huge scale with each development averaging over 1,000 properties. The film mainly consists of a helicopter flying over the various developments with the narrator telling us the location and amount of flats to be built. The helicopter view helps to provide a feeling of authority, almost God-like, of the regime as we look down on their plans coming to fruition. The use of a helicopter also provides a sense of modernity<sup>53</sup> and the money that has been invested in this plan. Additionally, by using the helicopter we are unable to see the detail of the blocks of flats and housing estates, for example, the quality of the building techniques, which were later to be called into question. From above it appears that there are little to no facilities or infrastructure provided within these huge developments, although occasionally the narrator talks about services like shops and doctors etc..

Often the narrator would site the properties by referring to a main road, for example the *autopista Toledo*, as if this is a benefit to the inhabitants of the newly developed blocks. For example, within NO-DO number 802A released on 19 May 1958 a group of journalists are shown a huge housing development of 34,000 properties comprising seven large housing estates surrounding Madrid which are all enclosed by large motorways to other parts of Spain. However, instead of facilitating mobility<sup>54</sup> these roads provided a feeling of entrapment in these out-of-town estates (Florida-Berrocal, pp. 9 and 47). These main roads would become a barrier for the free movement of the often, poor inhabitants, as owning a car would have been impossible and crossing these busy roads to access other parts of the city and public transport

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<sup>53</sup> Commercial helicopters were only invented in the late 1940s so only a decade before this NO-DO was released.

<sup>54</sup> Indeed, one of the main complaints about these out-of-town housing estates was the lack of proper public transportation to the city centre (Florida-Berrocal, p. 7).

would have been exceptionally difficult as seen with the film *Colegas*. One aspect that the helicopter view does unintentionally show is the isolation of many of these developments. They appear to have been built in fields in the middle of nowhere with nothing around and little to no amenities. The isolation and the physical barriers of the transport links, segregate the inhabitants from the centre of the city, cut off from the fruits of commercialism and consumerism that the city could provide in the emerging capitalist State.

One point to note is that, particularly towards the end, this longer documentary contains scenes already shown in earlier and shorter NO-DOs. Therefore, despite appearances and the words of the narrator talking about all the comforts of modernity, this documentary actually uses old and out-of-date clips. For example, the one of the minister of housing bulldozing the *chabolas* which was released in mid-1957. It therefore appears to be just a rehash of old propaganda to try and convince the public that the regime is continuing to do something about the housing crisis in Madrid while the use of old clips would imply that in fact they are not building as many homes as they claim to be.

As time marches on, we can see how the regime strives to show themselves as a modern and forward-thinking government as we see the building techniques and designs becoming more and more contemporary. For example, in NO-DO Number 728B from December 1956 we see the completion of the steel structure in Seville of a block of flats twenty floors high. Later, in the year 1961 (NO-DO 990A), we see an exhibition of modern homes in Barcelona by the Ministry of Housing, called *Hogarhotel*<sup>55</sup>, which contained modern appliances such as fridges

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<sup>55</sup> The *Hogarhotel* exhibition is featured frequently within the NO-DOs as it appears to be an annual event towards the end of the year. For example, NO-DOs 1302A (19/12/67), 1089A (18/11/1963), 1037C (19/11/1962) and 990A (25/12/1961).

and washing machines – the trappings of a middle-class lifestyle which one should aspire to. At the start of this clip the narrator talks of the typical, traditional interior of one's grandparents' house and how this exhibition shows a more modern, practical and comfortable way of life including many space-saving ideas such as bunk beds for children and storage in bags hung on walls. He talks about how the furniture items are long lasting and are part of an evolution of your life (990A, 25/12/1961, minutes 1-3). Consequently, I would argue that this NO-DO is trying to show how modern and forward thinking the regime is, turning away from the old-fashioned and traditional interiors. However, in contrast, at the end of the clip the camera pans over an old-fashioned painting of grazing sheep and crude pottery figures depicting the nativity (the NO-DO was released on Christmas Day). Here, we can see the dichotomy of the regime during this period, the early days of the *desarrollismo* period, where they still wished to retain traditional values with respect to religion and the role of women, while also being seen to be modern and up-to-date, in line with the more international and capitalist stance of the Opus Dei technocrats.

The family is one of the basic organisational pillars of many societies, however, in Francoist Spain the rhetoric of the family was set by the conservatism of the Catholic Church. Indeed, as part of a national effort to increase the devastated Spanish population after the civil war women were strongly encouraged to be mothers. However, during the period of *desarrollismo* when the State started to promote capitalism and consumerism within Spain, the conservative narrative of the family, particularly that of the female role, began to clash against the lure of consumerism in the rapidly modernising society. Previously, the role of wife and mother for Spanish women was part of their national duty and the best way for them to support the Patria. Indeed, women were required, certainly if they wanted access to a passport or driving licence

or to work in the public sector, to complete a six-month, unpaid voluntary course called the *Servicio Social*, where women were taught specific female-centred tasks such as cleaning and child-rearing (Reeser, p. 79). Women were encouraged to stay at home rather than get a job in that “all women worked for the State through their domestic duties as a wife” (Reeser, p. 87). A wife was to be subordinate to her husband, who was supposed to be the sole financial provider of the family.

On 18 December 1963 NO-DO 1089A showed a clip concerning *Hogarhotel* with the narrator stating that newlyweds and engaged couples would be interested to see modern designs for the house, from bedrooms to kitchens. In this clip a small dishwasher is demonstrated with the narrator stating it is for the single man, as clearly if married only his wife would do the washing-up, and a modern bucket and mop to help women to clean the house is demonstrated by a young, attractive lady. This NO-DO, even as late as 1963 when during the period of *desarrollismo* consumerism had become part of the dominant culture, shows that, despite more and more women joining the work force, the role of a woman is still very much considered as a wife, mother and homemaker. However, it cannot be denied that the advancement of capitalism was changing women’s role within Spain. As Doreen Massey states, “...the spread of capitalist relations of production...disrupted the existing relations between women and men” (Massey, 1994, p. 191). In 1961 the “Law of Political, Professional and Labour Rights for Women” allowed women greater access to the workplace. Women with a wage had potential financial independence, which threatened their ability to perform their domestic role adequately, and also provided them with entry into public life, so they were open to viewpoints other than the role of homemaker and procreator. This was unsettling to the patriarchal

authority and as such it was considered that “women should only work as a short-term necessity for the benefit of her family, not for her own career progression”<sup>56</sup> (Reeser, p. 88).

On 18 December 1967, NO-DO 1302A is of a *Hogarhotel* that is purported to show the top new designs in world furniture, showing how international the regime has now become. The narrator refers to the designs as both practical and aesthetically pleasing and lists a few of the items that are displayed at the exhibition including a revolving table that can hold your glasses, a record player and toys for the children. An older, dark-haired lady wearing a smart but staid, black skirt suit shows us some practical chairs that can be stacked and hence stored easily, while a younger, modern, fair-haired lady with a fashionable 1960s hairdo, who is wearing a more up-to-date skirt suit which sits above the knee, shows us a modern, comfortable armchair and footrest and the ultra-modern egg chair depicted in Figure 2. I would argue that the use of a young, pretty woman to display the modern items is wholly intentional. A woman, as the homemaker, would be the one purchasing a furniture or home appliance item, but with her husband’s salary. The use of a woman provides an affinity for the female purchaser who may want to emulate the perfect, modern lifestyle she sees being demonstrated, whereas the male husband would want to encourage his wife to purchase such an item as “he is beguiled by the

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<sup>56</sup> This can be seen within the majority of works studied in this thesis, which range from 1957 to 2008, and demonstrates how long-lasting gender prejudices remained active within Spain. For example, in both *El Lute* films released in 1987 and 1988, but set in the 1960s and 1970s respectively, we see how although he was not married to his common-law wife Chelo, which is emphasised when he takes a gitano girl as a second wife, she is completely subordinate to him, she is always clearing up, cooking, caring for the children and even has to accept his new wife into her home. Another example is within *Colegas* released in 1982, when José’s father returns home tired from work and his wife is clearing up the dinner table. He sits down and demands a cold drink from the fridge which she immediately gets for him, stopping the housework that she is in the middle of in order to serve her husband. Thus, these films depict that although by 1961 women were officially recognised in the work force, machismo in Spanish society was still prevalent with the women being subordinate to their husbands in the 1980s. This, of course, is turned on its head in the brilliant *¿Que he hecho yo para merecer esto?* by Pedro Almodóvar released in 1984 when Gloria kills her husband with the hambone from the dinner she has been cooking for him.

stewardess' looks. As Morcillo states "...the availability of manufactured products that could replace domestic production added a new responsibility to the middle-class housewife...[she] had to learn how to use her husband's salary wisely..." (2008, p. 75). The NO-DOs also echo the dynamic within many of the films studied in this thesis in that it is the woman who beguiles her man to purchase the coveted home, for example, *El pisito* (1958) and *El verdugo* (1963), both analysed in Chapter Four.



Fig. 2: The egg chair as displayed at *Hogarhotel* in NO-DO 1302A.

The regime continued to take credit for the huge new *polígonos de viviendas* built throughout the 1960s. For example, the inaugurations of around 4,000 flats around Barcelona shown in NO-DO 1337A released on 19 June 1968, approximately ten large high-rise towers opened in San Sebastian on 25 September 1967 (NO-DO 1290A), the creation of *polígono de Elviña* in Coruña in August 1967 (NO-DO 1286A) and so forth. In NO-DO 1337A, the clip starts with a view looking up at some new flats, thus depicting their imposing height and modernity, similar to the



view discussed below in NO-DO 1575A, and then cuts to a playground full of children, followed by a view of empty, cramped, but well-equipped classrooms in a nursery and primary school. These latter shots are clearly to encourage families to settle in these housing estates. However, when looking more closely, the lack of space in the classrooms unintentionally illustrates the number of buildings that are being developed with few amenities, so that the schools are forced to have more than 40 children in one small classroom (see Figure 3). Later a helicopter view shows the massive scale of the housing developments in Barcelona where, just in the one shot, we can see over 60 large tower-blocks. The shot highlights the lack of services and green space that is provided. It is, similar to the shots seen in *El pisito* studied in Chapter Four, simply row upon row of rectangular blocks of flats. Indeed, from above it looks almost like children's building blocks, or even dominos - with one push of a finger the whole arrangement could come down as each domino hits another. However, despite the homogeneity and the lack of services and open, green spaces, the music is triumphant and the narrator reels off the huge number of flats that are being developed all over the country to house workers. I have referred before to the disparity between the image we are shown versus the soundtrack be it the words of the narrator or the choice of music. This can be seen in NO-DOs 975A and 1005C and the extended documentary released on 1 January 1959 analysed above. Some of the images provided could be interpreted as critical of the propaganda projects, however these contradictions within the regime's projects are ironed out by the soundtrack. On face value one would assume that these contradictions are unintentional and have occurred due to the speed of production required, but they may also be a surreptitious critique of the regime by the technicians in the editing room. Much like the films critical of the regime released during the Franco regime, *El inquilino*, *El pisito* and *El verdugo* to name a few, the critical messages needed to be subtle to avoid the censors. We will of course never know the true answer to this but it is interesting to see that,

despite the propaganda nature of the NO-DO clips, it is still possible to have multiple and sometimes incompatible meanings.



Fig. 3: The cramped classroom as depicted within NO-DO 1337A.

In NO-DO 1337A, the narrator talks of how the estates have grown considerably and they are happy with the rhythm of construction. The regime is clearly proud to be providing such a large amount of housing and to be seen to be solving the housing crisis. One point to note is that there is no mention of the private construction companies that the regime incentivised to build new housing rather than it being built directly by the State.



Fig. 4: New housing as seen within NO-DO 1575A.

The construction of new housing as a principal topic of NO-DOs continues in to the 1970s. For example, NO-DOs 1571A from 12 February 1973 and 1428A from 18 May 1970 show inaugurations of high-rise characterless blocks in and around Madrid. The principal difference with these later inaugurations is that we see Prince Juan Carlos and his wife Sofía taking a more central role within the regime, presumably due to the increasing age and decreasing health of Franco at this time. NO-DO 1575A from 19 March 1973 shows the opening of 2,000 more new, high-rise flats in Santa Cruz, Tenerife. The low angle shots (see Figure 4) used within this episode are positioned at the bottom of the flats looking up and provide a sense of a tall, powerful building, something of substance that the regime has created for its citizens. Additionally, the point of view from below looking-up, is in contrast to the authoritative, God-like helicopter view of the 1 January 1959 documentary and other NO-DOs. I argue that, rather than the view of the regime from above looking down on its citizens, this is a viewpoint from the citizen who looks to the skies at the powerful, provider of new housing: the regime.

To conclude, it is clear from the above NO-DOs that the regime only wished to portray positive aspects of Spanish society. Part of the reason for this was to maintain political stability. The regime encouraged the average Spaniard to buy into the dream of a new modern flat in the out-of-town high-rise housing estates. This is evident within a number of the NO-DOs studied where the provision of housing took prime position. Additionally, it is clear that the regime used the NO-DOs to convey their concept of the ideal Spanish family particularly with respect to the consumer lifestyle that they should emulate. These newsreels were therefore clever tools of propaganda to encourage political stability through having a passive and content populace via the attainment of the perfect, Spanish family lifestyle with a high-rise modern apartment filled with all the necessary mod-cons. The NO-DOs thus denoted not only the ideals that the regime wished the populace to achieve, but also how they wanted to be seen by Spanish society and the outside world. Thus, they demonstrate the hegemonic discourse that the dominant Franco regime wished society to adhere to, which clearly included homeownership.

### **The reality behind State propaganda**

As seen in the section above, the Franco regime used the NO-DOs as a form of propaganda to portray the perfect home-owning Spanish family consumer lifestyle. The reality was very different with the rural exodus combined with a chronic lack of housing leading to overcrowding in many Spanish cities meaning that many of the populace were unable to attain the lifestyle of homeownership promoted by the regime.

We see evidence of the new cycle of capitalism and the hegemonic discourse of homeownership within *El inquilino*. The film criticizes the continual drive for profit that

capitalism demands and the desire for consumer goods that was often disseminated through the media of cinema, adverts and magazines. Throughout the film we see the obvious desire of the couple for their own home, mainly due to the necessity of housing their family, but also in order to attain the life seen within adverts and NO-DOs. This reaffirms the hegemonic discourse of homeownership, although it is made clear that in 1957 the reality, even for a medical professional like Evaristo (Fernando Fernán Gómez), is that the dream of homeownership, shown so overtly in the dream scene discussed below, is not possible for all, despite what the regime is promising.

Céline Vaz discusses *El inquilino* in her 2015 article “De la crisis du logement à la question urbaine: el régimen franquista et les conditions de vie urbaines”. Here she uses the film to demonstrate the housing crisis within Spain at the time and does not undertake any detailed analysis of the film. However, her discussion of the censorship the film was forced to undertake is interesting as this demonstrates the subversive nature of the film and that the regime did not want to publicise the issue of the lack of housing at the time as they wanted instead to be seen to be solving the issue.

In her 2016 article “Domesticidad e imaginarios del consumo en *El inquilino* (1957), *La vida por delante* (1958) and *El pisito* (1959)” Ana Fernández-Cebrián concentrates on the concepts of commodification in order to pacify the Spanish populace through contentment and how these three films demonstrated this way of life, which was portrayed in many films as the American dream, was unachievable for many. This article’s focus on consumerism underlines the commodified nature of the home that is highlighted within this thesis, however, I have expanded this to the idea of homeownership.

Susan Larson and Carlos Sambricio write about *El inquilino* in their chapter entitled “Who and what was José Antonio Nieves Conde criticizing in the film *El inquilino* (1957)?”. Their main focus is on the facts and figures of the housing policy of the Franco regime and there is little in-depth analysis of the film undertaken. However, the conclusion that this film marked the end of an era, due to Arrese, who became the head of Housing for the regime just after *El inquilino* was made, moving public housing almost entirely to the private sector, was interesting. The lack of social housing, as discussed in Chapter Two, was a policy adopted by the Franco regime and continued by successive democratic governments. I take this theoretical article one stage further by undertaking a close visual analysis of the film through the prism of homeownership.

In the opening credits of the film the camera pans over a newly developing Madrid with many high-rise blocks in the foreground and background. However, the director signals all is not perfect as roughly two-thirds of the screen is filled with menacing black clouds. This scene signals to the audience that Madrid is going through an unprecedented modernisation and development (at the time the film was released the Housing Ministry had just issued their *Plan de Urgencia Social de Madrid* as seen in the documentary released on 1 January 1959 (analysed earlier)). This plan involved constructing over 60,000 new flats and in the process eradicating the *chabolas* and gentrifying some of the old districts of Madrid. According to Harvey and Smith, this gentrification was a part of the ongoing drive of capitalism. As free space had been exhausted capitalists were forced to commodify existing spaces due to the continual drive for profits. This is evident within *El inquilino* where, at first, the family appear to live in an idyllic urban community. However, as the camera pans out, we see how most of the buildings in the neighbourhood are, in fact, surrounded by construction hoarding. The whole neighbourhood is

being demolished to make way for offices and shops as part of the urban regeneration of Madrid (López, 2010, p. 271), turning what Lefebvre would define as the perceived and lived spaces of the original neighbourhood into hegemonic spaces or conceived spaces, under State control and thus representing power, knowledge and commodification and a symbol of capitalism. Later in the film, we see how it is this process of capital accumulation, gentrification, which forces the family to vacate their beloved flat and community to desperately search for their own home.

It is clear that during the 1950s private construction companies were making huge profits. This is evident within the scene in the Mundis board meeting (minutes 22-27) where the board members are smug in the significant amount of profits made and are willing to waste money on extravagant food and absurd symbols of their company, but not to help out a family in need. The company sign at least is honest stating that they deal in both “Destrucción y Construcción” which would appear to be a nod to Karl Marx’s creative destruction<sup>57</sup> where new industrial processes will continuously revolutionise the economic structure, destroying the old one in order to create a new one, similar to the process of gentrification that the company is undertaking in the family’s district.<sup>58</sup> Inside the board room the camera starts at the top of a huge graph which has been extended to the ceiling, to show the excessive profits that the

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<sup>57</sup> Marx did not coin the term creative destruction as this was later credited to Werner Sombart in 1913. However the term was derived from Marx’s work including that of the Communist Manifesto where he states that “a great part not only of existing production, but also of previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed” (Marx, Karl; Engels, Friedrich (2002) [1848], *The Communist Manifesto*, Moore, Samuel (trans.) (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1888). p. 226).

<sup>58</sup>This brings to mind the novel *Crematorio* (Rafael Chirbes, 2007). Rubén, the protagonist of the novel, even compares himself to Hausmann (the renovator of nineteenth century Paris) believing that you have to destroy in order to create, “Se destruye algo para construir algo” (Chirbes, 2007, p. 409). This novel was released 50 years after *El inquilino* in 2007 and as such this continued use of Karl Marx’s creative destruction provides further evidence of the destructive forces of capitalism spanning the 50 years in which these cultural works were produced. Thus, further demonstrating the continuation of the economic policies of capitalism from the Franco regime onwards.

construction company has made. After it pans down the almost vertical line of the graph the view is of the other board members, all suited and booted, sitting around a large wooden table on luxurious leather chairs. During the canapes (that Evaristo's wife, Marta (María Rosa Salgado), helps serve), the CEO brings in workmen to demonstrate the symbols of the company, a pick for destruction, asking the worker to wastefully destroy one of the leather chairs, and the spade for construction. The board members are extremely self-congratulatory and dismiss Marta as an annoyance. We also see later in my analysis how the corrupt real estate industry would simply take their money in the guise of real estate agents, but produce no results in the form of a flat. Throughout the whole of Evaristo's search we see how the lower classes are discriminated against as money was always needed in order to find a flat in this extremely competitive market. This could be construed as further evidence of the emergence of parasitical, speculative and non-productive capitalism, where everyone is out for a fast buck, charging money wherever possible in this new money grabbing, economic model.

The film also criticises the land-owning bourgeoisie and portrays their drive for profits as immoral. This is evident in one scene with the original landowner Señor Marqués (Juan Vázquez) who is shown as a person with few morals and no social interest and care for those worse off than himself (minutes 15-18). The camera view is first of a classically painted hunting scene on the ceiling depicting the landed gentry on horseback surrounded by the common people on foot. This setting naturally ensures that the peasants are looking up to the nobles, something that Señor Marqués clearly expects. The camera then pans down via grand, gilded mirrors, more antique paintings and furniture and an extravagant chandelier, to Marta sitting upright and looking uncomfortable on the edge of an antique chair. The grandeur posits Señor Marqués as an extremely wealthy gentleman, his waiting room is larger than Marta and



Evaristo's whole flat. He cannot help her with her plight as he has sold the flat without her knowledge to the Mundis company. As she leaves, we see him viewing a 3D image of a half-naked lady through a bi-ocular contraption he has been holding in his hand throughout the entire conversation with Marta. The debauched nature of the landed gentry is evident in his flippant manner, the excess of his flat and furniture and the pornography he is viewing.

The couple's desperate search for a family home comes to a comedic head when we see Evaristo getting on a bus to a new development, which he must buy a ticket for. The new development is built by the Mundis company, the same company that is destroying his current rental flat, in a new barrio called Mundis Jauja (minutes 27-31). This loosely translates as Never-never land and therefore is a land where nothing is at it first appears and does not really exist. The flat is a joke. The lift stops between floors meaning that they have to climb down to the flat, the flat door does not open and the agent has to break in, the window shutters fall of in the agent's hands (see Figure 5), the bathroom, which they both cram into, thus illustrating its diminished size, has a bath that you can only stand-up in, the "modern" kitchen is two cupboards in the corridor and the final straw is when one of the internal walls collapses when the agent is trying to show the sturdiness of the build. This scene therefore represents the continual drive for profit of the construction companies, like the fictional Mundis. Despite flats often being constructed at this period of time using State Aid, commonly the construction of modern dwellings was the sole responsibility of the contractor with little to no input from the authorities. This led to very poor-quality builds as contractors cut costs where they could with no checks to ensure building safety.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> As a result, cracks and building collapses were relatively commonplace, for example, in June 1969 a restaurant above a newly built building collapsed killing 58 people and wounding another 150 (Vaz, p. 193).



Fig. 5: *El inquilino*: the badly constructed new flat in Mundis Jauja (minute 30).

During their search for a new home, we see Marta and Evaristo approach a dilapidated house arm-in-arm up the hill from the city. They have high expectations that this will solve all their problems and the music that accompanies their walk is serene and hopeful (minute 47). However, the music changes and the smile drops from Marta's face as she spots the house. The camera follows their path, but is positioned on the other side of the house so we can see the full extent of its dilapidation with the only protection from the elements being a tarpaulin held down on the roof by wood and stones. As they enter the house, the music is hopeful and joyful once more until the true state of the house, with no basic facilities, is revealed. Marta states that she will not stay in a house without a roof, while the ever-optimistic Evaristo states that it just needs a good clean only to find out that the cost of the property is astronomical given the disparity between supply and demand in Madrid at this time. The house appears to be built on the waste of the gentrification of the city, prevalent in the barrio that they are being evicted

from, as they pass piles of construction rubble and sand on their way to the house. I would argue that the waste, which in essence is a displacement of the buildings that once stood in the now gentrified neighbourhoods, is therefore a metaphor for the couple themselves who, like the rejected rubble of old buildings, have also been rejected from their old neighbourhood and forced to find a home elsewhere.

The difference between the approach of the NO-DOs around this time, which celebrated the destruction of the *chabolas* and old neighbourhoods with the narrator talking of rehousing the displaced families in dignified and comfortable housing, and the reality shown in *El inquilino* is striking. The irony of the official message and the reality is ridiculed within one scene where the couple try to apply for social housing (minutes 51-53). They have to complete hundreds of pages of forms only to be shown a waiting list contained within filing cabinets that line the walls all the way to the ceiling. It is clearly pointless as a flat will not become available any time soon. At the end of this scene Evaristo looks with despair at a governmental propaganda poster stating, as shown within Figure 6, “Solo con vivienda propia podrá el hombre cumplir su destino social” (minute 53). The irony is not lost on Evaristo who would love to own his own flat but is finding it impossible to find the dignified and comfortable housing that the NO-DOs have promised him.



Fig. 6. *El inquilino*: propaganda poster at the governmental housing office where the couple have just been shown an extremely long waiting list for housing (minute 53).

A drunk Evaristo falls asleep and dreams of being able to offer his family the perfect flat in a perfect suburb, aptly called *Barrio de la Felicidad* (minutes 72-76). The idea of a dream scene is set by the camera floating through the clouds to arrive at this heavenly barrio, where we see the family pull-up in a modern 1950s car passing through adoring crowds with guards and footmen at their disposal. In comparison to the usual overcast scenes within the film, the new barrio is bathed in sunlight with blue skies above. When the family enter the flat in the modern high-rise building, similar to those shown in many of the NO-DOs studied, the camera is set behind an exotic pot plant in the corner of the room, so we see the whole length of the spacious living room as Evaristo is waited on by scantily clad maids while his wife explores, exclaiming at all the mod-cons in the kitchen and bathroom and the children run through delighted at the myriad of toys made available to them (see Figure 7). Here we are shown how Spanish society is starting to crave modern domestic appliances of a consumer lifestyle. Marta deplores the facilities in their makeshift ground floor flat as we have previously seen her crying in the corner

after a close-up of the sink containing brown, dirty water, surrounded by dirty dishes. She had also deplored the lack of anything in the wrecked house on the outskirts of town, however, in Evaristo's dream she cannot contain her delight at the modern facilities of the perfect flat. These type of household appliances made the domestic work of the housewife much easier and as such it is difficult to argue that Marta's obvious delight is unfounded. However, the dream flat also contains many ornamental items, vases, plants, toys, pictures etc., which are less necessary and more aesthetically pleasing. The presence of both the necessary and unnecessary commodities help provide a sense of a middle-class lifestyle and their availability only in the dream highlights the disparity between what the propaganda of the NO-DOs and the reality of the lives of the characters portrayed within this film.



Fig. 7: *El inquilino*: the dream flat (minute 75).

In his dream, Evaristo is served by footmen, an assistant, a maid and even a slave like character (whom he calls "*esclavo*") who carries around on his chest a box full of Evaristo's work tools.

This departure from the usual consumer dream of simply owning desirable objects like those Marta is so excited about, translates to the idea that, in fact, people are also commodities to be bought and sold, of which the lower classes are generally victims. Evaristo, does not simply want to own a flat for his family, he also wants the life that he sees the leisure classes enjoying of servants and lackeys (Fernández-Cebrián, p. 46).

This scene, in an overt manner, positions homeownership as a marker of reaching middle-class status, the American dream. In the film, in line with the NO-DOs, these flats in the new high-rise, concrete blocks are imagined as a desirable commodity. As such, Evaristo's unconscious mind has fully bought into the idea of the consumer world as shown in the NO-DOs. He believes the hegemonic discourse that states owning his own home will make him happy, particularly in the aptly named *Barrio de Felicidad*, and this is something achievable by all. However, reality is very different from his dream as he wakes up to his flat falling down around him and Marta and the children have left.

There is a feeling of a lack of security within the film; the lives of the protagonists are literally falling around their ears. They clearly yearn for a feeling of ontological security through the ownership of their own home, something that has not been provided with their current rental flat. As discussed in Chapter One, Dupuis and Thorns found that the desire for homeownership was common in those that had experienced hardship as it was felt that owning your own home could protect you and your family against this happening again. Evaristo and Marta obviously loved their original flat, felt settled there amongst their local community. The considerable turbulence and alterations to their lives that they are forced to endure throughout the film, I

would argue, is part of the reason the protagonists are so desperate for their own home, a secure mooring that, unlike their current flat, cannot be taken away from them.



Fig. 8: *El inquilino*: Evaristo making himself at home on the street corner (minute 88).

We can see the yearning to have a feeling of settlement and security in the actions Evaristo takes when he starts to settle into his makeshift home on the street corner in the uncensored ending of the film (see Figure 8). In Lefebvrian terms he is trying to give meaning to this new place by making it his home. He starts to put up pictures and rearrange his furniture how it used to be in their old flat. He desires the feeling of security of being at home even in such a precarious location. In this ending, he has the support of his local community who, along with the demolition crew, help move his furniture to the corner of the street next to a food stall. They build a makeshift wall around him, although he is still without a roof. One of the demolition crew goes to get Marta and she and the kids turn up to support Evaristo and it is only on the return of his family he starts to smile once more, as, again using the concepts of Lefebvre, it is only social interaction that gives a place its meaning. In making the place his

home, Evaristo is overriding the conceived State definition of the street corner and is, according to the theories of de Certeau, enacting a form of rebellion against the State, such that this street corner is no longer under State control, changing it from a conceived to a lived space. In the censored version of the film the audience would not be able to see this small act of rebellion as it is removed and replaced with a happier ending more acceptable to the regime. As I have argued before, the hegemonic discourse sold the idea of homeownership as achievable by all, but it is clear that in the uncensored version even Evaristo, who is in fact a medical professional and not part of the working-class, cannot achieve this goal. The alternative ending imposed by the censors, where Marta drives past in the back of a truck to take Evaristo and the furniture to their new home with Esperanza, demonstrates that the Franco regime wished to continue to propagate the dream that homeownership was possible for all and makes no mention of the old community that supported Evaristo in the original ending.

### **The entrapment of the hegemonic discourse**

After the death of Franco and the end of the dictatorial regime in the late 1970s such overt State propaganda as the NO-DOs were no longer acceptable in the new democratic society. However, as discussed in Chapter Two, many of the regime's policies remained in place after the Transition to democracy and the hegemonic discourse surrounding the desire for homeownership continued.

The opening up and modernisation of Spain, brought more leisure pastimes for the young, such as discos, arcade games and the ability to purchase a greater variety of consumer products, such as music, comics, branded clothes and trainers etc.; suddenly there was a consumer



market focused exclusively on youths (Florido-Berrocal, p. 15). However, many of the youths from the suburban housing estates remained unemployed and hence felt disenfranchised and were unable to partake in the ever-increasing consumer market; the disparity between the haves and have nots continued to increase. Consequently, some turned to criminality to both provide them with something to do, but also with some money so they were able to partake in this new, exciting consumer market (Florido-Berrocal, p. 16).

Los primeros años de la década de 1980 vinieron caracterizados así por una creciente división social y simbólica entre ocupados y parados, empleados públicos y asalariados del sector privado...a la escasez de servicios sociales se sumó la desesperanza de una generación más joven, sin recursos propios, marginada política y socialmente y cada vez más atrapada por un nihilismo autodestructivo que halló su propia sima en el polvo marrón de la heroína (López, 2010, pp. 152-3)

We see the lumpen proletariat youth and their lack of opportunities within the film *Colegas*. The mother of José (Isabel Perales), the protagonist, is unable to properly feed her family, offering them rotten apples at the end of a meagre meal. This, along with the cramped living conditions inside the apartment, posit the family as a poor, working-class family trapped within a peri-urban housing estate created during the Franco era.



Fig. 9: *Colegas*: the couple trapped in *Colmenas* (minute 40).

A feeling of entrapment is made evident in one particular scene where we see an unhappy José and Rosario at different windows of their tower block looking out onto what can only be described as a bland, grey concrete wall with no possibility of a view of beauty. The lack of an inspiring view and its desolate nature gives the impression that the young couple are actually confined in a huge prison. It is clear that the three protagonists all feel trapped in a conceived space, instead of a place they had hoped, in Lefebvrian terms, to be a lived space, full of life and community. It is made clear by José when he tells his father at the end of the film “No puedes derrotar a la cárcel, ni puedes combatir al ejército. Lo único que puedes hacer es huir. Rompe tus cadenas y huye” (minute 89). I would argue, using the work of Saunders and Giddens, the instability created during the recession, particularly for those trapped in these out-of-town estates, meant that the couple were yearning for ontological security which they hoped to obtain through the ownership of their own home.

A shot from this scene (Figure 9), reminds one of the one shown within Figure 4 of the newly constructed flats in NO-DO 1575A. In the latter, I argue that this positions the citizen at the bottom of the shot looking up to the powerful and mighty block of flats provided by the regime, thus implying that the regime is all-powerful. Here the shot is more oppressive, given that there is no view of the sky, and as there is a corner in the block, the characters only have the perspective of another bland and depressing, concrete wall. The regime, which, as in NO-DO 1575A, created this concrete monolith, rather than being the provider of security and protection, is shown here to have entrapped the protagonists. I would even argue, given the positive, all-pervading propaganda surrounding these housing estates seen within the NO-DOs, that this screenshot within *Colegas* represents the regime as having tricked the inhabitants into purchasing or moving to (if rehoused from the *chabolas*) the flats within these types of blocks as we can see that the reality does not correspond with the promotion and hype of the NO-DOs. It should be noted that this film was made after the Francoist period, however *Colmenas* in which the film is set, was built during the era of the Franco regime and as such it is clear that the legacy of the Franco regime was still keenly felt within the urban environment when this film was released in 1982.

Although ownership of the flats by the protagonist's parents is not explicit, it is implied in the fact that they have clearly decorated and adapted their flats to their taste and the demeanour of José's father who is working so hard to pay the bills that he states that he does not have time to feel bored. The families are trapped within the never-ending cycle of work and paying for a home they can barely afford. This feeling of being trapped is emphasized in an earlier scene when José and Rosario return to *Colmenas* from a tryst walking hand in hand. The whole screen is filled with the huge, overbearing tower block with no view of the sky and only the wasteland

in the immediate foreground (minute 9). The huge scale of the housing block is foreboding and the cinematography provides a sense that they are walking to their doom. The only sound is the constant drone of traffic from the ever-present M30 that cuts the flats off from the city centre.

The director, through camera work and editing, continually uses the M30 to show the isolation of this marginalised society, both physically and mentally cut off from the city centre. Other scenes (minutes 45 and 70) posit the three protagonists on a bench above the noisy M30 with the housing block in the background, completely cutting out the sun or any view of nature. As they leave, the three friends walk down the hill towards the M30 which obstructs their route home. The sense of being physically excluded from 'normal' society pervades the whole film. Even in the opening scene the camera follows the trajectory of the motorway, panning across the skyscrapers of the city centre, cut off from the audience by the road. The only sound is the loud and continual hum of traffic and in the background, kids playing on the wasteland created from scrap heaps from the construction of the M30 motorway and the surrounding tower blocks, with piles of sand and dug earth clearly still visible, showing how the creation of green spaces were not a priority for the profiteering construction companies when *Colmenas* was constructed.

It becomes clear throughout the film that the couple's desire for their own flat is complex. It cannot be ignored that there is also a real need for a flat as a place to provide privacy and security for their unborn child. This is emphasised earlier in the film during a tryst in an abandoned and ruined building which offers little to no privacy from the public and provides no comfort, with the couple being forced to stand during sex due to rubble of the ruined

building littering the floor – but it is the only place they can be together away from the cramped conditions in their family flats. However, in order to escape the feeling of entrapment experienced on the peripheries of the city and of society, José is willing to go to extreme and criminal lengths<sup>60</sup> in order to obtain the dream promised by the hegemonic discourse, that of his own home. According to Javier Entrambasaguas-Monsell, the protagonists desperately want to be visible in a society that has relegated them to the periphery (p. 242). Combining this concept with the manipulation of their narrative by the hegemonic discourse surrounding homeownership I would argue that the film portrays that in becoming homeowners the couple will indeed fit into the ever-increasing consumer society. I would argue, using the work of Massey, that the couple wanted to feel ‘normal’ within capitalist society with the fixity of the home being one way to achieve this. This is evident when meeting the criminal gang in order to arrange the sale of their unborn child. Rosario’s first question is concerning the place she would live while pregnant with the baby, she wants to leave Madrid immediately, to flee the chains confining her to this life of poverty and is disappointed to find that she must stay in Madrid until the baby is born, although she will be given an apartment. The promised apartment is never shown during the film which begs the question as to its existence. However, simply the promise of a long dreamed for flat is enough to lure the couple to consider selling their baby. The gang member’s flamboyant cocktail and the flippant nature of the nightclub setting give the impression of unreliability. Despite this, it is clear that to José it is worth selling his own child in order to obtain a flat, as he vociferously convinces Rosario to accept their offer. Throughout the scene with the gang member, Rosario clearly has concerns about the future of

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<sup>60</sup> Within Chapter Four I analyse chosen cultural works and demonstrate that many of the protagonists manifest extreme behaviour in order to achieve the falsely constructed desire of homeownership which constitutes alienation. Although the willingness of the couple to sell their unborn child in order to obtain a flat is extreme behaviour, the overriding hegemonic desire for homeownership is also shown extremely clearly within this film and as such it was considered a better fit for Chapter Three.

her baby and her maternal instincts lead to her to attempt to resist the pressure from José and the gang member of trading her baby in for a flat. Rosario's conflict is unresolved as the death of her brother, Antonio, at the hands of one of the gang members ensure that the couple decide to keep the baby and create a world for themselves far from the confines of *Las Colmenas*.

### **The security of being normal**

A further two quinqu films that were released a little later in 1987 and 1988 were the *El Lute* films *Camina o revienta* and *Mañana seré libre* respectively, which focused on the concept of mobility versus constancy and security, particularly with relevance to El Lute's upbringing as a gypsy, and the concept of being considered a 'normal' member of society. It becomes clear through my study of the films that to fit in with Spanish society the fixity of homeownership is a must. Thus, homeownership within the *El Lute* films brings two complex issues to the fore, racism against gypsies and the hegemonic discourse.<sup>61</sup> The films are analysed again within Chapter Five as it is clear that El Lute partially uses the purchase of his home to fulfil a desire for ontological security as a form of refuge from the authorities, free from State surveillance. This emphasises how the home is a place free from State control, a refuge where El Lute and his family can be themselves.

In owning his own home, similar to the characters in *Colegas* analysed above, El Lute is attempting to fit into a society that has relegated him to the peripheries, particularly that of

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<sup>61</sup> Please note that the racism that gypsies suffered under the Franco regime is touched upon in this section but dealt with in greater detail within Chapter Five, as it is partly this persecution that El Lute is trying to avoid when seeking refuge in his Granada home.

assumed criminality as a gypsy – he is trying to flee the confines of persecution and racism that have dogged him throughout his life. We see the State’s assumption that all gypsies are criminals within the first *El Lute* film when he is arrested when simply trying to buy a gift for Chelo who has just given birth to their first child (minute 17). In an attempt to throw off these racist persecutions, the film demonstrates El Lute’s desire to conform to what was acceptable in society, he wants to settle down, to own his own home and leave his nomadic ways behind him. For example, he denies his nomadic routes when he refuses to let his new gypsy common-law-wife return to her family, instead making visible his intention to have a stable home so that he can fully integrate into society. Consequently, in agreement with Massey’s comments concerning how ordinary people are settled in houses (please refer to Chapter One) I would argue that the narrative in the film represents how El Lute is interpellated by the dominant discourse that the norm is for a home to be fixed – that for someone to obtain security and the feeling of home, ownership is required.

As above in *Colegas*, where the couple at the end of the film chose to break the chains that confine them and flee to make a new life for themselves and their baby, El Lute also wishes to flee the life that has been dealt to him. However, for him the constant pursuit and racist harassment of the authorities make this impossible. Throughout the second film, the headlines in the newspapers of the time that sensationalise El Lute and his continued freedom on the run from the authorities ensure that he is considered a legend, someone fighting against the oppressive authorities of the Franco regime, whereas the films show that the truth couldn’t be further from the legend. He is forced into a life that he does not want, constantly in fear of capture and forcing his family to endure many hardships.

El Lute's first home is one he attempts to self-construct in a shanty town on the outskirts of the city. After this is destroyed by corrupt police and local mafia, he expresses his desire to live in a block of flats "como los payos" and his ultimate goal is to become a "ciudadano normal" (minute 39). Throughout the second *El Lute* film, *Mañana seré libre*, which is set in the 1970s, El Lute's desire to fit into society becomes more and more evident culminating in the purchase of his Granada home which becomes part of his camouflage as a normal middle-class citizen when he is able "vivir como el rico" (minute 55). This is accompanied by a change in his appearance where he starts to wear refined suits and flamboyant ties. The house and suit act as a form of armour and allow him to pass as a *payo*. The achievement of homeownership and ensuing acceptance by society gives him more confidence and he starts to carry himself better, standing more erect and upright. For example, when we see him in the first *El Lute* film as a tinker selling his metal lamps in a shop, we see how he never looks the shop owner in the eye, and, even when the shop owner only takes three lamps saying that people prefer plastic nowadays, he does not argue for more, just accepts it and walks slowly off (minute 14). However, when he is purchasing his Granada home, he is able to argue for what he wants and looks the property developer directly in the eye with confidence. Thus, homeownership has provided him not only with a disguise/camouflage to evade capture by the State, but has also allowed him to fit into a society that previously shunned him – it has 'normalised' him.

The time in the Granada home is the only period in the films when the family appear happy and are able to entertain some modicum of normality. Here they are able to enjoy parties and large family dinners on the terrace. Additionally, his time in this home is the most stable as he is able to maintain his camouflage and evade the State for a long period of time. His desire for a home free from State control becomes almost farcically clear when he is forced to live with his family



in the sewers. Despite the dark, damp and frankly filthy, rat-infested conditions, similar to Evaristo's street corner in *El inquilino*, he attempts to make it homely, with furniture and decorative plates fixed to the dripping brick-walls (see Figure 10). In these scenes we can see how desperate El Lute is to flee the State control conceived spaces and instead create a lived space where he can be himself.



Fig. 10: *El Lute II: Mañana seré libre*: home in the sewer (minute 104).

Roberto Robles in his chapter entitled “*El Lute*: primer y último quinquí. Cierre e historización de lo quinquí” (2015) draws a parallel between the film and the Transition:

... “*El Lute*” afronta su recién estrenada vida en libertad convirtiéndose así en una metáfora de la sociedad en la que se haya inserto y que acababa de emprender un camino paralelo hacia la “libertad” democrática (Robles, Valencia, pp. 197-8).

However, I would extend this argument further in that the freedom that Spain achieved through democracy only applied to the privileged few, as the lives of much of the working-class did not materially change following the Transition. Additionally, *El Lute*, although on the run for six years in the second film, was never truly free, always having to consider his actions and always looking over his shoulder for the *Guardia Civil*. It is only in the Granada home where the family experienced their most 'normal' and settled lives, where they were able to live like the rich, and in Lefebvrian terms enjoy a lived space. However, despite his camouflage as a *payo*, even this settled period comes to an end when they are forced to flee it to avoid capture when the *Guardia Civil* start looking for him in the neighbourhood.<sup>62</sup> The State's obsession with recapturing him means that even his disguise is insufficient. Consequently, I would argue that the two films demonstrate that only true freedom can be felt for those that are able to achieve a "normal" middle-class life, a life full of consumer goods such as the house and car. As such, I would argue that the film is commenting on the racism that the family suffer as gypsies and this, aligned with the hegemonic discourse of homeownership, is why *El Lute* purchases a home on order to fit into society. This reinforces the hegemonic discourse that to be an active and accepted member of Spanish society one must partake in the consumer lifestyle and homeownership.

### **Tourism and second homes**

The continued growth of homeownership in Spain was fuelled by the increase in the second home market as owning a second home became both a status symbol of reaching the echelons

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<sup>62</sup> Due the sensationalisation by the press of *El Lute's* escape his capture became an obsession for the State and something that they would not give up on.

of middle-class and was also seen as a good investment. Thus, the hegemonic discourse of homeownership grew to encompass the desire for a second home. The pressure to fit in with the demands of society were therefore even greater and are evident within the film *Las verdes praderas*.<sup>63</sup> The protagonist José Rebolledo has a good job and a happy marriage with two young children. They are within the middle-class sector with no money worries and can therefore afford to have the required second home.

The promise cultivated by the consumer market was that happiness could be achieved through the purchase of commodities, such as the home. *Las verdes praderas* is critical of the Spanish consumer society, as it makes abundantly clear, despite the empty promises of the Spanish governments that owning commodities will bring you happiness, José and his family are unhappy with the pressures of maintaining a middle-class lifestyle. The film is not subtle in its messaging as even at the start of the film we see an analogy to the concept of promoting commodities through the selling of happiness, how one can buy a better life with consumer goods. The film opens with a clip of waterfalls, wildflowers and abundant wildlife showing nature at its best. It is only once the audience hears the voice of the narrator that they realise this is an advert for an insurance company. Once this realisation has dawned, the camera pans back to encompass an audience of a small group of suited men in the private cinema of José's advertising company. Once the advert is over, they discuss what they have seen and José's boss (Ángel Picazo) states that he does not like the clip as it alludes to death, he wants more happiness and more life. The aim of the advertising company is clearly to sell happiness – not the actual goods. In addition to this, throughout the film the English language is often used

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<sup>63</sup> I was not able to find any relevant critical bibliography of secondary sources on this film so the analysis below is solely my own.

which I would argue refers to the Americanisation of Spain, particularly in relation to commodities. This is similar to the novel *Escrito en un dólar* which also uses the English language, primarily within advertising slogans and often to sell American products. The use of English makes it obvious to the consumer that they are purchasing a slice of the American dream.

The Rebolledo family feel trapped by society and the focus on their second home as the mill stone around their neck is clear throughout the film. The chalet where they spend all their weekends, *puentes* and Saint holidays is set amongst the mountains in the Sierra region outside Madrid. The house is surrounded by similar chalets in relatively close proximity (see Figures 11 and 13), overlooking their property and garden, in what looks like a newly built urbanisation for the second home market. There appears to be no immediate facilities with the family having to use the car to access any amenities or shops. It is a small home with a small wrap around garden and although it has a stunning view of the mountains in the background, the house oddly faces away from them, so their only view is of some wasteland opposite. The positioning of the house on the periphery of this new development looking outwards is analogous to the family being on the periphery of the middle-class society that they are struggling so hard to be part of. It reminds one of the youths in both *Colegas* (studied above) and *Deprisa, deprisa* (studied in Chapter Four) where the physical location and the barriers of the M30 ring road and train tracks separate and marginalise them from the commodified urban centre. There are already roads and streetlights criss-crossing this wasteland demonstrating that this too will soon be built on to maintain the supply of second homes to the burgeoning market. The continued growth and development of the area points towards the tourism boom that was occurring in Spain at the time of the film's release.



Fig. 11: *Las verdes praderas*: the Robelledo second home (minute 17).

However, when the family first arrive at the chalet the music is buoyant and the children happily skip into the house and play on the swings in the garden. Despite there being lots of chores to undertake to get the house ready for the weekend (opening window shutters, unpacking, putting out the garden furniture etc.) the couple do so happily with smiles on their faces and chaste kisses when they pass each other. They are clearly excited to be spending a relaxing weekend away from Madrid in the countryside. However, as the weekend progresses and José is unable to escape the house to play tennis or to relax, with a much-coveted gin & tonic, due to the endless list of chores, we see him getting more and more depressed. Throughout the film, we discover that the majority of José's office have second homes within the same urbanisation and José is expected to spend his weekend socialising with his work colleagues. Indeed, Enrique, José's boss, appears to use the fact that they all have second homes in the same area to continue to issue instructions to his employees, whether it be work related or

how to play football or snooker. Keeping up with the expectations of his work colleagues is something that José does not enjoy as he wishes to just savour some peace and quiet with his family during the weekend, his only two days off work each week. It appears that having a second home is not the haven of peace and relaxation that was promised.



Fig. 12: *Las verdes praderas*: the family trapped inside their chalet (minute 21).

At the end of the Friday night, José has just fixed the boiler and is looking forward to a much-desired gin & tonic when his wife Conchi (María Casanova) gives him another chore to complete before he can relax. The next scene is shot from the garden looking voyeuristically at the house (minute 21) – the camera positioned at a distance provides an anodyne image of a house – not a place that could necessarily be identified as a home (see Figure 12). We hear José yelling for Conchi's help, the kids arguing and later José drilling. The cacophony of noises from the house sounds anything but relaxing as each member of the household competes to be heard over the other. The children are clearly watching something with a police chase on the television as we

hear the sirens blaring out into the still night. I argue that these types of abrasive sounds – arguing families, drills and sirens – are used by the director to create a feeling of stress in the audience so that they form an impression of the level of strain the family are experiencing. Additionally, the electronic music played at the finale of this scene is almost ominous and gives a further sensation of family stress. This is in direct contrast to the dark and calm night outside of the house which is in complete silence with no traffic or sounds from the surrounding houses. The stillness and silence of the night are emphasised through the camera angle which does not alter throughout the whole scene. I would argue that the silence of the night and stillness of the camera are to highlight the fact that this second home in the country is meant to be somewhere relaxing and peaceful not somewhere that causes more stress. The Rebolledo second home is the inverse of what a country retreat should be.

Within this film we see how even those within the supposed aspirational middle-class sector can still feel ostracised from society. José doesn't feel like he fits into his class and hence cannot reconcile himself with Spanish society and the expectations of him. Using Lefebvre's recalibration of alienation to everyday life we see how the competitiveness within middle-class society to keep up with, or indeed excel, your contemporaries leads to the family, and José in particular, feeling alienated from the rest of his class. He feels closed in by the parameters of his middle-class status which forces him to undertake a preordained life of studying, then work, a girlfriend, house, car, second home and so forth. In the film, the bourgeois José and his family desperately try to keep up with the expectations of society but find the whole charade a lot of work and fail dismally to play the part required: José is unable to play snooker without ripping

the felt, play football without injury<sup>64</sup> or even start his mower to cut his lawn. He never gets to relax and enjoy his chalet as he is constantly expected to play a role – this is demonstrated by his constant request for a gin & tonic that never materialises as it is always to be provided after he has finished the next chore.

One example of José's attempt, but abject failure, to keep up with bourgeoisie expectations is his desire to own a red sports car. Thirty minutes into the film we see Ricardo draped over a red sports car that belongs to José's brother-in-law. Conchi has stopped José playing his beloved tennis that morning as her mother is coming and there are chores to do around the house. However, the brother-in-law (Pedro Díez del Corral) and Ricardo soon decide to go and play tennis leaving José as the only man in the house. The setting of this scene emphasises the freedom of the brother-in-law and Ricardo who are both positioned at the forefront of the shot, compared to José who, being positioned at the back of the shot, appears much diminished and isolated. Indeed, he is standing almost out of shot, half hidden behind Ricardo's motorbike and leaning against his garden wall. This positioning gives the impression José is less of a man and his constant contact with the house, via the garden wall, illustrates how he is tied to the house – the millstone around his neck. As discussed in Chapter Two and evident within many of the works studied, for example NO-DO 1089A analysed above, within Francoist Spain the female role was of procreator and homemaker. Doing household chores was not something that the

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<sup>64</sup> It should be noted that both the ripping of the snooker table felt and the football injury were indirectly due to José's boss who continually criticises José and clearly believes him incompetent, constantly giving José instructions on how to play both games. In direct contrast, he constantly praises Ricardo (Carlos Larrañaga), José's colleague and nemesis, during the snooker match, with Ricardo even offering to fix the ripped felt after José's mishap and makes Ricardo captain as the star player of the football match. Ricardo is the epitome of a successful middle-class man, who excels in the environment created by his and José's boss and clearly enjoys spending time impressing his boss all weekend at their countryside retreats.



man was expected to do. Thus, José's inability to leave the home due the chores he has yet to complete cultivates the idea that he is not man enough to fit into macho Spanish society. Later on, at the end of the Saturday night, the couple lie in bed discussing the day and Conchi tries to unsuccessfully cheer José up. José has spent all day trying, but failing, to keep up with the societal requirements expected of him. In this scene (minute 51) José states that he had dreams of being older and having time to read the paper with two kids playing in the garden of their second home and owning a beautiful, red sports car. The audience has seen in the earlier scene that the more manly bother-in-law has achieved the goal of a red sports car. This is a further visible reinforcement of how José has failed to play the part expected by society.

A further example of José's inability to fit into the manly society in Spain at the time, is the barbeque that Ricardo ridicules as antique (see Figure 13). The scene starts with the now returned brother-in-law and Conchi's sister and mother relaxing in the sun having a drink while José, again shown in the background and hence again of diminished stature, desperately tries to light a red barbeque. He is furiously fanning the non-existent flames with a piece of cardboard and when the camera moves to a close-up of his face, we see José blowing and sweating with the effort. Ricardo then saunters over with a hairdryer, telling José to stop and simply and easily gets the flames started, yelling to Conchi that he has solved the issue and it is now working. Yet again, we see José as less than a man, a diminished creature, unable to even light a simple barbeque, whereas, as always, Ricardo saves the day. José's failure with the barbeque is one example of his inability to interact with commodities and the home, the very things that demarcate him as middle-class, in the way that the hegemonic discourse dictates. José appears to be in a constant battle with everyday household items, the mower, the barbeque, the boiler etc and as such the chalet does not appear to be a home to him, but a

place of constant work and failure. His constant failure to complete these domestic chores further serves to emasculate him. As seen in many of the works studied in this thesis (José's father in the film *Colegas*, analysed above, and both the male protagonists in the films *El pisito* and *El verdugo*, both analysed in Chapter Four), the only role of the man with respect to the home was to purchase it and provide the salary for his middle-class housewife to spend wisely on domestic commodities. José is unable to manifest the necessary masculine characteristics required to be an accepted member of Spanish society. Exploring this idea further, it has been said that the actor who plays José, Alfredo Landa, is “como espejismo de progreso social del franquismo” (Guerra Gómez, 2012, p. 9) and the term *landismo* has even been coined to describe this concept. Landa typically portrayed on the silver screen what could be said to be the prototype of the new Spaniard. One therefore has to ask the question as to whether Landa predicted the decline of machismo that had previously characterized Spanish society for so long.



Fig. 13: *Las verdes praderas*: José's inability to light the barbecue is ridiculed by his friend, Ricardo (minute 36).

It is clear that the reality of the second home is not as José imagined and he feels completely disillusioned by the bourgeois life. This is reinforced in a scene (minutes 76 to 82) that starts with some classical happy, but serene, music and is set in some woods with birds chirping in the background - the audience can see how far José's bourgeois life is removed from that of the simplicity of nature (see Figure 14). It is only outside of the home, within nature and outside of society, that José is able to truly be himself and fully open up to his wife. The use of nature denotes freedom and is a direct contrast to the feeling of entrapment of the house. José discusses the interminable treadmill of his middle-class lifestyle and rather than enjoying the benefits of such a life, he finds it an endless chore of keeping up with the 'Jones'. They spend every weekend and every holiday in their chalet which is more work than relaxation. He states that he has spent his whole life striving for this perfect dream, "nunca has hecho todo lo que querías, estudia, trabaja...un piso, un chalet, un coche, frega los platos, cortacésped...vives para el Corte Inglés...no me gusta" (minute 119). His wife agrees and states that her life is also an endless stream of chores with little to no enjoyment. They agree they do not want all the trappings that come with maintaining a position in society, they just need each other. As the scene ends the music starts up once more and the couple walk off supporting each other both physically and metaphorically in the decision that they have made.



Fig. 14: *Las verdes praderas*: José and Conchi discussing their unhappiness with their middle-class lives (minute 77)

At the end of the film, the family are in a hurry to pack up their second home and get back to Madrid for the working week. Conchi sends the family off to pack up the car while she does some final chores in the house, the camera focuses on Conchi's face which looks happy and serene. It then pans down to the large can of petrol she is holding. She slowly and calmly splashes the petrol in each room of the house, tuning off the lights as she goes, with jubilant classical music accompanying her apparent act of arson. We see her retrieve some matches from her handbag and then the camera pauses once more on her smiling and unperturbed face. We never see her light the match as the next camera angle is of Conchi locking the front door and then calmly closing the latch on the garden gate. The everyday and systematic tasks of locking the doors and turning off the lights demonstrate how untroubled Conchi is with the decision that she has made. This is not an act of passion, but a rational calculated decision to free her family of the chains of society that are binding them. This scene leads on directly from the woodland scene where she and José support each other as they walk back to the house.

Based upon this, I would argue that the audience are led to believe that Conchi is burning down the home in support of her husband who can no longer cope with the pressures of maintaining the middle-class lifestyle dictated by the hegemonic discourse.

As the family drive off the children notice through the back window that the house is on fire and after a look of incredulity and bewilderment, the realisation of what Conchi has done starts to hit José and he starts to smile. As the house explodes the family start to giggle and in unison shout “Estupendo”. It is clear that being free from the millstone of a second home and going against society’s expectations of them has brought the family happiness - they are now free to be themselves and finally do what they want. In Lefebvrian terms, what was essentially a conceived space to the Rebolledo family, not necessarily State controlled but certainly controlled by José’s boss, has become a lived space, a space of rebellion.



Fig. 15: *Las verdes praderas*: the chalet burning (minute 88).

Similar to the camera positioning on the Friday night (see Figure 12), here we have the same objective distance of the camera which creates a certain climate for the audience of a lack of melodrama, creating an atmosphere of a systematic and planned undermining of the hegemonic discourse rather than a sudden act of rebellion that may later be regretted (see Figure 15). I would argue that the similarity between the camera angles chosen for the Friday night at the start of the weekend and the Sunday night at the end of the weekend are no coincidence. The stress that the audience was made to endure during the scene on the Friday night can now be alleviated by the act of arson. The audience can now replace the image of the stressful household with that of the burning and exploding house – it can no longer be a millstone round one's neck as it has been completely destroyed. To emphasise the feeling of relief even further, the director uses the infectiousness of laughter as we hear and see the family smiling and giggling about the destruction of their house.

The awareness that the Rebolledo family have of the quagmires of society is in direct contrast to the characters in the novel *Crematorio*. In the latter, the capital processes have led to the modernity of 2007 where people only look out for themselves and not the community as a whole and we see the second home boom from the other perspective from *Las verdes praderas*, that of the ruthless property developer, Rubén Bertomeu. Rubén, with complete disregard for the past, the communities, the environment and even the law, will stop at nothing to achieve a fast buck. José is trapped by the need to own the right commodities in order to achieve the middle-class dream while Rubén is the one promoting the dream, which is shown to be all smoke and mirrors and false promises. Chirbes shows us how society has bought into the hype and propaganda of the estate agents that are selling a “pack de la felicidad” (Chirbes, 2007, p. 118), which states that your house is unique, managing to magically disappear the thousands

of homogenous micro-houses in the same development. This brings to mind the dream scene in the film *El inquilino*, discussed above, where the family are housed in the perfect *Barrio de Felicidad*. Similar to *El inquilino* where the harsh reality of the housing crisis is revealed and the lies of the regime's propaganda are exposed, we can see how the agents in *Crematorio* are selling the idea of the perfect holiday home in the perfect setting, whereas the reality of what the consumer is actually buying is "bungalows prefabricados, edificados en terrenos dudosamente recalificados...bungalows mal cimentados en los que solo vivir durante algunos meses al año" (Chirbes, 2007. p. 120).

In *Crematorio*, tourism within the coastal town of Misent has led to the creation of swathes of soulless, homogeneous homes, mainly to be bought as second homes, where the inhabitants are empty shells of human beings:

Lo mismo puede decirse de toda esa arquitectura de casas iguales de la costa. Han creado un personaje colectivo, que no sé si llamarlo el jubilado, o el eterno veraneante...un ser fantasmal, único y vacío, intrascendente, que no aspira a nada, ni espera nada que no sea retrasar la muerte lo más posible. (2007, p. 238)

The idea of homogenisation and lack of community transform a space into a conceived space or indeed one of Augé's non-places and can also be seen within the film *Colegas* in the many shots of the immense swathes of tower blocks hemmed in by the M30 ring road and in the earlier *El inquilino* when Evaristo visits the newly constructed Mundis barrio Juaja. We also see a glimpse of this homogenisation within *Las verdes praderas* where the expectations of society lead to the family purchasing their second home within the same barrio as all of José's work

colleagues and attempting to join in the activities that demark them as middle-class. It is evident that Enrique, José's boss, assumes that his employees will purchase a chalet in the same urbanisation, where he insists on them socialising with work colleagues during the weekend in order to progress their careers. The audience can feel the growing pressure on José throughout the weekend to conform to the expectations of his boss and colleagues. His demeanour changes from a happy smiling husband to a downtrodden man who feels like a failure and is completely disillusioned by the life he now leads. He strove all his life and worked hard and followed what was expected of him to reach this point in his life at 42 years old, but what he has ended up with does not meet his own expectations; he is not happy. Thus, ultimately what *Las verdes praderas* is telling us is that society has been shaped by our hegemonic and thus homogeneous desire for homeownership in a capitalist driven world. If one wishes to fit into society, ownership of at least one if not two homes is expected. However, the perfect life shown within the NO-DOs is in reality all smoke and mirrors as attaining the must-have commodities does not bring happiness.

## Conclusion

To summarise, the propaganda nature of the NO-DOs was subtle with the newsreels showing the epitome of the ideal Spanish consumer, home-owning family. However, it is clear that the reality, and even the images within some of the NO-DOs themselves, did not align with the promises shown within them. The reality of the housing crisis is depicted clearly within *El inquilino*, with the continued entrapment of sectors of society as a result of these false promises shown within the film *Colegas*. Within these two films we see how the residential space which should have been perceived and even lived space, has been turned into conceived space. We



see how El Lute wishes to fit into society as a camouflage to avoid further persecution – how owning a home demarcates one as normal – within the two *El Lute* films analysed. This therefore ties into Massey's theory that someone settled within a fixed home is considered normal within society. Within these four films we see moments of resistance to the State, we see Evaristo in *El inquilino* resisting the State definition of the street corner when he makes it his home, thus reterritorializing the conceived space into lived space, and in both *Colegas* and the *El Lute* films we have a resistance to the State definition of a lawful citizen, trying to create a lived space outside the confines of State hegemony. However, despite these rebellions, in all three of these films the characters wish to follow the hegemonic discourse of homeownership. In contrast, within the film *Las verdes praderas* we have the Rebolledo family who appear to have reached the desired goals of middle-class and in owning not only their main residence, but also a second home in the Sierra, they have achieved the dream that the characters in the other films have strived so hard for – but they reject it. Having reached the dream they have realised the oppressive nature of the hegemonic discourse, leading to a feeling of alienation from his class and society, and at the end of the film are able to act against the system in destroying their home. The family's obvious unhappiness with their second home leading to its destruction, is in essence a criticism and dismantling of the hegemonic discourse, disseminated through media such as the NO-DOs, which has existed from the 1950s that owning a home would ensure you have reached the echelons of middle-class status and would therefore be happy.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Homeownership in Spain: an aspiration that can cause extreme behaviour**

This chapter undertakes a close visual or textual analysis of chosen cinematic and literary texts within the period under review in order to show that the characters manifest extreme behaviour to achieve the goal of homeownership perpetrated by the hegemonic discourse which results in a form of alienation. Following on from Chapter Three, I argue that the individual's actions and feelings have been manipulated and falsely constructed by the capitalist market economy; the individual has been converted into an object by the capitalist modes of production, an object to purchase a commodity, in this instance the home, so that the capitalist machine is able to continue its drive to greater and greater profits. The manipulation by the capitalist modes of production to produce falsely constructed desires in the characters analysed within the cultural works constitutes alienation. Consequently, although closely linked to hegemony, this chapter looks at the effects of the hegemonic discourse on the individual characters within the cultural manifestations reviewed and how it makes them feel.

There are two common threads that weave through my arguments regarding homeownership and alienation. Firstly, it became clear throughout my studies that the female characters within the films and novels that I have studied, particularly those of childbearing age who therefore wished to have a safe and dignified space of their own to raise their families, were the main drivers behind homeownership and that the male characters, less affected by the hegemonic discourse surrounding motherhood and the biological forces at play, simply saw

homeownership as a fantasy. The analysis of the female characters within the works studied was therefore a complex one as it became apparent that there were at least three factors to consider when it came to homeownership; (1) the material conditions of the protagonists, be it poverty, overcrowding and/or their material need for more space and privacy, (2) the hegemonic discourse surrounding women, and (3) the role of the Franco and later governments falsely constructing through the capitalist modes of production the idea that happiness is subject to the ability to purchase commodities, in particular the home, leading to feelings of alienation. Consequently, the first subheading is “Female characters as the main drivers for homeownership”.

The second common thread was that the characters in the works studied in this chapter desire the trappings of a middle-class lifestyle, or one could say upward social mobility, as they were told that this would provide them with decent living conditions. In order to fit into middle-class society one would need to have their own home. However, the Franco regime, in its desire for political stability and economic growth (as discussed in Chapters Two and Three) predominantly only provided ownership as a route to meet the needs of the population and thus through the market economy, mass media and State sponsored vehicles such as NO-DOs and schemes such as VPO, duped society into believing that the dream of homeownership was necessary and possible for everyone. The lack of social housing and the various laws that severely restricted the rental market, policies initiated by the Franco regime but continued by subsequent democratic governments, meant that renting was not provided as a viable option. Consequently, the second subheading is “Upward social mobility”.

We see within works such as *Últimas tardes con Teresa* the desire to escape a working-class background and join the upper classes. In this instance, the home, as well as being a necessity to provide security and protection, it is also seen as a marker of becoming middle-class, simply another must-have commodity to possess. In later works, such as *Deprisa, deprisa* and *El otro barrio* we also see how not owning your own home marked you as abnormal and thus you were rejected from the predominantly middle-class society. We see how the characters subsequently felt marginalised and neglected and thus yearned to fit in by purchasing their own home, renting was insufficient.

Cultural works studied in this chapter include the films *El pisito*, *El verdugo* and *Deprisa, deprisa* and the novels *Últimas tardes con Teresa* and *El otro barrio*. The majority of works studied throughout this whole thesis demonstrate some level of alienation, but the works cited here have the commonality of the characters undertaking extreme behaviour in order to obtain their fantasy of homeownership, be it becoming State executioner (*El verdugo*) or committing armed robbery (*Deprisa, deprisa*). The extreme behaviour is a representation of how the author/director sees the Spanish populace behaving out of character in order to follow the hegemonic discourse and, as such, shows how hegemonic discourses of capitalism and commodification along with the ideology of homeownership have become so ingrained in the protagonists that they will do anything to realise their dreams. Additionally, the works chosen span the period under review with *El pisito* at the start of the turn towards capitalism and to a construction-led economy. Both *El verdugo* and *Últimas tardes con Teresa* were released/published during the *desarrollismo* period, a time of massive growth within Spain. The film *Deprisa, deprisa* was released just after the 1978 constitution and the Transition to democracy and finally *El otro barrio* was published at the start of a massive property boom in

Spain that lasted until the 2008 recession. These works, therefore, represent the journey of the hegemonic discourse surrounding homeownership within Spain and ultimately show that little has changed in this respect over the years.

### **Female characters as the main drivers for homeownership**

Within the cultural works studied throughout the whole thesis, it is within *El pisito* that homeownership, rather than rental, as an overriding goal really started to emerge. In *El inquilino* reviewed in Chapter Three, it is clear that the overriding goal is having a flat of their own, and although some of the options explored are clearly that of ownership, the idea of purchasing a home, rather than renting, is not as overt as within *El pisito*. Given that Rivero-Zaritzky comments that the film shows the audience “el momento histórico-económico de la Madrid de los años cincuenta se reproduce en el microcosmos de los personajes.” (p. 69) I would argue that *El pisito* can be used as evidence that by at least as early as 1958 the outlook towards homeownership started to alter and it could now be considered to be one of the main goals of the Spanish populace.

Many films, for example *La gran familia*, propagated the idea that happiness went hand in hand with the ownership of particular commodities, including that of the home, which encouraged the audience to dig deep into their pockets. However, despite this coercion many simply were unable to afford the luxury of their own home or took on high levels of credit to achieve this goal. The trajectory to this position of consumerism can be seen in the development of the dominant capitalist discourse within earlier films such as *Surcos* and *¡Bienvenido Mister Marshall!*. In both these films we first see the appearance of the desire for commodities. For

example, in *Surcos*, we see Tonia's obsession with silk stockings and how she believes this will make her happy. Within *¡Bienvenido Mister Marshall!* we see the villagers of Villar del Río line up around the central square to list what commodities they want from the imminently expected Americans and the brilliant parody of the American dream when one villager dreams that the USA provide him with a tractor. Therefore, by the late 1950s, I argue, through the analysis of the trajectory of these works, we can see the rise of the market economy and the world of commodities as central topics of cinematic fiction. It is this capitalist ideology that was extended to the home within *El pisito* during the urban housing crisis.

Patricia Lucas in her 2010 article entitled "Imágenes de ficción para cuentos realmente viejos. Madrid y el problema de la vivienda: *El verdugo*, *El pisito* y *La vida por delante*" discusses how these three films use humour to reflect the social reality, particularly in relation to the housing problem within Madrid during the 1950s and early 1960s. She discusses how the use of humour allowed these films to avoid censorship<sup>65</sup>, but also how the narrative was related to reality, but also different from it, and thus to her these films portrayed an extended realism. Consequently, in her opinion *El pisito* was not only about the unachievable desire of homeownership, but about the poverty and overcrowding in the *corralas* and the much-desired new flat was a symbol of a new life, one of a middle-class consumer. The main gist of her article is surrounding the use of humour, which although interesting and helps explain the films' popularity, is not relevant for my specific argument surrounding homeownership. However, it does discuss the aspiration to be middle-class which fits into my arguments surrounding the role that capitalism played in selling the middle-class status as an achievement of happiness.

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<sup>65</sup> Although *El pisito* was actually banned for six months (Labanyi, 2013, p. 396).

Rivero-Zaritzky in his 2005 article “Rafael Azcona en *El pisito*. Visión social de su tiempo” discusses the rural exodus and overpopulation within Spanish cities at the time of the film’s release. He also opines that the dominant ideology of capitalism, particularly in relation to ownership, has driven the actions of the characters in the film. Another scholar, Loredana Comparone’s later 2015 article entitled “Dando vueltas por Madrid: espacio urbano, descomposición y realismo ideológico en las películas españolas de Marco Ferreri” analyses Ferreri’s Spanish films, including that of *El pisito*, by focusing on accessibility to urban spaces and the process of political normalisation through the hegemonic discourse during the *desarrollismo* period under the Franco regime. Comparone argues that Ferreri’s films consciously manipulate the medium of cinema and use humour and parody to expose the cracks and highlight the broken promises with respect to Spain’s ideological path of international capitalism and commodification. Both these articles are relevant for my work as I argue that the protagonist’s extreme behaviour is partly as a result of the desires falsely constructed by the capitalist hegemonic discourse and their attempt to achieve homogeneity, to fit in with the rest of society. However, I take this one stage further by looking specifically at the falsely constructed desire for the commodity of the home and also by linking this extreme behaviour to a feeling of alienation.



Fig. 16: *El pisito*: the crowded kitchen of the *corrala* (minute 16)

In *El pisito* we come to partially understand why Rodolfo and Petrita were willing to go to such extreme lengths to obtain a flat as it shows the poverty and intense overcrowding in the *corralas*<sup>66</sup> at the time. The *corrala* was crowded, dirty and noisy, but there was music everywhere with friendly inhabitants, including lots of children. A feeling of claustrophobia is created using the visual and audio chaos of the film, where bodies, voices and objects constantly bounce off each other. Often you cannot even hear what the protagonist, Rodolfo, is saying as the other characters are talking over him and people are constantly having to squeeze past each other in the small corridors and rooms of the *corrala*. This is highlighted in one particular scene (see Figure 16), shot in the small kitchen of the flat from the perspective

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<sup>66</sup> A *corrala* is similar to a tenement building with a central courtyard and flats being accessed via staircases leading to galleries overlooking the courtyard. These are typical of old Madrid and were often built with many floors. They were considered to be cheap housing for the poor and were usually overcrowded and not well maintained.



of the corner of the table and using what appears to be natural lighting. In this scene there is a baby on a potty on the kitchen table while the mother watches on, another lady is cooking and trying to eat her dinner at the same table, there are five children playing in the background and a gentleman sat in his bedroom which is a cordoned off section of the kitchen, while Rodolfo also sat at the kitchen table, still wearing his overcoat, with his hat lying in the corner of the table at the forefront of the shot, watches silently on with a look of resignation to his fate. From his state of dress, it would appear that he is ready to leave the flat as he has clearly had enough of the chaos. However, in contrast his look of resignation implies that this scene is nothing out of the ordinary in the world he inhabits. There is no background music or central dialogue, just a cacophony of voices struggling to be heard over each other which only serves to emphasise the lack of personal space, both physically and mentally, in these overcrowded *corralas*. There are children everywhere which would seem to be a nod to the regime's politics of *familias numerosas*<sup>67</sup> which of course only exasperated the overcrowding. We are also shown how out-of-date these central urban spaces have become, how ugly and disagreeable they are, with little to no privacy, evidenced by the man's bedroom in the noisy and crowded kitchen.<sup>68</sup>

Spanish society was starting to yearn for the better and happy life they saw in adverts, films, magazines etc. and they were led to believe that this lifestyle could be easily purchased through the ownership of commodities, like that of the home. It is no coincidence that the new, modern

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<sup>67</sup> In 1941 the *Ley de Protección de Natalidad* and the *Leyes de Protección de Familias Numerosas* were passed which banned the dissemination of family planning methods and the distribution of contraception along with providing financial incentives and special benefits for large families (Linhard, p. 9).

<sup>68</sup> However, these spaces do have a certain vitality and a level of community that is lacking in the more modern flats that the protagonists aspire to. We see evidence of the community created in the *corrala* throughout the film, for example in the opening scenes when Rodolfo goes to comfort doña Martina (Concha López Silva) when she is woken up in the night, how he helps the old man with his stool and bird cage, how the children want him to see their new puppy, how everyone knows him and joins in conversations (even if they are not wanted) and so forth.

flats that the protagonists in *El pisito* desire mirror the images of New York skyscrapers, at the time considered the epitome of modernity. The desire of Petrita to own her own home evokes the idea of the American dream, where life is happy, content and carefree, if, of course, you own your own home and it contains all the necessary commodities for a middle-class life, the fridge, freezer, washing machine etc. Urban space, and more specifically the desire for a home, is the backdrop in which the clash between the promises of the new capitalist Spain and the true social economic backwardness of the real Spain is represented. The promised myths of cars, free time, modern flats in skyscrapers etc., become disturbing icons for the protagonists and the inaccessibility of these consumer goods to the disenfranchised highlights the empty promises of the regime and capitalism as a whole.

The visit to the new out-of-town flats, still under construction in a suburb called *Ventas* (see Figure 17) is revealing. The blocks would have almost certainly been part of the *Plan de Urgencia Social* which built many out-of-town developments during the period in which the film is set. The couple walk down on the opposite side of the street to some empty fields, towards a series of identical tower blocks panning out into the distance. The new blocks are clean and modern, but repetitive, identical, impersonal and characterless, and are presented as completely isolated in the newly created suburb. As they start to walk to these blocks the camera angle changes and we see line after line of identical tower blocks in the other direction. The audience is overwhelmed by the massive expanse of the housing estate – a whole new homogeneous town deposited amongst farmers' fields far from amenities and the city centre, evidenced by a herd of goats passing their tram when they arrive. These homogeneous, newly erected *barrios* on the fringes of towns and cities could be described as Augé's non-places where there is little to no social interaction. These non-places link to Lefebvre's recalibrated

alienation as they are generally conceived spaces under State control and, according to Lefebvre, it is conceived spaces that alienate us from lived space. The image ties in with the images of the new *polígono de viviendas* shown within the NO-DOs and the films of the Transition analysed in this thesis. The camera's view remains fixed while the couple approach the flats, getting smaller and smaller and eventually become too small to discern (minute 20). Their miniscule size compared to the constant view of the seemingly never-ending tower blocks disappearing into the horizon serves to accentuate the sheer scale of this huge out-of-town *polígono* and the insignificance of the individual within the new capitalist, consumer society. It reminds us how the individual has been converted into an object, someone to purchase commodities and feed greater profits into the greedy capitalist machine.



Fig. 17: *El pisito*: the new flats (minute 20).

The contrast between the modern high-rise blocks and the *corrala* is stark. The area in which the new flats are situated is empty, devoid of children, the quiet streets are wide and open and there is a feeling of light and modernity. The couple's conversations portray their longing for a home with space; space to think and eat without a potty on the table and children playing (see Figure 16). The couple see these new buildings as a promise of a completely new middle-class life. This is part of the attraction of these flats to Petrita and Rodolfo, somewhere they can start afresh and leave their old worries back in the *corrala*. The couple have bought into the hegemonic discourse that to occupy these new flats with all the mod-cons would buy them happiness, as well as provide the privacy and security of owning their own home, and Petrita would be able to have her longed-for family.

Consequently, it is after visiting the new suburb and being able to visualise the possibility of a new flat and new life, that the couple start exhibiting extreme behaviour in order to satisfy this desire. In the logics of the film, the awakening of this possibility has acted as a catalyst for them as they cannot wait any longer to satisfy this need. It is at this time that Rodolfo brings up the topic of his potential marriage to doña Martina and the possibility of inheriting her flat. At first, Petrita is scandalized and distraught, but as the days go by, she starts to see the benefits of the idea and it is her that convinces Rodolfo to go ahead with the charade as she believes it is the only solution to their desperate situation. It becomes clear as the film progresses that there is nothing more important to Petrita than taking over doña Martina's assets, to own her own home, even allowing the love of her life to marry another woman.

Scandalously, Petrita's ultimate goal is the death of doña Martina so she can obtain possession of her flat. As a work colleague of Rodolfo explains, if doña Martina doesn't die soon, Petrita is capable of killing her with her own hands! Indeed, when she hears about the imminent death of doña Martina, she immediately resigns from her job as a nanny and arrives at the flat with her suitcases (minute 64) and starts assessing the furniture, ornaments and also the current lodgers, despite doña Martina still being alive. Her impudence and apparent greed are astounding, particularly when she starts rifling through drawers while the old lady sleeps behind her. She even wakes up doña Martina, who is on her death bed, to ask where her savings book is and eventually discovers it behind a painting on the wall above the old lady's bed. In retrieving the book, it falls on doña Martina's head, which is the last straw as the knock finally kills her. The desperation of Petrita to own a flat and the assets that go with it almost justifies her extreme behaviour, which is accentuated by the comical slant of the film and this contrast makes it even more shocking to see.

This storyline of Petrita in *El pisito* ties into the ideology of the Franco regime as women being procreators and homemakers. However, the reality was that many working-class women needed to work in order to survive. In 1954 *Teresa*<sup>69</sup> informed women of their options within the labour force, with Petrita's job as a nanny being considered a role for working-class women. This classification of Petrita as working-class in the eyes of society could explain why, at the end of the film, she so readily leaves her job in order to become a homeowner and a stay-at-home mother; markers of having left her working-class roots behind and having achieved middle-class status.

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<sup>69</sup> A magazine produced by and for the *Sección Femenina de la Falange*.

The character of Petrita is a complex one. She is clearly very maternal which is evidenced by her interest in the lady's baby on the tram on the way to view the new modern flats. When she disembarks from the tram, she is in fact carrying the baby in her arms. As a consequence of the Franco regime's ideology towards women, having a maternal instinct was a mark of goodness within Spanish society at this time.<sup>70</sup> Within the film, there are clear moments when we see the film's acquiescence with the Franco regime's ideology on women. Indeed, although the film is clearly critical of the repression of the Francoist State and the burgeoning capitalist ideology, so heavily promoted by the regime, the film appears to actually reinforce the view of women as homemakers and procreators while the man is seen as the provider and protector. For example, in *El pisito* the role of working out how to either pay for or, in this instance, a way of obtaining such an expensive item as a flat, is still assigned to the man. Given this, I would argue that the film wishes to portray Petrita as a normal, good woman, who was determined to have a home of her own in order to raise a family and was convinced by the hegemonic discourse that owning your own home was the only route available to achieve this goal. This view is supported by the words of Rodolfo's work colleague who states that Petrita is obeying the "imperativo biológico sueño de tener hijos" and that "como para formar una familia es imprescindible tener un techo" (Rivero-Zaritzky, p. 71) Petrita is no longer a young woman (she is in fact 42 years old), and her biological clock is ticking meaning her maternal urges are becoming too strong to ignore.

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<sup>70</sup> Although promoted by the regime, it must not be ignored that in many countries often women's priorities are different to men, putting family and children higher up the list whereas men pursue a career as much for themselves as for their family (Massey, 1995, throughout).



Fig. 18: *El pisito*: Petrita manipulating Rodolfo after visiting the high-rise flats (minute 22)

These conventional gender roles are evident through Petrita's manipulation of Rodolfo to force him to obtain the flat that she feels she so desperately needs to start a family and are demonstrated in one scene where Petrita and Rodolfo are walking home at night after viewing the modern high-rise flats that day (minute 22) (see Figure 18). They are walking alongside a cobbled street and in the usual fashion of the directors, the protagonists are disturbed and distracted by other people within the scene. In this instance there is a one-legged man with a crutch who obscures them from the shot when begging for money, there is a cyclist on the road set above theirs who seems to follow them as they walk and there are homeless people set behind the protagonists either trying to sleep or eat. In my opinion, these various characters are inserted into the shot to continue the idea of overcrowding, poverty and lack of housing within city centres in Spain at the time. However, I would also argue that their desperate state, desperate for money to survive, is to remind the audience that the Franco regime marginalises and neglects those that do not fit into their ideology of a consumer, middle-class society. The

couple are centre stage and as they walk towards the camera take up a greater proportion of the screen such that at the height of their argument the camera is focused solely on them. Petrita is clearly very upset, shunning Rodolfo when he tries to take her arm, telling him to leave her alone. She is distressed that she is unable to have children as she still has to continue to live with her sister due to Rodolfo's lack of ability to obtain enough funds for their own flat and this is driving her to attempt to emotionally manipulate Rodolfo into taking action. Consequently, he suggests marrying doña Martina which initially appals Petrita and she breaks down in tears and runs off into the deserted and dark streets. A bemused and confused Rodolfo stares after her, not quite sure what to do, as he purchases olives from an old couple operating a stand. He is represented as being desperate to satisfy Petrita so even such an extreme course of action would be worth it. The streets are silent apart from towards the end of their argument when we hear a loud siren. I argue that this is to provide a sense of urgency to Petrita's predicament. To her, it is an emergency situation, if they do not get a flat soon she will be unable to have children due to her advanced age.





Fig. 19: El pisito: Petrita manipulating Rodolfo in the restaurant (minute 27).

We also see Petrita's emotional manipulation of Rodolfo in a later scene (minute 27) (see Figure 19) which is set in a restaurant. Yet again the directors use other actors to crowd and distract the protagonists. It should be noted that such disruption in the continuity of the narrative is common within neorealist films in order to expose the social conditions of the time. (pp. 55-56. Rocchio, Vincent F.). Petrita clearly wants to have a serious chat with Rodolfo about their plans to obtain a flat, but they are first disturbed by a waiter, then an elderly gentleman playing a bottle and then a waitress who is brazenly eavesdropping on their conversation much to Rodolfo's consternation. These constant interruptions throughout the film demonstrate, for Rodolfo and Petrita, the impossibility of having any privacy in the public domain and therefore reinforces the idea that the couple need their own place in order to be able to be a true couple. Petrita takes control of the situation as she has been up all-night thinking about their predicament and has decided that the extreme solution of Rodolfo marrying the old lady is their only route to obtaining the much coveted flat. It is now Rodolfo's turn to be appalled at the suggestion. Petrita then starts to cry loudly, making a scene and saying that Rodolfo swore that

he would do all he could to get them a flat. An embarrassed Rodolfo hurries her out of the restaurant and by his concerned face it is clear that he would do anything to make her calm down and be quiet, even marry the old lady.

It is my argument that these scenes, both reinforce the conventional and hegemonic ideology surrounding gender roles, particularly that of women as procreators and home makers, as well as being critical of the regime in that it shows the material and social need for greater housing that the regime is not providing. Within the film, we are constantly shown the subhuman conditions of overcrowding within the *corrala*, such that it becomes clear that, although Petrita clearly does entertain the fantasy of being middle-class with all the necessary commodities as seen in the scene where she assesses doña Martina's flat, if she is to fit in with the regime's ideology of women as mothers, to her, owning her own home in order to raise her children is a necessity.

To summarise, it is clear that Petrita is the driving force behind the desire for a new flat and the trappings of an elevated lifestyle. Petrita is thus combining two dominant discourses of adhering to the role of women in wanting to have the traditional family while also adhering to the capitalist aspiration for homeownership and middle-class status, to be able to give up her job allowing her to be a stay-at-home housewife with all the up-to-date domestic commodities.<sup>71</sup> These two hegemonic discourses, combined with Petrita's material need for a dignified, private space of her own in order to raise her longed-for family demonstrate the triality of roles that a woman was encouraged to adopt in the 1950s. Taking all this into account

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<sup>71</sup> We see the desire for modern domestic appliances when Petrita starts to assess doña Martina's flat even though doña Martina is not yet dead. She complains about the old-fashioned furniture and is clearly appalled at the state of the antiquated kitchen even driving the maid to tears with her derogatory comments.

I would argue that, although we see Rodolfo being dominated by Petrita with regards to getting a flat, the film does not ultimately present her as a greedy woman. She is desperate to have a family as according to the hegemonic discourse of the Franco regime she cannot be a real woman without having her own children and to do so she has a material need for a dignified space. However, the film is critical of the manipulation of her character by the hegemony of consumerism in falsely constructing the idea that she cannot be happy without her owning her own flat, rather than rental, in one of the new out-of-town high-rise blocks. Thus, she believes she can only be happy through homeownership, and it is this that is driving her to undertake her extreme and shocking behaviour.

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Similar to *El pisito*, the main focus of *El verdugo* is the lengths that a Spanish citizen will go to in order to obtain the must-have commodity of a modern, high-rise flat. As Patricia Lucas states, “La espiral de pequeñas cesiones y sacrificios necesarios para adquirir la ansiada vivienda nueva en propiedad llega aquí al extremo” (p. 10). In this film we see the terrible consequences to the characters of following the consumer dream of homeownership.

I would agree with Juan Rios-Carratalá who, in his 2007 article entitled “*El verdugo* (1964) la tragedia grotesca”, discusses how life and the rules of society have trapped the protagonist in the film to follow the path of becoming the State executioner in order to obtain the prize possession of a flat. It is clear that José Luis is trapped by society’s expectations and aspires to meet these by getting married, having a family and owning his own home. However, Rios-Carratalá has not, in my opinion, taken this argument far enough, in that it is the new market economy of Spain, with its empty promises, which has falsely constructed the desire for homeownership that has become imbued within the norms of society. This falsely constructed

normalisation by the capitalist economy, although promised to all, is only achievable to the moneyed few, hence why those that aren't within the middle-class sector of society, can only achieve this goal by undertaking extreme behaviour.

In his 2014 article, “¡No lo haré más: la sociedad española en *El verdugo* de Berlanga”, Marcos Rafael Cañas Pelayo discusses how the film is not solely about the death penalty but a representation of the reality of society during the 1960s and how there is a lack of freedom due to the dominant discourse of Spain at the time. Cañas Pelayo also discusses how both Carmen and José Luis due to their jobs (or father's job in Carmen's case) are marginalised from society, considered pariahs, so that they find solace in one another. I expand on this argument to explain why the protagonists display extreme behaviour in order to achieve the commodified aspirations constructed by the dominant discourse to fit in with a society that currently shuns them.

Cañas Pelayo comments when discussing *El verdugo*, “El estilo de esta obra es una extraordinaria fuente para comprender mejor la realidad de todo un periodo, en este caso, la ciudad de Madrid, durante la década de los 60” (p. 142). I would also agree with Ríos Carratalá, who, to paraphrase, states that the average Spaniard in the late 1950s/early 1960s has no choice but to follow the rules of society set by the hegemonic discourse which is imposed with such force that it becomes as inescapable as the attempt to survive (p. 220). Consequently, *El verdugo*, as a representation of the reality for the average Spanish citizen, demonstrates the terrible housing conditions during this period, along with the impossibility of being free from the hegemonic discourse and the resulting lengths that Spanish society were willing to

undertake in order to follow the dominant discourse alongside the real need of homeownership, actions so extreme that they manifest alienation.

I agree with Matt Losada's comments in his article "The Executioner" published in 2017 that the film is about how all, but the wealthy, have resigned themselves to the rules and traps set by society which ultimately force them to act against their will in order to be accepted within said society and achieve the falsely constructed aspirations. However, I link this aspiration to that of homeownership.

Within *El verdugo*, the scene when the family, with a heavily pregnant Carmen, first view the half-constructed flat (minute 38) (see Figure 20) is pivotal in that it is here we come to fully understand the overriding desire to own this new, modern flat. The new flat, in contrast to their current one, is seen as elevated from the dregs of society down below, highlighted by the worker who openly defecates against a tree down on the ground beneath the flat's window and José Luis, in the role of "lord of the manor" tells him off as it is within his view through the non-existent flat window. The scene is shot from the corner of the flat showing the long length of an expansive family room with barely anything but windows for walls such that the flat is full of translucent light. The family are seen laughing and joking as they are unable to contain their exuberance over being able to achieve the dream of owning this new flat. Consequently, the light atmosphere created matches the physical natural lightness we see through the expanse of windows and high elevation. We see through their dialogue how, through the idea of ownership, the family are able to project their fantasies onto this building site – summer breakfasts on the balcony etc. - and José Luis becomes very territorial over what he deems to be his flat and therefore clearly feels responsible for, clearing up some rubbish that a worker

drops on the, ironically, filthy, dirt floor of the building site. Similar to *El pisito*, it is after visiting the new flat that José Luis can visualise it as an achievable dream and it is then that he starts to exhibit extreme behaviour. When another family lay claim to the flat (as Amadeo is now retired and therefore no longer eligible for it), José Luis does the unthinkable and agrees to become the new State executioner thereby securing ownership of the must-have flat. This demonstrates the lengths that he is prepared to go to in order to provide his new family with a home.



Fig. 20: *El verdugo*: the new flat under construction (minute 39).

When we see the family once they have moved into the new flat they are clearly very happy. Everything is new and shiny with a new mattress and blankets being delivered. The contrast between this new, whitewashed modern flat and the old, dark and cramped flats where Carmen and José Luis used to live is stark. Carmen's old flat was situated down a dark, dirty alley way with broken furniture and house paraphernalia littering the street. The paint was peeling off the walls and the flat was too small for her and her father's needs with the dining table being

used as a depository for the executioner's tools, the garotte, a place to have tea and an ironing board (see Figure 21). There were few mod-cons and the furniture was old-fashioned and dark. There was no privacy with the noise of a crying baby coming through the windows as Carmen shouted down to her neighbour to deal with the child. José Luis sub-let a bed in the flat of his older brother. The flat was very small and mainly used as a workroom and shop for his brother's tailoring business, there was little space left for living in. José Luis' bed was in the lounge and on full view to customers arriving to have their suits tailored, with only three shelves above to house all his belongings. He shared this space with his brother, his wife and two children, meaning he had to queue to use the bathroom. He had no privacy and was unable to stop one of the children playing with his belongings on the shelves while standing on his bed. The flat was below street level and José Luis got soaked when a car goes through a puddle, splashing dirty water through the window. In contrast the new flat is bright and airy with modern, light furniture (see Figure 22). There are fresh flowers on every surface and the dining table is only being used to feed the baby. The flat has all the mod-cons with a kitchen range and its own bathroom and the couple and her father each have their own private bedroom with a door they can shut for privacy. Indeed, the idea of privacy is nailed home when we see Carmen and José Luis having relations in their own room, where José Luis is able to use his foot to close the door to the rest of the family. In contrast to this, the other time we see the couple having relations is in Carmen's old flat where they are disturbed by her father and José Luis has to hide behind a door as Carmen hastily does up her dress.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> After Franco's victory in the civil war sexual behaviour out of wedlock was criminalized (Morcillo, 2007, p. 749).



Fig. 21: *El verdugo*: the crowded and old-fashioned flat of Carmen and her father (minute 12).

The film therefore appears to imply that money, which enables one to purchase commodities, and a home can bring you happiness. The new flat is akin to a new life away from the misery of their previous lives. However, the film does not allow the audience to linger on this happy scene as promptly a letter is delivered stating that José Luis is required for an execution in Mallorca. For him, the idealistic consumer lifestyle they were enjoying has a heavy price, “la pérdida de la capacidad de decisión personal dentro de un mundo en el que la satisfacción de determinadas necesidades materiales se presenta como una lucha por la supervivencia” (Lucas, p. 10). This heavy price is the insidious dark side of what someone from a working-class background needs to do in order to achieve the false aspirations created by the hegemonic discourse of homeownership and it is this extreme behaviour that leads to alienation.





Fig. 22: *El verdugo*: the new flat and the delivery of commodities (minute 56).

We can link the character of Carmen with that of Petrita from *El pisito*. Both are the driving force behind the desire to have a home and the trappings of a middle-class lifestyle and are thus following the dominant discourse of a consumer housewife. Additionally, both are also following the dominant discourse of the idea of family. Petrita will not start a family without a flat of her own, being 42 her desperation is evident in her shocking and extreme behaviour and what she is willing to accept, i.e., her betrothed marrying another woman in order to achieve her goal. Similarly, it is Carmen's pregnancy that is the catalyst for the desperate need for a flat in *El verdugo* as she now has a material need for a dignified and private space to raise her family. We see a heavily pregnant Carmen viewing the half-constructed modern flat and in the new, shiny flat she is feeding her now newly born child at the dining table. Therefore, both of the female characters are following the hegemonic discourse established by the Franco regime of procreators alongside that of consumers. On the arrival of the news regarding the Mallorcan execution, Carmen is initially upset as her new 'perfect' life has been destroyed, but quickly she realises that the execution is in Mallorca and she starts to dream of the most middle-class of all

activities, a holiday, even callously trying on a bathing suit in front of a distraught José Luis. I would argue that, although the film, as a whole, is implicitly critical of the regime, for example surrounding its policies on housing and capital punishment, here the story line reinforces the regime's misogyny by representing women as pushing the men to pay the heavy price of having their own home. Carmen's callousness in front of her husband's clear distress is a visual depiction of just how alienated the characters have become due to the falsely constructed desire to be middle-class.

While the rest of the family enjoy their holiday in sunny Mallorca, a panic-stricken José Luis goes to the prison to try to resign, explaining how the situation has arisen due to his need to have a new flat for his family. Interestingly, the prison is erected and decorated in a similar way to Carmen's old flat with lime washed walls painted in a darker colour below and a lighter colour above. I would argue that this similarity is no coincidence as the prison is being portrayed as the old working-class way of life that José Luis wants to leave for his new life in the bright, modern flat of the middle-class. When Amadeo comes to give José Luis advice, José Luis talks to him from behind bars thus making it appear that it is José Luis who is the prisoner, trapped not only by his job but also by society. José Luis appears as the condemned man when he is told by the prison commissioner "Si dimites ahora, perdemos el piso" (minute 83) (see Figure 23). When the actual prisoner is taken to the place of execution through the prison courtyard it is José Luis who needs the most persuasion and support as he is dragged to perform his duties. José Luis has become a prisoner of both the regime directly, which had the power to force its citizens into submission, and the hegemonic discourse of a capitalist society, propagated by the regime, where the flat has become an object of desire. The new flat has converted into a commodity fetish for the protagonists of the film.



Fig. 23: *El verdugo*: “Si dimities ahora, perdemos el piso” (minute 83).

Similar to Petrita in *El pisito*, we see Carmen conforming to her conventional gender role in her manipulation of José Luis into marrying her by exposing him and their lascivious activities to her father when he disturbs them in the old flat. Later, when a very heavily pregnant Carmen, her father and José Luis go and visit the new flat under construction she is very much in her domain, correcting José Luis on the placement of furniture and deciding who will have which room. It is clear that the home, including the purchasing of domestic goods, is her responsibility and one that she looks forward to. She also appeals to the protective side of José Luis when he refuses to become the State executioner, he asks how can he kill a human when he cannot even kill a fly, and she answers that the new flat doesn't matter to her, but think of their imminent child, doesn't he need a roof over his head (minute 43)? As such, we can see how Petrita and Carmen are the main drivers behind the desire for homeownership and how they use their feminine ways to manipulate and control their other halves into carrying out the extreme

actions that eventually lead to the women obtaining their dream and owning their own property. The extreme behaviour by both the women in manipulating their men and the extreme actions the men are forced to take thus constitutes alienation.

### **Upward social mobility**

In both *El pisito* and *El verdugo*, it is principally the women that are seen as the consumers and motivators behind homeownership in order to raise a family and as a marker of social upward mobility to middle-class. In contrast, the novel *Últimas tardes con Teresa* by Juan Marsé, published in 1966, but set at the time of the 1957 student uprisings within Spain, focuses on a male protagonist, Pijoaparte/Manolo who wishes to achieve a home and middle-class status, whereas the female protagonist, Teresa, as a member of the upper-classes, already possesses this elevated position along with the coveted commodities. *Últimas tardes con Teresa* denounces the Francoist Catalan bourgeoisie and how it suppresses the dreams and desires of the working-class through the promotion of its dominant ideology meaning that it wishes its citizens to become the stereotype of the perfect Spaniard while having to follow the rigid rules and class divisions set by a capitalist society.

The critical bibliography of secondary sources on this novel is extensive so I have limited my summaries to the parts of works that are relevant to my thesis. Shirley Mangini González in her 1980 article entitled “‘Últimas tardes con Teresa’: Culminación y destrucción del realismo social en la novelística española” discusses the rigidity of society and that both Pijoaparte/Manolo and Teresa believed in the myth of the other class, not the reality. She also discusses Pijoaparte/Manolo’s obsession with commodities and becoming respectable so that

he earns the respect of both his and Teresa's class. From analysing the two cultural works discussed above, one thing I note that differs between Pijoaparte/Manolo and Carmen and Petrita is the commodities that they desire. Pijoaparte/Manolo wants the suit and briefcase that denote a professional, middle-class worker in an office, rather than the overalls of his working-class brother, alongside the sports car, city house and holiday villa. Consequently, I would argue that these types of commodity tie into the dominant discourse surrounding gender distinction. As explained above, the woman was meant to provide children and look after the home, whereas the man was meant to provide for his family, drive the family car and provide his family with a roof over their heads. Another gender distinction is how with respect to the women in *El Pisito* and *El verdugo* the house is very much entangled with consumerism as another commodity, but is also to a degree real and necessary. However, within this novel the home that Pijoaparte/Manolo covets is pure fantasy, an illusion of grandeur. This is a further difference between the genders and is in line with the regime's ideology surrounding women in that the woman feels that she needs the home to provide for her family, whereas the male character desires the home as a status symbol. This difference between the gender characterisation leads into the idea of class or, I should say, upward social mobility.

Enric Bou looks at the division between the classes of the novel within his book *Invention of Space: City, Travel and Literature*. He discusses how the novel divides spaces into the definitions created by Deleuze and Guattari in that the rigidity of striated space creates a wall or division between Pijoaparte/Manolo and Teresa. It is this wall that Pijoaparte/Manolo wishes to destroy as he wants to enjoy the lifestyle that Teresa takes for granted. I agree with Bou in this regard. For example, the opening quote in the book "Hay apodos que ilustran no solamente una manera de vivir, sino también la naturaleza social del mundo en que uno vive" (Marsé, 2017, p.

19) sets the scene for the rest of the book. This is underlined by the use of Manolo's nickname Pijoaparte<sup>73</sup> during the first 64 pages of the book which disappears when he meets Teresa and he becomes Manolo<sup>74</sup>, only to reappear as Pijoaparte in the last two chapters of the book when he is forced to return to his own world. Here we see the allusion to appearance versus reality, where Manolo is a character created for the role of securing Teresa and the aspired middle-class status, whereas Pijoaparte is the reality of a working-class petty thief. We are told how Manolo's voice, hands and the colour of his skin all stigmatize him and mark him out as working-class. Thus, the suit and tie that Manolo desires as a symbol of a middle-class job is also to camouflage his working-class roots, similar to El Lute within the two *El Lute* films who dons on a suit in order to fit in with the predominantly middle-class Spanish society as discussed in Chapter Three. For Manolo owning homes, like the Serrat's Blanes villa and San Gervasio townhouse, is synonymous with success and reaching the echelons of their class. I extend Bou's point further to take into account the market economy and hegemonic discourse when analysing the characters in the novel and in my particular focus on homeownership.

Geraldine Clearly Nichols in her 1975 article entitled "Dialectical Realism and Beyond: "Últimas tardes con Teresa"" connects the work of Juan Marsé with that of the 1962 novel *Tiempo de silencio* by Luis Martín-Santos with respect to their use of dialectical realism. She visualises the four main characters in relation to their class and each other with Maruja and Hortensia being constants in their class, whereas Teresa bends towards the lower classes and Manolo towards the upper classes, never meeting and diverging once more at the end of the summer. This visual representation of the characters clearly illustrates Teresa's dabbling within the working-class

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<sup>73</sup> A term which ultimately denotes his role within the novel as a *gigolo* in order to achieve upward social mobility to the desired echelons of the middle-class.

<sup>74</sup> From now on I will refer to Pijoaparte/Manolo simply as Manolo for ease of reference.

world, which she never fully commits to and treats almost like a game, and Manolo's desperate but failed attempt to reach middle-class status. I agree with her conclusion that Marsé perceived society at the time as completely rigid, it was an individual's class that determined their fate and there was no hope for change. However, I would extend this argument further in that it is this exclusion from the upper-classes that drives Manolo to behave in the way he does. He wishes to join the echelons of the middle-class, to enjoy the benefits and luxuries he sees them enjoying. The dominant discourse of capitalism manipulates him into believing that if he were to obtain the necessary commodities, including that of the home, then he would be accepted and his life would become complete and happy.

A further article written by Carolyn Morrow in 1991 is entitled "Breaking the rules: Transgression and Carnival in *Últimas tardes con Teresa*" and centres on Bakhtin's concept of carnival and how during these "islands of time" (p. 834) a more democratic society is allowed with classes being able to mix. I would agree that the only time that the classes appear to mix in the novel is during festivals or parties, for example within the opening scene at Teresa's house in San Gervasio where Manolo first meets Maruja. According to Carolyn Morrow, this ties into the theories of Bakhtin who argued that such 'carnivals' break down any hierarchical barriers (p. 834). Although this theory does have some merit, I would argue that in this particular novel the carnival scenes actually highlight the differences between Teresa and Manolo's classes rather than connect them. For example, Manolo is not actually invited to the party at Teresa's house in San Gervasio, but instead sneaks in pretending to be one of them. Additionally, the scene in the disco in Guinardó shows that Teresa clearly does not fit in with the crowd in the club or understand why the working-class locals behave the way they do with their lewd comments and open attitude towards sex, particularly when she stumbles upon a

young couple having sex in an upstairs side-room when looking for Manolo to save and protect her. This is supported when, after she eventually finds Manolo and explains what has happened to her, Manolo comments “¿En qué mundo vives, niña?” (p. 364). Tying this into my argument, we see here the difference between appearance and reality. Manolo as a con-artist/gigolo is all about creating an appearance that is different from the reality. In the first example given, the appearance that Manolo portrays is one of Teresa’s friends so that he can gain access to the San Gervasio party, but this is far from the reality of his actual life in Monte Carmelo. This could be considered to be symbolic of the market economy during the period of *desarrollismo* in Spain. Where a fantasy life that Manolo sees Teresa enjoying with her sports car, two homes and ability not to work, is promoted as achievable by all, in reality this is not the case for him and those from his class.

Kirsten Thorne’s “The revolution that wasn’t: sexual and political decay in Marsé’s *Últimas tardes con Teresa*”<sup>75</sup> written in 1997 highlighted how Manolo does not fit in with his class. Her focus on Manolo’s “obsessive need to escape the alienation he feels from his social class and family” (p. 3) is relevant to this thesis. This exclusion ties into the film *El verdugo* where, due to their jobs, the exclusion of Carmen and José Luis is what partly drives them in their desire for a flat of their own in order to fit into what they see as ‘normal’ society.

Focusing on homeownership, we can see Manolo’s first experience and reaction to Teresa’s upper-class space in the first scene of the book when he enters the garden of her San Gervasio

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<sup>75</sup> There are elements to this work that are not relevant to my approach, namely the use of sex in power relations and the concept that Manolo is alienated due to his previous homosexual relationship with El Cardenal as homosexuality and society’s treatment of those with a different sexual orientation is not an area that I am focusing on within this thesis.



home during a *verbena*.<sup>76</sup> The garden is luxurious, exhaling “aromas untuosos, húmedos y ligeramente pútridos” (p. 26), with a grand willow tree, swimming pool, paths bordered with hedges, an area of grass where a sofa has been placed, a dance floor on the terrace and is large enough to accommodate around 70 partygoers. We see how Manolo changes his whole demeanour when he enters the space of the upper-classes. Before he goes into the garden his face is “melancólico y adusto, de mirada grave y piel cetrina” (p. 20) and his eyes “como estrellas furiosas esa vaga veladura indicadora de atormentadoras reflexiones, que podrían incluso llegar a la justificación moral del crimen” (p. 20). He is trembling slightly before he enters the garden, but when he pushes open the gate, his hand stops trembling and “su cuerpo se irguió, sus ojos sonrieron” (p. 21). This change in demeanour is calculated as Manolo has entered the garden in order to invoke some restitution as he feels that the upper-classes are not only unaware but purposefully ignore the misery and poverty that he has to endure on a daily basis. Manolo is particularly resentful as he feels that it is something he is entitled to due to his mother’s connection with the Marques of Rhonda.

The narrator continually refers to the indifference of the truly privileged, “la serena indiferencia, casi desdeñosa” (p. 21), and we see this in the casual and carefree way they dress, very few wearing formal ties and suits, unlike Manolo who suddenly realises that “Son más ricos de lo que pensaba” (p. 22). I would argue that the toy boat, still floating in the pool, denotes the leisure lifestyle of the upper-classes who have time to play with such toys. It also could be considered synonymous with how, in the end, Teresa treats Manolo, as a toy that can be abandoned at will. However, despite this air of indifference, the upper-classes do not allow

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<sup>76</sup> A *verbena* is the term for a garden party on the eve of a Saint’s Day, in this case San Juan.

anyone to enter their protected realm. Principally due to his southern appearance a group of three young men challenge Manolo's attendance at the party. It is Manolo's ability to act, to portray utter confidence and arrogance in the face of his accusers - his ability to reflect their air of indifference and disdain - and his quick thinking, that allow him to stay.

We see Manolo's desire for his own home and the home as a symbol of his struggle against class barriers with respect to the villa in Blanes which features heavily within the novel. Its impenetrability, with its high pine tree fence is symbolic of the inability of upward social mobility and hence could serve as Lefebvre's fracture lines where geographical space is divided depending on class and as a metaphor of Bou's class wall established by the hegemonic discourse between Teresa and Manolo. The villa is also a place of inactivity where the leisure classes take their holidays, something that is impossible for the working-classes, as evidenced by the significant debts that Manolo acquires during his summer off working as a motorbike thief for El Cardenal while courting Teresa. The destruction of a section of this fence by Manolo and Sans shows how they were continually fighting against their position in society, wanting to break down class divisions, and also their jealousy of those that are able to own such luxurious commodities. The fact that the Serrat family do not repair the fence is a sign that they do not need it, they are exclusive anyway and the working-classes, despite their desire for upward social mobility, are unable to obtain access to their world as a symbolic virtual fence has been imposed by the regime and the rules of society. Manolo never gets to own his mythical villa he so desires, as he is forced to endlessly repeat the same cycle that traps him in his class and his district of Monte Carmelo, as Shirley Mangini Gonzalez states "El destino de Manolo es, típicamente, determinado por unas rígidas leyes sociales" (p. 17). Again, linking this to the other two films studied above, we see how the expectations of universal accessibility to the home

and other commodities are socially created by the capitalist market economy, but in reality, this is only a mirage as this consumer world is only accessible to those that can afford it. Manolo's delinquency, both in stealing motorbikes and his masquerading as something he is not (a con artist), links back to the behaviours of both Rodolfo from *El pisito* and José Luis from *El verdugo*. All these characters, in order to secure ownership of their own home, have had to undertake extreme behaviour, either immoral or illegal. The gap between what our protagonists are promised and what they can actually achieve is what forces them into undertaking extreme behaviour that they would normally consider insufferable and/or intolerable and hence constitutes alienation.

To Teresa's family, Manolo is a nobody, a working-class delinquent, and he therefore never stands a chance in their world. His fantasy of belonging to their class and owning his own home was, by the end of the novel, shattered. Within the novel there is extensive descriptions of Manolo's district, but little about the house that he shares with his brother and sister-in-law. Instead, similar to the vistas we see later in *Deprisa, deprisa*, the descriptions of Monte Carmelo often look out towards the distant city centre, the commercial hub of consumption which is denied to the working-class inhabitants of this *barrio* "Desde la cumbre del Monte Carmelo y al amanecer hay a veces ocasión de ver surgir una ciudad desconocida bajo la niebla, distante, casi como soñada...." (Marsé, p. 77). Additionally, the houses in Monte Carmelo are described in general terms, rather than Manolo's house specifically "...se ven casitas de ladrillo rojo levantadas por emigrantes, balcones de hierro despintado, herrumbrosas y minúsculas galerías interiores..." (Marsé, p. 37). The description of the *barrio* in which Manolo lives does highlight the material needs of the working-class to have a dignified space to call their own. This only serves to intensify Manolo's desire for a home such that when he sees the homes and riches

that the upper-classes possess his desire for his own home is piqued as he covets what they have. In contrast, the houses of Teresa, the city house in San Gervasio and the holiday villa in Blanes, are described in vivid detail – aspects of which are discussed above with respect to the inaccessibility of the Blanes villa and the gardens of the San Gervasio property. I would argue that Marsé intentionally avoids a detailed description of Manolo's home as he is trying not to construct the commonly used neorealist image of an exploited and victimized working-class. However, the narrator does linger on the houses of the rich as he wants the reader to understand that the hegemonic discourse has turned the home into a commodity fetish, thus driving Manolo's extreme actions.

We see Manolo's desire to be able to own homes like that of the Serrat family throughout the novel, but most keenly within the scene of him and Maruja playing mistress and master of the house at Blanes when they believe they are alone. On his last night with Maruja, it becomes evident that Manolo has always wanted to possess the Serrats' luxurious symbols of wealth when Maruja responds to his wish to have a tour of the villa with "Por qué siempre piensas en lo mismo" (Marsé, p. 132). Manolo does not want to just see the left wing of the house, where the servants' quarters are, but wishes to view the right wing where the lounge and library are situated with their "misteriosa conexión con la idea del lujo" and where the parquet floor has a "lustrosa musicalidad siempre fue para él un indiscutible signo de riqueza" (Marsé, p. 134). We see how, similar to his change in manner when he enters the luxurious garden in San Gervasio discussed above, Manolo's demeanour automatically changes when he enters the luxurious side of the villa. To Manolo the walk around the house fulfils a fantasy of an ideal life with ownership of all the commodities that the capitalist dominant discourse denotes as necessary for true happiness, with the home being at the centre of this aspiration. Again, the

visualisation of his dream in the form of the Blanes villa reinforces Manolo's overriding desire to become middle-class.

The *quinqui* film *Deprisa, deprisa* also shows how the characters have become alienated from themselves in order to follow the hegemonic discourse of homeownership. Similar to *El pisito*, *El verdugo* and *Últimas tardes con Teresa* the narrative of the film centres around the protagonists' desire to have the trappings of a consumer lifestyle which has been sold to them, through the hegemonic discourse, as a way to achieve contentment and acceptance in society. A further similarity is that the group of delinquent youths also undertake extreme behaviour in order to achieve this goal, in this instance in the form of armed robbery. Indeed, in Spain in 1978 there was a 320% increase in bank robberies, with one being robbed every 56 minutes (Labrador-Méndez, 2015, p. 43).

Tom Whittaker's "No Man's Land: Transitional Space and Time in Carlos Saura's *Deprisa, deprisa*" (2008) highlights the relationship between space and identity within the film. I take Whittaker's arguments one stage further in that the film shows the stark contrast between the mirage created by the hegemonic discourse of a consumer society supposedly achievable by all and the reality of being excluded from said society. This social gap, or, one could say, Lefebvre's fracture line, led to the protagonists undertaking extreme behaviour in order to achieve the dream that has been sold to them by the capitalist market economy. This demonstrates that the hegemonic discourse, what Gramsci would call a process of power where the State rules through coercive control, with respect to ownership of commodities and climbing the social ladder remained in place from the 1960s, when the previous works in this chapter were written, past the Transition to democracy and into the 1980s when *Deprisa, deprisa* was released.

Additionally, of course, I add a focus on homeownership which is something that Whittaker does not undertake.

More recently in 2020, Tom Whittaker has analysed the film *Deprisa, deprisa* in relation to the sound of the delinquent voice within his book *The Spanish Quinqui film: Delinquency, sound, sensation* (pp. 144-155). Here Whittaker talks of the real-life of actor Valdelomar with respect to his criminal activities and addiction to heroin. Whittaker then compares the voices, raspy due to heroin addiction, of the delinquents who tend to drop their consonants and elide words to the crystal-clear voices of the owners of the car that the delinquents are stealing at the start of the film. This analysis of the film highlights the marginalisation of the teenagers who are drowned out by “the soundscape of social order” (p. 155) and the “close relationship between geography and the voice” (p. 155), clearly denoting the teenagers as delinquents from the outskirts of Madrid. This is in line with my conclusion that the delinquents are positioned, both socially and geographically, outside consumer society, excluded from the commercial city centre. However, Whittaker concentrates on sound and the voice whereas I concentrate on space and in particular the concept of homeownership.

I agree with Whittaker that this peri-urban location is supported by the soundtrack which uses traditional flamenco music, positing the protagonists as rural migrants, but it is set to a modern, disco beat updating it to a more urban sound, thus establishing the film as somewhere in-between traditional and modern and rural and urban (p. 683). The urban-rural dichotomy of the protagonists’ situation is all pervasive in the film and their demarcation as delinquent youths descended from working-class migrant families provides an ambience of separation, of difference from the norm, clearly positioning them as outside the consumer society, the

dominant ideology within Spain at this time. I argue that it is this exclusion that is the driving force behind the youths undertaking the bank robberies. They want to be accepted in society and due to the hegemonic discourse of capitalism they believe, like Manolo in *Últimas tardes con Teresa*, that this is achievable through the ownership of commodities, including the home. In order to reach this goal they need money so they undertake extreme behaviour and turn to crime.

Marianne Bloch-Robin looks at two of Saura's films in her 2009 article "Los Golfos et Deprisa, deprisa de Carlos Saura: de la conquête impossible du centre par la marge a l'omniprésence de la périphérie". She discusses how the centre of the city pushes the protagonists to the peripheries and even beyond. Again, I agree with her argument, but take it one stage further to examine the protagonists' reaction to being excluded from something which the dominant discourse implies is open to all and will be the path towards happiness, namely owning a home.

Germán Labrador-Méndez also discusses *Deprisa, deprisa* within his chapter entitled "La Habitación del Quinqui. Subalternidad, biopolítica y memorias contrahegemónicas, a propósito de las culturas juveniles de la transición española". Here, Labrador-Méndez talks of the youths within the film being excluded from both the commodities and benefits that the middle-class sector enjoys, but also from employment, meaning that it is almost impossible for them to escape their cycle of poverty, very similar to the trapped youths of *Colegas*. He also discusses that Ángela's entry into delinquency is part of her project of social upward mobility in order to gather sufficient funds to permit her to join middle-class society and escape her current condition of exclusion from the world of consumerism. I take this argument a little further in

that I show that this desire to be middle-class is a false construction of the hegemonic discourse which I achieve through a focus on homeownership.



Fig. 24: *Deprisa, deprisa*: the city centre as viewed from the wasteland of the peri-urban (minute 61).

The feeling of being marginalised is evidenced by the fact that the protagonists are always looking into the city rather than being in it. Saura chooses to extensively use wide panoramic shots with the ugly wasteland that appears to be created from the construction of the motorway ring-road, the M30, in the foreground and the urban, commercial city centre in the background (see Figure 24). This unequivocally situates *Deprisa, deprisa* as a social film where the protagonists are framed as being excluded by the city and, as such, we see evidence of Lefebvre's fracture lines where geographical space is divided depending on class. Similar to *Colegas*, the urban space is divided by the M30 ring-road which both physically and metaphorically separates these youths from the city centre. In one particular scene, the youths go for a walk in the wasteland and sit on a hill overlooking the ever-present road with its constant noise of traffic and fumes and look into the city beyond. The city takes on the look of



a formidable, impenetrable space with no character and identity, just row upon row of foreboding identical blocks. This further provides a feeling of oppression and homogeneity such that those that are forced to be different due to their poverty and neglect by the rest of society, often seen in the experimentation of the young, are ostracised and excluded. These youths are not conforming to or even understand the rules of society. We see an example of this with the character of Pablo in his lack of ability to comprehend Ángela's desire for a place of her own. The high-rise housing blocks surrounding the inner-city shield it from view and hence metaphorically and literally protect the city from these migrant youths, much like a traditional city wall, but acting like Bou's wall created by the capitalist hegemonic discourse that divides the space into the haves and have nots. It is this denial and lack of acceptance by society to allow these delinquent working-class youths to direct their own lives that drives them further into delinquency. To them the only route out of this cycle is criminality and it is this extreme behaviour that Ángela is willing to undertake to achieve her goal of a flat. Thus, she is represented as believing that by following the hegemonic discourse of homeownership she would be accepted by society and achieve upward social mobility.

In the film, Ángela conforms to the hegemonic narrative of homeownership as well as the narrative of women as homemaker and, using the money she has accumulated from her crimes, purchases her own flat with all the electronic, modern trappings of a middle-class lifestyle. However, she is not completely alone in her desire to own a flat, as in one scene Meca jokingly divides up his share from one of the robberies, choosing to spend it first on a flat, secondly on a car and thirdly on a holiday, leaving only one bill for taxes. This demonstrates that despite their lives on the periphery, outside normal society, the all-pervading desire to own a home has even reached some of the lumpenproletariat boys.

Ángela's flat is part of a huge *polígono de vivienda* which stands on the side of a busy train track; the noise of the trains is often heard in the background and are easily visible from the balcony. Beyond the trainline and surrounding the blocks of flats, is the empty wasteland that we see throughout the film. Thus, the flat, that Ángela has chosen as her home, sits in the same no-man's-land that the youths grew up in. This is evidenced where in one scene the couple, Pablo and Ángela, romantically and happily cuddle on the balcony, accompanied by the deafening and constant sound of trains prohibiting any conversation (see Figure 25). Regardless of this modern world of high-speed trains encroaching on their idyll and Ángela's obvious desire to own the trappings of the middle-class lifestyle and to partake in 'normal' society, I argue that the film presents the characters as considering the peri-urban to still be their home and that they are most happy here. The acceptance of the spatial division of society is part of the social hierarchy set by the hegemonic discourse of the Franco regime before the Transition and we can see here how this has been accepted and continued, despite the onset of democracy, into the early 1980s.



Fig. 25: *Deprisa, deprisa*: the view from the balcony of Ángela's new flat (minute 60).

However, it could also be argued that Ángela chose this location to try to minimise her loss of community and roots. Those that moved to these out-of-town housing estates were often segregated from the rest of society partly due to the location of the blocks, but also due to the lack of open spaces and facilities provided and the design of the flats, meaning that there was a reduced ability for social interaction (Cuesta, p. 7). We see this within both the earlier films studied in this chapter, where the characters in *El pisito* and *El verdugo* enjoyed a community and collective solidarity, that they tended to lose in their quest for owning a home. However, despite Ángela having grown up in one of these housing estates, we see throughout the film that she has been able to form a strong bond with her band of criminal delinquents who are all from the same peri-urban space. So, by choosing to remain in the same area Ángela may hope that she is able to retain this hard fought for community. This is of course a reflection of the different periods under review as in both *El pisito* and *El verdugo* the couples are moving out of inner-city housing into the out-of-town housing estates that Ángela grew up in.

We see evidence of Ángela wanting to settle down throughout the film. This desire ties into the work of Massey studied in Chapter One, where settling down in a fixed owned home is considered the norm within capitalist society. When Ángela first visits Pablo's flat it is dingy and dark with no care or love for the property evident from Pablo. However, in the next scene set in the flat we see Ángela opening the window blinds onto the hot morning sun to retrieve her pot plants from the balcony and place them in the shade. Here, in contrast between the flat under Pablo's sole care and now, Ángela is denoted as the care giver and consequently I would argue that this scene is very gender specific showing that, despite the political changes leading to democracy, the woman is still hegemonically perceived as the homemaker. Hence, Ángela is

simply fulfilling her prescribed role. This gender difference is emphasised later, when in bed (see Figure 26), Pablo asks Ángela what she would want to do with her share of the spoils. She replies simply and unequivocally that she would buy a flat. Pablo, who sees a flat as just somewhere to live rather than a home, does not understand why when they already have somewhere to live; asking her whether she wants to live in a palace. The image of the couple on bed is a standard representation of intimacy implying that they wish to become a respectable couple. This supports my argument that the extreme behaviour of armed robbery is a means to an end, particularly for Ángela, in order to provide her with the funds to purchase a home. The gender specific desire to have a flat, in Ángela's instance somewhere of her own that she can make look nice, somewhere she is in charge of and somewhere she can put her own stamp of identity on, ties into the previous films *El pisito* and *El verdugo* where the women were the driving force behind obtaining the coveted flat. The main difference here between *El pisito* and *El verdugo* is that in *Deprisa, deprisa*, despite the continued hegemony of women as homemakers, within the now democratic Spain it is acceptable for women to earn and possess their own money. This means that Ángela does not need a man to provide her with the flat, she is capable of 'earning' the money (albeit through crime) herself, which demonstrates that the representation of women in 1980s Spain, although retaining some of the old gender ideologies, are slowly becoming more independent.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> However, it should be noted that Ángela's disguise when she is undertaking a bank robbery is always as a man. This would imply that the director has further acquiesced to stereotypical gender distinctions given that women should be seen as gentle, care-providers and not violent bank robbers. And also, that she would not have been taken seriously, had the people she was trying to rob known that she was a woman.



Fig. 26: *Deprisa, deprisa*: Pablo asking Ángela what she would like to do with her share of the money from the robberies. She responds that she would like to buy a flat (minute 43).

We see further evidence of the marginalisation of the inhabitants of certain *barrios* in Elvira Lindo's 1998 novel *El otro barrio*. The neglect and abandonment of these neighbourhoods and their inhabitants is highlighted by Lindo herself within the prologue to the novel where she looks back on the twenty years since its publication. Here she talks about the working-class suburbs on the peripheries of cities being largely absent in previous works and that her characters would normally be invisible to the world if it weren't for her writing about them in her novels (p. 2).

Within the novel we see how the extreme actions of Ramón provide him a possible escape route from his neighbourhood, Vallecás, and continual cycle of poverty. In an implausible series of events, Ramón manages to almost kill two people and actually murder two more, plus a dog. His actions provide him access to Marcelo as his lawyer. However, despite the crimes of Ramón appearing extreme to the reader, criminality is so accepted within Vallecás that the narrator

comments, “Probablemente a nadie le extrañó aquella carrera. Cuando un chico corre de esa manera o bien ha robado un bolso o bien pierde al autobús o ha tomado algo. Ninguna de las tres cosas son extrañas en el barrio.” (pp. 49-50). Additionally, one of the murder victims, *El gordo*, is described as a criminal three times as bad as Ramón as he grew up within a criminal family (p. 45). This apparent casual reference to criminals within the working-class barrio when the book was written in 1998, when Spain was supposedly booming at the start of another housing bubble, further confirms how these pockets of working-class neighbourhoods remained incredibly poor, such that, similar to *Deprisa, deprisa*, the inhabitants were forced to turn to crime in order to meet their desires and needs. However, unlike the earlier films and novels, although Ramón does escape his *barrio* due to his extreme actions, he is still a long way off achieving his goal of being a middle-class homeowner. However, through his actions he has met Marcelo who has lit the spark that may eventually lead to his newly formed desires being met.

Carmen Servén-Díez states within her 2012 article “Los barrios de Elvira Lindo” that, within the novel, space takes on the crucial element of representation and shows the reality of contemporary society. Consequently, the space of the novel is linked to the socio economic and historical meaning of society and is used to illustrate certain forms of life and perceptions (pp. 352-353). She argues that the use of the working-class barrios in Lindo’s books allow certain topics to be considered, for example how urbanisation has social consequences, the homogenisation of space and the relationship between the middle-class centre and the working-class neighbourhoods on the peripheries. The assertion that the book is a representation of the reality at the time supports my reasoning for choosing this novel for my thesis. It allows me to use my analysis of this novel in my arguments of how Spanish society

perceived the concept of homeownership at the time. However, Servén-Díez, although linking the novel to space, does not link it to the hegemonic discourse at the time nor to homeownership. This is therefore an area which I explore further.

We understand through the memories of Marcelo that there was once a vibrant community in Vallecas. Marcelo remembers his father talking of his old friend Mariano Fortuna, Ramón's father, "de su honestidad, de su camaradería. Valores antiguos." (p. 55). Marcelo's parents' *corrala*, that had been originally developed by architects to house the poor, was overcrowded but with a tight knit community, everyone knew everyone's business "todos los vecinos sabían lo que se concinaba en las casas del lado, por el olor" (p. 55). The *corrala* had been destroyed to make way for new houses and his father had died without ever seeing the flat that the Ministry had promised him. As the new flat was never passed onto his father, Marcelo inherited nothing from his parents. Thus, through the experience of this one family, Lindo has described, in line with the theories of Harvey and Smith concerning capital accumulation and the loss of the original spatial communities, how a once vibrant community was destroyed through the redevelopment of the neighbourhood.

Marcelo, like Manolo from *Últimas tardes con Teresa*, never felt that he fitted in with his own class, "Nunca sintió ese sello del barrio que dicen tener algunos vallecános, al contrario, desde muy joven se encontró ajeno y en cuanto pudo se marchó de allí, no sólo físicamente, sino también de la clase social en la que había criado" (p 55). He worked hard as a child to flee the *barrio* and move his new family into the terraced house in Chamberí, a central middle-class neighbourhood of Madrid. It is made apparent, certainly until the last paragraph of the novel, that living in a different *barrio* allowed Marcelo, now a successful lawyer, to enjoy a happy life,

which is conveyed in the simple joys of a lazy Saturday morning with his son and wife (pp. 97-8).

When Ramón visits Marcelo's house it overwhelms him due to its size, grandeur and cleanliness: it is so different from the home he knows and understands "No podría expresar lo que le pareció la casa de Marcelo porque la vio con los ojos del niño que ha vivido siempre en un piso de no más de sesenta metros cuadrados" (p. 109). It becomes clear to Ramón that one changes one's character depending on where one lives as Marcelo, when in his middle-class surroundings, behaves more refined and cultured, something he hopes will also happen to himself; "Daba la impresión de que aquí, en esta casa, el abogado se refinaba con el ambiente. A lo mejor a él le pasaba lo mismo." (p. 111). Yet again we come across the contrast between appearance and reality. It appears to Ramón that the man that enters the house is not the Marcelo he knows from his *barrio*, like Manolo in *Últimas tardes con Teresa*, he becomes a refined and cultured caricature of himself when associating with the middle-class, while the reality of his working-class roots are brushed under the carpet. While in the house, Ramón looks at himself in the mirror and hopes to no longer see himself as a murderer. Within the mirror, so often used in novels as a type of Foucault's heterotopia to both reflect and distort reality, Ramón hopes to be able to see another world, one free from the constraints of his *barrio*, living a life similar to Marcelo in a middle-class neighbourhood, with a perfect family and perfect house and all the necessary commodities. However, he is not yet able to make that jump and is constrained by his material reality and the actions of his past, "Se miró en el espejo del pasillo. El pelo un poco tieso, los ojos redondos, muy juntos, la misma cara de pardillo de siempre. No había manera, seguía siendo Ramón Fortuna, el asesino de Payoso Fofó." (p. 111).



However, the visit to Marcelo's house opens Ramón's eyes to what Spanish society perceive as being middle-class, and he starts to buy into the hegemonic discourse that commodities, principally that of homeownership, buys you the ideal, happy life. He starts to covet what Marcelo has "Se veía viviendo en aquella casa, pensó en sí mismo tumbado en el sofá, desayunando en la cocina..." (p. 112) and wants to experience the change in his demeanour that he sees Marcelo exhibiting. Therefore, I would argue that the character of Ramón is similar to that of Manolo from *Últimas tardes con Teresa* to the extent that both of these male protagonists are coveting a home, not simply due to need – to have a roof over their families' heads - but principally due to an all-encompassing fantasy to escape their working-class roots. Additionally, both of these protagonists wish to exhibit a change in their character, to reinvent themselves by moving into an elevated class. Manolo's acting skills do this to some extent, but his working-class southern roots always show through in the end and it becomes clear at the end of the novel that Ramón may not be able to move on from his past extreme actions. As such, Ramón has bought into the hegemonic discourse created by the Franco regime during the *desarrollismo* period and continued into the democratic period.

The only character who appears to have successfully reinvented himself is Marcelo, but at the end of the novel it becomes clear that he too was just acting out the part expected of him and that, similar to the rigidity of the class system in Marsé's 1966 novel, true upward social mobility is not possible even in the late 1990s, "Son los ecos que nos llegan desde el otro barrio" (p. 174). Hence, Marcelo, who has all the trappings of a middle-class lifestyle, including the home, has fallen within the gaps of society and actually feels like he belongs nowhere, he has become, using the terminology of Homi Bhabba, a hybrid trapped in metaphorical third space between two distinct social classes. The appearance of Marcelo as successful and middle-class belies the

reality of his working-class roots. This attempt to reinvent their personality by both Marcelo and Ramón, taking the mirror metaphor one stage further, the reflection of themselves enjoying a life of the upper classes, ultimately leads to alienation due to a lack of any true relationships as they are unable to be themselves with the people that they call friends and family.

We can link Marcelo's feeling of not belonging into the liminal status of the delinquent teenagers in *Deprisa, deprisa* where Ángela attempts upward social mobility through purchasing her own home. However, unlike Marcelo, Ángela is not willing to make a clean break and leave her *barrio* completely behind as she initially buys a flat in the same peri-urban space she has always inhabited. Having said this, in the finale of the film we see Ángela walking off into the sunset after the deaths of the rest of the criminal gang (see Figure 27). Who's to say where she will end up and whether she will make a success of her new life and, if so, whether, like Marcelo, she will feel that she belongs to her working-class upbringing or to a newly adopted middle-class sector of society. Saura, by ending the film on such an ambiguous note has left the determination of her fate in the hands of the audience. Perhaps this is a more realistic ending as, assuming the audience are a cross-section of society in Spain, the many deviations of her outcome will be determined by their own reality and aspirations which, as such, are a true representation of the Spanish population.



Fig. 27: *Deprisa, deprisa*: Ángela walks off into the sunset at the end of the film (minute 94).

## Conclusion

We can see within all of the artefacts studied in this chapter how the protagonists act completely out of character in order to obtain the coveted prize of their own home. The heavy price of enjoying a consumer lifestyle for the working-class is laid bare as we see the dark, and often criminal, side of the extreme behaviour committed in order to achieve the false aspirations created by the hegemonic discourse of homeownership. It is this out of character behaviour that ultimately alienates them. In *El pisito* we have Rodolfo marrying a woman many years his senior just to obtain her flat and Petrita causing the old lady's death due to her desperation to own the home and commodities she so covets. In *El verdugo*, José Luis is willing to become the State executioner, a job he clearly deplores, in order to obtain the flat he and his family desires. In *Últimas tardes con Teresa* Manolo is willing to reinvent himself in order to achieve upward social mobility with all the trappings that this entails, including that of a home.

In *Deprisa, deprisa* the delinquent teenagers see armed robbery as their only route to owning the commodities denied them, particularly the home and we see how Ramón in *El otro barrio* is willing to use the murder and attempted murder of a number of individuals as a way to escape his working-class *barrio* behind and obtain the middle-class trappings of a home.

Within these examples we can see the journey of alienation caused by the hegemonic discourse and how it has remained relatively static throughout the period under review, despite the political landscape changing from a dictatorship to a democracy. The narrative commencing in 1958 with *El pisito* continues all the way to our last example published in 1998, where we see the similar theme running through *El otro barrio*. Additionally, it becomes clear that those on the peripheries, living within the working-class neighbourhoods are still neglected, marginalised and denied access to the consumer world promised to them through the dominant discourse. Lefebvre's fracture lines which separate the rich and poor areas of the city are still clearly evident with the poor being trapped in their cycle of poverty on the outskirts of consumer society.

The distinction between gender becomes apparent in these works as the women are the main driver behind homeownership principally, I would argue, due to the Catholic ideology of women as mother and homemaker adopted and promoted by the Franco regime such that the women felt that they need somewhere dignified to raise their family. We see the continuance of this genderised ideology post the Transition, albeit in a weaker form, through the character of Ángela in *Deprisa, deprisa*. However, in striving for homeownership over rental, it is clear that they are following the hegemonic discourse and policies that the Franco and subsequent

democracies heavily promoted through economic and ideological policies that cultivated ownership.

To summarise, the works studied support the view that the hegemonic discourse surrounding homeownership within Spain during the period under review was aimed at manipulating the Spanish popular classes into adopting the falsely constructed desire of homeownership and has manipulated the discourse and socio-economic policies that make purchasing a house the most readily available route to decent housing. This desire and the continued exclusion throughout the works studied from the commodified world due to a liminal, marginalised status leads the characters in the films and novels studied above to behave in an extreme manner in order to realise these falsely constructed desires of home ownership and middle-class status and hence become alienated.

## Chapter Five

### Refuge and resistance

This chapter undertakes a close visual or textual analysis of chosen cinematic and literary texts in order to demonstrate how homeownership could be as a result of the need for a place of refuge or resistance within Spain during the period under review. The works chosen were all published or released after the Transition to democracy, although *Los girasoles ciegos* is set in the early 1940s just post the civil war. That is not to say that there were no works produced which represented counter-hegemonic attitudes and actions during the Franco era, as mentioned in the cases of *El inquilino*, *El pisito* and *El verdugo* which are reviewed in Chapters Three and Four. However, the works included here differ in that they specifically use the *space* of home as a form of resistance or refuge rather than just the character's actions being against or aligned with the hegemonic discourse of homeownership. Perhaps one exception to this could be *Las verdes praderas* reviewed in Chapter Three where, at the end of the film, Conchi burns down their second home to relieve the family of the burden of keeping-up with middle-class expectations. However, it was decided to keep the analysis of this film in Chapter Three as it so clearly demonstrates the falsely constructed desires of homeownership with particular reference to second homes which was a burgeoning market at the time of the film's release. Within the works studied in this Chapter the idea of ownership, although the framework of following a capitalist hegemonic discourse and the commodification of the home remains, could be considered to be portrayed differently to the earlier works studied as other aspects of ownership with respect to desires, aspirations and feelings of belonging become entangled with the central capitalist definition. However, the central definition still prevails. For example, even

when discussing *El cor de la ciutat* we see how the hegemonic discourse has even manipulated the squatters into desiring a home of their own, even if this home is subverted as a symbol against capitalism.

I have divided this chapter into two sections. The first is 'The home as a place of refuge', where the purchase of the home is due to the need for ontological security and a place free from the State's and society's panopticon gaze. We see the desire for somewhere free from State control and the characters using the space of home as somewhere to provide a level of ontological security within the two *El Lute* films, *El Lute I: Camina o revienta* and *II: Mañana seré libre*. Additionally, the family home is central to the plot within the short novel *Los girasoles ciegos* as it is a refuge against the persecution of the Franco nationalist government, represented through the character of Lorenzo's teacher, *hermano Salvador*.

The second section is 'The home as a place of resistance' where the home becomes a place of rebellion against the hegemony of capitalism. The home as a place of resistance is supported by Doreen Massey who contends that the home enables one to express one's disaffection with the dominant ideologies (Kilmasmith, p. 9). David Harvey also supports this by stating that "home is a place which enables and promotes varied and ever-changing perspectives, a place which discovers new ways of seeing reality" (Harvey, 1996, p. 104). This can be seen within an episode of the TV series *Verano Azul* entitled "*No nos moverán*" where the central character Chanquete refuses to bow down to significant pressure to sell his home to a property development company as he wishes to preserve a simpler, non-commodified way of life. Another cultural work that shows the resistance against unscrupulous property developers is that of the hugely popular novel *La piel del tambor* where computer hacking, kidnap and murder

are committed in a dispute over the development of the land on which a church sits. However, within this novel we learn that resistance can have consequences, intended or not, such that resistance may not always be the right course of action. Finally, we see a fight for a place to call home and to live an alternative life away from the ravages of capitalism in the eighth season of the Catalan TV series *El cor de la ciutat* when squatters were an integral part of the story line for the first time.

It should be noted that despite the differences between refuge and resistance many of the works chosen blur these two concepts in that seeking a place of refuge free from State and capitalist control is already an act of, one could say, *passive* rebellion, in choosing to live outside the hegemonic norms of society. However, despite this blurring, there is a defined difference between using the space of home as a refuge or for active resistance against the State and capitalist society.

### **The home as a place of refuge**

The first cultural work which I undertake a close analysis of is that of the two *El Lute*<sup>78</sup> films which have also been analysed in Chapter Three as an example of following the hegemonic discourse of homeownership. I argue in Chapter Three that the protagonist appears to be following the fixed hegemonic rules of society in trying to fit in by purchasing his own home. El Lute wishes to become an accepted member of society free from the racist persecution that dogged his early life as a gypsy, and he wants his family to enjoy a normal life, something that

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<sup>78</sup> Please refer to Chapter Three for a detailed critical bibliography of secondary sources for the *El Lute* films.



was lacking during his childhood as a gypsy. The films are analysed again within this section as it is clear that *El Lute* partially uses the purchase of his home, particularly the one in Granada, to fulfil a desire for ontological security and as a camouflage to ensure his continued freedom from prison. Ontological security is defined by Giddens as being confident and trusting in the world, felt mainly in the home, which Saunders opined was the principle reason for homeownership (see Chapter One). This emphasises how the home is a place free from State surveillance, a refuge, an example of Lefebvre's lived space, where *El Lute* and his family can be themselves and have greater control over their lives.

The idea of wanting to retain control in the private realm, particularly those that have been persecuted by the State, is supported by Miriam Lee Kaprow's work on gypsies in Saragossa in the 1970s. She found that, due to the racial persecution of gypsies during the Franco era, many gypsies wished to avoid any form of State participation. Consequently, many gypsies within her survey wanted to own their own homes to retain more control over their own lives and try to remain out of State control<sup>79</sup> (pp. 410-412). In the film, it is made apparent that *El Lute's* persecution mainly stemmed from his formative life as a gypsy which meant he didn't fit into the norms of urban life. For example, at the start of the *El Lute I*, which is set during the 1960s, we are shown *El Lute's* family of travelling merchants, who are living in an old-fashioned wagon. The family are sitting having dinner around a fire while *El Lute's* sister tends to their mother,

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<sup>79</sup> There was institutionalised racial stigmatization and prejudice against the gypsies during the Franco era, supported by the Penal Code of 1944 which complemented the earlier *Ley de Vagos* of 1933 (García-Sanz, p. 137). Gypsies tended to avoid participation in the State by not sending their children to school, not registering for  *carnet de identidad*, not sending their sons for compulsory military service and resisting proletarianization. Miriam Lee Kaprow discovered in her survey of gypsies in Saragossa during the 1970s that a large proportion of them did choose to own their own homes, many of them self-constructed homes within the *chabolas*, in order to have more control over their own lives. The regime attempted to move these gypsies to the newly constructed *polígonos de viviendas* to engage them within society and as such ensure that they were under greater State control (Kaprow, p. 412).

who is clearly very sick. The *Guardia Civil* tell them that they must move on with no understanding of their predicament (minutes 1-3). Later we see how the grave of the mother is filled with so much water that the coffin actually floats, but the mourners appear to accept that this is the norm for such a poor family, as after a pitiful attempt to empty the grave of water, the coffin is quickly lowered in with a splash with no comments by the mourners, who simply continue the prayers without pause (minutes 3-4).

We see the continued persecution of El Lute and his family in *El Lute I*, which is set in the 1960s during Franco's years of *desarrollismo*, with the protagonist and his common-law wife, Chelo, living in the slums of Madrid trying to make an honest living through selling metal goods (*El Lute I*, minute 15). The conditions in which they live are deplorable and they are clearly neglected and forgotten by the State. The walls of their hovel are made of mud with no windows, there is no door, simply a curtain to separate them from the street with their only room being set below street level. This is clearly not a place to bring up a young family with the only source of heat being a stove in the corner of the small room. Additionally, we see El Lute arrested time and time again, often for crimes he did not commit, and his family on the run, all of which provide a lack of ontological security as the family are continuously having to look over their shoulder and move from one rental house to another.

El Lute is trying to better his life and attempts to build a new home within the *chabolas* which is set against mounds of waste created by the construction of new blocks of flats just beyond. The juxtaposition of the new modern high-rise blocks in the background with the self-constructed hovels that comprise the *chabola* in the foreground is striking. It clearly demonstrates the modern way of life under Franco that the regime wished society to believe

as portrayed in the NO-DOs, compared to the reality of many of the working-class at this time. In my opinion, these newly created mounds of earth, waste from the high-rise blocks behind and hence a symbol of modernity and progress, that dwarf the hovel that El Lute is constructing, can be interpreted as serving as a metaphor for the might of the authorities and those from the commodified urban centre compared to rural migrants, such as El Lute and his family, who are considered insignificant and neglected. This image reminds one of the images of high-rise blocks seen in Chapter Three when discussing the NO-DOs (see Figure 4) and the film *Colegas* (see Figure 9) when the images bely the tower blocks as a symbol of the all-powerful State and as such undertake the role of conceived space as compared to the lived space El Lute is attempting to build for him and his family. Again, the imposing nature and height of the modern signs of capitalist progress are used to dominate and, in a sense, intimidate those that live beneath their shadow. They evidence that, before having his own home in Granada, El Lute was in a constant state of insecurity and experienced a feeling of not being in control of his own destiny as the State was continually persecuting him.

The lack of control over their own lives is further emphasised when a property developer comes along to demolish their home to make way for the development of more modern tower blocks. We see their home being destroyed by a bulldozer, with all their belongings inside, while Chelo looks on helplessly (see Figure 28). The fragile nature of their existence is laid bare as their home is flattened within a matter of seconds. El Lute is himself hiding from the authorities behind the previously mentioned mounds of construction waste and witnesses the destruction of his home and all his worldly goods with the backdrop of the identical, characterless, concrete monoliths behind (*El Lute I*, minute 35). I argue that it is this level of insecurity, caused by the

authorities<sup>80</sup>, that was one of the drivers for El Lute's determination to own his own home. It was immediately after the destruction of this self-constructed home that El Lute turns to his friend to express his desire to live in a block of flats "como los payos" and his ultimate goal to become a "ciudadano normal" (minute 39) and live by the accepted hegemonic capitalist rules of homeownership. I argue that the lack of security and constant persecution of him and his family leads him to have the desire for some level of control over his own life, thus he is seeking a feeling of ontological security that is obtained through homeownership. Consequently, the first home he owns, the house in Granada, becomes El Lute's security against further persecution.



Fig. 28: *El Lute I: Camina o revienta*: the destruction of El Lute's self-constructed home with the modern high-rise blocks behind (minute 35).

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<sup>80</sup> The authorities are represented as the Guardia Civil who are themselves corrupt, demonstrated by the horrific torture scene within *El Lute I*, and/or unscrupulous property developers.

It is only when the family settle in their Granada house that they experience some level of continuity. As the family start to get comfortable and put down roots, it becomes clear to the audience that El Lute believes that the disguise of a living as an affluent gentleman is sufficient. The film represents this feeling of security when both El Lute and his eldest son take gypsy wives and we see them enjoying a large family dinner on the terrace of the house (*El Lute II*, minute 74) along with a raucous party after El Lute's wedding (*El Lute II*, minute 84). It is clear to the audience that the family have been able to relax and enjoy life and are no longer fighting to survive against the constant persecution from the authorities – for a short while at least they have found refuge in their Granada home, it has become Lefebvre's lived space.

A novel that also demonstrates the home as a space of protection against society is *Los girasoles ciegos* which was published in 2004. Within the story, the survival of the Mazo family depends entirely upon the conservation of their home in which is hidden a secret place, the wardrobe, where the Republican father Ricardo conceals himself against persecution by the Franco regime. Consequently, the home takes on a central role as the protector of the family and is part of the narrative development. Within the novel the son, Lorenzo, calls his flat his refuge, which towards the end he realises is being destroyed by the encroachment of the State's discourse, "... me parecían síntomas de que algo funesto se fraguaba en mi refugio" (Méndez, p. 146). Therefore, at the start of the story the flat is a lived space, somewhere outside the realm of capitalism and the State, and the only place Lorenzo can be himself.

The novel is set in Madrid in the post-civil war period. During this time, the Franco regime consolidated the pre-existing perceptions of the Civil War by vilifying the Republicans and enforcing an almost religious, crusade-like memory of the Civil War within the psyche of the

Spanish populace. The Republicans were thought of as immoral and unpatriotic and animosity towards them was stoked to create an almost religious fervour against them. The author of *Los girasoles ciegos*, Alberto Méndez, was an ardent member of the *Partido Comunista Español* (PCE) and was himself under constant surveillance by the authorities and consequently, “writing enabled him to conflate his childhood experiences with his adult knowledge of the injustices committed by the dictatorship” (Ryan, p. 82). As discussed in Chapter Two, during and post the civil war the Franco regime denigrated the city and championed the countryside. However, the regime was based in the capital city of Madrid and consequently, they needed the city to undergo a transformation; to be reconstructed as a symbol of the new regime. For example, Republican buildings were destroyed and monuments, only to the fallen Nationalist heroes, were constructed in an effort to expunge any remnants of Republicanism (Ryan, throughout). Thus, within the novel we see the transformation of Madrid to a conceived space, under State control, enforcing homogeneity and disseminating the State ideology of the Nationalist post-war identity.

The enlightening 2016 article by Lorraine Ryan entitled “The Nullification of Domestic Space in Alberto Méndez’s *Los girasoles ciegos*” was invaluable in my arguments that the home is a place of refuge. I am in complete agreement with her regarding the Mazo’s home being a place where the family, particularly Lorenzo, can be themselves, as compared to the outside world where Lorenzo has to play a part to protect his father and himself against reprisals. I also agree that the invasion of the flat by his teacher, a monk at the *Sagrada Familia* school called Salvador, was akin to him losing control of his selfhood. Within the novel brother Salvador represents the Church and its misguided alignment with the Franco regime. Ryan focuses on the transformation of Madrid into a receptacle for the Franco regime’s ideology and social control

and that the Mazo family are using the home as a juxtaposition of this, a place where Lorenzo does not have to hide his true identity. Before the invasion by Salvador, Lorenzo's life in the flat was a happy one. He describes it as his world and universe (Méndez, p. 112) and how, "En casa vivíamos una complicidad parlanchina, en la calle vivíamos en bullicio silencioso" (Méndez, p. 121). In his house he could be a carefree, chatty child, but outside of this refuge he had to pretend that his father was dead. I would therefore argue that, at the start, Lorenzo's home is a refuge from the Franco regime, which is why it is so terrifying to Lorenzo that the regime and Church, through the guise of Salvador, manage to deterritorialise it.

Although the reader is made aware of the secret of Ricardo's hiding place in the flat, it is not until page 124 that Méndez talks of the '*inefable [de] describir*' fear of the invasion of the Mazo family home. We learn, through Lorenzo's recollection, of the fear of his family bubble being burst always being in the background of his mind; the fear of 'them' managing to penetrate their hidden world of family happiness. The sound of the lift squeaking and spluttering up to their third floor takes on an ominous tone and Lorenzo's terrifying memory of the almost paralysing fear he has when recovering his father's papers while hearing insults being hurled at his mother all help to manifest the dread that Lorenzo and his family had of the authority's encroachment on their private space.

The reader later learns how during the summer after the end of the civil war, four men had turned up in the middle of the night dragging Elena, Lorenzo's mother, to the kitchen for a chaotic, but terrifying interrogation, attacking Lorenzo and ransacking their home. While this was happening, Ricardo was hidden in the cupboard unable to contain his tears at the impotence he felt to protect his family. This event created a constant state of anxiety of the

authorities invading their home once again and discovering Ricardo; the family's refuge was collapsing. The novel is written from three perspectives - the recollections of an adult Lorenzo, the voice of Lorenzo as a child and the ravings of brother Salvador. As the encroachment on the Mazo home escalates by Salvador, the matter-of-fact approach by the adult Lorenzo clashes against the increasingly hysterical and sinister obsessive voice of Salvador and the childlike, but desperate fear of Lorenzo. The effect is a sensation of an overwhelming and enveloping darkness giving a feeling of desperation for the family, and the reader, to escape it.

The world of his father, the wardrobe, is separated from the real world by the use of a mirror "un espacio triangular disimulado tras un tabique sobre el que se apoyaba un espejo" (Méndez, p. 117). Lorenzo also describes his life as a mirror, where one part of his life is his reality within the flat and the other is the altered image of his life in the outside world, the one where his father is dead. The mirror form of a heterotopia is thus evident here where Lorenzo uses it to neatly compartmentalize his life, where one side is his family life within the flat and the other is the persona he portrays to the outside world, how he has to behave within his neighbourhood, with his teachers and under the oppressive silence imposed by the State, a place where his father does not exist; "como un péndulo, yo era capaz de estar a un lado y a otro sin confundirme gracias a las enseñanzas del espejo" (Méndez, p. 121). Therefore, Lorenzo, through the use of the real but also virtual mirror, is able to pass between his real world, where his father is alive literally behind the wardrobe mirror, what in Lefebvrian terms would be considered a lived space, to the other side of the wardrobe mirror, where he is forced to act the unreal role of a grieving son, a place his father can no longer inhabit as it has become a State controlled conceived space. The flat acts as a conduit between these two worlds and is



thus a refuge to Lorenzo as it is the only place he can truly be himself and, as such, the flat is part of his identity.

As the narrative develops, the State continues to encroach on the family's lived space of the flat culminating in the overall control of the flat and converting it to a conceived space. This continued encroachment by the State on the Mazo's home/refuge forces Ricardo to become, not only a prisoner within his own home, but he starts to fade into the lie that Elena and Lorenzo propagate for his protection, that of being dead. At one point during the novel, when Elena is forced to explain Ricardo's shadow in the passageway, she states that it must be a "fantasma" (Méndez, p. 133) and as time passes all traces of Ricardo are carefully removed from the house such that "estaba pero no ocupaba lugar en el espacio" (Méndez, p. 142). I have discussed above how the home is **part** of Lorenzo's identity, but I would argue that to Ricardo the only identity left to him is contained within his family and home, his refuge. His gradual removal from the home points to his removal from society and eventually from his family, such that he no longer inhabits the same world as everyone else, but instead a place in-between, a place where ghosts can be found, which is represented by the mirrored wardrobe. Thus, his death at the end of the novel comes as no surprise.

### **The home as a place of resistance**

We have seen in the example of *Los girasoles ciegos* how, within their flat, the family attempt to resist the hegemonic discourse. This could be considered a form of dissidence against State control, although of course in this example it fails given the ability of the State to invade the

Mazo's family home both in the form of the police and the Church, in the guise of brother Salvador.

A more overt form of resistance against the hegemonic discourse can be seen through the character of Chanquete in *Verano Azul*. As discussed in the Introduction, this TV series was extremely popular when it was released in 1981-82 and it has been chosen as it reflects a period of time in Spain - post the Transition to democracy and just before the election of PSOE in October 1982 - a time during a long recession, but where many had hopes of a bright future for Spain bringing a feeling of jubilation in the newly democratic country. The country was on the verge of a huge property boom and tourism, including second homes, was a massive market that many hoped to tap into.

Teresa Herrera De la Muela's 2004 chapter entitled "Algo se mueve en el alma: nostalgia y mitos transicionales de sobremesa en *Verano Azul*" examines the series using Roland Barthes's concepts of myth and inoculation. As mentioned in Chapter One, Barthes coins the term myth to describe when a chain of concepts is used to naturalise and universalise the interests of the bourgeoisie class. This is defined further, with respect to cultural texts, using the term exnominated discourse as that which appears to be natural and universal and the process of inoculation is when a radical voice is used only to reinforce the exnominated version. Herrera concludes that *Verano Azul* is creating a myth in reconstructing the past as part of the imposition of silence surrounding the culpability of those who took part in the civil war and the repression of the Franco regime, *el pacto del olvido*. This is evidenced by the clumsy attempt by the parents of the children within the TV series to channel and mitigate their children's questions which ultimately leads the children to seek new paternal figures in the form of

Chanquete and Julia (p. 162). In her opinion, it is not the condition of the children as adolescents that causes the issue between the parents and their offspring, but instead the fact that the children are growing up post the Transition and therefore cannot understand their parent's viewpoints who have all, to some level, been indoctrinated by the teachings of the Franco regime. Her view on the TV series regarding the Transition is echoed in a later article by Nadia Ait Bachir, discussed below. Herrera's chapter explains the background to the episode which I analyse and introduces the concepts of myth and exominated discourse, which I use in my analysis. However, I look more closely at the use of Chanquete's home as a form of resistance which is a subject not touched on within her chapter.

A 2021 article by Nadia Ait Bachir entitled "Changement, consensus et réconciliation. Pour des représentations – simplifiées et didactiques – de la Transition espagnole dans la série *Verano Azul*" discusses all nineteen episodes of the hugely popular TV series and concludes that the series shows the youth of the 1980s what the Transition is, teaching them to look differently at Spain and to better understand it. According to Ait Bachir, the series provides a message of solidarity and support, depicting situations that demonstrate the desire of the characters to denounce the myth of two irreconcilable Spains and work towards a reconciled Spain. It was the feeling of euphoria and of one Spain that led to an increase in internal and international tourism within Spain and with it the early shoots of the property boom, partly as a result of the desire for second homes, which started in earnest in 1985.

Taking this one step further, Nadia Ait Bachir's message of solidarity is in line with the concept of *la cultura de la transición* (CT), as discussed in Chapter One, where the dominant discourse was argued to be the fear of another civil war occurring meaning that many of Franco's policies

were continued. This fear explains Ait Bachir's conclusion that the hegemonic discourse in the early 1980s heavily promoted solidarity, togetherness and the idea of one united Spain. It is therefore my opinion, using the ideas of Roland Barthes, that in this episode the radical opinion is that of Promovisa, seen as bad and corrupt, and its inclusion only serves to further promote the exnominated meta-discourse, the universal truth, of the restoration of social structures such as the family, the home and working together as a community. Additionally, Antonio Sánchez in his article "Storytelling in the Novels of Julio Llamazares" (2018) opines, expanding on the theories of Moreno-Caballud, that traditional customs of the village could be maintained through the telling of stories (Sánchez, 2018, p. 119). Therefore, through viewing the stories of the home and community, the exnominated message the audience receive is that of traditional values which they could potentially revive so that perhaps Chanquete's idea of a non-commodified home may be continued into the future. I would therefore argue that the episode was attempting to achieve a revival of shared communities through the scenes of a simple life enjoyed by Chanquete within his home, and indeed, by many of the families who chose this coastal village in which to purchase their summer home due to its traditional and slower way of life.

However, despite the overarching concept of solidarity evident within this episode, it cannot be ignored that since the 1950s capitalism has been strongly promoted within Spain with tourism, construction and home purchasing playing leading roles within the country's economic development. I would therefore argue that the director could not overlook either hegemonic discourse, one of capitalism and one of traditions and solidarity within this TV series. These two competing hegemonic discourses are played out between Chanquete, representing the ideas of solidarity, home and family, and Promovisa, representing the hegemony of capitalism and

consumerism. The fact that Promovisa are shown as the clear miscreants ensuring that the audience sympathises with Chanquete, Julia and the gang of children, strengthens my argument above that the discourse of fear within CT meant that togetherness and solidarity were at this time taking centre stage.

In the episode studied, *No nos moverán*, we see how Chanquete, a retired fisherman, refuses to bow down to extreme pressure to sell his home, holding onto his ideal of a traditional coastal village and living a simple life in his boat, *la Dorada*, set on the cliffs above a sleepy seaside village on the Costa del Sol. Here he cultivates his land for vegetables, principally tomatoes and lettuces, and obtains his fish from the sea; bartering the crabs he has caught for sardines. This particular episode was chosen as it demonstrates, following Harvey, the concepts of gentrification and that it is the uniqueness of the traditional coastal village on which capitalism places a high value that makes the town of Nerja more desirable to the developers. Within the episode, the audience is led to understand that it is the stunning views and sleepy, uncommodified nature of the town that appeals to so many tourists which is emphasised when Chanquete reminds the mayor that the reason so many tourists return to their village every summer, year after year, is that it remains a traditional village, with clean water and a peaceful life (minute 29). It is the increasing number of tourists that Promovisa ultimately wishes to take advantage of in its development, thus, supporting Harvey's opinion that capitalism puts a high value on uniqueness. Chanquete states that the traditional tourists will stop coming if 5000 apartments are built on the village's outskirts. Instead, a different type of tourist will start to

come, one that prefers a homogeneous world<sup>81</sup> with the same shops that they have at home, rather than local, bijoux ones.

Chanquete, Julia and the children are fighting against the development of homogeneous concrete monoliths in this episode. They wish to preserve the traditional way of life, free from large multinationals that homogenise towns and villages across the globe. Within the TV series, Chanquete's boat is represented as somewhere outside the capitalist race for profit, somewhere Chanquete can just be himself and enjoy the simple pleasures of life, a lived space which has retained its uniqueness and is free from the panopticon gaze of the State. His home is depicted as his refuge against the capitalist homogeneous onslaught. However, the message of the episode in apparently criticising the onslaught of capitalism contradicts the reality where a few weeks after the broadcast of this episode in the real seaside town of Nerja, where the series was filmed, there was an avalanche of offers and land purchases (Ait Bachir, p. 222). *Verano Azul* paradoxically contributed to the success of Nerja, previously a sleepy fishing village, as it became a centre for both property investment and tourism - everything Chanquete was fighting against.

Following the credits, we are immediately confronted with a model plan of a huge housing project for the sleepy seaside town consisting of fourteen storey skyscrapers with a 22-storey hotel at its centrepiece.<sup>82</sup> The camera then lifts to show the speaker, the president of

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<sup>81</sup> The homogeneous tourist resort that Chanquete fears has already been constructed within the novel *Crematorio* (Rafael Chirbes, 2007). Here we see Chanquete's worst nightmare, where the past has been figuratively and literally concreted over to make way for modern developments in the coastal town of Misent.

<sup>82</sup> The advertising message that Promovisa use to promote their development to the town is "un nuevo estilo de vida" which echoes the slogans seen in both *El inquilino* and *El pisito* where it is the achievement of middle-class status through homeownership, be it a second home in this instance, which has been promised rather than the reality.

Promovisa, discussing in very serious terms the development and how it is being hindered by Chanquete's refusal to sell his land (see Figure 29). The municipality has said that they will not redesignate the land from rural to available for development until he agrees to sell. The board room is wood panelled with dark, classical paintings on the walls. There are no women in the room and all the businessmen are wearing suits, listening seriously and intently to the president. The president looks haggard with large bags under his eyes and he is incredulous that someone would turn down huge sums of money, more than the land is worth, in order to stay in their home and cultivate lettuces. The setting reminds one of the comedic board room scenes in *El inquilino* where the company directors are congratulating themselves on how much money they have earned. The camera then cuts to Chanquete having a glass of wine at a café overlooking the sea. Chanquete is reading a newspaper in an open-necked, green-checked shirt, his skin is tanned and healthy and he looks relaxed. The contrast between the café setting and Chanquete's casual appearance and the serious, business scene in the board room is startling. It is clear both from their activities and appearances, that the boss of Promovisa and Chanquete are polar opposites when it comes to their standpoint vis-a-vis money and profit. These two scenes show how Chanquete is not motivated by money, but wants to preserve the non-commodified way of life he loves whereas the President is purely motivated by the profits he hopes to earn.



Fig. 29: *Verano Azul, No nos moverán*: the boardroom (minute 2).

The difference between the two characters becomes even more apparent when the president proudly shows Chanquete a wonderful villa that they are willing to exchange for his land. The president first takes him into a mature garden, full of exotic flowers and Chanquete asks where he can grow his tomatoes in such a small plot, to him flowers have no purpose. The president shows Chanquete the swimming pool about which Chanquete asks if it would take salt water as he wishes to turn it into a *vivier* for lobsters. The president is exasperated and cannot understand Chanquete, it disturbs him that a man can be so unmotivated by money and commodities. To Chanquete, his boat is his home and as de Certeau opines, a home is not just made of bricks and mortar (or in this case wood) it is made of memories and stories and is part of a non-commodified way of life. This is what Chanquete refuses to relinquish for the characterless mansion he is offered. Chanquete wishes to continue the simple way of life cultivating his verdant small plot of land and enjoying the views from the deck of his boat set on the clifftop overlooking the sea and the community he enjoys within the village.



This is made evident when discussing the development with the mayor, Epifanio (Roberto Camardiel), as Chanquete states, while looking from the bow of his boat at the view of the beach and town below bathed in sunshine, that what Promovisa are proposing to build is barbaric with too many cement walls already lining the seafront of the Costa del Sol. He states that his village is not the island of Manhattan, implying that the high-rise blocks proposed would look completely incongruous. During this conversation (minutes 28-34) Chanquete's words imply that, in his opinion, when the construction company talks of the benefits to society of their development, they are referring to an anonymous society of profiteers, speculators and homogeneous consumers, but instead they should be considering the current community of his village that has specific needs and wants.

The whole of this conversation is set on the deck of Chanquete's boat/home with shots of the two men alternating between the view of the cliffs and sea or the beach and town from either side of the bow of the boat. Indeed, the only time that the view is inland of the hills behind is when Epifanio talks about his opinion of the development, implying that this topic does not deserve such a pleasant view. In my opinion, the use of the stunning views from the boat are not accidental. It is this view that Promovisa are so keen to capitalise on through the siting of the new hotel. In contrast, Chanquete does not put a price on the view, willing to share it with his friends and ultimately gifting his land to the town in the event of his death. We see Chanquete's washing drying on a rope strung between the mast and jib, and often the men are set behind a foreground of sails and ropes. This setting is used to show the simple life that Chanquete enjoys, at one with the sea and land. During the conversation, the men are wearing short-sleeve casual shirts and share a beer together, with Chanquete frequently putting his arm around Epifanio's shoulders. The friendly and united nature of this scene is in conjunction with

Epifanio ultimately agreeing with Chanquete's point of view; even at the start he deplores the underhand tactics used by Promovisa and during this conversation he admits his misgivings about the changes the development will bring to his sleepy seaside town.

Chanquete's home is used as a focal point within this episode as the centre of a simple, community-based way of life with many of the simple traditional activities taking place on the deck of *la Dorada* e.g., the knot tying lesson for the children, the fish barbeque with Chanquete playing traditional folksongs on his accordion for Julia and the children to dance to etc. (see Figure 30). Chanquete's home and to a lesser extent his Mediterranean coastal village, in celebrating these simple pleasures, would appear to be removed from the dominant reality of the all-pervasive consumer world. The village is portrayed as a lived space, a space where people can be themselves and speak their minds and a space that retains a uniqueness. Thus, it could be said that it is presented as remaining uncommodified, as a pocket of traditional community driven life. It has been argued in Chapter One that community spaces are being absorbed by capitalism's constant drive for profit. We can see here through Chanquete's words how the lure of consumerism could kill the traditional coastal village life and if he bows down to the pressure his small pocket of resistance against capitalism would be absorbed and eradicated. Indeed, it is only Chanquete's ownership of his land that hinders the gentrification and provides him with some level of security. Thus, as discussed earlier, it is through homeownership that a feeling of ontological security is created as a buffer against the upheavals of the capitalist consumer world. The storyline itself holds a visual depiction of the theories of de Certeau and Moreno Caballud that imply that it is often shared stories that arise from moments of crisis. Here, the local community come together to defend Chanquete's home at a time of crisis, the attempted destruction of Chanquete's property. Through this period of

crisis, the bond between the friends becomes stronger and Chanquete's property becomes more of a home to them than ever before.

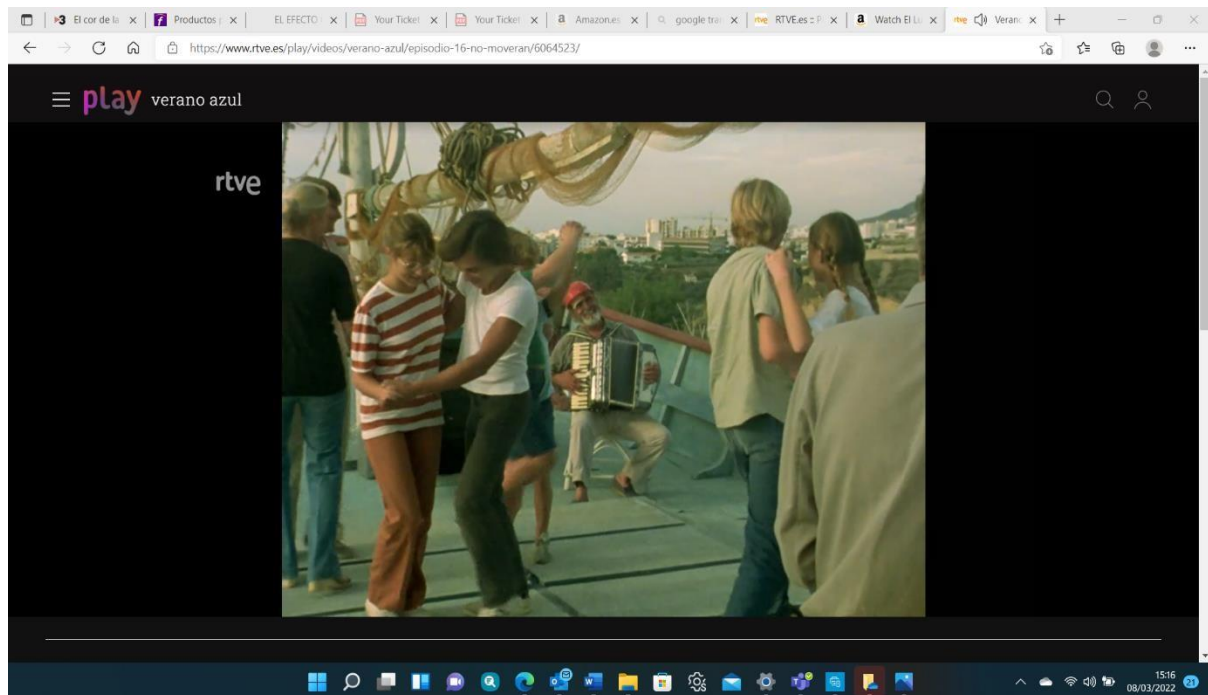


Fig. 30: *Verano Azul*, *No nos moverán*: simple life (minute 64).

Chanquete's boat is represented as a bastion against the wave of capitalism surging over Spain during the early 1980s which was started in the *desarrollismo* period by the Franco regime. The manipulation of spatial control in the pursuit of capitalism by Promovisa, to paraphrase Gramsci, was continually negotiated, contested and subverted by spatial tactics. One way that we see Chanquete subverting the propagation of capitalism is the gift of his home and gardens to the municipality on the condition that it is not developed, which provides some hope of uncommodified areas remaining. Additionally, the children and Julia employ spatial tactics, as it is they who undertake the fight against the construction company's gentrification of their sleepy seaside village, as Chanquete has been hospitalized, when refusing to move from the deck of the boat despite the threatening machines.

A further revealing section of this episode is when we see Bea, Pancho, Javi (Juanjo Artero) and Desi (Cristina Torres) discussing the views of their parents with respect to the new Promovisa development while enjoying a pedalo ride in the Mediterranean Sea (see Figure 31). The scene is clearly posited as part of a carefree holiday as we see a water skier and kayaks in the background and swimmers and lilos in the foreground with the children wearing their bathing suits and enjoying the sunshine while slowly pedalling the boats.

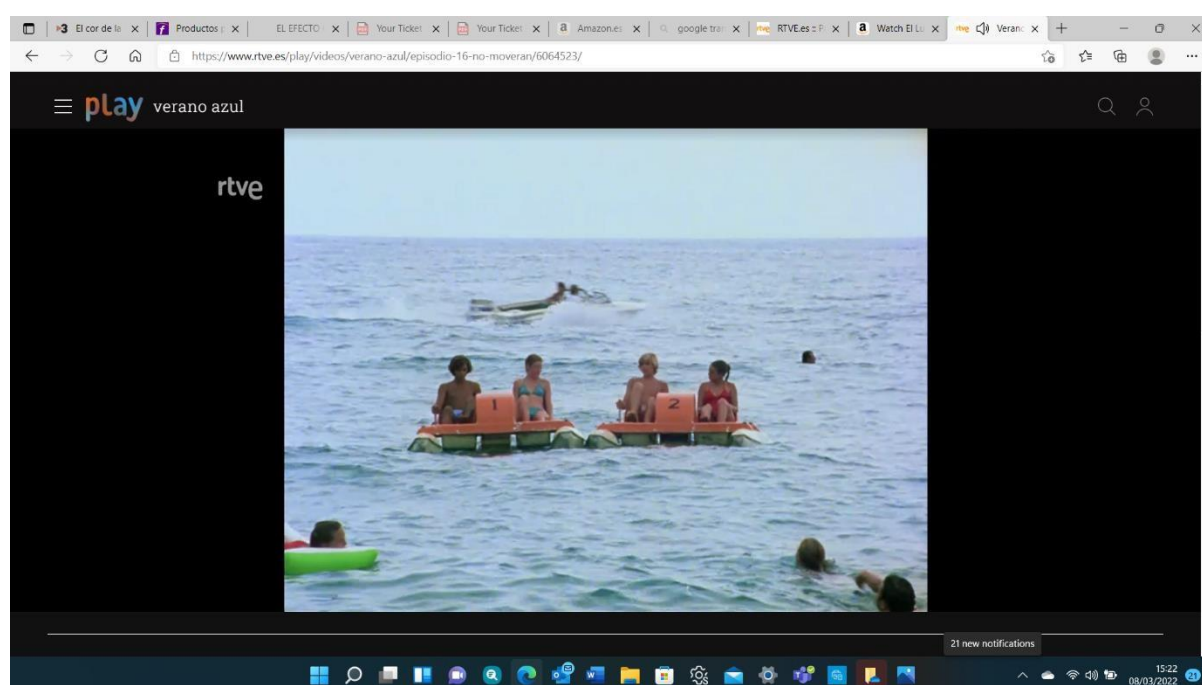


Fig. 31: *Verano Azul, No nos moverán*: discussing the pros and cons of the development (minute 39).

In a semblance of impartiality, there is one for and one against the development on each pedalo. The camera angle, although appearing in the centre at the start, alternates regularly between the two pedalos, spending more than ten seconds longer on the left hand pedalo as Pancho's speech is the longest. Pancho's father is a local milkman and is for the development - he believes that Chanquete is being selfish as the extra need for his milk if the development

goes ahead could make him a millionaire. Pancho sits next to Bea whose father is against the development. On the right hand pedalo sits Javi, whose father also wants to make money from the construction and is thinking of purchasing two or three flats for the purpose of property speculation<sup>83</sup>, and Desi whose mother and aunt would, in agreement with Chanquete, want to summer somewhere more peaceful if the apartments were to be built. It is clear that it is the traditional, uncommodified and unique nature of the seaside village that lures her family there every summer. However, Chanquete's resistance to the development of his village, galvanises all the children, despite their differing opinions, to want to help and support him. According to Ait Bachir it is this message of solidarity that the series wished to portray.

We see the fight against unscrupulous property developers continued well into the 1990s when the novel *La piel del tambor* is set. In this novel, the corruption, exploitative and often violent behaviour of the so-called pillars of society in their desperation for greater and greater profits is heavily criticized.

Ann Walsh's 2007 book *Arturo Pérez-Reverte: narrative tricks and narrative strategies* provided a greater understanding of the author and his approach to writing. She notes that within his journalism columns, Pérez-Reverte often championed the underdog against the rich and powerful and he liked to criticise those in authority. She also comments that his persistent tone

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<sup>83</sup> With Javi's father we get a glimpse of the world of property speculation, how Javi's father wishes to purchase cheap and sell the flats on at a higher price when the apartments become more popular. This type of property speculation is the reason that many believe the youth of today's Spain are priced out of the housing market. Property speculation was to become prevalent within Spain, particularly during the property booms of the mid-1980s onwards, and the number of vacant properties in Spain increased to staggering proportions. For example, in municipalities such as the village of *Verano Azul* (1982) and Misent (*Crematorio*, 2007), where the permanent population is small, the percentage of second homes could reach well over 50% of total dwellings (Barke, 2007, p. 198).

of anger and disillusionment against those in power were equally targeted at those on the left and right of politics, thus, showing a contempt for those that squander the lessons of the past irrelevant of political stance (p. 116). Following my review of *La piel del tambor*, I would agree with Walsh's comments in that Pérez-Reverte champions the small church and the novel reveals the scandalous corruption affecting all those in authority, be it in the banks, the Church or the council. However, Walsh does not provide any close readings of *La piel del tambor* that were useful for this thesis and so my use of her, albeit very interesting, book is limited to the provision of a background understanding of the author.

Throughout the novel, *Nuestra Señora de las Lágrimas* could be considered a place of refuge, a lived space. Although a church is not normally considered a home, in this novel it is actually a home for the two priests who work at the church and it could also be argued that it is a home, a place of refuge, for many, if not all, of its parishioners. Both Father Oscar and Father Ferro repeatedly call their church a refuge "cuando Quart le [Ferro] oyó decir que su iglesia era un refugio: una trinchera" (Pérez-Reverte, 1995, p. 144). Here, Father Ferro is alluding to the traditional church as a refuge from the capitalist world outside, or as Ferro states "Frente a tanto cuento. Y tanta mierda" (Pérez-Reverte, 1995, p. 145). This is confirmed in a later conversation between Ferro and, by now a more sympathetic, Quart, the priest/detective sent by the Vatican, when Ferro states "Sólo nosotros somos la tierra firme que os pone a salvo del torrente tumultuoso" (Pérez-Reverte, 1995, p. 329). The church can also be considered as a source of resistance or rebellion which is evident through the defenders of the church, particularly that of Gris Masala. This is supported by the conversation between Macarena and Quart when she states that the past experiences of Ferro as a country parish priest mean that "en vez de rendirse, lucha" (Pérez-Reverte, 1995, p. 249).

Within the novel it is the space of the church itself that is represented as fighting against the impending encroachment of capitalism “una pequeña iglesia...mata para defenderse” (Pérez-Reverte, 1995, p. 26). The use of the church as the focal point of resistance evokes strong passions on either side of the argument. For example, the man pushing for the new development, Pencho Gavira, who is the vice-president of the Cartujano Bank, clearly feels very strongly that the development should proceed; he is prepared to lose his wife, Macarena Bruner, place large bribes to pave the way for the development and hire thugs to kidnap Father Ferro to achieve his ultimate goal. On the other side of the dispute, the three-hundred-year-old church arouses strong feelings in the three women - the nun Gris Masala, elderly duchess Cruz Bruner and her daughter and wife of Gavira, Macarena Bruner - resisting its development. Particularly fervent is the character of Gris Masala who believes that the church should be preserved as “Nadie tiene derecho a dejar que se pierda” (Pérez-Reverte, 1995, p. 70) and that the history and collective memory of buildings like the church should be maintained, “A fin de cuentas se trata de nuestra memoria” (Pérez-Reverte, 1995, p. 70) which ties into the arguments of Harvey and Smith concerning the destruction of a place’s social meaning through gentrification. Gris Masala believes that the church is the “heritage of all humanity” and thus by protecting the building itself the collective memory is also saved. Just like Chanquete within *Verano Azul*, she wishes to preserve the community that the church has developed through its three-hundred-year history and does not want this part of Seville and the church to be paved over, forgotten and become one of Augé’s non-places – for the space to become a homogenised commodity, a conceived space, rather than continue to be a unique refuge and meeting place for the local community. The three women would appear to perceive the space of the church as a home away from home, somewhere they feel secure and can enjoy the traditional way of

life outside the onslaught of capitalism. And, in particular for Gris Masala, it is a place of resistance where she actively fights for its survival. Hence, to them and to the two priests the space of the church is a lived space. The resistance to the commodification of the church is clearly stated in scriptures evoked by one of the defenders of the church, "no hagáis de la casa de mi padre casa de mercado" (Pérez-Reverte, 1995, p. 155).

Throughout the novel, Pérez-Reverte's words demonstrate how the manipulation for spatial control of the church generates significant emotions on both sides. The resistance to the development of the church and the corruption of the property developers, the Church (as an organisation) and mayor, take centre stage leading the reader to believe that the protestors were in the right. However, during the final chapters of the novel it becomes more ambiguous as we learn that Cruz Bruner was the computer hacker<sup>84</sup> and that Gris Masala was even willing to commit murder<sup>85</sup> to save the church from development. Both of these characters first appear, on face value, to be good, upstanding citizens - one is a sweet and frail 70-year-old duchess and the other a nun – it therefore comes as a surprise to a reader when we discover that these apparently innocent characters are culpable of such crimes, all in order to save their church. The willingness of a nun<sup>86</sup> and duchess to commit these crimes demonstrate how strong feelings can be associated with a space, particularly one that is a refuge to so many.

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<sup>84</sup> We are introduced to the hacker *Vísperas* at the start of the novel when we discover that they have managed to illegally hack into the Pope's personal computer to alert him to the dispute over *Nuestra Señora de las Lagrimas*.

<sup>85</sup> There were three murders - the municipal architect, the secretary of the archbishop of Seville and Bonafé, a journalist – all were considered enemies of *Nuestra Señora de las Lagrimas*.

<sup>86</sup> It should be noted that we learn that Gris Masala is not an entirely happy nun as she fell in love with the archbishop of her previous diocese. She appears to be angry with her eighteen-year-old self that gave up all her worldly possessions to enter the Church, and now she is rebelling by going against her vow of poverty and owning a mirror, both of which are against the rules for a nun. It was a previous mirror in which she was applying makeup before the archbishop's visit that made her realise her feelings for him, she then smashed the mirror and used the broken pieces to slit her wrists.



At the end of the novel, we hear that Gavira has rightly lost his job, but the murderer, Gris Masala, has evaded any form of punishment and is now working as a teacher in Mexico. This conclusion leaves the reader with a bad taste in their mouth – after supporting the protestors throughout the novel the reader is now forced to confront whether the right side won or are both sides of the coin as bad as each other. Surely resisting development at any cost is not acceptable and, in this instance, would it have been better to allow for the development to occur and the church to be demolished rather than there have been three unnecessary deaths? Additionally, now that the main opposition to the church's development are principally out of the picture (Cruz Bruner has died of old age) will someone else truly go to the same criminal and immoral lengths to save the church? In portraying the lengths that Quart and the three women have to go in order to defeat this discourse the strength of the hegemony of homeownership is highlighted. It is this universal 'truth' of the authorities that Roland Barthes would call the exnominated discourse. Using a tactic of inoculation, it allows the radical voices a moment to speak i.e., those against the development, however, it is done in a way that ensures that the hegemonic discourse of property development and capitalism is strengthened. Given this, it is my opinion that the novel takes a nihilistic stance, in that it is inevitable that the church will eventually be developed and that the process of capital accumulation cannot be stopped.

This would appear to be in contrast to *Verano Azul* where I claim the exnominated discourse is that of Chanquete against the developers. The principal difference between *Verano Azul* and *La piel del tambor* is that in the former, the gang, mainly consisting of children, work together to defeat the developers thereby demonstrating a saccharine idea of innocence and solidarity. Whereas in *La piel del tambor* the opponents to the development of the church work

independently of each other as individuals and in secret, such that the reader develops a feeling of darker forces at play in a dirty and immoral game. Indeed, those against the development undertake more nefarious deeds than the supposedly unscrupulous developers such that the reader is forced to consider who is worse. Given this difference, I would argue that by 1995, at the start of another property boom, property development and construction, leading to a prosperous economy, are represented as acceptable, more so than the idea of unity and solidarity which was so important just post the Transition.

It cannot be ignored that the Church holds a complex role within Spain, particularly considering its support and collusion with respect to the repressive policies of the Franco regime, which is demonstrated within the novel *Los girasoles ciegos* analysed above. This collusion did not just stop with respect to society, but also regarding property. The Franco regime set out in Article 206 of the *Ley Hipotecaria* of 8 February 1946 that the Catholic Church could register property without the same physical checks and accreditation that everyone else had to undertake (Religion Digital, pp. 2-3). On 4 September 1998, Aznar's conservative government modified the 1946 law to include places of worship which were previously excluded (Ruano, pp. 1334-1339). The law changed again in 2015 to ensure that the Catholic Church must undergo the same checks as everyone else. It has since been found that some 35,000 properties were listed by the Catholic Church between 1998 and 2015 which included 20,000 places of worship and of this number a significant amount were registered by the Church despite there being no proof of ownership or clearly belonging to others (Associated Press, p. 1). *La piel del tambor*, although not explicitly evoking the *Ley Hipotecaria*, demonstrates that the author would have been well aware of the Church's collusion with local registries and the use of this law with respect to

property ownership in providing a clear representation of the Church's willingness to enter into property deals alongside the collusion of those in authority.

The main colluder with the Church, represented in the novel through the character of the Sevillian archbishop, is Gavira who is ruthlessly ambitious and manipulates those with any power to bend to his own will, be it through bribes, blackmail or worse. He has struck a deal with a group of investors from Saudi Arabia called Sun Qafer Alley to develop the old district of Santa Cruz in Seville into a luxury hotel; the church of *Nuestra Señora de las Lágrimas* is the only thing standing in his way. He is willing to employ any means, even that of kidnap and murder, in order to protect his future profits and purchase the church. Similar to Rubén in *Crematorio*, he even blatantly discusses his bribing of the mayor and the archbishop of Seville in order to get the land reclassified for development. It is clear throughout the novel that even somewhere as supposedly sacred as a church is still considered a commodity to be bought and sold at a profit. Even those at the Vatican refer to it as “el conflicto no habría pasado de ser uno de tantos: un solar, unos especuladores y mucho dinero de por medio” (Pérez-Reverte, 1995, p. 38) thus implying the willingness for the Church to enter into land deals if it involves a sufficient amount of funds, choosing to ignore the value of the church to its community and those that work in it.

The level of corruption that Gavira undertakes with impunity is shocking and this, along with the complicity of both the Church and the town hall in Gavira's dirty dealings - “Los políticos, los bancos y del Arzobispado rondaban en torno como una manada de lobos” (Pérez-Reverte, 1995, p. 90) - demonstrate how property development is acceptable at any cost. There is clearly a blatant disregard for the legal and hence acceptable way to purchase and develop a property.

For example, within the novel we are led to believe that the current mayor will not win the next election due to the level of corruption in his office, but that his departure will be sweetened by a large payment from Gavira for reclassifying the land of the church, *Nuestra Señora de las Lágrimas*, and withdrawing any obstacle for its development. It is clear that the mayor, although losing his seat, will receive no punishment for his corruption, only profit (Pérez-Reverte, 1995, p. 391). Thus, neoliberal Spain appears to turn a blind eye to those that defy the law as long as they were able to generate jobs and profits. Consequently, this indicates that the development of homes was paramount and overrode any other rational argument with respect to communities, traditions or the environment.

We see the fight for a place to call home, but also to live an alternative life, free from capitalism and State control within the extremely popular Catalan TV series *El cor de la ciutat* (see Figure 32). This TV series was chosen because in the eighth season of this soap opera aired in September 2007, for the first time in Spanish TV history (Vilaseca, 2013, p. 48), squatters were an integral part of the storyline. Its reach was huge with just under 30% of all Catalan television screens tuned to the show which was on at 3.50pm five days a week (Vilaseca, 2013, p. 48). In the soap opera a group of twenty-something squatters occupy an abandoned factory, can Sarró, in the neighbourhood of San Andreu in Barcelona.



Fig. 32: *El cor de la ciutat*: Francisco's (Artur Trias) first encounter with the *okupas* where they agree to meet with the neighbourhood association (Episode 1447, 15/07/2007, minute 2).

The Catalan language soap opera was produced at a time of a growing tide for an independent Catalan State. Although independence can be traced back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century it was in 1931 that the Spanish Second Republic gave Catalonia autonomy. This was abolished by Franco in 1938 and it wasn't until 1979 following the 1978 constitution, which recognised the right to autonomy, that it was achieved once more. However, in 2006 José María Aznar's conservative Partido Popular government challenged the Statute of Autonomy. Judgement was slow, only given four years later in 2010 stating that several sections of the Statute were unconstitutional (Calamur, throughout). Hence, the 2007/8 series of this soap was produced at a time when Catalan independence was in flux, but growing in popularity. Additionally, this season was aired during the start of the global financial crisis. During this recession unemployment reached unprecedented levels, estimated to be greater than 50% in those under twenty-five. With the majority of squatters being in this age bracket it is not difficult to understand why squatting was becoming more prevalent within Spain and Catalonia at this time.

Throughout this TV series it becomes clear that the *okupas* wish to stay in can Sarró and make it their permanent home. We see this throughout the 2007/08 season, particularly with Eli in her wish to work with the neighbours to remain in can Sarró and the fight that they put up, including the use of a lawyer, to remain in the abandoned factory. This is why the *okupas* initially refuse to join the neighbourhood protest against Ivan as the neighbourhood want to turn it into a social centre, whereas the *okupas* wish to remain living there as their home.

In the real world, *okupas* reject and resist capitalism particularly in relation to the notions of ownership. They wish to portray a different and better way of life free from the constraints of capitalism, a shared life of community and a different form of ownership. The ethos of squatting is that of sharing rather than the exchange of money, and hence outside the capitalist system. We see the alternative way of life of the *okupas* in the TV series through the communal food that they are often preparing and also when, in Episode 1550 (minute 11) (see Figure 33), Eli will not let a discussion commence until all the *okupas* are present. It is very important that all decisions are made as a community – not as an individual. Squatting, to many, offers a way to create social change with the space that is occupied providing the basis on which to create an alternative life, a Lefebvrian lived space. Although in one sense *okupas* reject homeownership, their lives and way of living are very connected to the space in which they live. *Okupas* wish to make the occupied space a hub of their community, indeed of all the Barcelonan squatted houses in 2010 around 10% became social centres (Vilaseca, 2013, p. 3) and many offered a variety of activities which are open to the public free of charge. This is seen in Episode 1447 of *El cor de la ciutat* when Eli offers free cultural and social activities in the form of music, circus

etc.<sup>87</sup> as a form of 'rent' in return for the locals allowing them to live in the factory (Episode 1447, 15/07/07, minute 22). Therefore, despite the lack of official ownership of space the squatters do make these spaces very much their own, providing a sense of home, not just to themselves but to the wider community. We see this within *El cor de la ciutat* in the sense of ownership that the community feel towards the squat when they stand with the *okupas* against the might of the developers and authorities.



Fig. 33: *El cor de la ciutat*: a communal vote by the *okupas* in can Sarró (Episode 1550, 28/03/08, minute 11).

It is my opinion that an owner-occupied home provides a similar space, one free from State vigilance and a place where you can be yourself and live the life you chose rather than one set by the rules of society, Lefebvre's lived space. With the *okupas* the reterritorialization of their home from its commodity form is not much different to the use of the owner-occupied home

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<sup>87</sup> Although it should be noted that the audience never see any of these social or cultural activities actually take place.

in many of the cultural works studied. For example, the boat home in *Verano Azul* is also used as a site of resistance against capitalism and the desire to have a place to call your own, away from the prying eyes of society, is paramount within the film *El Lute*. Within many of the films I have studied during the Franco era, for example *El verdugo*, *El pisito* and *El inquilino*, the home is portrayed as the ultimate commodity and we see the extreme lengths that the protagonists are prepared to go to in order to obtain this marker of being middle-class. However, all of these works obliquely criticise capitalism and the approach taken towards the home as a commodity, rather than as a place to live. These films are therefore, in agreement with the ethos of the *okupas* in being critical of capitalism with particular respect to the commodification of the home, albeit they are from a diagonally opposed approach. One side, as seen within the films, accepts the hegemony of homeownership and the other side taken by the *okupas* directly fight against it. Additionally, in contrast to *Verano Azul* and *La piel del tambor*, the *okupas* did not simply want to retain the status quo, but wished to change the accepted norm of capitalism by using the space occupied to enable them and the inhabitants of the local neighbourhood to live an alternative life of sharing and community outside the confines of capitalism.

Vilaseca discusses this TV series in Chapter Three of his 2013 book *Barcelonan Okupas: Squatter power!* and his work was invaluable for my study of it. However, Vilaseca focuses on the difference between the reality in Barcelona and what is portrayed in the TV series and the use of the series to combat the impression created by the council and media of *okupas* as destructive, violent delinquents. My focus is on the use of the squatters' home, albeit temporary, as a place of resistance against the hegemonic discourse of capitalism and homeownership.



The show had decided to include the *okupa* storyline as they wanted to reflect what was actually happening on the streets of Barcelona. The storyline was loosely based upon the real-life squatting of a former factory can Ricart which the local neighbourhood managed to get declared a Cultural Property of National Interest and its total demolition was prevented. However, a major difference is that in the real-life case<sup>88</sup> the Barcelona City Council participated in the property speculation and could be said to have abused the law in order to achieve its goals, whereas within *El cor de la ciutat* the *okupas* and neighbours were fighting against Ivan Crespo, a local businessman who wished to develop the factory using his small private real estate company. The can Ricart case was only a year before the first *okupa* storyline was aired in *El cor de la ciutat* and hence would have been within the minds of the audience when viewing the show. Vilaseca argues that the difference in the approach to the role of the Barcelonan City Council is significant and dangerous as “half-truths...are oftentimes taken at face value” (Vilaseca, 2013, p. 56). Here, the actions of the Barcelona authorities are not publicised or called into question, which would have been very damaging for the municipality given the popularity of this show. Vilaseca also argues that *El cor de la ciutat* could have been used by the Barcelonan council to portray the *okupas* as Catalanist, to represent the squatters in a favourable light (Vilaseca, 2013, p. 49), trying to live a peaceful alternative life, in order to mitigate a lot of the

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<sup>88</sup> The original 2005 plan for can Ricart was to demolish the majority of the façade and completely alter the interior with almost 50% of the space becoming inaccessible to the public. The neighbourhood wanted the factory to be preserved in its entirety and in a show of solidarity *okupas* squatted in part of the can Ricart complex (Vilaseca, 2013, p. 55). By March 2007, the neighbours had successfully convinced the Generalitat to start proceedings to declare can Ricart a Cultural Property of National Interest, but while the results were still pending the Barcelonan City Council was allowed to start work, including demolition of parts of the site that they argued weren’t within the perimeter of protection (Vilaseca, 2013, p. 56). Since then, the area of Poblenou where can Ricart is situated, has had substantial redevelopment as part of an ambitious project to become Barcelona’s hub for innovative technology companies, but some of the architectural heritage of Can Ricart has been preserved, namely the central section, tower and a building currently used as an art space. More recently, a joint initiative, started by the National Council for Culture and Arts in 2019 and supported by nineteen artistic education centres which offer higher education, including the Universitat de Barcelona, has submitted plans for the site to become a new Campus de las Arts ([www.barcelona.cat/infobarcelona/en/tema/education-andstudies/can-ricart-to-house-the-campus-de-les-arts\\_1119955.html](http://www.barcelona.cat/infobarcelona/en/tema/education-andstudies/can-ricart-to-house-the-campus-de-les-arts_1119955.html)).

bad press at the time. I agree with Vilaseca that the soap portrayed the *okupa* movement favourably and if they had not been on the show at all then the negative image that the media had previously portrayed<sup>89</sup> may continue unabated. Therefore, although the corruption of the council is not shown in the soap, the promotion of the *okupa* movement in a better light may have potentially led to greater sympathy regarding the *okupa* way of life and the causes that they uphold.

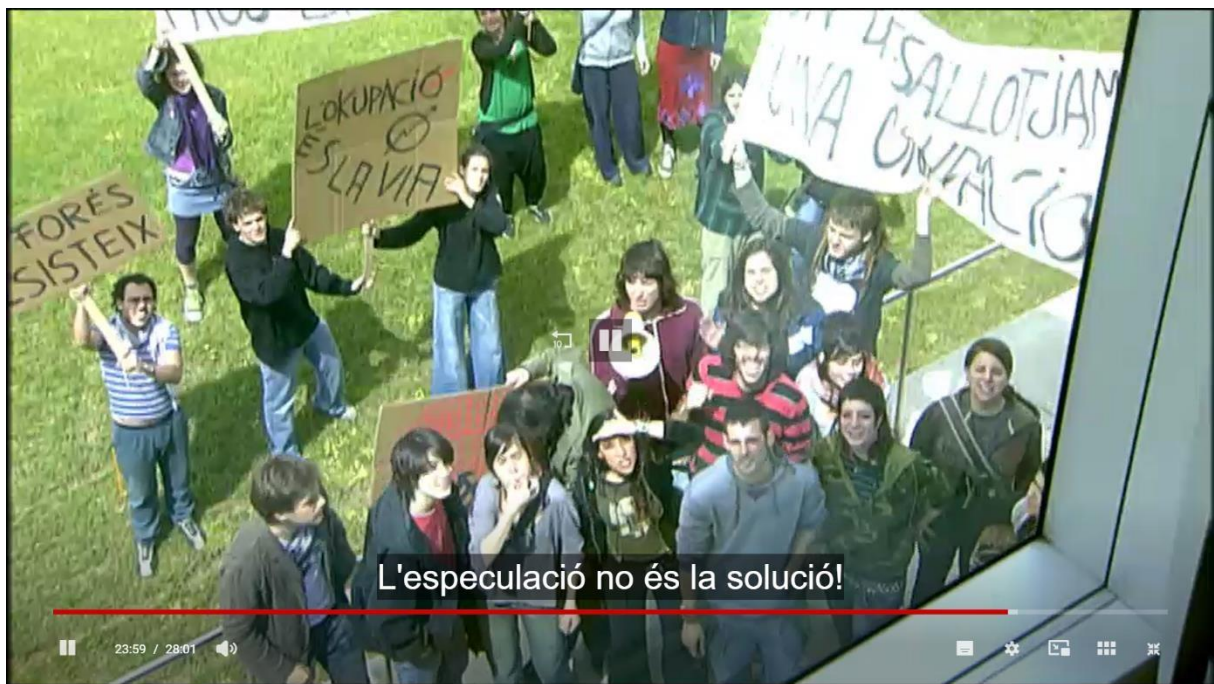


Fig. 34: *El cor de la ciutat*: protesting outside Ivan's office (Episode 1584, 16/05/08, minute 25).

The *okupas'* alternative way of life is juxtaposed with the character of Ivan who wants to obtain as much profit as possible through property speculation. The contrast is made clear within Episode 1584 (minute 25) (see Figure 34) where we see Ivan alone in his office talking on the

<sup>89</sup> For example, leading up to the December 2005 vote to pass a Law of Communal Living, where the use of public space would be severely controlled by the Barcelonan City Council, the newspaper *La Vanguardia* published several articles against the *okupas* calling them uncivil, taking drugs, peeing and defecating in building entrances and holding loud parties (Vilaseca, 2013, p. 21). Vilaseca discusses the "overwhelming negative image of the *okupas* fomented by the corporate media" (2013, p. 48) in portraying violent evictions and not the peaceful everyday life of *okupa* social centres.

phone making deals. The only sound we can hear is the chant of protestors from outside. Ivan looks down out of the window, annoyed at the disturbance, but feeling invincible up above in his office 'tower' – much like a landed gentry looking down on the peasants below, a scene which is clearly depicted in the ceiling of the unscrupulous landlord Señor Marqués in the film *El inquilino* analysed in Chapter Three. The *okupas* are shouting “L’espulació no és la solució” and, by the smiles on their faces, are enjoying the protest, working together as a community. The reason for the protest is that they have been fired up by another group of *okupas* at Fores Athenaeum who have won their lawsuit and can remain in their ‘home’. It has given them hope that they too can stay in their new-found home at the can Sarró factory.

Within the TV soap, the *okupas* are seen working with the neighbourhood movement to resist the gentrification of can Sarró and create a space which meets the social needs of the neighbourhood. Indeed, during the last episode in the series some of the neighbours barricade themselves inside can Sarró with the squatters, chaining themselves to the building to prevent removal by the police. The neighbours are led by Francisco Luque, president of the Neighbourhood Association, and he has rallied them to lock themselves in with the *okupas* to ensure they get to stay at can Sarró (see Figure 35). The neighbourhood movements that started in the latter half of the 1960s initially fought for better urban facilities, transport etc. but were also hot-beds for anti-Francoist political reform as discussed in Chapter Two. They continued post the Transition to democracy with one of their main issues being the lack of decent, affordable housing. Thus, the Neighbourhood Association depicted in *El cor de la ciutat* would have almost certainly been started as an anti-establishment movement and their fight against the authorities to save can Sarró would invoke the collective memory of the audience.

The contrast between the young, casually dressed *okupas* with piercings and long, unkempt hair to the older neighbours, where the men are wearing suits and the women are wearing old fashioned clothes, with dated haircuts and carrying handbags, is striking and I would argue ensures that the audience can understand that all walks of life should be against property speculation and stand up for community and a better way of life free from capitalism (Episode 1623, 11/07/08, minute 21). I would argue that this is made even more obvious to the audience when compared to the character opposing the *okupas* and neighbours, Ivan Crespo, who is seen as an unscrupulous property developer who will go to pretty much any means<sup>90</sup> to convert the old factory to luxury flats and ensure that he makes as much profit as possible.



Fig. 35: *El cor de la ciutat*: solidarity from the locals (Episode 1623, 11/07/08, minute 21).

Despite the difference in appearance to the neighbours, the squatters are represented in this TV series as fairly clean cut and living by a strong moral code. Many real-world *okupas* criticized

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<sup>90</sup> Ivan lies about contracts with the Council to provide social services to the neighbourhood, he destroys a document that confirms the factory as being a National Historic Landmark and hence protected under law from demolition and he sets fire to the building in order to get rid of its occupants and in doing so kills a man.

the show for the portrayal of the squatters as good and compromising on their ideals in order to appease their neighbours (Vilaseca, 2013, pp. 61-2). The show, although a saccharine portrayal of the life of squatters, does try to balance the characters out with the contrast between Eli and her brother Ros (Joep Sobrevals) being the most notable. She always wishes to appease the neighbours and find the best compromise and a solution where everyone wins. This is clear from the start of the eighth series when Eli befriends the local neighbourhood movement, explaining the *okupas'* philosophies, even holding a party for their neighbours to introduce themselves and get to know the local community. The meeting, held in the local bar, is well attended by the neighbourhood, but at first glance it appears to be a situation of 'them' and 'us' with the *okupas* sat on one table and the greater number of older and more conservative neighbours facing them with what would appear to be an unbridgeable gap between them, much like an interview panel. Eli introduces herself as the *okupas'* representative and explains that they only wish to benefit the neighbourhood and will cause no problems.

Eli's philosophies of quietly living an alternative way of life in can Sarró without any outspoken action are underlined by the character of Ros' girlfriend, La K (Carlota Olcina), when she states that they should live their alternative lives without disturbing the neighbours (Episode 1492, 1712/2007, minute 19). This could be considered a form of passive resistance in living a life outside of the hegemonic discourse, an alternative life outside the norms of society. This way of life represented by La K, in disengaging from society, is more like a hippie commune than an *okupa* squat, simply occupying the space as a home. However, *El cor de la ciutat* does mirror the dominant representation of the real-life *okupa* movement in using the space to work with neighbourhood associations to improve quality of life for their urban community and hence

undertake a more active and engaged form of resistance. Thus, the occupied space *is* being used as a home for the *okupas* in the series and in doing so they are following the dominant discourse acceptable in society of a permanent home (which ties into the theories of Massey studied in Chapter One), but the space is also used as a positive tool of resistance against capitalism by creating a better and alternative way of life. The result is that, in a way, the space is 'owned' by the whole community and not just the *okupas*.

Ros, who does not care what other people think of him and simply wishes to follow his morals and beliefs, willing to go to prison rather than bow down to authority, portrays a character that is less passive and more actively resistant, more akin to the dominant representation of a real-life *okupa*. This is emphasised in one episode (1492, 17/12/2007) when the repercussions of Ros throwing a stone through the window of the popular neighbourhood café start to be felt within the squatter community. Eli and Ros argue over his actions with La K watching on. Eli, the de facto leader of the squatters, wants to resolve issues with the neighbours peacefully, whereas Ros prefers the more confrontational route of direct action. The difference between the siblings' approach is not only clear with their words, but also through their actions and the clothes they wear. Eli is wearing clean bright clothes and her open-handed stance shows that she has nothing to hide and is open for discussion, whereas the unshaven and shabby Ros wears only khaki green clothes giving him a military feel which denotes someone more antagonistic and with his arms folded he gives off both an aura of defiance and defensiveness. He speaks critically of fitting into the box that society puts you in, stating that in the opinion of society if you do not live like a bourgeois then you must be a criminal (Episode 1492, 17/12/2007, minute 5). Eli and La K's condemnation of Ros' more active resistance softens the anti-capitalistic and

anti-class stance Ros has taken and as such portrays the can Sarró *okupas* as relatively passive, more relatable to the average Spaniard.

I would argue that the clean cut, predominantly law-abiding nature of the squatters portrayed within *El cor de la ciutat* was a deliberate act by the director to endear the squatters to the audience. This approach, criticized by real-life squatters, normalised the squatters in the eyes of the audience so that the average Catalan home-owning citizen could relate to them, they are portrayed as not that different from the average Catalan. It is a complex argument as, on the face of it, the audience will align the can Sarró squatters with the dominant representation of real-life *okupas* who strongly criticise the hegemonic discourse of homeownership. However, the TV series in portraying these particular squatters in a much softer light and making it clear that they, particularly through the character of Eli, want to make can Sarró their permanent home differentiates them from the dominant representation of real-life squatters. Thus, similar to the characters in Chapters Three and Four, the can Sarró squatters are represented as having a real and material need for a home and additionally even they have been manipulated by the hegemonic discourse of homeownership in their desire for a permanent home (albeit not one purchased by themselves). Thus, the TV series has dramatically softened the radicalness of the squatters to such an extent that, I would opine, the TV *okupas* and their ethos are represented as being compatible with the hegemonic discourse of homeownership. The TV series has created a story (whether accurate or not) that is saying even squatters, underneath all their protesting, actually desire the safety and security of their own home – even if this home is subverted as a symbol against capitalism.

## Conclusion

To summarise, the home has many facets. Although, I have previously argued that it was the hegemonic discourse of the State that so heavily promoted homeownership within Spain during the period under review, it is clear that the home can be considered, not just as a commodity to be bought and sold for profit, but also as a place of security, a refuge from society, free from the norms of society where one can be yourself. A home could be considered Lefebvre's lived space. We see this in the *El Lute* films where the protagonist is presented as seeking ontological security for his family through homeownership. In the short story *Los girasoles ciegos*, the home is initially a place of refuge for Lorenzo and his family, but it is soon encroached by the hegemonic State and Church wishing to impose its beliefs and way of life.

Additionally, the home, away from the panopticon gaze of the State, can also be a place of rebellion and resistance, also a form of Lefebvre's lived space, in particular, within this thesis, against the neoliberal policies of the Spanish governments. We see this resistance in the TV series *Verano Azul* and the novel *La piel del tambor* in their fight to retain their homes against unscrupulous property developers. However, it also becomes clear that there are many sides to every argument. The arguments can be complex and ambiguous and resisting change can sometimes have detrimental consequences.

Within *El cor de la ciutat* it becomes evident how the hegemonic concept of home as the ultimate commodity can be subverted as a symbol against capitalism. In this way, the symbol of the home can be used as a criticism of the Spanish governments and thus as a form of resistance against their policies.



## Chapter Six

### Conclusion

When I set out on this path I didn't know the twists and turns that it would take me. The thesis has grown and developed as my research continued and areas I thought that I would not touch, for example feminism in Spain (as it is such a large topic and with a limited word count I wanted to concentrate on the concept of homeownership) have in fact come under my scrutiny<sup>91</sup> due to women's intrinsic relationship with the drive for homeownership. However, one constant throughout this thesis is the overriding desire of the Spanish populace to own their own home and the persistence of the capitalist hegemonic discourse of homeownership. This has been evidenced through the many cultural works I have studied, of which only the most pertinent examples have made it to the final cut of this thesis.

I understand that I am the first to undertake a close reading of cinematic and literary texts from the latter half of twentieth century Spain through the prism of homeownership. It is hoped that this new branch of cultural urban studies provides an insight into the significant issue of homeownership in Spain, particularly in relation to the hegemonic discourse that promoted it and its effects on the Spanish populace.

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<sup>91</sup> As Massey states, a "lack of attention both to feminism and to what feminists have been arguing ..in the end [would] vitiate" (Massey, 1994, p. 213) my thesis. Hence its need for inclusion.

In Chapter One I introduced the various terms and concepts on home that I mobilise throughout my thesis concerning the fields of space, home and homeownership with particular regard to the hegemonic discourse and the commodification of the idea of homeownership, homeownership as a form of alienation and the possibility of refuge and resistance in homeownership.

Chapter Two demonstrated the transition of Spain from a predominantly rental society to that of homeownership and it is clear that the State, be it the Franco regime or subsequent democratic governments, played a significant role in developing and continuing the hegemonic discourse encouraging home ownership for many reasons, for example to pacify the populace through the creation of a middle-class consumer society, to bolster the economy and/or to follow the dominant discourse of fear, referred to as the *cultura de la transición*. However, not everyone was included in this new society and many felt neglected and ostracised, often geographically in huge housing estates on the outskirts of the urban commercial centre. Additionally, EU money played a key role in stimulating the housing market helping to cause the subsequent housing bubbles after Spain joined the EEC in 1986.

Within Chapter Three the commodification of the home as a desirable consumer product and the intervention by the State to both grow the Spanish middle-class and to encourage homeownership are seen throughout the works studied. The State propaganda with respect to homeownership and the regime's desire for political stability is laid bare for all to see within the NO-DOs studied. The reality of the effects of the State propaganda and its housing policies, particularly with reference to the 1957 *Plan de Urgencia Central de Madrid*, are evident within the 1957 film *El inquilino*. Additionally, we see the continued marginalisation of those living in

the peripheries of urban life in the 1982 film, *Colegas*. The ongoing hegemonic discourse surrounding homeownership can be seen within both the *El Lute* films, *El Lute I: Camina o revienta* and *El Lute II: Mañana seré libre*, such that homeownership provided a form of camouflage, of being a normal citizen. Within these films we see how the residential space which should have been perceived and lived space, has been turned into conceived space. I also argue that through both *Colegas* and the *El lute* films we can see the continuation of many of the Franco regime's policies, particularly with respect to housing, the economy and the continued expansion into tourism. This, along with the burgeoning second home market, is evident within both the 1979 film *Las verdes praderas* and the 2007 novel *Crematorio* where we see further evidence of what should be considered lived spaces becoming conceived spaces or one could say Augé's non-places.

In Chapter Four, I argue through the close reading of selected cultural works that the hegemonic discourse of homeownership has, in part, manifested extreme behaviour in order to achieve the falsely constructed desire of homeownership. Using Lefebvre's recalibrated notion of alienation we see how the characters within the works analysed were manipulated by the hegemonic discourse under capitalism into purchasing a home and were alienated. It became clear as this chapter developed that the main drivers behind homeownership within the works studied were the female characters and the triality of the role of women during the Franco period is represented through Petrita within the 1958 film *El pisito* and Carmen within the 1963 film *El verdugo*. However, within the 1966 novel *Últimas tardes con Teresa* the main character of Manolo is male. Here we see a stark contrast between the representation of female and male characters during the Franco period: a woman feels that she needs a home to provide for her family, whereas a man desires the home as a status symbol, often as a symbol of reaching the

echelons of the middle-class. Consequently an area that could be further expanded is the differences between genders with respect to homeownership and where this difference stems from. For example, is it from the Franco regime's discourse of home and hearth with respect to women or from more general Catholic/societal beliefs or is it indeed a more complex combination?

In later works, such as the 1981 film *Deprisa, deprisa* and the 1998 novel *El otro barrio* we see how not owning your own home marks you as abnormal and thus you were rejected from the now predominantly middle-class society. This subsequently led to the characters feeling marginalised and neglected, yearning to fit in with the middle-class consumer society, which they attempt to achieve through homeownership.

Finally, within Chapter Five we see another side to homeownership in Spain through close readings of the cultural works chosen, that of the home as a place of refuge or resistance, thus falling within the definition of Lefebvre's lived space. Within this chapter both of the *El Lute* films, *El Lute I: Camina o revienta* and *II: Mañana seré libre* along with the 2004 novel *Los girasoles ciegos* demonstrate the characters' need for ontological security, somewhere they can feel at home, somewhere safe from the prying eyes of capitalist society and the State: a refuge. We also see the home as a place of resistance or rebellion in the TV series *Verano Azul*, particularly within the episode *No nos moverán*, and the 1995 novel *La piel del tambor* as they resist the onslaught of capital accumulation in the guise of unscrupulous property developers. However, there are many facets to these complex arguments for and against development with both courses of action potentially leading to adverse consequences. We also see the home being used as a symbol against capitalism by the *okupas* portrayed in the Catalan TV series *El*

*cor de la ciutat*, while still reinforcing the idea of the hegemonic discourse surrounding the desirability of a permanent home.

It is clear from the works analysed that the home has many facets. Within both Chapter Three and Four the analysis provides evidence that the hegemonic discourse of homeownership started by the Franco regime, but continued by subsequent governments as part of the capitalist discourse of consumerism and commodification, has manipulated the Spanish populace into a falsely constructed ideal of homeownership. However, within Chapter Five it becomes clear that the home is also a place of security, a refuge from society, free from the demands of a capitalist society. Additionally, in line with Lefebvre's definition of lived space, the home can also be a place of rebellion and resistance and even subverted as a symbol against capitalism. The *okupas* appear to have seen through capitalism's veils of deception and therefore use the space of the home to criticise and resist the neoliberal governments and their capitalist policies. It is clear that still to this day, the Spanish neoliberal governments are attempting to manipulate the population into homeownership in order to feed the capitalist machine that their predecessors unleashed.

Other aspects of Spain's relationship with homeownership that could be developed through the prism of Hispanic urban cultural studies are the differences in the approaches to homeownership between different countries, between rural and urban Spain or between regions in Spain, particularly those that have a substantial population that wish to be independent of the national government, like Catalonia or País Vasco.

Looking more closely at the cultural works selected for this thesis they focus on literature and the screen. However, other cultural forms should also be considered in the expansion of this field of study. For example, the theatre, art or even more recent forms of social media, like podcasts etc. Additionally, although the reception of the works chosen is discussed within the Introduction, a more in-depth analysis of the extent chosen works were received and perceived at the time could further support the argument that the works provide a representation of homeownership within Spanish society at the time.

The remit of this thesis stops at 2008 when Spain underwent a significant and long recession only emerging in 2015. During the recession, as a result of huge international pressure, an austerity programme was launched in May 2010 (López, 2011, p. 9). This in turn led to the 15M movement where *indignados* occupied the previously commercial town squares of many cities throughout Spain on 15 May 2011. The *indignados* were against the austerity measures and rallied against the high unemployment rates, welfare cuts, corrupt politicians and the two-party system in Spain as well as generally against capitalism and the banks that caused the collapse. Many called for the basic right of a home. The post 2008 recession and the 15M movement have received significant attention from the cultural and critical point of view and my own interest started here with my Master of Arts degree entitled “Space in Crisis: the centrality of space and its links to the rise of neoliberalism with respect to the Spanish populace during the 2008 economic crisis as reflected within current cultural artefacts” which looked at how space played a dominant role in the onset of the recession and was used as a tool by the 15M protesters against the neoliberal policies of the Spanish government. Thus, taking my PhD back to the 1950s resulted from my desire to understand the origins, evolution and persistence of

the situation along with the ideological and imaginary components that affected the Spanish population in relation to owning a home.

In 2014 the austerity measures were eased and growth and employment started to increase such that by 2021 unemployment had been reduced to 14.73%.<sup>92</sup> However, covid and the rising cost of living, as with many other countries around the world, has taken its toll and it is estimated that Spain may enter another recession in 2023. Consequently, one area of further research could be to continue the work of this thesis to the current day. For example, has the hegemonic discourse of homeownership continued within Spain past the 2008-15 recession and continued to be represented within cultural works or are representations of this discourse more careful and wary?

What is not in debate is that Spanish society has a complex relationship with their homes that has been affected by both State policies and capitalist society. Given the consequences of homeownership demonstrated in this thesis, namely the creation of political stability, bolstering of capitalist markets, the use of the home as a status symbol, huge levels of credit to pay for the coveted home etc. it is my opinion that this is an area that should continue to be developed within the field of Hispanic cultural urban studies.

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<sup>92</sup> [www.macrotrends.net/countries/ESP/spain/unemployment-rate](https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/ESP/spain/unemployment-rate)

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