Spanish Cultural Studies

An Introduction

The Struggle for Modernity

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3 *La Vanguardia Española*, 4 Apr. 1939.
4 See J. M. Solé i Sabaté, *La repressió franquista a Catalunya, 1938–1953* (Barcelona, 1985); F. Moreno Gómez, 'La represión en la España campesina', in J. L. García Delgado (ed.), *El primer franquismo* (Madrid, 1989), 189–207.
5 *La Vanguardia Española*, 4 Apr. 1939.
6 F. Alburquerque, 'Métodos de control político de la población civil: el sistema de racionamiento de alimentos y productos básicos impuesto en España tras la última guerra civil', in M. Tuñón de Lara (ed.), *Estudios sobre la historia de España* (Madrid, 1981), 427.

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Gender and the State: Women in the 1940s

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This essay will look at regime policies towards women in order to shed light on both the functioning of triumphalist Francoism as a system and the social history of various female constituencies in the 1940s. Gender politics are vital to our understanding of the efforts made at regime stabilization. To this end, Francoism projected (via both the Church and Sección Femenina* de Falange) an ultraconservative construction of 'ideal' womanhood, perceived as the fundamental guarantor of social stability, or indeed stasis. But the regime's economic policies combined with its politico-moral/ideological framework to produce highly contradictory results. For all the Franco regime's aspirations to monolithicity, the socio-economic and cultural experiences of women's lives in 1940s Spain were complex, conflictive, and plural. Different female constituencies would contribute in varying degrees to regime stabilization, as we shall see. But even in its most overt and conscious forms, as with the social service and educational activities of the Sección Femenina's cadres, this contribution carried within it the seeds of social/gender change.

The experience of the civil war had left Spain with a shattered body politic and an atomized society. This fragmentation was intensified by the very policies implemented by the victors. Spain in the 1940s contained frighteningly separate worlds. Alongside the savage poverty and the widespread terror of the post-war repression unleashed against the defeated, there coexisted an upper middle-class milieu of ease, security, and order regained. As Republican women were being shaved and dosed with castor oil by the 'victors' of their villages, or transported with their children across Spain in cattle trucks in scenes of Dantesque horror, women in the Sevillian aristocracy or Salamancan bourgeoisie celebrated the 'redemption' of their private family sphere and revelled in the tremendous upsurge of public Catholic ceremonial—of religious processions in particular.

The sheer extremity of the times makes 1940s Spain a clear illustration of the axiom that there is no such thing as 'women in general' and no such thing as their 'typical experience'. Gender cannot denote a single experience because it is always bisected by socio-economic class and other competing cultural and political identities. Women experienced both the civil war and the long aftermath of conflict in different geographical locations, as parts of disparate and often antagonistic political collectivities and cultural communities. Nor did socio-economic marginalization itself indicate a shared perspective: a female factory worker from Barcelona's urban belt would not have identified some primary commonality of experience with the wife or daughter of an impoverished Castilian smallholder just because they were both female. At the very least religious belief—whose meaning obviously varied according to the social context—as well as their experience of work would have separated their world-views.

So the usual factors—wealth, status (including marital status), age, family circumstances, socio-economic class (whether or not they had to work for a wage), and religious belief—mediated women's experience of: (1) the political consequences of Nationalist victory, (2) the resulting legal/constitutional restrictions affecting women, (3) state social policy towards women/the family (including its pronatalist policies, discussed below), (4) the demographic impact of the war, (5) the socio-economic disruption erupting into full post-war crisis (exacerbated by the regime's own disastrous economic policies), (6) the impact of (1–5) on women's own perception of their roles/identities. What was specific to the 1940s was the acuteness of the social differentials operating. This essay will look first at the regime's policies towards women, and then focus on those specific female constituencies on the 'fault line' who experienced the gender contradictions of triumphalist Francoism in their most acute form: predominantly urban working-class women and lower middle-class sectors, especially those encadred in the Sección Femenina.

'Making the nation': the Franco regime and the politics of gender

To seal victory in the post-war required the imposition not just of an authoritarian political framework and regressive economic policies, but also of a socially conservative project. In general terms, the motivation for this was the same kind of 'politics of moral panic' which had operated elsewhere in Europe in the inter-war

period, as a result of cultural anxieties produced by increasingly rapid socio-economic change ('modernity'). Women's changing identity and roles, symptomatic of these wider changes, were perceived by those sectors of society adversely affected as the *cause* of their personal problems and of 'falling standards/degenerating values' (which is how anxious humans generally read social change). Thus, reimposing traditional gender roles on women became at once a substitute for this lack of control in other areas and an (ultimately unsuccessful) bid to 'turn the clock back'. As a result, a whole pathology of modernity was written on women's bodies via repressive state legislation—in particular with regard to pronatalism.

In its bid to stabilize itself and to effect the social institutionalization of victory, the Franco regime targeted women because of the pivotal role they played within the family. The patriarchal family was seen as representing the corporate order of the state in microcosm. So, by reconstructing or reinforcing it, Francoism would, in theory, be able to operate on an atomized post-war society to build up the 'new order'. The family, as envisaged by the regime, was unthreatening because it connected vertically with the state rather than horizontally within society. Thus it reinforced the unity and power of the state, rather than challenging it as did the horizontal solidarities of civil society (other sorts of 'family'/affective ties, political parties, trade unions, and the traditions of civil associationism). One of the major functions of the civil war had been to annihilate these threats.

The regime promoted an 'ideal' image of womanhood as 'eternal', passive, pious, pure, submissive woman-as-mother for whom self-denial was the only road to real fulfilment. The many incarnations of the Virgin provided the perfect role model. But others too were provided by sanitized reconstructions of Isabel la Católica and St Teresa of Ávila. Church teaching on the irreducible nature of male and female, and the latter's exclusive fittedness for the home, received tendentious justification via pronouncements of the medical establishment which presented women as weak and emotional creatures, a miry mess of hormonally inspired conditions.

The Franco regime's object, similar to that of Italian and German fascism, was to obliterate women as independent social beings (hence the difficulty of unreconstructed versions of St Teresa/Queen Isabella as role models). Socially, 'woman' was to be an identity indivisible from 'the family'. Legally, there was a return to the 1889 Civil Code which enshrined women's juridical inferiority, married women becoming minors before the law.

Under the terms of the March 1938 Labour Charter (Fuero del Trabajo), married women were also to be 'free[d] from the workplace and the factory'. The Fundamental Law of 18 July 1938 (Ley de Bases) established the family subsidy (paid to the father) ostensibly so that women should no longer need to work to supplement low male wages. From 1942 onwards all labour regulations stipulated the dismissal of married women (*excedencia forzosa por matrimonio*) and on 26 March 1946 the Family Subsidy Law (Ley de Ayuda Familiar) deprived men whose wives worked of the state-paid family bonus (*plus familiar*).

16 Illustration from a children's book on St Teresa (*c.*1955). The Franco regime used sanitized versions of certain historical figures to legitimize its values; in particular St Teresa—'the saint of the race'—was pressed into service to exemplify ideal Catholic womanhood. In the process, the regime had to edit out certain awkward heterodoxies: in this case, St Teresa's possible Jewish ancestry, independent thought, and active role as a religious reformer. Her transformation here into a Snow White figure, demurely sewing indoors, shows how the regime promoted a version of popular culture steeped in retrograde archetypal imagery. This book appeared in a series of *Accessible Biographies of Great Figures*: series I (on great men) was published in the 1940s; series II (on great women) had to wait till the 1950s. All were written by men except, curiously, that on Isabel la Católica. The Francoist concern with forming the minds of the young—through its manipulation of children's literature and other forms of indoctrination—reflects a view of the populace in general as minors in need of supervision.

Removing married women from the workplace was closely linked to the regime's pursuit of pronatalism. Through a variety of legislative policy measures, involving both punishment and perks, the Franco regime sought to boost the birth rate. Twenty-five per cent of a state dowry loan could be written off against the birth of a child. And, again, as under German and Italian fascism, abortion and contraception were criminalized. Conversely, numerous schemes were implemented in the early 1940s to assist large families: including, in addition to extra family allowances, state payment of school fees, subsidized transport, and special credit terms. Francoism, like other authoritarian regimes, equated population levels with socio-economic and political strength. Moreover, the economic policy of autarky being pursued by the regime also demanded the maximum possible production of labour.

Autarky is a policy which, in theory, seeks to achieve total national economic self-sufficiency. As an extreme expression of economic nationalism it is most specifically associated with fascist regimes. In Spain's case, autarky was basically designed to cut Spain off from world trade and the international economy in order to protect the weak, antiquated (*latifundista**), agrarian sector. Autarkic controls and state intervention (two sides of the same coin in the 1940s) caused enormous stresses and problems in the economy, virtually creating the pre-conditions for the enormous black market which constituted the real national economy during this decade. One significant characteristic of the economic system was the labour force's subjection to extremely high levels of exploitation in order to try to make up for old or broken plant, a lack of foreign investment, and the dearth of raw materials consequent upon autarkic policies themselves. Wages dropped, until by 1945 they were frequently worth only a quarter of their pre-war value (and it was not until 1952 that they rose above half of this). The poverty consequent upon autarky forced workers into double or triple employment (although often in marginal activities and/or on the black economy). Inevitably this meant that proletarian women worked in whatever way they could (whether they were married or single, whether there was a male breadwinner or not). While this was an advantage to some sectors of capital (generally the larger concerns), especially since legal discrimination pushed women to the margins of the labour market, making them an even more pliant work-force, the intense poverty experienced by the working-class disrupted the regime's family policy and its pronatalist strategy. (Indeed, a primary indicator of massive economic crisis was the very high infantile mortality rate itself.) In order to contain the growing material crisis and to avert any wider political repercussions, the Franco regime was obliged to adopt a level of intervention in the private sphere.

This intervention, moreover, was also paradoxically generated by the very restorationist-patriarchal ideology underpinning the regime. On the one hand, it had sought to make a rigid division between public and private, closing down society (by ensuring the disarticulation of the aforementioned horizontal solidarities), promoting its 'privatization' or 'atomization' based on the 'haven' of the

private household at whose centre was the 'mother'. Women were envisioned as the source not only of physical reproduction (i.e. babies for the *patria*) but also of 'correct' ideological reproduction via the socialization of children in the home—the goal here being the imposition of a social hierarchy. But, to ensure this outcome, the state could not really afford to let the private sphere remain entirely 'private'. Control, especially of women, had to be enforced.

Women thus became the target both of a cult of morality and of the educational and low-level welfare ministrations of state agencies. Although the Church should be included in this category, predominant here was the Sección Femenina de Falange (SF). Thousands of middle- and lower middle-class women were mobilized in its cadres to perform functions which signified the penetration of the private sphere by the state. In this way, middle-class women were being taken into the public domain and used to police other women—most overtly, the urban and rural poor. In the process, the rigid division between public and private was blurred and shifted.

As the transmission belt for state directives to women, the SF was involved in numerous different educational, cultural, and health/welfare initiatives. Most relevant here are its Social Service programme (Servicio Social (SS)) whereby unmarried women between the ages of 17 and 35 were encouraged (or required if they wanted employment) to provide six months' state service of which at least three constituted unpaid welfare work. Women served in schools, hospitals, orphanages, old people's homes, or else they helped in food kitchens, made up clothes and baby baskets for the poor in the SF's own workshops, or assisted literacy teachers and the SF's rural health visitors. Without this free labour, even a state as underdeveloped as Franco's in the area of social provision (whose population thus had correspondingly low social expectations) would have been in crisis as it sought to cover the minimum necessities for reproducing labour. Via the SF and SS, then, the Francoist state secured rudimentary welfare provision on the cheap.

This was particularly important in political as well as material terms in rural Spain. Throughout the 1940s a majority of the population still lived outside urban centres and were engaged in agricultural production of some kind. (Women in villages near provincial capitals or bigger urban centres would often combine this labour—unpaid if it was for a family concern—with some form of domestic service work.) At a practical level the SF cadres (via its rural section, the Hermandad de la Ciudad y el Campo) provided the *divulgadoras* [health visitors] whose major task was preventive health education—of crucial importance in a post-war society ravaged by malnutrition and contagious disease. Their immunization campaigns were an attempt to reduce Spain's very high infant mortality rate. Moreover, close contacts with families allowed the health visitors to exert moral control—for example ensuring children were baptized. But even the most practical aspects of their work ultimately need to be read politically. The *divulgadoras*, in effect, were controlling the social fall-out of economic policies whose rationale had been bitterly disputed on the battlefields in the civil war.

More generally in rural areas the SF was involved in providing a variety of services: from literacy classes and library facilities (provided by the *cátedras ambulantes*) to courses in a variety of agricultural and artisanal skills (including silkworm production, which seems to epitomize the bizarre economics of triumphalist Francoism). Behind these initiatives lay a typically fascist nostalgia for a self-sufficient peasantry. But while in material terms these rural projects remained marginal to Spanish development, they did serve a useful political purpose. Through them the SF ensured that the regime retained the support of impoverished smallholders and tenant farmers, the sociological bedrock of Francoism and a crucial part of its ongoing support base throughout the 1940s and early 1950s. By formulating policies which seemed to address their needs (the rural lower middle classes never having been the object of state attention previously), the SF camouflaged the real impact of state autarkic policies which meant the severe economic exploitation of the rural lower middle classes, despite the fact that they believed they had 'won' the civil war. The SF, by acting to contain material crisis and hold the social fabric together, and also as 'cheer-leader' to manage lower middle-class support, facilitated regime stabilization.

'Making ends meet': women, the family, and work in 1940s Spain

> Against impossible odds, they administer the routine of millions of bleak, hungry and ignorant families; [. . .] the women of Spain make her a nation [. . .] [Their] daily striving and suffering make what little structure there is [. . .] Spanish men have built a state, but they have never built a society [. . .] that [. . .] is in the hearts and minds and the habits and love and devotion of its women.[1]

While the Franco regime institutionalized its victory 'top-down', power was also being restructured in Spanish society 'bottom-up'. Through its daily operation at the micro level—and predominantly through the regime's control of food and work—the defeated would learn the real meaning of their defeat, internalizing their lack of power. Culture, for the urban poor especially, came to revolve around the procuring of food and warmth: the basic necessities of life. In this social milieu the work of daily survival was in women's hands. Even if there was a male breadwinner, women too were forced to work—'officially' or otherwise—to supplement starvation wages. But very often the male family members were dead, or in work battalions, labour service, or prison.[2] (The post-war prison population in Spain reached astronomical proportions.) Moreover, the wives and mothers of those executed or imprisoned were frequently reduced to destitution—denied pension rights, subjected to economic penalties by Francoist courts or to the repeated raids of Falangist squads—all of which was permitted by the sweeping Law of Political Responsibilities. It has been estimated that at least half a million families were without a male breadwinner. Indeed the perspective of female community and solidarities seems to offer a promising way of researching the social history of Spain's urban poor in the 1940s. It might also be useful to explore the socio-cultural parallels between Madrid or Barcelona and Berlin in the 1940s during the decade of reconstruction and Allied occupation when a third of families were headed by women while men were prisoners of war, refugees, or political detainees. In Spain, however, the significant number of family units which did not conform to the state-projected norm were statistically invisible as well as culturally marginalized, making any historical reconstruction of this complex picture a difficult task.

The extreme nature of Spain's social crisis in the 1940s transformed the nature and significance of food procurement. Apart from their demonstrating great ingenuity in bartering, this situation inevitably involved women in buying and selling on the black market (*estraperlo*), usually at the lower levels where the risk was greatest. (Women were tried for buying as well as selling on the black market; both were illegal.) Thus poor urban female constituencies would experience in particularly acute form, as they struggled daily to ensure their own and their families' survival, how food was a key commodity in the reconstruction, operation, and circulation of state and élite power.

In these conditions of scarcity, hunger, malnutrition, and epidemic disease—which accelerated social atomization—one could argue that it was female solidarity, established around collective activities such as communal cooking or information networks to aid food procurement, which constituted a key part of the pockets and remnants of civil society. Equally, 'traditional' modes of female protest—such as bread riots and overturning market stalls to protest against black market prices—signified women's civil opposition to the state's strategies for extending its power. The domestic space too—even the family, despite the regime's ideological appropriation of it—was subjectively experienced as a haven against state persecution, in contrast to the street where 'defeated' workers could be subjected to humiliation or worse at the hands of agents of the victorious order (Falangists, police, etc.). But in this sense the family's function was complementary to the state's goals since it facilitated the imposition of 'order' and regime stabilization. In the same way, women's resistance to the state existed alongside their crucial role in holding together the social fabric and coping with vast material crisis.

'Women's work' took many forms in this impoverished urban environment: they were textile operatives, provided casual, unskilled labour (e.g. canning factories, fish processing), many worked in the domestic service sector as maids, laundresses, cooks, and dressmakers / seamstresses, or provided other services which paid (at least potentially) somewhat better, the most notable being prostitution.

In spite of the official puritanism of the New State's ideology, this was one economic activity from which women were not even legally debarred until 1956, when brothels (significantly known as 'casas de tolerancia') were criminalized, and prostitution further 'privatized' as a result. Comparative assessment of the quantity of prostitution occurring relative to the pre-war or wartime periods is fraught with difficulty because it begs some enormous methodological and conceptual

17 Still from Patino's documentary film *Canciones para después de una guerra* showing a postwar newspaper headline: 'A mother sells her daughter for 400 pesetas'. The text continues: 'The buyer, in a green coat, cannot be traced. The go-between refuses to talk.' This story—whether true or false—highlights the searing poverty which in the 1940s operated a brutal 'reign of material truths' as the market—in effect the black market—saturated all social relations and values. The Catholic moral values proclaimed by the Nationalists were a luxury for the defeated as they struggled to satisfy the most elementary needs; for the wealthy, moral values could be maintained only at the expense of turning a blind eye to the material truths around them or, as here, by demonizing the poor.

questions. The data are scarce—the statistics for controlled prostitution in Spain in the 1940s (i.e. within brothels) obviously being of little use.[3] But what is certain is that the particularly desperate economic straits of many lower middle-class and working-class women in the immediate post-war, and their need to support families (parents and aged relatives as well as children) in the absence (permanent or temporary) of male breadwinners, was the strongest motivation towards some form of prostitution—whether widely or narrowly defined. ('Widely' in the sense that many women would form relationships with men who had political or economic leverage—those with Falangist/military connections or black marketeers of various levels—in order to secure material support for themselves and/or relatives and children.) There was a close reciprocal relationship between the black market and prostitution in that fortunes were being made through *estraperlo* speculation of all kinds. And not only was there the economic opportunity but also a culturally conducive climate. Prostitution thrived on the rigid gender roles and sexual Manichaeism/oppression which underpinned the state's efforts to stabilize itself on the basis of a closed family unit. At both the economic and cultural/sexual levels, prostitution operated as a safety valve. But the highest price for that was paid by the thousands of women who experienced in their own lives the most acute contradictions between state ideology/policy and the material reality of autarkic Spain.

But in fact all poor urban working women—whether prostitutes or not—epitomized the vulnerability of the urban labour force. Legally discriminated against (either under the terms of the Labour Charter and Fundamental Law of 1938 or directly by the actions of the state security forces), they worked in the most irregular and semi-clandestine sectors of the labour market. They represent the 'marginal', not because they were few in number, but because of their position: first, in the urban world, the spatial location *par excellence* of Francoism's 'other'; and second, because they found themselves, in relation to official Francoist discourse, on a kind of 'fault line' where a complex social reality diverged sharply from the regime's projected images of women and their role. While we know, in theoretical terms, that 'women have always had to interpret their womanhood within the contexts and parameters of their lives',[4] to date we know very little about how these specific contradictions were internalized, shaping the very construction of gender identity itself. (For an English-language source conveying something of the atmosphere of these times, readers should see Richard Wright's remarkable, virtually contemporary account, *Pagan Spain*, parts of which evoke—albeit within the constraints of a 1950s male sexual sensibility—the diversity of women's lives in 1940s Spain and something of the struggle going on below the state's monolithic-mythic construction of gender, as 'real' women faced a communal life dominated by the brutal materiality of food, sex, and death.)

Certainly the opportunities to manifest any behaviour or attitude dissenting from the dominant discourse were few and far between for most working women—not least because there was so little physical or mental energy to spare. Commentators

have read some of the most famous popular songs of the period as a form of female cultural resistance to both Francoist gender norms and the material misery inflicted upon them: in particular the quite extraordinary 'Tatuaje' [Tattoo], which tells of a woman searching desperately and endlessly in the bars of a port for her lost sailor lover whose name she bears tattooed upon her arm.

> [Lines] sung by all those exhausted housewives and mothers doing shift work in the sweat shops of the textile industry. They sang it for whoever was listening beyond the wide open windows of the workshops, not as a commercialized popular song, but as a cry of protest against the human condition, against their own lot as the Carmens of Spain waiting for husbands on whom History had imposed too great a trial, they sang against the grinding routine of a life spent queuing in front of food shops, ration book in hand, day after day, with no chance of that sailor who had arrived one day on a ship and whom, who knows, they might have encountered in the port at dusk.[5]

These were women who had themselves been tattooed by history, by the searing experience of civil war, all their grief, frustration, and longing personified in the description of the inaccessible, impossibly tall, blonde, *foreign* sailor. 'Tatuaje' and other popular songs, as well as the myths of the 1940s, constituted a form of cultural resistance to the state, helping people in the enormous task of getting by in dark times. (Indeed, the contestatory power of 'Tatuaje' is evidenced by its rediscovered popularity, in a camp reading, during the *movida* madrileña*.)

More quantifiably, we know that in the 1940s Spanish women had recourse to long-established socio-economic survival strategies (although the women concerned would not, for the most part, have interpreted this behaviour as protest or political resistance). Such indicators of the state's failure to construct woman in its image would include, most obviously, the downright failure in Spain, as in fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, of pronatalism. (Spanish birth rates would not reach 1930s levels until the economic take-off of the 1960s.) Poor, working women used whatever birth control methods they could gain access to—and abortion, as before—to exert some degree of control in order to protect their own health, and stave off economic disaster and family crisis—all of which were closely connected. No amount of persuasion on the part of the Sección Femenina's cadres could persuade them of the joys of prolific motherhood.

For the poor, the Francoist image of 'family' and women's return to the home, as preached by state agencies, was a myth—above all in an urban working-class milieu. Here the family was often an absence. The imperative of autarky meant women left their homes to work (and this included prostitution) so their families could survive—although they often did so within alternative structures not remotely resembling the Francoist 'model' family (e.g. children deposited with different relatives or those of women working as prostitutes looked after by a variety of 'grandmothers' and 'mothers').

Of the various sources of socialization where working-class women were concerned, probably the least influential was that occurring via the intervention of the

Sección Femenina. Working in marginal sectors as so many women did, they mostly avoided the six months' labour service (Servicio Social) required—theoretically—of all single working women and overseen by the SF. (Marriage, of course, provided universal exemption from SS.) Of those young, single, urban working-class women who might have been targeted, the decrees of 1944–6 released them from the labour requirement, at which not only they had balked but also their employers, most of whom saw it as unwonted state interference with their workforce and its productive capacity. (Henceforward working-class women had only to attend classes—which ranged from basic literacy to low-level domestic science, sewing, and etiquette, and some very elementary aspects of 'national history and culture'.)

In so far as the point of control for female mobilization was entry to the official labour market, and in that industrial workers were exempt from labour service proper from the mid-1940s onwards, then the majority of those 'drafted' were in fact single middle- and lower middle-class women. Indeed the SF was mainly a middle-class affair in terms of both its cadres and those they mobilized. These were the women—above all the urban middle classes—who provided the free labour in hospitals, schools, food kitchens, old people's homes, orphanages, charity workshops, etc. so crucial to the containment of socio-economic crisis and thus to regime stabilization in the 1940s.

For the SF's cadres proper—those who organized SS or provided the SF's many other educational or cultural services—these activities meant more than just the provision of low-level welfare services gratis. For many urban lower middle-class women, of course, it meant the implementation of a conscious political project: they saw themselves as actively contributing in the great enterprise of building the 'New State' and nation. But perhaps for even greater numbers it came to mean a relative freedom, alternative life chances—albeit according to norms acceptable within a deeply conservative society and polity. Yet the SF's cadres were single, economically independent women with an unusually self-sufficient life-style. The discrepancy between this and the message they disseminated—of the virtues of female submission, subservience, and joy through domesticity—was remarkable. Of course the SF was in a sense itself a form of cultural control in that it permitted the appearance of female involvement in public life without giving women entry to formal politics. Nevertheless, the ambiguities and contradictions of SF praxis contributed to creating a new mentality for some younger urban middle-class women. In the end, the conscious political objectives espoused by the SF's cadres may be seen to be less significant in terms of what the organization ultimately 'meant' than the process of change of which it formed a part.

Conclusion

There are two conclusions underpinning this brief exploration. First, that the regime's project for Spanish 'womanhood' scarcely functioned as its ideological

progenitors had intended. This was unsurprising as the Spanish state was poor (in both absolute and relative terms) and could devote few resources to back its social policies. As far as urban working-class women were concerned, social control came chiefly through their total absorption in the battle for material survival rather than by dint of any internalization of regime norms of 'womanhood'. While female resistance to the regime's natalist policy did contribute to the collapse of autarky, here again women were motivated more directly by imperatives of material survival rather than political opposition in the strict sense. By contrast, however, the thousands of middle-class women mobilized as providers of basic health and education provision in the cadres of the Sección Femenina were often much more consciously engaged on a project: sustaining the social fabric in the vast material crisis of the 1940s, helping to stabilize the regime in order to build the New State as a self-consciously middle-class enterprise. But here too an ambiguous dynamic was present. For the process and experience of SF mobilization played, over time, a not insignificant part in disrupting and dynamizing gender relations and thus formed part of a matrix of social/cultural change.

Notes

1 R. Wright, *Pagan Spain* (London, 1957), 160–1.

2 On the scale of the post-war repression generally, J. Fontana, 'Naturaleza y consecuencias del franquismo', in J. Fontana (ed.), *España bajo el franquismo* (Barcelona, 1986), 22–4; A. Reig Tapia, *Ideología e historia: sobre la represión franquista y la guerra civil* (Madrid, 1984), 25–6; also M. Richards's essay in this volume.

3 The only published studies are contemporary medical-moral ones focusing mainly on the spread of venereal disease. More usefully and accessibly, see the accounts in novels such as Luis Martín Santos's *Tiempo de silencio* (1962) and Juan Marsé's *Si te dicen que caí* (1973).

4 J. Scott, foreword to M. J. Boxer and J. H. Quataert (eds.), *Connecting Spheres: Women in the Western World, 1500 to the Present* (Oxford, 1987).

5 M. Vázquez Montalbán, *Crónica sentimental de España* (Barcelona, 1980), 25 (translation mine). For 'Tatuaje' and many more, see Basilio Martín Patino's remarkable film *Canciones para después de una guerra* [*Songs for after a War*] (1971, authorized for release only in 1976).

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