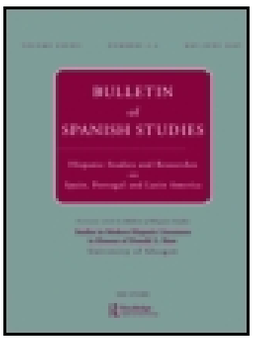

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The Counter-Nostalgia Front against Spanish Censorship: Realism's Affective Mirrors and Double-Voicedness in Early Novels by Miguel Delibes and Ana María Matute

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Bradley Epps once remarked, '[s]ometime during the 1960s, the mirror breaks for Spanish narrative'.[1] Certainly, most would agree that the 1960s ushered in a sea-change in the Spanish novel, with many works ranging from Luis Martin-Santos' *Tiempo de silencio* (1962) to Juan Benet's *Volverás a Región* (1967) clearly departing from the lauded social realist style of the 1940s and 1950s. Yet, Epps' metaphor of the mirror merits further examination, as some of this early postwar

1 Bradley Epps, *Significant Violence: Oppression and Resistance in the Later Narrative of Juan Goytisolo* (Oxford/New York: Clarendon Press, 1996), 193. Epps describes how each of these new works, in various degrees and styles, 'twists, blurs, stretches, smashes, or scoffs at mimetic representation, communicability, and referentiality. Language, turned into its own object, becomes opaque, restive, polyvalent, and at times even purposeless' (193). My discussion here will show that under the censorship of the 1940s and 1950s critically acclaimed works of social realism also subtly used language as 'its own object'. Thus, while there is admittedly a break in narrative styles in the 1960s, this break is, in part, owing to the new law of censorship—the Ley de Prensa e Imprenta (1966)—developed by the Minister of Information and Tourism, Manuel Fraga Iribarne (available online at <https://www.boe.es/eli/es/l/1966/03/18/14> [accessed 21 April 2021]). This law permitted a degree of leniency regarding style and content; in the period of forming this law, between roughly 1961 and 1966, the changing censorship was noted in publications such as Luis Martín-Santos' novel *Tiempo de silencio* (1962). As I have explained elsewhere, Martín-Santos' novel appears on the cusp of this censorship change and the first edition was published in a semi-censored form that was apparent to most alert readers. None of the extravagant new styles of the 1960s could have been published without the more permissive censorship of the 1960s and 1970s, some of which is seen in publications from 1961–1965, prior to the 1966 Ley de Prensa e Imprenta. Censors were already becoming more permissive prior to a change in the law; however, this permissiveness is not consistently applied. Further, the

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narrative is mirror-like beyond a Platonic concept of the mimetic. The notion of the 'mirror' can be examined to reveal a complex aesthetic and political resistance of Spanish realist authors who faced heavy censorship and their literary works' appeal to a broad array of readers. One of the mysteries of the history of the book in Spain is how, despite Franco having an organized team of censor-readers with designated criteria (Does it offend the regime? Does it offend Catholic morality?), certain novels with realist features about pressing social and ethical issues stemming from the violence and injustice of the regime were published. My archival research shows that these censor-readers were inclined by their own ideology to overlook or tolerate such social and ethical references, ones that socially and politically progressive readers inside and outside Spain could recognize as a complex mirror of wholeness and lack of the personal Spanish subject. Moreover, Miguel Delibes' and Ana María Matute's realist works' tendencies to include regional, middle-class and socially marginalized characters reflect a contemporary interest in particular narratives in Spanish regions, and correspond with the post-Franco era's movement away from a centralizing national identity and towards including points of view from various autonomous regions.

Two authors to emerge early on in the postwar Francoist literary scene, Miguel Delibes (17 October 1920–12 March 2010) and Ana María Matute (26 July 1925–25 June 2014), refracted some material aspects of their respective local Spanish social and natural environments while carefully excluding overt references to politics and ideologies. However, their mirror-like writing also offered a kind of discursive mirror stage: it provided contemporary readers with a sense of wholeness of a difficult Spanish reality while omitting any elements too oppositional, such as war or politics, for the censor. This sense of a former wholeness and implied Spanishness is handled paradoxically as something to be both desired and rejected. To synthesize such a paradoxical viewpoint, Delibes and Matute privilege narratives with a highly personalized viewpoint (whether through a first-person narration by a character-narrator or a third-person narration by an omniscient narrator focalizing primarily a single character's point of view).

Nostalgia and counter-nostalgia in Delibes' and Matute's early novels consist in the narrators' and characters' acts of looking back as well as the

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1966 law introduces a good deal of ambiguity and a double standard. While the law's initial words seem to protect freedom of speech, it also proceeds to present a list of conditions that reduce that freedom. For more on Martín Santos' *Tiempo de silencio*, see Susan Mooney, *The Artistic Censoring of Sexuality: Fantasy and Judgment in the Twentieth-Century Novel* (Columbus: Ohio State U. P., 2008).

inclusion of detailed accounts of harsh or challenging regional settings and situations.[2] Delibes and Matute, for example, despite their political differences, do not tend to embellish the past. In their novels, part of readers' experience of a double-voiced nostalgia and counter-nostalgia is found in the remembrance of a difficult reality (whether crude ways of behaving, desperate recourses for gaining food or simplicity of country ways of life). The narratives could be appreciated by readers across the socio-political spectrum. My archival research of censorship files shows that several of Delibes' and Matute's early novels passed censorship with only moderate suppressive attention; in retrospect, it is surprising to remark how the censors were less provoked by the realist style, in part because of its seemingly straightforward documentary aspect.

By comparing two writers at a similar point in their careers facing similar Francoist censorship conditions, I show how Delibes and Matute deployed retrospective narratives that suggest both nostalgia *and* counter-nostalgia of pre-Civil War times (or even an indeterminate time in the twentieth century), capturing a paradoxical impression of wholeness and incompleteness; on an ideological level, this paradox elides the regime's mythology of *la España eterna*, instead using youthful protagonists' own personal search for themselves in the past. This in turn shows that the earlier 1939–1962 period of writing under Franco cannot be summarized as a mimetic realism. In this article, I will examine Delibes' *La sombra del ciprés es alargada* (1947), *El camino* (1950), *Las ratas* (1962) and, briefly, *Cinco horas con Mario* (1966); the works by Matute discussed here include *Pequeño teatro* (1954; but written prior to *Los Abel*), *Los Abel* (1948) and, briefly, *Primera memoria* (1960),[3] in part to interpret Delibes' and Matute's counter-nostalgias and also to show how censors were receiving these works by examining their previously-classified reports.

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2 Several works inform my understanding of Spanish nostalgia in Franco's dictatorship. See, for example, Jeremy Treglown's *Franco's Crypt: Spanish Culture and Memory since 1936* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2013).

3 I cite from Miguel Delibes, *La sombra del ciprés es alargada* (Barcelona: Ediciones Destino, 1967); *El camino* (Barcelona: Ediciones Destino, 1982); and *Las ratas* (Barcelona: Ediciones Destino, 1973). For Ana María Matute's works, I cite from *Los Abel* (Barcelona: Ediciones Destino, 1948); *Pequeño teatro* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1954); and *Primera memoria* (Barcelona: Ediciones Destino, 1960). The Francoist censorship files are stored in Alcalá de Henares, outside Madrid, at El Archivo General de la Administración, Ministerio de Cultura y Deporte, Gobierno de España (see <http://www.culturaydeporte.gob.es/cultura/areas/archivos/mc/archivos/aga/portada.html> [accessed 21 April 2021]). Literary manuscripts and censors' reports are filed in this archive under 'Grupo de fondos: Cultura'. The files (*expedientes*) on Delibes' novels include: Expediente 1154-48, *La sombra del ciprés es alargada*; Expediente 5197-50, *El camino*; Expediente 3566-61 and Expediente 6317-61, *Las ratas*; Expediente 4897-66, *Cinco horas con Mario*. The censorship files on Matute's novels include: Expediente 4030-48, *Los Abel*; Expediente 5122-54, *El pequeño teatro*; Expediente 545-60, *Primera memoria*. Further references to these sources will be given in the main text.

This mirror-stage writing, offering the reading subject the illusion of wholeness in the subject's understanding of the narrative worlds and the permitted *versus* the taboo in a repressive state culture, provides a discourse of counter-nostalgia. By 'nostalgia', I mean a sentimental construction of an idealized past that satisfies some kind of affective need (such as justifying the 'rightness' of one's origins). By 'counter-nostalgia', I indicate a complex modality that is not necessarily ironic about nostalgia, but is double-voiced.[4] 'Double-voiced' is a term coined by Mikhail Bakhtin to address the multilayered effect of parodic language in works by authors like Nikolai Gogol; more generally, double-voicedness foregrounds how language is related to other language. The counter-nostalgic mode does not idealize a Spanish past, and in that sense authors like Delibes and Matute work against simplifying nostalgic feelings about an essentialized Spanishness. In representing realist aspects of a materially impoverished past in provincial locations, these authors deploy narrators who reflect on their personal past and communicate the value of local Spanishness based on material, emotional and ethical lack. Literary exploration of harsh conditions or negative but ritualized behaviour, shortages, painful emotions and other forms of lack are part of Spanish counter-nostalgia. Delibes' and Matute's narratives tend to use a remembering narrator who, without reflecting in an overly didactic way, merges dialogically nostalgic and counter-nostalgic elements of the protagonist's personal past, and in so doing suggests an internalized disruptive paradox that can be related to the violence of the State.

Early novels by Delibes and Matute invoking counter-nostalgia do not aim to transform the Spanish past into a heroic age. Their narratives are often set in an undefined but bleak recent past that leaves out the Civil War or makes only vague mention of it (*Primera memoria* is an exception here, as most of the action occurs during the conflict; however, its indeterminate location on an island in the Balearics allows for a degree of haziness).

The novels' setting alone creates an imaginary space for melancholy nostalgia and its counter elements. For example, Matute's *Los Abel* has an initial unnamed male narrator who travels back in time to tell of his childhood meeting with the Abel children ('Una vez, siendo niño, estuve enfermo' [*Los Abel,* 9]); he then comes across Valba Abel's diary, and the novel then carries on in Valba's voice; thus Matute encloses the narrative in a *mise en abyme* that activates a fairy-tale discovery of the forbidden and secrets; the Cain and Abel intertext does not cohere with the regime's

4 The mid-century nostalgia/counter-nostalgia of Delibes and Matute, one conservative and the other more critical, do not play on the kinds of ironies, such as camp and pastiche, of postmodern nostalgias as discussed by Linda Hutcheon, *Politics of Postmodernism* (London/New York: Routledge, 1989), 176–79.

mythically glorious *España eterna*, but alludes to sombre, violent divisions within the family, an alternative narrative.

Both novelists tended to emphasize local Spanish situations, not a national one. For Delibes this terrain is Castilla del Norte, the countryside around Valladolid (a *Falangista* stronghold) that Delibes knew intimately. For Matute, regional locations are found in Castile and Catalunya (and more unusually País Vasco or Euskadi for *Pequeño teatro*). These narratives develop a counter-nostalgic discourse composed of nuanced and complex affects, including those of pain, isolation, fear, depression, sadness, abjectness and negativity. This array of emotions is expressed variously through the diegetic narrator or protagonist as well as their setting, actions, relationships and social conditions. The narrators often frame the work with a 'looking back' and questioning of how things turned out. For example, Delibes' *El camino* begins with the lines: 'Las cosas podían haber sucedido de cualquier otra manera y, sin embargo, sucedieron así' (*El camino,* 7). In turn, these narratives provide something akin to an affective mirror for contemporary Spanish readers.

In Franco's Spain, censorship as a secretive government organ was directed by a variety of bodies: at first it was located in the Ministry of the Interior (1939–1941), then with the Vice Secretary of Popular Education of the Falange (1942–1945); from 1946 to 1951, it was located in the Ministry of Education; finally, from 1951 onward, in the recently created Ministry of Information and Tourism.[5] Writers in the 1940s faced seemingly insurmountable hurdles, as the regime created an intimidating 'time of silence' in which a raised, overly critical voice could be accused of a crime.[6] During its functioning under Franco, censorship twice changed significantly: after the first most severe post-Civil War period around 1944 or 1945, and again in 1966 with the newly created Ley de Prensa e Imprenta instigated by Fraga; this law ostensibly offered more lenience, yet in its structure it differed little from prior formats.[7]

During the bleak post-Civil War, early 1940s period in Spain, writers like Camilo José Cela (in *La familia de Pascual Duarte* [1942]) and Carmen

5 Hans-Jörg Neuschäfer, *Adiós a la España eterna: la dialéctica de la censura: novela, teatro y cine bajo el franquismo*, trad. Rosa Pilar Blanco (Barcelona: Anthropos/Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 1994), 48.

6 For the violent impact of Francoist censorship, see: Miguel Abellán, *Censura y creación literaria en España (1936–1976)* (Barcelona: Península, 1980); Justino Sinova, *La censura de prensa durante el franquismo (1936–1951)* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1989); Xavier Moret, *Tiempo de editores: historia de la edición en España, 1939–1975* (Barcelona: Destino, 2002); Elisa Chuliá, *El poder y la palabra. Prensa y poder político en las dictaduras: el régimen de Franco ante la prensa y el periodismo* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2001); and Eduardo Ruiz Bautista, *Tiempo de censura: la represión editorial durante el franquismo* (Gijón: Trea, 2008).

7 See, for example, Lucía Montejo Gurruchaga, *Discurso de autora: género y censura en la narrativa española de posguerra* (Madrid: Univ. Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2010), 29–33.

Laforet (in *Nada* [1945]) showed that it was possible to write through censorship with their landmark novels that atypically disrupted the officially coded concept of a contented, traditional, hierarchical Catholic society.[8] In interviews, both Delibes and Matute have remarked how life-changing the publication of *Nada* was for their critical and creative formation and for the courage to proceed with aspirations to write at all in the dismal publishing scene.[9] *Nada*, with its inclusion of Catalan street

8 See Fernando Larraz, *Letricidio español: censura y novela durante el franquismo* (Gijón: Trea, 2014). Larraz explains how these two novels, 'las dos más influyentes novelas de la década', had little to do with Francoism (in Cela's, for the protagonist's 'flagrante degeneración moral' and in Laforet's, 'por sombría y poco entusiasta de la nueva realidad social' [166]). He goes on: 'pero tienen en sí el residuo de lo posible porque cumplen con las características elementales de la prescriptiva franquista. Sin ser exactamente parte del proyecto cultural tradicionalista ni falangista, *La familia de Pascual Duarte*, *Nada* y casi todas las demás novelas de la alta posguerra poseen una preocupación existencial en la que converge el sustrato del credo literario de la época: la gravedad, el trascendentalismo, las preocupaciones antropológicas, los temas de Dios, la muerte, la culpa, etcétera, propios de una literatura católica; el realismo antivanguardista, el vigor, la herencia del 98, el compromiso social, etcétera, característicos del falangismo cultural. Quizá pretendieron superar en cierto modo los moldes impuestos, pero no acertaron a romperlos porque, no habiendo recibido otra formación, carecían de modelos disyuntivos. Esta deriva posible de lo útil-nacional a lo humano se ve en no pocas propuestas programáticas' (166–67). Larraz's claim that these postwar works do little to break with cultural *Falangismo* perhaps overlooks the mixed tonalities of these aspects. My interpretations point to a handling of nostalgia without reinforcing *Falangismo*.

9 In this article, I draw much of the authors' interviews and literary historical information from extant works; I also use my recorded audio interview with Matute in Barcelona in the autumn of 2004, my written correspondence with Delibes and my archival research of the censorship files (*expedientes*) stored in the Archivo General de la Administración. Works used for Delibes include *Miguel Delibes. Homenaje académico y literario*, ed. María Pilar Celma (Valladolid: Univ. de Valladolid/Junta de Castilla y León, 2003); Antonio Corral Castanedo, *Retrato de Miguel Delibes* (Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg/Círculo de Lectores, 1995); Ramón García Domínguez, *Miguel Delibes: la imagen escrita* (Valladolid: 38 Semana Internacional de Cine, 1993); César Alonso de los Ríos, *Conversaciones con Miguel Delibes* (Madrid: EMESA, 1971); Manuel Alvar, *El mundo novelesco de Miguel Delibes* (Madrid: Gredos, 1987); Ramona F. del Valle Spinka, *La conciencia social de Miguel Delibes* (New York: Eliseo Torres & Sons, 1975); Esther Bartolomé Pons, *Miguel Delibes y su guerra constante* (Barcelona: Victor Pozanco, 1979); Jesús Rodríguez, *El sentimiento del miedo en la obra de Miguel Delibes* (Madrid: Pliegos, 1989); María Luz Long, *La repercusión del conflicto del 36 en la obra de Miguel Delibes* (Madrid: Pliegos, 2005); F. Javier Sánchez Pérez, *El hombre amenazado: hombre, sociedad y educación en la novelística* (Salamanca: Univ. Pontificia de Salamanca/Biblioteca de la Caja de Ahorros y M. de P. de Salamanca, 1985); Miguel Delibes, *La censura de prensa en los años 40 y otros ensayos* (Valladolid: Ámbito Ediciones, 1985), and his *España 1936–1950: muerte y resurrección de la novela* (Barcelona: Ediciones Destino, 2004). Sources for Matute include Michael Scott Doyle, 'Entrevista con Ana María Matute: "Recuperar otra vez cierta Inocencia" ', *Anales de la Literatura Española Contemporánea*, 10:1–3 (1985), 237–47; Roy Joaquín, *The Literary World of Ana María Matute* (Coral Gables: Iberian Studies Institute, Univ. of Miami, 1993); Marie-Lise Gazarian-Gautier, *Ana María Matute: la voz del silencio*

names and other discursive markers that indicate other Spains beyond the Francoist idea of a unified heroic Catholic Spain. Laforet thus sets up a counter-nostalgic Spanish text that does not align with Franco's ideology, yet also does not romanticize the past in another direction. In fact, the character-narrator's decision at the end of the novel to continue life in Madrid signals further ambiguity about the novel's potentially oppositional stance. This retrospective narrator, also the focalizer of the text, is similar in construction in delivering a double-voice narrative to the narrators of Delibes' and Matute's early novels.

The ethical compulsion and emotional challenge of their novels can be found in their engrossing portrayals of the lives and swirling affects of ordinary and underprivileged people, including illiterate and semi-literate individuals. Both writers, somewhat in keeping with modernist practices developed by non-Spanish writers such as Virginia Woolf and Spanish Silver-Age writers, erase or understate narratorial editorializing. Their works draw much of their meaning from specific locations rather than generalized ones. Delibes' challenge of using Castilla, his home province, would be to provide *another* Spain, beyond the Castilla used as a representation of Spain overall (and in Franco's myth of *la España eterna*). Gonzalo Sobejano recognizes some unifying features of these early postwar narratives: narration works as a confessional discourse, with the main story revolving around an isolated individual or family, 'faced with an uncertain future', suffering 'the emptiness of inner exile, or, paralyzed by indecision, […] lost in monologues suffused with memory and endless waiting'.[10] The realism of these works is achieved partly through the apparently

(Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1997); Alicia Redondo Goicoechea, *Ana María Matute (1926–)* (Madrid: Ediciones del Orto, 2000); Rosa Isabel Galdona Pérez, *Discurso femenino en la novela española de posguerra: Carmen Laforet, Ana María Matute y Elena Quiroga* (La Laguna: Univ. de La Laguna, 2001); Antonio Ayuso Pérez, ' "Yo entré en la literatura a través de los cuentos". Entrevista con Ana María Matute', *Espéculo. Revista de Estudios Literarios*, 35 (2007), <https://webs.ucm.es/info/especulo/numero35/matute.html> (accessed 22 April 2021); Marie-Linda Ortega, 'Inscripciones de las "dos Españas" en *Primera memoria* de Ana María Matute: la unidad de nunca jamás', in *'Una de las dos Españas … ': representaciones de un conflicto identitario en la historia y en las literaturas hispánicas. Homenaje a Manfred Tietz*, ed. Gero Arnscheidt & Pere Joan Tous (Madrid: Iberoamericana/Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert, 2007), 103–12; Janet Pérez, 'Ana María Matute', in *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, 375 vols (Detroit: Gale, 1875–2006), CCCXXII (2006), *Twentieth-Century Spanish Fiction Writers*, ed. Marta E. Altisent, 187–96; Guadalupe M. Cabedo, ' "La madre ausente": inconformismo social en algunas novelas de la posguerra civil escritas por tres autoras españolas: Carmen Laforet, Carmen Martín Gaite y Ana María Matute', *Cuadernos del Lazarillo. Revista Literaria y Cultural*, 29 (2005), 57–61; and Nuria Cruz-Cámara, 'La trampa existencial en *La trampa* de Ana María Matute', *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*, 29:1–2 (2002), 269–83.

10 Gonzalo Sobejano, 'The Testimonial Novel and the Novel of Memory', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Spanish Novel: From 1600 to the Present*, ed. Harriet Turner & Adelaida López de Martínez (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 2003), 172–92 (p. 176).

transparent images of reality delivered by the character-narrator.[11] This existential confessional mode investigates the marginalized ability for individual growth, the cult of the family, and hunger and misery. Roberta Johnson notes that innovative later postwar works like Matute's *Primera memoria* (1960) and Delibes' *Cinco horas con Mario* (1966) use aesthetic strategies of resistance already present in several foundational pre-war narratives of the Spanish Silver Age. These strategies include 'elliptical plot structures, poetic language, and linguistic representation of thought processes'.[12] David K. Herzberger argues that postwar literature offers a counter-discourse to the dominant Francoist discourses.[13]

I recognize that there are multiple discourses on both sides, the counter-discourse containing, in fact, many features of life and cultural symbolism in everyday postwar Spain. In order for writers to create this counter-myth, Herzberger posits that postwar social-realist narratives of the 1940s and 1950s display

> [el] presente como un tiempo estático, reiterative e inmutable; la ausencia de héroes, sustituidos por protagonistas de carácter colectivo; y el empleo de un lenguaje referencial y objetivo, que trasladara fielmente a la ficción la realidad circundante, lo que aproximaba los relatos a la narración histórica.[14]

Herzberger points out that the apparently lucid realist language works on at least three levels: 1) the apparent and unambiguous actual world of referentiality; 2) 'discourse as metaphor' and 3) a contestation of 'the monologism of the discourse of the State'.[15] He explains the second in the following way: 'Discourse as metaphor refers […] to the way in which language points in two directions at the same time: toward the reality described in the narration and toward a discourse or myth that postwar culture (and in particular, historiography) has made familiar and imposed as valid'.[16]

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11 Sobejano, 'The Testimonial Novel and the Novel of Memory', 177.

12 Silver-Age writers include: Rosa Chacel (1898–1994) (*Estación, Ida y vuelta* [1930]); Ramón del Valle-Inclán (1866–1936); Miguel de Unamuno (1864–1936); Pío Baroja (1872–1956); Azorín (1873–1967); Gabriel Miró (1879–1930); Ramón Pérez de Ayala (1880–1962); Franciso Ayala (1906–2009); Ramón Gómez de la Serna (1888–1963) and Ramón Sender (1901–1982). See Roberta Johnson, 'From the Generation of 1898 to the Vanguard', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Spanish Novel*, ed. Turner & López de Martínez, 155–71 (p. 170).

13 David K. Herzberger, *Narrating the Past: Fiction and Historiography in Postwar Spain* (Durham, NC: Duke U. P., 1995). He does not discuss Matute's novels, however, and only briefly mentions one of Delibes'.

14 As summarized by Susana Bardavío Estevan in her article 'La infancia imposible: *Los niños tontos* de Ana María Matute o el fracas de la biopolítica franquista', *BSS*, XCV:8 (2018), 999–1018 (p. 1000).

15 Herzberger, *Narrating the Past*, 62.

16 Herzberger, *Narrating the Past*, 64.

My study agrees with Herzberger's recognition of the State's monologism, and realist writing contesting it. However, I see Delibes and Matute deploying counter-nostalgic discourses not because they see the present as a 'tiempo estático'—indeed, in their works discussed here, neither the past nor the present are static—but rather presented as open and oscillating.

Meanwhile Hans-Jörg Neuschäfer makes a similar proposal for discursivity by identifying the impact of censorship on literature, especially in view of prohibitions of freely expressing sex—particularly regarding female sexuality—, politics and religion. He writes:

> Es lógico que tanto los tabúes temáticos como este doble tratamiento censorial hayan llevado a los autores a inventarse tácticas de camuflaje y de disimulo, es decir formas indirectas y encubiertas, ya que la enunciación directa del pensamiento podía ser peligrosa. Yo llamo a esto el 'discurso de la censura'. El hecho de que la censura lograba imponer un discurso enigmático muestra naturalmente su *poder*. Pero al mismo tiempo hubo autores que manejaron este discurso, es decir el arte de la expresión indirecta, con tal ingenio y maestría que llegaron a engañar, en ocasiones incluso a dejar en ridículo, al aparato de la censura. En estos casos quedaba de manifiesto la impotencia de la censura.[17]

Both Herzberger and Neuschäfer identify the pressure of discourse to do more than one thing. What they are noticing is how censorship takes an organic form within texts written under the pressure of censorship. Neuschäfer is interested in the *huella* that censorship leaves on a text; Herzberger is interested in language's dual referentiality. However, with or without censorship, language is always already at least making a dual reference; and since Saussure, we recognize that all language is metaphorical.[18] How can we determine some creative process under Spanish censorship that is more specific to its conditions and the successful critical literature yet general enough to apply to a broader period, such as the early years of

17 Neuschäfer, *Adiós a la España eterna*, 10.

18 For more on Saussure's theory of language, see: *Premier cours de linguistique générale (1907) d'après les cahiers d'Albert Riedlinger / Saussure's First Course of Lectures on General Linguistics (1907) from the Notebooks of Albert Riedlinger*, ed. Eisuke Komatsu, trans. George Wolf (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1996); *Deuxième cours de linguistique générale (1908–1909) d'après les cahiers d'Albert Riedlinger et Charles Patois / Saussure's Second Course of Lectures on General Linguistics (1908–1909) from the Notebooks of Albert Riedlinger and Charles Patois*, ed. Eisuke Komatsu, trans. George Wolf (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1997); and *Troisième cours de linguistique générale (1910–1911) d'après les cahiers d'Émile Constantin / Saussure's Third Course of Lectures on General Linguistics (1910–1911) from the Notebooks of Emile Constantin*, ed. Eisuke Komatsu, trans. Roy Harris (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1993).

censorship when social realism emerged as a way of satisfying protest literature (*littérature engagée* in the Sartrean sense) and responding to a wide readership, including one of censors?[19]

I suggest, during the years of censorship, Spanish writers use diverse recourses to write through and with censorship, not just against it. Fernando Larraz and Cristina Suárez Toledano have argued that the Francoist censors' responses to post-Civil War manuscripts contributed to Spanish writers' general adherence to social realism. However, the communication produced by some writers via the censors needs to be understood far more dialogically. In the early years of the censorship period, Spanish realist writers such as Delibes and Matute develop double-voicedness and heteroglossia (narrative terms coined by Russian formalist Mikhail Bakhtin)[20] to create an ambivalent mirroring effect of wholeness and incompleteness of the subject.

Double-voicedness and heteroglossia can refresh historiography's theories of discourse, in particular its preoccupation within the advantages and limitations of narrative. Bakhtin's heteroglossia (multi-voicedness) is one strong antidote to historiographers' crisis, that is, history could be written more like a novel in terms of gathering several discourses into a text. For Bakhtin, the modern novel ideally foregrounds heteroglossia and downplays monologic traditions (such as the epic; ideologically, the monologic can be noted in the Francoist regime's idea of one Spain and its false mythology of the *Reconquista*).

In the Spanish realist novel of the immediate postwar period, the seemingly simple mirror-like appearance of the narrator's focalization belies a more complex web of heteroglossia playing on both nostalgia and counter-nostalgia. Bakhtin's term of double-voicing indicates special speech the speaker wants the listener to hear as if the speech were spoken with 'quotation marks'; this is a variation of free indirect style, in which the narrator's discourse mingles with that of one or more characters. Some early works by Delibes and Matute feature this double-voicedness. While these authors have often been credited with writing clear, straightforward realist prose that is mimetic, it is worth considering how they achieve this

19 In my 2004 interview with Matute, she explained that the censorship constricted her rather than compelled her to write through it. She also expressed how, despite feeling solidarity with other engaged writers, she herself could not be considered entirely an 'escritora comprometida' because she would not subscribe to any ideology that was not her, because she was a free being, without political affiliation. It is helpful to remember here how Matute, from early on, had friendships with Juan and Luis Goytisolo, and José María Castellet, who did identify as 'écrivains engagés' (author's interview with Matute, November 2004).

20 See Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination. Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson & Michael Holquist (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1981).

mirror-like effect in order to achieve a more complex meaning beyond what the censors appreciated.

Bakhtin's double-voicedness in the modern novel refers to how this genre offers multiple perspectives and modes of perception of different characters, including characters representing less privileged classes. Some Spanish realist novels, such as the ones discussed here, represent the middle class, working class and the subaltern, and directly capture their voices; the double-voiced aspect refers to how free indirect style can particularly allow a narrator's and a character's voice to mingle. Delibes' narratives showcase his attention to specific rural speech of labourers, farmers, hunters and other rural people. Matute also regularly includes subaltern characters within the central plot and captures some of their particularized speech and points of view.

Delibes and Matute use heteroglossia and double-voicedness to express counter-nostalgia which in turn brings into a confrontation good, ambiguous and difficult memories of Spanishness or regional Spanish identity related to pre-Civil War, war and postwar situations, and settings, feelings and experiences. In their counter-nostalgic discourses, their novels offer readers reflections of a critical wholeness—a wholeness that was never there, and in fact integral or complete personal identity is withheld and delayed. The narrative leaves a degree of ethical incompleteness which in turn reflects on the engagement of the reader. The invocations of lived experience involve lack.

In my study, I see the languages and themes of Delibes' and Matute's narratives working as heteroglossia hidden in the open, as a counter-nostalgia presented also as a desire of simplicity and intimacy inherent in a lyrical-realist narrative style. While their narratives do not engage in Francoist mythologies of national heroics and sensational-epic-Catholic history as destiny,[21] they do appeal to a broad Spanish readership's fascination with the individual's solitude, the power of family, and personal anxiety about having enough or making minimal progress.[22] For readers, the implied losses in these narratives are losses that matter. But the

21 For more on how Catholicism was funnelled into Spain's national narrative, see William Viestenz, *By the Grace of God: Francoist Spain and the Sacred Roots of Political Imagination* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 2014).

22 In her consideration of Laforet's writing tactics under harsh censorship, Stacey Dolgin Casado argues that *Nada* avoids cause-and-effect situations and in other ways avoids assigning definitive meanings, positive or negative. See Stacey Dolgin Casado, 'Structure As Meaning in Carmen Laforet's *Nada*: A Case of Self-Censorship', in *Studies in Honor of Gilberto Paolini*, ed. Mercedes Vidal Tibbitts (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 1996), 351–58. The textual ambiguities allow for nothing to give offense to the censor (353–57). At same time, the ambiguities open up readerly knowledge and understanding, ranging from the enigmatic title of the book to foundational situations for the protagonist Andrea, who must emigrate from the countryside and move in with her decrepit family in Barcelona.

restoration of what is lost would be impossible in the current (Francoist) retrospective viewpoint; this reflection also turns the political into the personal, as the open political arena is not possible.

Delibes and Matute would proceed to create and publish many works from the 1940s to the early 2000s successfully, but not without multiple encounters with censors prior to 1976. Both writers use a form of social realist style to apprehend a local reality and differ from paternalistic tone or framework (such as national epic or heroic narrative); both handle Spanish and local provincial heritage in a semi-documentary fashion, a mode that conveys counter-nostalgia, without giving way to a lyrical rhapsody or satire.[23]

As nostalgia was one of the dictatorship's sources of imagination and ideological appeal, the challenge for emerging critical writers was to tap creatively into nostalgia while not overinvesting in its limitations. Delibes accomplishes this balance of nostalgia/counter-nostalgia with his highly detailed unromantic descriptions of Castilian rural life and ordinary folk, from labourers, farmers, field hands, social outcasts, the uneducated and semiliterate, old people and children in the Castilian countryside. He does not angle for the *tremendista* approach of Cela but rather, in an unassuming manner, gently focalizes his subaltern subjects. He uses a thoughtful, reflective liminal character-narrator, who also serves as the main focalizer (the one who provides the main point of view); this narrator looks into the past with an unadorned clear prose. In dialogues, subaltern characters retain much of their original rural dialect; with Delibes' familiarity with rural residents from all walks of life, his works contain a degree of authentic speech patterns that lend a documentary effect to his prose. Delibes' novels like *Las ratas* or *El camino* provide an unromanticized, unsensational look at some of the humblest rural people in

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Dolgin Casado sees writers like Matute, Delibes and even Cela (*La colmena*) as following Laforet's example of 'sociopolitical cause-and-effect omissions' (357).

23 In the abstract of his dissertation, Omar García suggests that under Francoist censorship 'a particular kind of theater was created, which forms dialogues with the institutionalized censorship of this period' and he claims that certain plays 'become non-superimposable mirror images ("enantiomers") of the society they criticize. […] [W]hilst many of the plays decontextualized the setting established by their authors, the "historical" character is maintained by the eruption of "chronotopic" elements which can be set in Spain at the time of the representation, be it hymns, military salutes, and other forms of non-dialogic elements of representation' (Omar A. García, 'Diálogos con la censura: el enantiomorfismo teatral durante el franquismo', Doctoral dissertation [University of Miami, 2003], <https://scholarship.miami.edu/esploro/outputs/doctoral/Dialogos-con-la-censura-El-enantiomorfismo-teatral-durante-el-franquismo/991031447461402976> [accessed 1 June 2021]). Similar to Dolgin Casado but from a textual and semiotic perspective, García shows how critical playwrights under Franco made particular omissions while preserving other historical elements, giving an illusion of mirror-like reflection of a benign reality while embedding disparities that subtly challenge the Francoist version of reality.

Spanish society. The dialogic aspect of representing subaltern voices and subjects, mimetically relating their speech and customs, serves to deflect the Francoist censor who would read it at face value as a documentary-style representation that does not offend as it makes no overtly controversial statements (this further speaks to Francoist censors' straightforward acceptance of rural poverty and lack of education, aspects that would, by contrast, appear as a neo-liberal or socialist cause for protest).

At the same time, in his narratives, Delibes avoids a heroic tone or narrative line of action and progressive outcome. The rural community in the countryside near Valladolid, or plural communities at times, is recognized and plays a part as a character; the diegetic mimetic character, from his standpoint later in life reflecting back, includes a particular Castilian identity. For example, from the first lines in Chapter 1 of *Las ratas*, a counter-nostalgic framework is apparent in the matter-of-fact narrator's presentation. The Valladolid countryside and 'cloud of crows', covering three typically Castilian poplar trees, appear in the morning before the eyes of the child protagonist el Nini, watching, barefoot, from his home in a cave:

> Poco después de amanecer, el Nini se asomó a la boca de la cueva y contempló el nube de cuervos reunidos en consejo. Los tres chopos desmochados de la ribera cubiertos de pajarracos, parecían tres paraguas cerrados con las puntas hacia el cielo. (*Las ratas,* 9)

The damning fact that Spaniards have become so impoverished that they reside in caves breaks from conservatives' traditionally romantic view of the peasant class as wholesomely connected to the land; moreover, as a *ratero* (rat-catcher), Nini's uncle helps to feed villagers who are reduced to eating the rodents (again, a break from a nostalgic view of the poor eating humble but traditional Spanish fare, such as *migas*). Here they are indeed connected to the land, but in a struggle for survival. Moreover, the child suffers from his abusive father, further moving away from a nostalgic view of Spanish Catholic family values.[24]

This reference to Castilla as a village surviving on rural, agrarian means would appeal to both conservative and ecologically-progressive Spanish readers as an awareness of the rigorous demands and beauty of the modest simple life. Delibes' narratives do not offer simplicity nor romance nor

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24 For more on how the characters embody 'un atraso vergonzante' rather than a wistful nostalgia, see Tomás Salas, 'La construcción del personaje en *Las ratas* de Miguel Delibes', *Espéculo*, 45 (2010), <https://webs.ucm.es/info/especulo/numero45/persrata.html> (accessed 1 June 2021). The censor clearly did not anticipate the book's reception. Janet Pérez points out how the novel's publication prompted public outrage regarding the subhuman conditions endured by the cave-dwellers depicted in the novel (Janet Pérez, 'The Socialist Realist Novel', in *A Companion to the Twentieth-Century Spanish Novel*, ed. Martha E. Altisent [New York: Tamesis, 2008], 60–74 [p. 67]).

idealization of the rural human subject. A coming-of-age story such as *La sombra del ciprés es alargada* involves many ruptures, conflicts, unadorned characters, and a range of emotions transcending *la cursilería* or the sentimental (*lo cursi* typifies Francoist discourse while generally literature of any critical quality avoids it). Many of these narratives explore affects of sadness, negativity, depression or abjectness in a way that is oddly in keeping with Catholic discourse of the temporary passage of life *versus* the great afterlife.

The modest narrator, whether male or female, also helps shield the text from the censor's inquisition. As Irene Gómez Castellano has pointed out in the cases of Laforet's *Nada* and Mercé Rodoreda's *La plaça del Diamant*, the young woman narrator and the personal story of a *Bildungsroman* serve as unassuming features which convey innocence.[25] Likewise, Delibes and Matute usually model seemingly innocent character-narrators who often seem focused on small matters in life. This, however, allows various things in the apparent social realist framework to live a double life, containing a critical symbolism or criticism by way of leaving gaps untold. The things and experiences, while recognizably Spanish and specific to regions, evoking in their mention 'how things used to be', serve purposes beyond simplistic nostalgia. For example, horrific imagery presses up against apparently normal and quotidian situations. In an interview with *Le Monde* in 1970, Matute stated:

> To my mind, […] our vocation was conditioned and stimulated more by the postwar period than by the war itself: the 'dazed children', as I call my generation, grew up into discontented adolescents who rebelled against all forms of mysticism and myth and refused to identify with a world governed by rewards and punishment, by good and bad men. The wolf was beginning to emerge from his sheep's clothing.[26]

After the end of Franco's regime, she and Delibes became more outspoken.

Mirrors of Not-Quite-Nostalgia

The realist mode of writing has many forms; Spanish writers opted for either first-person narrations or spare third-person narrations that efface the

25 Irene Gómez Castellano, 'On Food, Hunger, and Parasites: Female Strategies against Censorship in *Nada* and *Plaça de diamant*', in *Dictatorships in the Hispanic World: Transatlantic and Transnational Perspectives*, ed. Patricia Swier & Julia Riordan-Goncalves (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), 133–60 (p. 144).

26 Cited in English in *The New York Times*'s obituary for Matute: see William Yardley, 'Ana María Matute, Spanish Novelist Marked by Civil War, Dies at 88', 1 July 2014, n.p.; available online at <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/01/books/ana-maria-matute-spanish-novelist-marked-by-civil-war-dies-at-88.html> (accessed 26 May 2021).

narrator, creating an illusion of direct representation. How better to avoid censorship action by either giving the obviously fictional first-person narrator the task of telling the tale or by erasing signs of any editorializing in a third-person narration? Show, not tell, seemed to be a savvy aesthetic.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the postwar Spanish writers creating works under the censor's heavy surveillance found a certain spare social or objective realist perspective a great recourse. Indeed, it is sometimes surprising to discover what kinds of dire social conditions could be reported via such narratives, conditions which implicitly condemned Franco's regime for neglect or abuse of its citizenry.

Further, by the late 1940s, the writings of Jean-Paul Sartre regarding *l'écrivain engagé*[27] and the necessity of awakening in the reader a social consciousness found a receptive audience amongst emerging postwar writers and critics in Spain. While never really forming a school, certain writers such as Jesús Fernández Santos (*Los bravos* [1954]), Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio (*El Jarama* [1955]) and Ignacio Aldecoa (*El fulgor y la sangre* [1954]) set a trend for a movement of writers wanting to capture the social and material reality of working and subaltern classes. Their work shows a commitment to raising awareness of challenging social conditions, particularly poverty and possible causes linked to government and class forces. Both Delibes and Matute emerged slightly before these realists. While Delibes, who resided all his life in heavily Francoist Valladolid and its environs, did not work and live in an environment encouraging dissent or at least questioning authority, Matute, residing in Barcelona and Madrid, cities noted for their resistance to Franco, developed into a literary free spirit with many friendships with writers and critics who favoured social realism and its Sartrean bases. These regional differences, along with each writer's particular identity and sense of the purpose of writing, led to a divergence in their literary styles and themes. Yet, both faced the same censors and all the cumbersome restrictions of writing in this era of silence.

27 As Steven Crowell explains: 'According to the theory of "engaged literature" expounded in [Sartre's] *What Is Literature?*, in creating a literary world the author is always acting either to imagine paths toward overcoming concrete unfreedoms such as racism and capitalist exploitation, or else closing them off' (Steven Crowell, 'Existentialism', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, 9 June 2020, n.p.; <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2020/entries/existentialism/> [accessed 18 May 2021]). Sartre's ideas in *What Is Literature?* were first explored in his articles published in his journal of opinion, *Les Temps Modernes*, especially the essay 'Présentation' to the initial issue in October 1945. As these were articles, and many Europeans read French, his ideas circulated in Spain in the 1940s and 1950s, even if not openly in the Spanish press.

Miguel Delibes: Nostalgia of Mirrored Ambivalence

Occasionally, in interviews, Delibes does discuss censorship, but the topic seems curiously divorced from many of his comments and idealizations here, such as the 'bridge' he can extend to his readers and his nostalgia for a former artisanal journalism.[28] What might have been more pertinent to notice is that he was not able to express in journalism what he could in literature, particularly situations of crushing poverty in the Castilian countryside.

Delibes' breakthrough novel *El camino* (1950) shows grinding poverty in village life while paradoxically admiring old Castilian customs. He uses a free indirect discourse to capture the languages of both a narrator and Daniel, the protagonist. This dual mirror image of the Castilian village confirms what many Spaniards would know to some degree about poverty as well as persistent local customs in the countryside, and not just in Castile. While later in his career, some of these novels were considered evidence of Delibes' stature as an ecologist or preservationist, it seems that at the time of publication, his interest was divided between a desire to improve agricultural and other rural workers' lives (counter-nostalgia) and to preserve them as they were, complete with the charm of old beliefs, customs, and practices (nostalgia).

The conclusion of *El camino* contends that the then child protagonist Daniel, *el Mochuelo*, at age eleven, would be better off staying in his village rather than heading to Madrid, at his father's behest, for an education to elevate him socially. In a retrospective sweep, the novel focuses on Daniel's formative years from his earliest days to his most recent, when he loses one of his best friends through a tragic accident and thus loses his innocence. Daniel owes his childhood to his village, and one infers that childhood is valued over adulthood. The dichotomy of city and countryside is clearly

28 For example, in Delibes' 2004 book, *España 1936–1950: muerte y resurrección de la novela*, written at a time in which he had the luxury to look back over the tough Franco years and say exactly what he wanted, he makes virtually no reference to censorship. In Part II's second essay ('Novela de posguerra [1940–2000]', 139–53), he delays the mention of censorship until page 145, when he vaguely notes that the country's borders become more 'permeable' so that despite a zealous censorship some of the latest significant literary works (from outside) reach Spanish readers. Curiously, while mentioning no names of works or authors, he claims that the Spanish novel of the 1950s 'se enfría, pierde pasión' (146–47). Delibes' book offers fleeting descriptions of his encounters with and impressions of postwar writers; while he does not celebrate any particular writer, his criticisms are also vague. Matute is not a good writer in his view because she chooses unusual names for her characters. He also distances himself from the so-called social realist and objectivist writers, despite the fact that some of his work shares an interest in presenting difficult material situations of the under classes (148–49). In this same book, he happily pronounces that, from early on in his career, journalism served for him as a 'draft' for his fiction, again without acknowledging the severe censorship regulating the media (160).

implied, despite all the 'simplicity' and hardships of country life and practices. Madrid will likely not offer Daniel something better and he must face it like medicine: his thoughts are revealed in the final pages: 'El progreso, en verdad, no le importaba un ardite' (*El camino,* 218); the double-voicedness of such lines implies the boy's language 'importaba un ardite' and the narrator's and father's 'el progreso'. By contrast, his father, the village's cheese maker, is proud to be able to send his son on a better path (*camino*), unlike many others in the village.

Through the narrative, the boy's thoughts are clearly prioritized over the pragmatic plans of the father. Daniel will obey his parents because he has also learned to do so, but an education in Madrid does not make sense to him, and readers are invited to agree with him. Why would it hurt him to stay in the village, learn his father's trade (or another), and eventually marry the girl he is just starting to have feelings for? The conflict is developed via Daniel's masculinity and affects of nostalgia, as he emotionally asks Uca-uca, the girl he likes, not to have her freckles removed, and then turns away to cry, even though he has just been lectured to about the masculine code of not crying: 'Un hombre no debe llorar aunque se le muera su padre entre horribles dolores' (*El camino,* 223), a warning imposing shame made in the novel's first chapter as well. Daniel's character and divided situation appeals to a broad Spanish readership that also felt divided between impulses to preserve traditions and to modernize.[29]

It is likely that writing fiction served as a humanizing escape with an objective to report and reflect on what could *not* be reported in newspapers. Delibes' first novel, *La sombra del ciprés es alargada*, inadequately reflects his eventual overall aesthetic, but there do emerge some early signs of criticism of war. He adopts a melancholy and Catholic tone to relate the sombre story of an orphan, Pedro, who loses his best friend Alfredo during childhood and who grows into a man who scarcely dares to ever attach himself emotionally to anyone ever again.[30] He becomes a merchant ship's captain, a metaphor for man's temporary roving state in the world. Despite his reserve, he succumbs to loving and marrying a Catholic American woman, Jane, only to see her melodramatically die, pregnant, shortly after their marriage. The protagonist concludes the narrative by finding a silent closure of sorts by 'casi inconscientemente' dropping Jane's wedding ring down into the grave of his best friend Alfredo. In fact, the closure of the

29 Delibes only really dares to treat the Civil War directly once censorship is no longer an issue, with his novel *377A, Madera de héroe* (Barcelona: Ediciones Destino, 1987). For a more sustained review of Delibes' treatment of the Civil War, see Long, *La repercusión del conflicto del 36 en la obra de Miguel Delibes*.

30 For more on the Spanish figure of the orphan, see Jeremy Squires, 'Orphanhood As Genesis', *BHS*, XCII:1 (2015), 39–52.

novel relies heavily on the act of reliving nostalgia of his 'primeros años' and 'primera amistad' (*La sombra del ciprés es alargada,* 277) and confronting lack. Pedro returns to Ávila, wanders to the graveyard to find the grave and relates his sensations of nostalgia/counter-nostalgia:

> 'Mi sitio está aquí—me dije—; entre los vivos y mis muertos, actuando de intercesor.' Sentí agitarse mi sangre al aproximarme a la tumba de Alfredo. La lápida estaba borrada por la nieve, pero nuestros nombres—Alfredo y Pedro—fosforescían sobre la costra obscura del pino. Me abalancé sobre él y palpé su cuerpo con mis dos manos, anhelando captar el estremecimiento de su savia.
>
> (*La sombra del ciprés es alargada*, 277)

After departing the cemetery, he relates that he suddenly felt an unaccustomed sensation of 'relajada placidez. Se me hacía que ya había encontrado la razón suprema de mi pervivencia en el mundo' (*La sombra del ciprés es alargada*, 277–78). Prior to the cemetery visit, when Pedro has visited the house in which he had been raised as an adopted orphan many years earlier, he discovers that some of the inhabitants remain alive, while several others have died for various reasons. The novel thus reflects on the very act of recovering nostalgically one's past only to find it changed by death and those who remain strangely frozen in time (though not in a positive sense). Pedro reflects:

> Me pasaron a la sala isabelina de tan compactos recuerdos. ¿Era posible que también por allí hubieran desfilado veinte años de existencia? El mismo papel rameado continuaba adornando las paredes, sirviendo de fondo a la sillería de raso rojo, al arcaico piano, al espejo dorado […] Entonces comprendí que el hombre puede inmovilizar el tiempo a su capricho respecto a las cosas que le rodean; que puede estabilizarse voluntariamente en un punto de su existencia y no abandonarle ya hasta que la muerte le arrebate.
>
> (*La sombra del ciprés es alargada*, 211)

Aside from the morbidity of the tale, the protagonist relates how, during his seafaring, a strange war is going on, in which he finds both sides to blame. While he condemns warfare, his comments are so cryptic that one cannot discern whether he refers to the Civil War or to one of the two World Wars. Although he would appear to refer to a larger theatre, the more obvious allusion would be to Spain's own painful conflict.

While much has been made of Delibes' ability to oppose censorship, his early novels as well as his mid-career masterpiece often passed relatively easily by the censors. As the censorship archives show, Delibes' manuscripts rarely encounter any substantial problems, likely owing to his

own caution (or lack of interest in pushing the envelope) and possibly thanks to his newspaper position in conservative Valladolid and his military service on the side of the Nationalists. For Delibes, the experience is marked by a constant attention not to write beyond a certain limit; his measured and critically successful works, such as *El camino*, *Las ratas* and *Cinco horas con Mario*, show how he avoided provoking the censors. His first novel, *La sombra del ciprés es alargada*, does not try to push the envelope at all. Moreover, as he admitted in an interview, he supposedly preferred the 1938–1965 censorship style to the 1966 form, as there was less ambiguity; this comment is remarkable in its lack of apparent irony.

The censorship's archival record of 21 March 1948 of *La sombra del ciprés es alargada* is simple: a brief book report by the reader, granting permission to publish and noting that it is a '[n]ovela de una alma. Severamente moral y crítica de una vida humana. Nada censurable' (Expediente 1154-48, *La sombra del ciprés es alargada*). Later, in 1950, with *El camino*, the censor Juan Beneyto thought some erasures ('tachaduras') conditional for publication, without clearly identifying them in his letter of 24 November 1950 (Expediente 5197-50, *El camino*), except for mention of page 129, which is a page about Daniel's mental struggle with his desire for a beautiful village girl; while in the novel's published form, one can still discern that Delibes is referring to the boy's tangled feelings of lust, the allusions only refer to her 'deslumbradora belleza' and 'hermosura' and not actual body parts (which typically are censored). Interestingly, the censor does not appear worried with unveiled references on page 14 to Daniel's mother's 'aborto' which apparently left her sterile; the 'aborto' here is likely a miscarriage ('aborto espontáneo', although a miscarriage does not usually cause infertility, while an abortion might if performed incorrectly), especially as the parents would have liked to have a second child. Later in the novel, the priest and some enterprising women who attempt to bring edifying cinema to the village (and to stop the local youth from canoodling in the fields) find that they ultimately must serve as censors of both the films and the viewers' intimate relations in the dark. If *El camino*'s 1950 censor had some mild reservations, the 1966 censor of *Cinco horas con Mario* happily endorses the novel, evidently completely unaware of the irony of the narrative and the emphasis on Carmen as primary narrator. The censor's report reads:

> Mario Díez Collado, intelectual y catedrático de Instituto, muere repentinamente cuando contaba 49 años de edad. Las clásicas manifestaciones de condolencia de conocidos y allegados llenan el primer cap de la novela. El resto, hasta el cap XXVII, queda sintetizado en el monólogo de la viuda, quien, durante la noche ante el cadaver [*sic*], evoca la personalidad de su marido—un intelectual insobornable, despistado e idealista–, su vida con él, el ambiente que les ha rodeado en lo personal y en lo histórico—el del último medio siglo—, los agobios

> y las penurias, las miserias y las contradicciones que rodean a los mortales, etc.
>
> La novela esta de Miguel Delibes nos parece de intención moralizadora, dentro de una prosa dificilísima y magnífica por su sencillez y simplicidad para apresar el discurso de una mujer en momentos tan críticos como estar velando el cadaver de su marido, mientras repasa todo el cuadro de su vida y deja aflorar sus sentimientos y pensamientos, hasta que llega la hora de conducirlo al cementerio. PUEDE AUTORIZARSE. Firmado HV.
>
> (Censor's report, Expediente 4897-66, *Cinco horas con Mario*)

In this document, we can note how the censor has clearly been duped into a flat reading of Carmen and Mario. The censor nostalgically embraces the figure of the widow as a someone to celebrate in Spanish culture, whereas post-publication critics and readers of the day, both in Spain and abroad, would recognize how Carmen's double-voiced testimony casts a damning critique of an exaggerated and hypocritical regime and its intelligentsia. When Delibes had initially drafted parts of the novel in which he experimented with Mario being still alive, he soon realized that Mario became more powerful as a silent dead man whose life is filtered by the biased perspective of his vain wife.[31] He also recognized that this shift of emphasis to the portrayal of a reactionary woman would work well under censorship, as her position had become normalized and validated under Franco in many social circles; the intimacy of her first-person narration allows and her female married identity both help to lower suspicion that she might convey political meaning. Her voice helps to create counter-nostalgia as she frequently evokes situations and tensions between desiring old Spanish ways and new Spanish materialism cloaked in Catholic morality (given the novel's chronotope [*cinco horas*] of the Spanish Catholic tradition of the spouse or close family member observing a vigil over the body of the deceased).[32] The vigil set as the 'hours' spent 'with Mario' contains ideas of nostalgia for the deceased as well as the awkward truths that Mario had dissident leanings while clinging to his prestigious identity as professor and Carmen proves to be not just the long-suffering wife in the shadow of her important husband (a common stereotype for

31 Delibes has commented several times on how he stumbled upon the subversive usefulness of an already dead Mario and conservative protagonist for this narrative; see, for example, Alonso de los Ríos, *Conversaciones con Miguel Delibes* (Madrid: Ediciones Destino, 1993), 74–79. For a more in-depth interpretation of Menchu, Mario's wife and the bearer of authority, see Melissa Dinverno, 'Dictating Fictions: Power, Resistance and the Construction of Identity in *Cinco horas con Mario*', *BSS*, LXXXI:1 (2004), 49–76.

32 For more on the Spanish body, see Elizabeth A. Scarlett, *Under Construction: The Body in Spanish Novels* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1994).

female characters) but also a woman who does not align with Francoist Catholic ideals and morality: from her coarse language, the revelation of her lack of respect and love for her husband and others, her selfishness and egoism (counter to the regime's celebration of the modest sacrificing mother-wife, keeper of the hearth), her marital infidelity, her materialism and fixation on social castes and political insiders and outsiders—reflective of the Civil War's winners and losers. The censor's easy acceptance of the manuscript shows how he read the work at its surface level, quickly adhering to the suggestion of Carmen's respectable public persona rather than the more comprehensive mirror-image of the Francoist person that Delibes holds up to his readers. Carmen and the novel create an effective counter-nostalgic discourse that lay bare the shortcomings of 'progress' when combined with the reactionary drag of Francoism.

Ana María Matute: Narrated Memory of Lack

Matute's literary work under Franco consistently resists Francoist and Catholic rhetoric and policies, while also capturing the material and emotional specificity of contemporary regional Spanish lives. Her focus is on social outsiders: women, oddballs and children, war and its aftermath, as well as rural and urban poverty and injustices across the classes. As a middle-class girl living through wartime in Barcelona (from age ten to fourteen), she was afforded a multifaceted view of the conflict, and was inspired after the war by secret groups of Socialists and sympathizers who rejected the postwar Falangist/conservative *status quo*; she herself never took up any political affiliation. Unlike Delibes who only became interested in literature once he married and was inspired by his wife, Matute from a very young age was an avid reader and creator of stories and illustrations. As a child, some of her work was already recognized; she wrote and illustrated her first story at the age of five. As a complete outsider to the literary world, at seventeen, she submitted one of her first novels, *Pequeño teatro*, to Ignacio Agustí, the editor at Destino and she was quickly nurtured by the press.

Matute's first works are compelling for their fresh and unexpected narration, but at times somewhat heavy with symbolism and deep psychological struggles, as though the characters' surroundings and circumstances are too powerful. Her form of realism hearkens back to the nineteenth-century novels of Benito Pérez Galdós and Emilia Pardo Bazán, but without the extradiegetic narratorial commentary these earlier writers favoured.[33] Rather, from early on, Matute tries to show, not tell. Yet,

33 See Margaret E. W. Jones, *The Literary World of Ana María Matute* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1970) for a more extended overview of Matute's style and themes and their relation to her early life experiences.

unlike many neorealists, her work often incorporates passionate lyricism, psychological depth, violence, and absurd and grotesque scenes and characters.

Matute had many more clashes with the censors early in her career than Delibes did. Despite knowing that she should exercise caution, she none the less aims for a more daring counter-nostalgic confrontation. Her first novel, *Los Abel* (1948), contrasts in its audacity with Delibes' *La sombra del ciprés es alargada* of the same year. *Los Abel* probes the miserable, backward conditions of the Spanish countryside and villages, the lack of educational, medical and financial resources and the shabby decadence of the landed class. It also presents the compelling voice of a rebellious, sensual young woman with no opportunities to develop herself and grow beyond the stifling warfare within her family. Meanwhile, Delibes' novel develops a delicate, mournful tale of an orphan struck by two personal tragedies; the presentation of a modest Spanish life is acceptable, and largely uncritical. The protagonist-narrator is critical of his teacher with whom he boards throughout his childhood, but this is not by extension a condemnation of traditional Spanish Catholic values, which centre on self-sacrifice, the fleeting moment that is this life, and the rewards of the afterlife. The characters of the teacher and his wife are shown to be limited, emotionally distant people, unable to fully participate in life, qualities which seem to haunt the narrator and the couple's one daughter, who in turn have not been prepared to integrate themselves into life.

While *Pequeño teatro* is the first novel Matute wrote, and went under contract with Destino in 1947, it was only published in 1954. Thereafter it won the Premio Planeta. *Los Abel*, her second novel, was her first to be published. This book competed for the Premio Nadal of 1948 and emerged as a finalist; but the prize ultimately went to Delibes. At least as a Nadal finalist, *Los Abel* helped to promote her career as it significantly extended readership.

Matute describes the absurd rigidity of the early 1940s censorship in her interview:

> La censura tenía oprimidos a los escritores. La censura era totalmente estúpida y arbitraria. En una ocasión, a un escritor le tacharon las frases en que describía cómo una muchacha se levantaba y se ponía las medias. No sé qué verían en esas medias aquellos ojos podridos, pero se lo tacharon. Y al lado escribieron el siguiente comentario: 'La mujer española, lo primero que hace al levantarse es rezar.' Había que rezar sin medias, aunque una se helara de frío. Eso es igual, primero era la moral. ¡Sí señor, no faltaba más! Era algo demencial. Teníamos que vivir así los que queríamos escribir inventando argucias y trucos. Lo peor de la censura era que no tenía un criterio claro porque, de repente, quitaban las cosas más inocuas o, en el peor de los casos, censuraban

> libros enteros. Algunos libros pasaban, más o menos censurados. De pronto, un rayo de luz vino a iluminar tanta oscuridad cuando dos escritores publicaron algo diferente: Camilo José Cela con *La familia de Pascual Duarte*, in 1942, y Carmen Laforet con *Nada*, en 1945. Hay que hacerles justicia. Ellos nos dieron esperanza; gracias a ellos nos dimos cuenta de que se podía escribir de otra manera y de que se podía burlar la censura.[34]

The censorship archives show the censor's vigilance with Matute's first published novel, *Los Abel*, the story of a decaying family torn by sibling rivalry and a static, unfulfilling village life. The Cain and Abel theme reflects the way Matute sees the Civil War conflict, but also prior to that, a longer-standing conflict of ethics embedded in the family. The censor does not react to the Civil War symbolism; instead, he reacts to sensual, sexual descriptions provided by the eldest daughter Valba, the primary narrator in the manuscript, such as some scenes between her and a village doctor Eloy. The censor marks such passages as the following:

> Su mano descansaba sobre el terciopelo. Apoyé la frente en ella y me acarición ligeramente. Entonces apreté los labios sobre sus dedos, con una fuerza que a los dos nos sorpredió, porque nos miramos con idéntica curiosidad. […]
> Su boca cayó pesadamente, como una insistente quemadura viva. Era difícil sustraerse a la lava de su voracidad.
> Me sorprendió, esto es lo cierto. Aquella mañana había cedido a Dios sabe que impulso sentimental, cuando le dije que iría con él a esperar a los cazadores. …
> ¡Dios, qué vacío, qué sequedad interna me obligó a apartarme de él! Era una repentina y desoladora sensación, del algo muerto prematuramente. Y no repugnancia: sólo un frío yermo que apagó aquel pobre fuego incipiente. Quizá le sorprendí también a él, porque logré desasirme con facilidad. (Expediente 4030-48, *Los Abel*)

In another scene with Eloy in the submitted manuscript, the two meet at Valba's home during a downpour. Once they are alone, he sits beside her and comes close with his 'atroz y avasalladora fuerza'. The censor cuts the ensuing sentences:

> Y me parecía que cada beso suyo era un pedazo de vida que le estaba robando, segundos de su existencia, que yo poseía ávidamente. Era un rabioso chocar de dientes, un abrazo cada vez más innoble. Había allí

34 Gazarian-Gautier, *Ana María Matute*, 89–90.

> un poso amargo, ácido. Despertaba en mí lo que Eloy no conseguiría nunca satisfacer. Y lo sabía. (Expediente 4030-48, *Los Abel*)

The censor's file subsequently includes correspondence from the Destino editor with galleys to prove that the offending passages have been removed.

In the first scene, Matute simply shortens the encounter, while still implying the passionate conflict between Valba and Eloy. She retains the last permitted sentence, cuts the offending passage, and then resumes the exchange as in the original. While she loses the erotic contact between the couple, she does sharpen the protagonist's paradoxical attraction and repulsion:

> Le observaba de soslayo; tenía las manos cruzadas sobre sus rodillas, atenazadas como dos zarpas torpes y brutales.
>
> Se quedó mirándome, indeciso. Brillaba el filo de sus dientes, pero sus pupilas parecían confundirse en el blanco de los ojos. Cuando intentó sonreír, la mueca se quedó lastimadamente incompleta.
>
> —No seas niña … —empezó a decir.
>
> Pero me fuí. Corría cada vez más de prisa, hacia la carretera, cada vez más de prisa, con el corazón volteando dentro como una campana.
>
> Y sucedió lo que no podía sospechar: empecé a reírme. Ahogada, calladamente. Era una risa íntima, secreta, sólo para mí. ¿De qué? Dios, no lo sabía. Me estaba acordando de Eloy, y me parecía tan ridículo.
>
> (Expediente 4030-48, *Los Abel*)

With the second scene, after the mention of his 'atroz y avasalladora fuerza', Matute has Eloy and Valba avoid direct physical contact by excising the sensual passage offending the censor and resumes her narration immediately afterwards as in the original:

> Hasta que, de improviso, sin suavidad, otra vez me invadió aquella desgarradora impresión que me helaba la sangre. Otra vez aquella dureza de sentimientos; sólo podía ver a Eloy como una masa jadeante, tan lejano a mí, que ni soportaba su presencia.
>
> Huí de él y me refugié en un ángulo de la habitación. Entonces cedí a un cansancio pesado. Era inútil que de pronto a Eloy se le ocurriese decir que me quería; y más aún, que se acercara con un gesto manso, abominable. 'Señor,' me dije, '¿por qué se besará la gente?'
>
> En aquel momento entraba Tito [su hermano] en la habitación, y yo salí silenciosamente con un gusto agrio en el alma reseca.
>
> (Expediente 4030-48, *Los Abel*)

With these two concessions, we can see how Matute gains some dramatic tension while losing the physical sensuality that would have deepened the perverse attraction between the two characters. From the 1940s

through to the mid 1960s, any reference to corporeal sexuality was usually censored.

The censored version none the less offers a kind of counter-nostalgia: it resists a simplistic romantic love or gendered arrangement, and rather suggests the chaotic and ambiguous situation of two unmarried adults and their conflicting sexual desires and fantasies. The female narrator Valba, as a woman, even one from a privileged class, is a second-class citizen. Most of her narration, somewhat akin to the unassuming discourse of Andrea in *Nada*, is not barred by the censor. The story of the Abel brothers, a modern-day Cain and Abel, intersects with Valba's female *Bildungsroman*; Matute goes beyond typing Valba simply as a desiring Eve figure. Rather, her characterization flickers through contradictory feelings. The affective features of the novel include Valba's series of learning experiences that teach her suffering, each experience showing up her false expectations and introducing her to pain, sadness, frustration, hatred, humiliation and alienation. As her auto-confession is found hidden in a desk in the abandoned and decaying Abel house by a later family descendent, Valba's voice is framed by the anonymous narrator's. Her manuscript is left beside a silver watch, a ring and a deck of cards, as though she had not intended to take anything linking her to her family. As Vadillo Buenfil points out, the female *Bildungsroman* tends to show the protagonist clashing with patriarchal roadblocks. As the time frame of the novel is imprecise, *Los Abel* allows readers to think of an unspecified past in their memory of Spain or what they could imagine about the Spain of their Second Republic ancestors or a Spain that could have replaced Franco's.[35]

Matute counters the potential for rosy nostalgia, meanwhile, by having her narrator reveal the unpleasantness of that past, especially within the family unit, an entity usually idealized as a structure to be counted on against the world, especially in Francoist ideology. The quality of mirroring an imaginary whole subject that I suggest is at work in such novels can be understanding Valba as *mise-en-abyme* narrator. Carlos Vadillo Buenfil points how Valba uses the act of confessional writing to reflect herself as if in a mirror. He explains: 'El yo narrador de Valba se desdobla en la escritura para contemplar, como en un espejo, a su yo narrado; en la introspección formula preguntas cuyas respuestas encuentran acomodo en la hoja en blanco, espacio textual íntimo'.[36] This character-narrator uses her writing to reflect herself and question her puzzling conflicted childhood

35 Carlos Vadillo Buenfil notes clues in the novel that indicate that most of the past action occurs during the Second Republic (1931–1939). See his 'A la busca de un lugar en el mundo: *Los Abel*, primer *Bildungsroman* de Ana María Matute', *Confluencia*, 28:2 (2013), 149–62 (p. 150).

36 Vadillo Buenfil, 'A la busca de un lugar en el mundo', 151.

and the corruption in her family. Her narrative both reflects back to the lack in her past and does not entirely satisfy the mysteries of the familial tensions. While, the traditional Spanish family unit is taken as an almost sacred private realm, Valba misaligns with the 'exemplary woman'.[37] Rather, she undoes the Catholic mysticism around the family to contemplate guilt, violence and deathly competition.

In the case of *Pequeño teatro*, two censors submitted reports granting permission to publish (censors Manuel Sancho Millán on 10 September 1954 and José de Pablo Muñoz on 16 September 1954). Both reports betray rapid, distracted readers of a complex novel. The narrative focuses on the life of a Basque coastal village. Zazu Kepa, daughter of the village's wealthiest man, while engaged to an absent, aging, ship's captain, embarks on an affair with a mysterious interloper Marco, who poses as the son of rich governor of a faraway island. Their affair is not so much one of love, but rather one of paradoxical and conflicting desires. Zazu realizes that Marco is a confidence trickster, and at the novel's end, instead of running away with him and the villagers' money, it is implied that she commits suicide by drowning. The village simpleton, the teenager Ilé Eroriak, sees beyond Marco's feigned friendship with him and ultimately denounces him in time to have the authorities arrest Marco. The first censor-reader Sancho Millán simply states in his report:

> Novela de intriga y amor de una familia de abolengo marinero y un marino aventurero y audaz. La acción en Guipuscua. Proponemos su publicación. Madrid, 10 de Septiembre de 1954, el lector Manuel Sancho Millán (Expediente 5122-54, *Pequeño teatro*)

José de Pablo Muñoz shows some more attention, writing:

> Esta novela que se desarrolla en la Costa Vasca en el poblado de Oiquixa, relata la vida en la tranquila y pequeña población costera, con sus miserias, hipocresías y bondades. Toma como ejemplo la vida del niño loco Ilé que vive con Marco la vida bohemia. Marco se enamora de Quepa Deber hoja [hija] de un ricachón. Ella es escandalosa y con Marco pone de relieve su mal temperamento. El pueblo hace una colecta para el niño Ilé y huye Marco con estos fondos después de haber provocado el suicidio de Quepa (hija). El pobre niño loco Vuelve con su antiguo amigo Anderea constructor de Marionetas y queda con él.—PUEDE PUBLICARSE. Madrid, 16 de Septiembre de 1954, José de Pablo Muñoz (Expediente 5122-54, *Pequeño teatro*)

37 For a detailed discussion of the exemplary woman in Spain, see Fátima Gil, 'Exemplary Women: The Use of Film and Censorship As a Means of Moral Indoctrination during the Franco Dictatorship in Spain', *Journal of Popular Culture*, 49:4 (2016), 856–74.

Pequeño teatro's plot consistently works against nostalgic notions of a devout Basque fishing village. Although the censorship did not allow for an explicit portrayal of suicide, as we see here, one censor was clearly willing to let the inference remain, as it is stated in his synopsis (the other censor may not have read the whole novel based on his cursory summary). The censors, who are charged to uphold Catholic values, seem surprisingly lenient. In early 1950s Spain, the Catholic Church did not allow for a person deceased by suicide to have funeral mass or burial in a Catholic cemetery. Further, the censors do not take offence with one character's abuse of Catholic teachings to torment her sister and later play hypocritically the role of the village's humanitarian. Also, Zazu and Marco are having an extra-marital affair, and she, prior to his arrival, with her habitual wandering through the fishermen's part of town, is possibly cruising for lovers. A young unmarried woman should remain chaperoned according to Francoist ideology. Thus, several components of the novel would have likely offended the censors when Matute first joined Destino in 1947. But somehow after seven years, this same novel not only passed the censors but also won the Planeta Prize of 1954.

In her interview with Pat Farrington, Matute explains the harshness of the 1940s and 1950s censorship:

> Muy duro, sobre todo cuando se escribían artículos o se manifestaban opiniones. Sí, era una cosa terrible. Por ejemplo, con mi primera novela, *Pequeño teatro*, que escribí a los 17 años, aunque se publicó algo después, fue imposible. Era tremendo. Era prohibido hablar de suicidio, de adulterio … y al final de *Pequeño teatro* hay un suicidio. Tuve que hacer algo muy poético y el imbécil del censor no se enteró. Porque eran imbéciles. Eran totalmente imbéciles.[38]

At the time of her interview with Farrington, Matute would not have known the two censors' reports from the Archivo General de la Administración as, at that point, no one had shown her any of that documentation. In 2004, I showed Matute these two different reports from 1954; one report reveals that at least one of the censors, José de Pablo Muñoz, *did* understand that a suicide had taken place (Marco 'huye con estos fondos después de haber provocado el suicidio de Quepa [hija]'), and also seemed to recognize Zazu's implied sexual exploits ('Ella es escandalosa') (Expediente 5122-54, *Pequeño teatro*). Matute was surprised to learn there had been two reports, and that one of the more alert readers had noticed the suicide. It is likely that her novel passed because Matute had subtly developed the suicide and

38 Pat Farrington, 'Documenta: Interviews with Ana María Matute and Carme Riera', *Tesserae. Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies*, 6:1 (2000), 75–89 (p. 76).

sexual mores and because her work was luckily assigned to two lenient reader-censors.

While *Pequeño teatro* had to sit on the shelf for years before Matute would dare to submit it for publication, she did not need to wait so long with her more challenging novel *Primera memoria*. The 1960 censorship of this narrative (a novel that won the prestigious Premio Nadal of 1959) is surprising in its mildness, despite the novel's strong counter-nostalgia. On 15 February 1960, the censor-reader, P. Álvarez Turienzo, writes in his report:

> La infancia de una niña sensible, con sus reacciones al encuentro con la complicación y malicia del mundo de los mayores. Un repudio de lo artificial, lo hipócrita y lo violento, en nombre de la ternura y la sinceridad. Pasajes de cierto mordiente social y político, pero en nombre y en busca de lo humano. PUEDE AUTORIZARSE. Madrid, 15 de febrero de 1960, P. Álvarez Turienzo[39]
>
> (Expediente 545-60, *Primera memoria*)

The censor's endorsement of Matute's work is surprising as the novel deals directly with the Civil War, usually a taboo topic in this Franco period, although the anonymous island setting is away from any actual military action. The narrative, focalized and told by Matia, an adult woman looking back on her summer at fourteen, explores a microcosm of Civil-War conflict on an unnamed Balearic island, along with Matia's coming of age.[40] She does not idealize herself, but rather becomes central to the theme of treachery and betrayal when she is too afraid to speak out in support of her friend (and possible half-cousin) Manuel, falsely accused of a crime by her jealous cousin Borja and sent to a reformatory. While the cousins Borja and Matia stay together at their grandmother's, away from the war raging on the Peninsula, their fathers are fighting on different sides. Matute renders Matia's remembrance of the past tragically counter-nostalgic: there is no original wholeness in this coming of age, but rather acceptance of ethical lack.

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39 As indicated by the 'P.' for padre, this is actually a religious censor, not unusual among the censorship cadre; in Francisco Rojas Claro's book, this censor's full identity is Father Saturnino Álvarez Turienzo. For a fuller examination of the censors employed by Franco, see Francisco Rojas Claro, *Dirigismo cultural y disidencia editorial en España (1962–1973)* (San Vicente del Raspeig: Univ. de Alicante, 2013).

40 *Primera memoria*'s setting suggests the island of Menorca which was the only Balearic Island that remained Republican at the outbreak of the Civil War; the other islands sided with the Nationalists, and Majorca saw an invasion in the first summer of the war, which would not square with the action in the novel, that has the war occurring far away on the mainland. Matute was not aiming for a strictly historical realist narrative, but Menorca is further suggested as this island was the only one with a considerable Jewish history with episodes of violent repression.

Further, Matute deconstructs any idealization of the Spanish island as some kind of pristine place outside ethical conflict. It turns out that the island conceals a communal crime reflective of the brutality of the Christian conquest of the Peninsula: the inhabitants long ago burned the Jewish residents (implying that Menorca is the island). Thus, any kind of bucolic nostalgia provided by the island's beauty or ancient customs is offset by the narrator's and reader's accompanying realization of white Christian violence preceded by earlier multi-ethnic and multi-faith societies, as well as fears of difference and lack of homogeneity that has Spaniards fighting amongst themselves, even deep within their families and secret families.

The revelation of this brutal early Spanish history of ethnic cleansing, the realist counterpart to the mythologized Spanish blood, is planted in the middle of the novel, not at the end, thus prompting both the protagonist and the reader to grapple with the shameful, horrific reality of the Spanish mythification of blood. In a nightmarish shock, Matia abruptly opens the second chapter ('Las hogueras') with a quotation from a history book:

> '*Era de ver cómo prendían en el fuego sus carnes, cómo las llamas lamían sus entrañas: cómo se rasgaba su vientre en dos, de arriba abajo, con un brillo demoníaco …*', decía el libro que Borja encontró en la habitación del abuelo. Explicaba cómo ardían vivos los judíos. Aquella era la misma plaza donde ocurrieron, siglos atrás, aquellas escenas.
>
> (*Primera memoria*, 160)

The fact that this book is kept in Matia's grandfather's house implies Spain's current ownership of this grim knowledge and a shared responsibility and heritage. By learning of this awful portion of Spanish history, and its very real consequences for living human beings treated as abject refuse, Matia reflects on the current plaza at twilight, noticing how char and ash from this older time still seems to remain: 'las ruinas se volvían siniestras, y era verdad que las losas del centro de la plaza aparecían ennegrecidas y quemada la tierra. Incluso el musgo, que todo lo cubría, tenía un cruento moho de cementerio o de pozo' (*Primera memoria*, 160). The contemporary bonfires of this part of the novel merge a competition among the village boys and Matia's cousin Borja with the more general annual pagan practice of the Valencian celebration of Las Hogueras around the summer solstice of 20 June and ending with the Catholic feast day of San Joan. The actual bonfires in the novel's present Civil War context recall the ancient cruel burning of the Jews as the children still find dolls to throw into the flames. Matia, as the first-person narrator, recounts all of this without glorifying the Spanish role, and instead foregrounds the conflict among the boys.

Conclusion: Dialogic Mirrors of Regional Spanishness

In my analysis of censors' reports on Delibes' and Matute's works, the censors show a consistent interest in maintaining a degree of conservative modesty. Thus, a trend of the blue pen (1945–1962) is a homing in on obvious statements involving breaches of Catholic morality. In this way, censors end up interpreting much of the realism of Delibes and even the harder-hitting Matute as 'faithful' or innocuous reflections of particular Spanish regions that censors view nostalgically (while socially-progressive readers would see as damning). In the cases examined in this article, the censors do not tend to pick up the counter-nostalgic strands in Delibes' and Matute's writing, unless these are heavily transgressive (for example, some of the eroticism in *Los Abel*). As long as *some* of the counter-nostalgic mirroring gets past the censors, these writers succeed in delivering to the public readership a more dynamic, dialogic questioning of local Spanishness and history and, through personal character conflict, implied criticism of state violence.

Counter-nostalgic narratives can both value the pre-Francoist Spanish past while not forgiving social wrongs and injustices, nor closing one's eyes to long-term social problems such as poverty and lack of education and health care. While Delibes, the more conservative writer, balances a valuation of 'progress' against a nostalgic appreciation for an organic Spanish past, Matute, in her early narratives, uses counter-nostalgia to interrogate the lacking ethics of Spain's past and present.

As their fictional narrators are positioned in a Francoist present, the reader in that present moment is aligned with this evaluating point of view. Both writers are deeply concerned with subaltern characters and point out how the middle class and the authorities fail them. But neither writer wishes to idealize the subaltern. Their novels' narrative structure of a personal search into the past sets up a critical focus: the narrative form helps to provide a mirror of wholeness composed of an alternative incoherent past, a pre-war, Republican or earlier twentieth-century past that is shown to be lacking, or in the case of *Primera memoria*, the first year of the Civil War. The Francoist censorship often read these narratives without always making heavy objections. Whereas Francoism prizes a kind of mythical continuous past, *la España eterna*, the censors did not always enforce this vision. Without needing the recourse of postmodernist ironic devices, Delibes and Matute invested in dialogic discourses that both unify local Spanish elements through realist representation, creating a sense of nostalgia for local Spanishness (Castilian, Basque, Catalonian, Balearic, and so on), while centrifugally dispersing this nostalgia with probing visions and voices of both subaltern others and the remembering narrator who does not go back for

a complacent sense of wholeness. Rather the ethically informed dialogic mirror is shown as misapprehension and lack, gained by critical, disillusioned insights into Spanishness and its past.*

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