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**GENESIS, EVOLUTION AND REVOLUTION  
OF BULLFIGHTING IMAGES IN SPANISH FILMS:  
A CULTURAL HISTORY OF *CINE TAURINO***

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of the University of Sunderland for  
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to be a critical investigation into the representation of bullfighting in the history of Spanish cinema, through the framework of Antonio Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony (Gramsci [1929-1935] 2007), including the concept of 'orientalism' (Said 1978), and the study of identity in film genre and national cinema. I explore how some dominant cultural elements, such as male virility, ultra-conservative Catholicism and political nationalism, exerted their influence on films about bullfighting throughout history.

With a close textual analysis of an extended filmic *corpus* of *cine taurino*, which includes fictions and documentaries, popular films and *cinéma d'essai*, and comparative studies with other national cinemas, I investigate which predominant meanings have been conveyed through visual representations of bulls, bullfighters and bullrings, and how these meanings can find their roots in bullfighting culture itself and in cultural movements of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Spain.

As a brand-new study in the field of Spanish Film Studies, with little literature available, the investigation explores all the three major eras of Spanish film history, which correspond to specific political situations in the Spanish state:

- The pre-Franco era (1896-1939), focused on the genesis of the cinematic genre and subgenre and on the controversies about the macro-genre of the filmic *españolada* in silent films (Navarrete Cardero 2009);
- The Francoist dictatorship (1939-1975), focused on the political evolution of bullfighting representation in national cinema as a metaphor for class struggle;
- Post-Franco cinema (1975 - 2012), focused on the new wave of filmmakers who portrayed gender reversal in virility, bravery and strength (now conferred to the literal or symbolic *matadora*), using formal elements of the stereotypical representation of Spanishness.

*El mundo entero es una enorme plaza de toros  
donde el que no torea, embiste  
(Ignacio Sánchez Mejías)*

## INTRODUCTION

In 1988 I was seventeen-years old. I was watching the news on TV with my mother and, suddenly, the speaker announced a special report on Tyrone Power, on the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death. A close up of his face appeared on the screen. “I remember him very well”, said mum. “He was so gorgeous in *Blood and Sand*. In that film, he was a famous bullfighter, and was married to a good girl. But that bitch Rita Hayworth took him away from his wife, and so he died in the arena”.

This was my first description of a classic plot of films about bullfighting.

It took me over twenty years to go back to this narrative formula as a starting point for my PhD research. Meanwhile, I worked in the film and TV industry for over a decade; I lived in Spain for years, and inevitably came across bullfighting. If you are a TV producer in Seville, you should not be surprised to host a bullfighter on your show, or even to hire him as a presenter of it. My residence in one of the cradles of tauromachy encouraged my intellectual curiosity on the theme. In my Spanish years, I avidly read about the history and theory of bullfighting.

It was therefore an unexpected surprise to discover, years later, while I was writing an essay for an MA in Film and Cultural Studies on *Matador* (Pedro Almodóvar, 1986), a successful film that reformulates Spanish identity through a gender revision of bullfighting, that the so-called *cine taurino* (taurine cinema) was still unexplored. I was unwilling to believe that a genre with hundreds of productions throughout the whole of film history had attracted very limited research.

Amongst the few books available, mainly expanded catalogues of taurine films with a brief text, no one has explored this film genre in the context of some

of the key constituents for the study of identity<sup>1</sup> in Media and Cultural Studies: race, class and gender (Hammer and Kellner 2009: xxxii).

This gap became the focus for my MA essay, and the starting point of my PhD.

This work is therefore devoted to investigating the cultural history of Spanish *cine taurino* as a film genre and subgenre, focused on questions of ethnic, social and gender identity, with a twofold aim. On the one hand, it seeks to analyse how these issues inter-relate throughout its history, as a national and a trans-national genre, in order to extrapolate specificities of Spanish *cine taurino*. On the other hand, it seeks to examine its relations to history itself. Due to the lack of notable literature, predominant meanings and values linked to the genre in Spanish film history are extrapolated through a close textual analysis of the filmic texts, including a comparative approach to other cinemas (essentially Mexican, Portuguese, French and Hollywood), rather than any application of pre-determined theories.

The film texts are, however, examined through philosophical assumptions, linked to Antonio Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony; that is, the moral and intellectual direction exerted by a social group or class to others, through cultural practises and shared beliefs, in order to create a complex system of control, which includes its acceptance as common sense in everyday life (Gramsci [1929-1935] 2007: 2010-34). Thus, the analysis of the films seeks to highlight hegemonic discourses linked to identity in the formulas, repetitions and variations of the film genre, and its political connotations. These philosophical assumptions are also rooted in my personal professional background as a film and TV studio manager and producer. The privileged position - especially during my years in Cinecittà Studios (Rome) and ZZJ Producciones (Seville and Madrid) - in which I have dealt with different productions whether by budget (from low-cost to Hollywood colossal) or format (for cinema and TV), granted me the opportunity to be part of the complex series of ideological and economic negotiations between culture and power, which allow a story to become a finished production.

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<sup>1</sup> The sense of belonging of a group of people who share a common culture (Gramsci 2007: 769).

The study of a film genre is always connected to looking for a balance between the exposure to an excess of structuralism in the description of its historic dynamics, and the lack of clarity in the tools and models used to detect its relevant elements (Grant 2007: 3). The first chapter is therefore committed to clarifying the rationale for, and the main concepts and tools of this work, and the implications of the chosen methodologies and philosophies. For the ease of the reader, there has been added a separate glossary of the main terms in Spanish, whose translation into English is made difficult or simply impossible (i.e. *banderillero*, *picador*, etc.), and an extended filmography, which includes the locations of the films. Too often, in fact, literature on early and silent cinema does not clarify if it is an analysis proceeding from the primary source (the film itself) or, especially in the case of lost films, the secondary (scripts, old publications, etc.). Though I have indicated in this work the use of secondary sources, I have decided to offer an extended list of the films that I have investigated, to indicate their location, especially for future readers of this work. In this thesis, films are quoted using their original title. This explains that the filmic adaptation of the novel *Sangre y arena* (Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, 1908) maintains its original title in the Spanish versions of 1917 and 1989, and its title in English *Blood and Sand* for the Hollywood adaptations made in 1922 and 1941.

The second chapter explores the main sources and the genesis of Spanish *cine taurino*, especially focused on the links between early and silent films (1896-1931), and their connections to previous artistic forms of *españolada*, the latter is intended as a stereotyped and exaggerated representation of Spain in literature, music or fine arts, both in national and foreign productions (Navarrete Cardero, 2009; Sánchez Biosca 2013: 351). The analysis of the main sources and the Spanish filmic texts, compared with the contemporary genesis of other national taurine cinemas, reveals common components and Spanish specificities, prominently linked to discourses of national and ethnic identities. Due to the prevalence of films attributable to the macro-genre of the *españolada*, this chapter makes some observations on and raises questions about cinematic 'orientalism', borrowing this term from Edward Said (1978), and referring to representations of 'the other' characterised as exotic and primitive.

Sound in films comes to Spain in the 1930s, corresponding to major political changes, from the Second Republic and the Civil War (1931-1939) to General Francisco Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975). This implies for Spanish cinema considerable challenges, both for the industry and film content, subject to a stronger control by political power. Hence, the third chapter is centred on the evolution of *cine taurino* as part of a complex process of negotiations between Francoism, which promoted cinema as a propaganda weapon; the cultural *résistance* of anti-Francoism; and the influences of realism in films, which brought new uses of tauromachy to build discourses on class struggle and identity. Again, a comparative gaze on other national cinemas highlights Spanish specificities and peculiarities, especially productive in taurine cinema, which is experiencing a second Golden Age.

Democracy and post-modernity meant for tauromachy in films a dramatic decline in the number of productions. From the end of Francoism to the present day (1975-2016), the genre has suffered profound changes. National folklore passes through processes of reformulation, often rephrasing national identity through gender revisions and reversals. The fourth chapter is dedicated to underlining the cultural shift in *cine taurino* which includes contrasting issues and revolutionary mutations of the main elements of bullfighting as symbolically used in cinema. From the hard-core minority of classic narratives, to the inclusion of the woman bullfighter in films (the *torera* or *matadora*), in the last four decades bullfighting in cinema has been transformed into a visual discussion about sexual and gender identity. The comparison with documentaries and other films, and the contrast with significant political discourses on tauromachy linked with the changing sensitivity to animal welfare, conclude – for now - the journey around the cultural history of bullfighting in Spanish cinema.

# CHAPTER ONE

## ENGAGING WITH SPANISH *CINE TAURINO*

### 1.1 *Cine taurino*: building filmographies, settling methodologies

*Cine taurino* is an accepted definition for a film genre in which the plot is devoted to bullfighting. Considered also a specific subgenre of foreign and national *españoladas*, tauromachy in films is often named when listing or exploring popular productions with stereotypical representations of Spain (Navarrete Cardero 2009; Triana Toribio 2003; Claver Esteban 2012; González-Requena 1998). '*Cine taurino*', 'taurine cinema' and 'bullfighting films' are interchangeable terms which refer to the cinematic genre with analogous contents to taurine novels, music compositions and artworks. However, when looking for a more extensive definition, or a comprehensive literature for the film genre, the result is discouraging. Films are labelled, in an almost dogmatic way, as belonging to a genre which does not have literature.

In his list of categories, styles, trends and movements in cinema, Daniel Lopez defines 'bullfighting films' as such:

A penniless urchin's passion for bullfighting which he practises as a street game with other would-to-be bullfighters, is the driving force that will eventually lead him to the bullring. This rags-to-riches-and-fame underlying theme is found in many bullfighter films. Bullfighting is Spain's national sport, and bullfighter movies have been a minor local staple for many decades. The subject transcends borders, however, and some bullfighting movies have also been produced outside Spain or Mexico, the two major producers of bullfighting films. It is a minor genre (1993: 35).

This reductive definition, and the misrepresentation (Hollywood has produced a substantial number of taurine films) is accompanied by the lack of research. Only a limited number of published monographic studies are available. The first publication committed to *cine taurino* was written in 1963 by Carlos Fernández Cuenca, the founder and first director of Spanish National Film Archive (Filmoteca Española, Madrid). *Toros y toreros en la pantalla* (Bulls and bullfighters on the screen) is the first attempt to catalogue national and international films attributable to the genre. The booklet has a short introduction,

followed by a chronological “critical filmography”<sup>2</sup> (Fernández Cuenca 1963: 47-182), intended as an often personal review of the films, focused on the ability of cineastes to depict bullfighting as an exemplary racial feature of Spanishness. French films are therefore distinguished as “*evidentes españoladas*”, and British producers are considered too influenced by Animal Protection societies to enter the field (Ibid.: 5-8). Fernández Cuenca is openly concerned about the representation of the *Fiesta Nacional*, which he considers as a sort of Spanish cultural property: his critique on Portuguese taurine cinema is softened by it having its own “legitimate national character” and “national style of bullfighting” (Ibid.: 83; 88; 157), but he is fierce about Mexican cinema for its “pathetic *costumbrismo*” (Ibid.: 77), which often produces “mediocre films” (Ibid.: 96; 100; 118).

A second comprehensive review of the film genre was published over forty years later (Feiner 2010). North American journalist and photographer Muriel Feiner, based in Madrid from the 1960s, is personally linked to bullfighting world: she is married to a *torero*. Her book partially builds its filmography on Fernández Cuenca’s previous work, adding an impressive update not only about taurine cinema *per se*, but also about a large number of films of other genres with scenes of bullfighting. The purpose of her research is indeed to find out to what extent filmmakers have genuinely represented the *corrida* in films. Feiner makes clear her main focus in the introduction, regretting “Without wishing to give offence, that few good films about bullfighting have been produced throughout film history” (Ibid.: 15). Despite her approach of isolating bullfighting scenes from the filmic texts, which leads her to avoid analysis of their intertextual function, Feiner makes several interesting links between film production and bullfighting history, linking them to some major political events, through the introduction to the film genre’s history.

With similar apologetic nuances towards the *fiesta*, writer Paco Ignacio Taibo is the author of the first publication focused to a national *cine taurino* (1987). His booklet is devoted to Mexican films about bullfighting, and has the analogous structure of Fernández Cuenca’s. With a short introduction on the film genre as a characteristic genre for Mexican cinema, there follows a list in

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<sup>2</sup> All the English translations are mine. Due to the extensive use of resources in Spanish, only iconic and historical quotations have been cited in the original and translated version.

chronological order of national productions, reviewed through the perspective of the author's personal taste. Being a writer himself, Taibo expresses his concerns on Latin-American scriptwriters of taurine films, whose plots "do not satisfy cinemagoers nor tauromachy *aficionados*" (Ibid.: 15). In recent times, there is a renewed interest in Mexican cinema about bullfighting thanks to a new generation of researchers focused on early cinema (Leal, Coello and Barraza 2016).

There are no studies on Portuguese taurine cinema, except for a first cultural-historic approximation written by the author of this thesis (Caramella 2014). On Spanish cinema and tauromachy, on the other hand, we find the only academic research on the subject so far undertaken. Carlos Colón Perales, scholar from the University of Seville, has critically approached films about bullfighting as a subgenre (1999; 2005). His two books are linked to Eric Hobsbawm's theory of the 'invention of tradition' (1983): "cinema and bullfighting are built - and are building – traditions, both are rooted in ancient materials, and are remodelled for new intentions" (Colón Perales 2005: 30).

The cultural transformation of bullfighting into a major popular entertainment during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century is analysed in parallel to the consolidation of cinema. References to political events reinforce his proposal to place taurine cinema as in the processes of the building of an ideal of nation: his second book is indicatively titled *Un cine para tres Españas* (A cinema for three Spains) (2005). Colón Perales approaches *cine taurino* in its function as a subgenre (1999: 154), and his deductive methodology derives from the theory (of the history of tradition of bullfighting and of cinema) and some film texts. This scholar marks undoubtedly a starting point of this research, which aims to offer a distinct and more comprehensive point of view.

In fact, this research starts, firstly, from considering *cine taurino* both in its functions as a film genre and subgenre; secondly, opposing Colón Perales' methodology, the textual analysis is theoretically inductive and quantitative. The analysis of the filmic texts, indeed, shows how a remarkable number of films can hardly be considered belonging to a mere subgenre, with bullfighting acting not only as the main plot, but also proposing narrative formulas and conventions, repeated and reformulated in other films. In addition to that, the inclusion of documentaries, newsreel, cartoons and, when possible, amateur

and domestic films, displays common cultural backgrounds. Moreover, comparative studies with other national cinemas with analogous productions – almost absent in Colón Perales' publications – disclose similarities and Spanish idiosyncrasies.

Finally, the primary focus on the texts brings light to omitted elements opening crucial discourses within the film genre, such as gender issues. The studies on *cine taurino* are usually limited to traditional representations of masculinity (essentially, the vision of the bullfighter as a passionate man and as a social climber), and often ignore other models of representation, especially those in relation to women, that this work aims to uncover. Along with gender, the analysis of the use of fighting bulls in films, which is predominantly symbolic, aims to open some questions on objectification of animals in visual representations. In fact,

There are other ways of looking at film genre apart from a dogmatic kind of categorization whereby genre is regarded as the product of similarities within a group of filmic texts, or of the canon to which these are deemed to conform. [...] Cinematic genres, then, are not exclusively film genres; they are also categories of production and interpretation. From this perspective, a theory of cinematic genres must reconcile both textual and contextual approaches (Moine 2008: xvi).

The reconciliation between textual and contextual approaches starts, for the purposes of this work, from the building of a more comprehensive filmography. The extended list of filmic productions includes the catalogue of fictions and documentaries of Fernández Cuenca (1963), Taibo (1987), and especially Feiner (2010); the updates and the additions found in catalogues of national cinemas (González López and Belchí 1993; Hueso 1998; Vallejo and Heinink 2009; Bello Cuevas 2010; García Riera 1992-1997); and personal contributions resulting from prolonged research in the main film archives of Spain (Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Cordoba), Portugal (Lisbon) and México (UNAM and Cineteca Mexicana, Mexico City). New digital tools of research and work in close cooperation with archivists are now offering more opportunities to find omitted and recovered titles, especially the once lost films which have been recently found and restored. The research in the archives does not only offer

the possibility to analyse fragments and original nitrates, but also the study of old domestic and amateur films deposited in local film archives<sup>3</sup>.

Finally, the emerging field of research on newsreel as a distinctive film genre has laid out the connection between narratives of fictions and documentaries (Tranche and Sánchez-Biosca 2000; Fielding 2006). Therefore, the textual analysis of this research has incorporated the ‘taurine newsreel’ of Mexico (*Cine Mundial*), Portugal (*Visor, Jornal Português, Imagens do Portugal*) and Spain (*NO-DO*), with generic glances to other national cinemas (such as the British catalogue of Pathé or the Italian *Settimana Incom*).

The choice of an extended filmography is linked to the contextual approach. As mentioned above, the philosophical assumptions of this research are rooted in the *Quaderni del carcere (Prison Notebooks)* of Antonio Gramsci (2007). The legacy of the Italian philosopher, whose impact in Cultural Studies is indisputable (Hall 1992), does not limit its contribution to critically investigate political power and cultural consensus, giving popular culture a non-marginal place. For the purposes of rebuilding a new *cultura nazionale-popolare* (national popular culture), Gramsci also suggests, as effective methodology, the study of cultural history and a “meticulous and scrupulous philological work” (2007: 1840). The approach to a defined body of cultural productions should follow a progressive dynamic:

A register of all the works, including the most tangential, in a chronological order, and a division according to intrinsic motivations: intellectual formation; maturity; possession [...]. The research of the *leitmotiv*<sup>4</sup>, of the rhythm of the developing thoughts must be more important than individual casual assertions and disconnected aphorisms (Ibid.: 1841-2).

The search for hegemonic cultural leitmotifs in film texts, therefore, considers an extended filmography, analysed in chronological order (including the ‘most tangential’ productions), in order to extrapolate the ‘rhythm of the thoughts’, rather than focus to individual case studies. However, textual analysis is “a sort of scenario of war of discourses which are fighting for hegemony” (García Carrión 2007: 15). Considering the extension of the *corpus*, the variety

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<sup>3</sup> The archives belonging to FIAF (International Federation of Film Archives) have recently started a campaign of depositing and recovering domestic and amateur films. In Spain, each regional archive has its own catalogue, with no obligation to provide a copy to the national archive in Madrid. This explains my research in several locations in Spain.

<sup>4</sup> Italics in original.

of sources, and a certain trend of *cine taurino* for adaptation, the comparison and contrast between the original source and the film goes beyond exclusive questions of faithfulness. Variations and alterations of the original stories are highlighted according to the main focus on identity, and are underlined as a vehicle for related discourses, avoiding emphasis on truthfulness, which can drive to sterile arguments (Geraghty 2008).

Texts are never plain or definite: their fluidity incorporates, among others, inter-textualities, para-textualities, meta-textualities (Genette 1997). Therefore, a filmic adaptation can offer several intertextualities (i.e. the presence of a specific bullfighter-actor who adds biographic elements), paratextualities of title cards or posters, or symbolic meta-corridas with social or sexual allegories which relate to their cultural context: “While versions are necessarily interconnected, they possess distinct textual identities (Bryant 2013: 49).

This last reflection links directly to the outline of the ‘national identity’ of a film, more specifically to what is intended in this work as national cinema and Spanish national cinema. As well as for film genre or for textual analysis, the polysemy of the concept can lead to linguistic or theoretical nightmares (Triana Toribio 2003: 2). Cinema can be ‘national’ in a variety of ways, and can be approached from different perspectives, to be generically understood as belonging to a distinctive nation.

National cinema is “a helpful taxonomic labelling device, a conventional means of reference in the complex debate about cinema, but the process of labelling is always to some degrees tautologous, fetishising the national rather than merely describing it” (Higson 2000: 58). Framing national cinema implies hybridity and fusion, traditions of genres and of auteurs, discourses on the representation of national identity, or simply a variety of ‘otherness’ with regards to Hollywood (Croft 1998: 385). The distinctiveness of a national cinema depends on the adoption of a set of conventions or a specific approach (see, for instance, the label of ‘blood cinema’ to Spanish films applied in Kinder 1993).

Among the most effective attempts to deduce Spanish distinctiveness in its national cinema, Santos Zunzunegui (2002) offers a compelling analysis of four main characteristics of it. The scholar underlines how in the tradition of *esperpento*, *cuplé*, *zarzuela* and other popular forms of entertainment or literary genres can be found one of the most productive waves of national cinema.

These sources are modified, developed and amplified, producing a cinematic form which can be ascribed to Spanish national cinema. Secondly, he highlights a specific 'corporeity' of Spanish cinema, embodied by the singularity of its actors and their performances (for instance, Fernando Fernán Gómez). Thirdly, Zunzunegui points to the tendency of Spanish films to exceed realism through mythology, especially in narrative archetypes (i.e. *La aldea maldita*, Florián Rey, 1930). Finally, in the mix between vanguard and popular resides the most audacious experimentations of Spanish cinema, especially noticeable in the documentarist tradition. As well as Moine, Zunzunegui recommends avoiding excesses in structuralism and post-structuralism, hoping for "a balance between methodologies of textual analysis and historic investigations [...], as an essential procedure for future research" (Ibid.: 24).

*Cine taurino* is not exclusively linked to Spanish cinema. It is not only trans-historic (likewise the Western, is one of the longest-lasting genres), but is also trans-national. Despite its association with Spanishness for "common cultural consensus" (Tudor 1974), the 'textual identity' of the filmography shows how bullfighting in film belongs, for instance, to Mexican national cinema, as well as to Spanish national cinema. In addition to that, Portuguese films about *tourada* (the Portuguese *corrida*), though outnumbered, are intimately connected to Portuguese national cinema (Baptista 2010: 8), and especially linked to discourses on nationalism (Hagener 2014: 35; de Matos-Cruz 2011: 389-90).

The approach to the genre should therefore highlight specific discourses on Spanishness with a regard to distinctions on Mexicanness, Portugueseness, and other 'otherness', as showed by filmic texts. The relationship between the Spanishness of the cultural world of bullfighting and its representation in cinema is, indeed, hoped-for not only by Zunzunegui, but by other researchers focused on the study of cinema as a vehicle for national identity:

Zarzuelas, rural melodramas, films about bullfighting and [...] folk musicals have been progressively structuring themselves as the basic genres of Spanish cinema. It should be investigated which discourses about Spain these films have presented, as well as looking at what literary works have been selected for the embodiment of the national spirit, as worthy of adaptation for the silver screen (García Carrión 2007: 65).

This work accepts the challenge. However, the distinction of Spanishness in *cine taurino* should start from the recognition of Spanishness in bullfighting

itself. Prior to the textual analysis of the filmic texts, it is essential to identify what the study is precisely looking for, and from which cultural guidelines the investigation is driven. It is needed to highlight how bullfighting itself is culturally linked to Spanish identity; what is the Spanish distinctiveness of bullfighting; and how the ritual of the *corrida* itself can convey discourses on identity.

## 1.2 Tauromachy and identity

The relevance of bullfighting in Spain is often introduced by a well-known categorical sentence of philosopher José Ortega y Gasset:

Let us say, to everyone's shame, that no one in Spain knows anything about the history of a fiesta which has for two centuries been the biggest source of happiness for the majority of Spaniards. [...] And they do not know it because they are not able to approach with free spirit a topic which is considered as trivial. [...] To them, I strongly affirm that it is impossible to understand Spanish history from 1650 to today without having retraced the history of the corridas ([1960] 2007: 136)<sup>5</sup>.

A long time has passed since the discouraging lack of serious academic investigations on tauromachy and history: an encouraging number of academics have filled the gap in the field and have recovered the cultural and economic impact of the *fiesta* (see for instance, the complete works of scholars such as Carlos Martínez Shaw and Araceli Guillaume-Alonso).

The term *tauromaquia* (tauromachy) makes its entrance in Spanish language in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, and was admitted as a common word by the *Academia de la Lengua* (Academy of Language) in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, to indicate “the art of fighting bulls in the bullring” (Saumade 2006: 46). It is indeed in that period when the *corrida* performed by a matador on foot starts its process of popularisation, opposed to the more ‘noble’ art of fighting bulls on horseback, previously performed by aristocrats for special events (a royal wedding, the birth of an heir, etc.). By the time cinema has itself become a popular form of entertainment in the 1920s, tauromachy is living its Golden Age. In a relatively

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<sup>5</sup> “De la historia de los toros – de esa fiesta que durante dos siglos ha sido el hontanar de mayor felicidad para el mayor número de españoles – ningún español sabe nada [...]. Sea dicho, para su vergüenza [...] porque son incapaces de acercarse con frescura de alma y mente a un tema que parece trivial [...]. Frente a ellos afirmo, de la manera más taxativa, que no puede comprender bien la historia de España desde 1650 hasta hoy quien no se haya construido con rigurosa construcción la historia de las corridas de toros”.

short period of time, just two centuries, bullfighting has turned itself into one of the most characteristic signs of Spanish identity.

The traces of tauromachy as a distinctive part of the country involve various fields and places (Maudet 2010). Architecturally, the shape of several squares in Spanish towns refers to their original design for bullfighting (i.e. Chinchón), as well as bullrings being part of the urbanism of towns and villages, together with the main Church and the City Council (Ibid.: 232). Furthermore, the Spanish rural territory has an eco-system proceeding from the necessity to breed fighting bulls for four-five years in large areas of land. The Spanish *dehesa* is a unique pastureland with high environmental and natural importance (Lomillos et al. 2012). Across the roads of the nation, the skyline is dominated by black iron silhouettes of the Osborne bull, born as a brand in the 1950s to advertise a sherry and today is part of the Artistic Heritage (Romero de Solís 1999: 360; Johnson and Leatherman 2005: 139). Outside the national borders, tauromachy is, in addition to football, the element that most spontaneously is associated with Spain (*BIE* 2016: 25).

Bullfighting is present in everyday language (Abella 2015), and 'taurine journalism' (*periodismo taurino*) is now a specific academic course. In literature, music and fine arts, the list of authors and artworks related to the symbolic world of bullfighting is extensive (Amorós 1999). From Goya's etchings, through Federico García Lorca's poetry to Picasso's paintings, modern and contemporary cultural and artistic Spanish history is embedded with bullfighting. Even *antitaurinismo* (against bullfighting) is a remarkable part of its cultural history (McKinty 2015a).

The richness and the variety of themes and fields of study on tauromachy and Spanishness have a special link, proceeding from the symbolic world of corrida. Though "the *mise-en-scène* of bullfighting is susceptible to important cultural variations" (Saumade 2006: 42) and includes different traditions (i.e. the *encierros* [running of the bulls]), the corrida is the most known and visually represented form of tauromachy. The extended filmography also confirms its predominance, whether in fiction films, documentaries, newsreel and domestic films. Independently from the audiovisual production's origin, it is the ritual of killing fighting bulls in the bullring that exerted a tremendous influence in literary and visual cultures.

Indeed, as a ritual performed according to specific regulations and in precise locations, the corrida is in itself a representation of four fetishisms: the cultural, the religious, the socio-economic and the psycho-sexual (Lev 1995: 73). The cultural meanings of tauromachy are part of what has been mentioned above: this is also true for other taurine countries, bullfighting is not only part of a cultural legacy, but, for Spain, is still one of the most common cultural practices of its citizens (*MECD-EAT* 2016: 10). The cultural distinctiveness of corrida does not only belong to Spain; however, each taurine country has its own symbolic cultural world. As will be presented throughout this research, the Portuguese *tourada* has different meanings, as do other local traditions, such as the Peruvian *fiesta Yawar*, which can enclose specific political connotations.

The religious legacy of corrida is both intrinsic and extrinsic. Bullfighting performances follow the calendar (*temporada*) according to the Catholic Liturgical Year (Molinié 2016). In this as well, the *temporada* in Spain is different from other nations which share similar traditions of the corrida on foot. In fact, while in Mexico the *fiesta* starts according to the beginning of the Year of Faith (Advent), in Spain the season usually begins in Easter time, and ends in October. Each town has its own *feria*, usually associated to the local patron Saint (San Isidro in Madrid, San Fermín in Pamplona, etc.). Though some of the *ferias* are also linked to more 'pagan' traditions, one or two special days of corridas are added in accordance to the religious calendar: for instance, Seville has its season linked to the old name of its cattle fair (*Feria de Abril*), but opens with a prestigious bullfight each year on Easter Day. As a consequence of this religious link, the 'catholicity' of corrida is also visible in the devotion of matadors, who are often part of religious associations and have their *capote* adorned with images of Our Lady. Prior to the bullfight, they have their own ritual of praying in their hotel rooms in front of a portable altar; as soon as they arrive at the bullring, the first place they go to is a chapel.

Intrinsic to the corrida itself, the religious fetishism is linked to the representation of the bull as a divine symbol, as an ancestral god or as a pagan/Christian offering (including as a symbolic Body of Christ). Often linked by scholars both to the cultural world of Ancient Greece and its religious celebrations with bulls and to Christianity (Delgado Ruiz 1986; Romero de Solís 2002 and 2003; Retamales Rojas 2006: 35-38), the sacrificial aspect of the

death of the bull has been argued by Frédéric Saumade in his study on the numerous taurine *fiestas* around Europe (2006). Though his well conducted research can partially diminish the preeminent approach to tauromachy as a sacrificial performance, from a cultural point of view, the allegory of the bull as a sacrifice and of the matador as a sacerdotal agent is unquestionable.

The rite of the *corrida* can be seen as a ludic performance, but the first criterion of truth, evidence, shows the sacrifice of an animal. The bull, in the *corrida*, always dies, according to specific procedures in a structured ceremony. Indeed, the two theories can both reach validity depending on the specific tradition considered; however, the *corrida*'s language, visual references and artistic representations find an impressive accordance to religion and sacrifice. Throughout this work it will be underlined, for example, how the Christian legacy and the rite of Mass, associated with the *corrida*, are also crucial for the formation of cinematic archetypes and models.

The third fetishism of Spanish *corrida* is linked to the social world and the class struggle. Questions of social mobility are implicit in modern tauromachy for historic reasons. The popularisation of bullfighting on foot, indeed, has allowed humble commoners to perform in the bullring with the simple help of a *capote* or a *muleta*, with no need of – expensive – horses. Allowing mass involvement in the *corridas* has both increased the amount of bullfighters and has allowed its development into a business. Between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, bullfighters acquired extreme popularity, and popularity meant lucrative contracts, a prosperous life, and a higher position in the social ladder. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, bullfighting was amongst the few professions, and an attractive option, which could offer social mobility. Bullrings became therefore a micro-cosmos in which the agents – the matador, the bull, the public – assume allegorical meanings of class struggle and governance.

Indeed, as resumed by sociologist Lázaro Echegaray (2005), class structures are represented both in the arena and in the bullring, a symbolic *umbilicus mundi*. As in general, people are separated by classes according to the seats they are in, with expensive places in the front row and more affordable seats under the sun, and in the *cuadrilla*, a purely masculine team led by the dominant matador. The bull is turned into a god of capitalism, symbol of power and richness, who awards individualism and ruthlessness in business. Once

killed, the bull still maintains its economic value, with its meat transformed into food, distributed to the poor outside the bullring, or turned into a deli dish, the *cola de toro* (bull tail stew), by the restaurants for *aficionados* and gourmands.

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, bullfighters were considered national heroes, enjoying national and international popularity: they influence writers and painters, participate in social events as part of the jet-set, are adored by men and women. The *plaza de toros* was a *societas perfecta*, where only men were active agents of society. Women, in addition to their decorative function as spectators, were confined at home, praying in the family chapel for the sake of the matador. Moreover, the revolution of the bullfighter does not affect the masses: he only wants to change his world, not the world. The lack of political ideology pleases those in power, and the matador is grateful to that power, accepting the social *status quo*:

The bullfighter is looking for an individualistic social mobility. The aspiring bullfighter wants to escape from his own hardships. He knows the society to which he wants to belong, he wants to achieve it no matter what. The bullfighter accepts social inequalities, just as they are. However, he is not a conformist; he strives for reaching the top of the social pyramid. [...] The bullfighter is not a social reformer. He only reforms his own existence (Ibid.: 151).

Tauromachy similarly references psycho-sexual meanings. Firstly, the fact that bullfighting is an activity involving blood performed by a fighting male, links to theories of sexual allegories of the bull as a (feminine) pre-Christian symbol of fertility (Martínez de Vicente 2003). However, the interpretation of *corrida* as a performance of a recovered masculinity through a sort of symbolic coitus is, as it will be detailed in the next chapters, hegemonic in some traditions of national cinemas.

As described by anthropologist Julian Pitt-Rivers ([1984] 2002), several factors can associate the matador with a feminine figure (the clothes, his refined movements, etc.). However, this femininity stands only during the first part of the bullfight, when the matador encounters the fighting bull with his *capote*, used “like a flamenco dancer or Marilyn Monroe standing above a subway grating in her famous film” (Ibid.: 90). Throughout the *corrida*, the bullfighter removes from his body feminine delicacy and sacerdotal solemnity (another sexually ambiguous figure), and regains his masculinity through his dominance to and the submission of the bull, now transformed in an allegoric woman. With

his *muleta*, the matador changes his body language: the chest is erect and his steps are majestic. He assumes authority and thrusts-penetrates the bull as a virile man:

Therefore, the symbolic meaning of the bullfighter goes through two transformations. First, a priest [...] with his *capote de paseo*<sup>6</sup>-chasuble; later on, a seducing woman in the first *tercio*; finally, he ends up being an outstanding man, a transformed male. A matador risks his life in the heroic moment of the *estocada*, and some scholars consider this moment like a symbolic representation of the coitus. As for the bull, its trajectory is symmetrical and inverse. When it enters the arena, it is an almighty monster, expression of aggressive masculinity and symbol, from the Neolithic age in the Mediterranean area, of fecundity and power. (Ibid.: 97).

At the end, the animal is weakened, and loses its honour: “Its humiliation ends with its violation. Its horns do not protect it anymore, even in the final confrontation. The sword, thinner than the penis of a bovine, penetrates the bull in the right point, this vagina previously open by the picador” (Ibid: 101).

The sexual reading of the *corrida*, which will have significant representations and variations in *cine taurino*, is intimately connected with filmic representations of anthropomorphisation and metamorphosis. Similarly for the other cultural meanings and fetishisms of the *corrida*, more details and theoretical references are offered through the textual analysis of the films, exploring complexities and dynamics. If *corrida* represents multiple and elaborate connotations in term of Spanish national, social and sexual identity, the research conducted into films explores the ‘representation of a representation’.

Focused on the main agents of this representation, humans and non-humans, the journey through the history of *cine taurino*, searching for hegemonic leitmotifs and outstanding heterogeneities, can begin.

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<sup>6</sup> Italics are mine. Spanish terms are explained in the glossary.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE GENESIS OF *CINE TAURINO*: (INTER)NATIONAL SOURCES, NATIONAL CINEMAS, NATIONAL IDENTITIES (1896-1931)

#### 2.1 The 'foreign' birth of *cine taurino*

The history of Spanish cinema begins with taurine images. Indeed, the earliest examples of world cinema include depictions of bullfights shot in all of the countries with traditions of tauromachy. The 'taurine shots' were part of early collections of the first moving images, screened for a general audience attracted by scenes of remote lands, showing exotic customs. The first taurine film in Spain is attributed to Alexandre Promio, who was sent to Spain in 1896 by the Lumière brothers (*Arrivée des toreadors*, Catalogue Lumière no. 259, 1896), whilst the first to immortalise bullrings and matadors in Mexico and Portugal were respectively the camera operators of Edison (*Bullfight*, Anonymous, 1896) and of the British production company owned by Robert W. Paul (*Corrida de touros em Campo Pequeno*, Henry Short, 1896).

Alongside religious processions, regional dances, and military parades, the first scenes of Spain give a visual picture of a stereotypical nation. The first 'Spanish scenes' which stand out by the French correspondent from Lumière "consist of a few chance panoramic shots of Barcelona's port, views of urban Madrid, military parades, and bullfights: in other words, the most obvious or picturesque for an undiscerning eye" (Pérez Perucha 2009: 23).

In Promio's first 'views', the static camera observes the atmosphere around the bullring of Madrid before a bullfight, following the arrival of the famous bullfighter Luis Mazzantini and his *cuadrilla* (team). The unsuspecting actor becomes therefore the first of a long list of bullfighters who would create, either due to the recording of their performances or because of their starring roles in fiction films, a *unicum* in film history: the bullfighter as a film star. Promio is soon followed by employees of other French companies: Pathé and Gaumont send their cameras around the whole country to increase the content of their catalogues with 'Spanish views'.

Together with Lumière, they also train part of the first generation of Spanish professionals, or hire the pioneers of national cinema. Many of them learn the business from the French, and later direct their own production companies. The know-how of shooting and editing is also acquired in bullrings. The arenas become schools in which to learn how to effectively focus in an enclosed space where an uncontrollable animal, unable to be directed or commanded in the scene, tests the cameramen: among others, Antonio Escobar directs for Gaumont *Fêtes du couronnement de S. M. Alphonse XIII. Course royale de taureaux* (1902); Segundo de Chomón works with Pathé (*Course de taureaux aux arènes de Barcelone*, 1903).

The short bullfighting films appear in catalogues which depict a stereotypical image of a nation, already the subject of literary and artistic genres in vogue during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: the *españoladas*. Using a representative model from Romantic literature, including travelogues and musical productions, early cinema produces similar contents, analogously following the narrative models of these sources. With modernity reaching the Iberian Peninsula in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, albeit to a lesser extent than in other European nations, historic traditions and folklore are mixed with bullfighting, flamenco dance interpreted by groups of gypsies, and ostentatious religious processions. The titles of the films generally reflect the association of these practices with the country ('Spain-Bullfight', 'Procession-Seville', 'Dance-Andalusia'), adding movement and giving life to illustrations, which have previously accompanied published stories or artworks:

These first images of Spain to be sent around the world were dominated by authentic or folkloric references which captivated the audience of the day. The representation portrayed by authors such as Washington Irving, Prosper Mérimée, Georges Bizet or Edward Manet [...] had forged a specific stereotype of "orientalist" vices, passions and exoticness, in a country sited around the corner from an industrialised Europe [...] The expression of that taste for passion and the extraordinary in Spanish culture within early cinema is reflected pre-eminently in the interest in bullfighting (Benet 2012: 25-6).

The first screenings of 'Spanish scenes' reflect a significant interest in the Iberian nation which arises in the Paris World Fairs: between 1855 and 1900 traditional Spain is celebrated with numerous folk events. In addition to flamenco dance performances and exhibitions of Spanish art, a bullring is built in the French capital for a special corrida, performed by the most distinguished

bullfighters of that time: Luis Mazzantini, Salvador Sánchez Povedano 'Frascuero', Rafael Molina 'Lagartijo'. This contributes to the emergence of the nation's image as a distinguishing and characteristic feature (Lasheras Peña 2009: 443; Claver Esteban 2012: 38-43).

The model of the nation imagined and reproduced in early cinema undoubtedly alludes to the dominant 'orientalism' of the *españolada*: it is no surprise, therefore, to find the films by the Lumière brothers at the start of the development of the cinematic *españolada* (Navarrete Cardero 2009: 51). In fact, limited camera manoeuvres and the clear focus on the most striking or curious details, such as the *traje de luces* (bullfighting outfit), offer at times an air of extravagance, sometimes almost comical. Leaving the camera's focus towards the centre of the bullring resulted often in a disordered series of moving images in which bullfighters and bulls are entering and leaving the shot, with little attention paid to the order of fight proceedings.

Significant in almost all films is the figure of the *picador*, then still important and renowned amongst spectators, also due to its presence in Prosper Mérimée's *Carmen*<sup>7</sup>. The relevance of the *picador* in the bullfighter's team is prominent until the end of the 1920s<sup>8</sup> and, despite the disgust which the sight of disembowelled horses lying in the bullring can cause the public, it is predominant in 19<sup>th</sup> Century accounts (Jiménez Morales 1997; López-Burgos del Barrio 2001, Martínez Shaw 2012) as in the first taurine films. The performance of the bullfighter on horseback is attractive and emotive, either as a symbol of human bravery or as an image of the ancestral barbarity of this very Spanish cultural practice.

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<sup>7</sup> Despite having few lines in Mérimée's novel ([1845] 2008: 48-50), Lucas the *picador* is not a minor character in *Carmen*, given that he represented the ideal of seductive masculinity which resulted in the tragic *dénouement* of the story. The *picador* is the man who wins the heart of the Spanish ladies, as much or more so than the matador, being also an example of masculinity for men. In cinema, a *picador* became the protagonist of a French film: *Le picador* (Lucien Jaquelux, 1932). The elegiac inheritance of this figure has been maintained throughout history thanks to the artistic creations of Pablo Picasso, in whose work the *picador* enjoys considerable importance and, more recently, in the paintings of Fernando Botero. Currently, the *picador's* historic importance is visible through the preservation of the gold-embroidered outfit, like the matador, as a sign of respect for its former place in the hierarchy. The other members of the *cuadrilla*, such as the *banderilleros*, have silver-embroidered outfits.

<sup>8</sup> When the new bullfighting rules in 1928 introduced the protective covering of horses (*peto*), the *tercio de varas* became less dangerous and less intense. Previous to that, the *picadores* were frequently unsaddled, and the possibility of injury or death in the ring was high. Moreover, the bravery of a bull was measured by the number of horses killed in this *tercio*.

The international success of the taurine scenes and reportages produced by French companies was sensational, to such an extent that Spanish cinema developed its productions as an 'imitative model'. Thus, within themes modelled on the style of French cinema (Benet 2012: 31), such as the variations on the themes on *L'arrivée d'un train à ...* or *La sortie de l'usine...*, we may also include bullfights, and consider them as examples of imitation from a French model. On the other hand, tauromachy becomes one of the fundamental and founding indigenous subjects which, when based on and combined with foreign models, will define national cinema in the following years (Ibid: 35).

This double nature – international and national - of Spanish cinema may be considered, on a historical basis, the first distinctive feature of *cine taurino* which, before becoming a deliberate choice to represent the nation, was actually born out of the desire to copy lucrative models:

With these films circulating around the world, the art of bullfighting acquired an unprecedented universality by being made accessible to every type of spectator, including the Spanish, who were able to relive the enjoyment and emotions regularly experienced in live performances. Furthermore, and more importantly, this practice of fighting, with human participation and rituals unique to the field, began to operate as one of the significant cultural clichés which were shaping the stereotype of Spain which was being portrayed to the world from the silver screen (del Rey Reguillo 2010: 315).

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Spanish companies regularly produced bullfighting films with performances by famous matadors (Bello Cuevas 2010). Amongst the numerous directors, were some of the 'fathers' of Spanish cinema, such as Fructuoso Gelabert, who self-produces *Corrida de toros con Ricardo Torres Bombita* (1908); Ricardo de Baños, who directs *Corrida de toros con asistencia de los reyes* (1908) for Hispano Films; Enrique Blanco, who founds the company Iberia Cines and films *La historia del toro de lidia* (1911). Several production companies are established across the country, Barcelona, Zaragoza and Valencia being the most productive areas, leaving the capital Madrid on the side-lines until the 1920s. The convergence of significant social and political events, such as the loss of the last colonies in the Spanish-American War (1898), the late industrialisation of the country, and a middle-class in the capital which was more interested in popular theatre than the new form of entertainment, all contributed to a fragmentation of the geographical map of national cinema (Pérez Perucha 2009: 45).

It is not surprising, therefore, that the most important producer of taurine cinema, Films H. B. Cuesta, is from Valencia. It is this company which develops narrative cinema – not exclusively on bullfighting – in its various subgenres, between 1905 and 1915, through the use of new techniques and the insertion of proto-narratives in documentaries and reportages. Thanks to the bullfighting catalogue, the producer's primary export (Ibid.: 31), Films H. B. Cuesta becomes the main film distributor *ad intra* and *ad extra*, establishing some of the bases of a national cinema (Benet 2012: 38; Lahoz Rodrigo 2010b: 297).

If the nuances between French and Spanish films appear still relatively narrow between 1896 and 1905 (one focused on picturesque details, the other on bullfighters' popularity and bullrings prestige), the following decade marks the differences which transform taurine cinema into a genre with national idiosyncrasies. At the end of the 1920s, national and 'foreign' *cine taurino* are already different, according to distinct narrative developments of the 'views' and the reportages: if Films H. B. Cuesta gives birth to Spanish taurine cinema, Gaumont and his filmmakers offer the base for the formation of taurine *españolada*. In fact, the intertextual inclusion of bullfights in fiction films starts in the 1910s with these two production companies, and maintains *grosso modo* its leitmotifs throughout film history. Gaumont introduces the symbolic use of the anthropomorphic bull and the metamorphosis, whilst Films H. B. Cuesta transforms the professional bullfighter into a cinema star; develops subgenres; and introduces different intertextual uses of tauromachy, moving away from more 'orientalist' depictions.

## **2.2 *Cine taurino* and narrative developments: Gaumont and Films H. B. Cuesta, models of 'foreign' and of Spanish cinema**

### **2.2.1 Two exemplary production companies**

The narrative development of tauromachy in films gradually progresses from single-reel films to medium and full-length movies of five or more reels. The first fiction films coexist in theatres with reportages of bullfights and documentaries on fighting bull farms. Equally, the reportages' accounts become more coherent, largely due to technological advances, such as multi-camera shots, a more

elaborate editing, and the inclusion of title cards for descriptive and didactic purposes. This period in the history of cinema, through the use of micro-stories and symbolisms, establishes several of the genre's standards, depicts myths of national identity and 'otherness', and starts to pay greater attention to viewers' expectations, 'creating' audiences. It is at this time that:

Any national cinema, if it wants to exist beyond a fleeting story or partisan periods, should first build its audience [...], and should secondly secure the loyalty of this recently captivated audience by outlining the technical and cinematographic approach [...] in conjunction with the popular and cultural traditions with which the viewer grew up (Pérez Perucha 2009: 25-6).

In the development of narrative structure in *cine taurino*, Spain again progresses more or less in parallel with French cinema. Though in both national cinemas the genre moves from the 'views' through similar dynamics, the analysis of two key production companies, Gaumont and Films H. B. Cuesta, shows different specificities. Whilst French cinema evolves from its *españoladas*, Spanish cinema grapples with two theoretical approaches. The first arises from those same French models, and the second from its own cultural reality: the Golden Age of Bullfighting<sup>9</sup>; the relatively deliberate search for a cinematic representation of the nation; and the intellectual tensions between the search for modernity and the defence of traditions. The inclusion of bulls, bullfighters, and bullfights as narrative elements reflects the distinction between two Spains: one imagined by foreigners and the other wished for by the Spanish.

The choice of Gaumont as a main example of the genre's development is due to several reasons. Firstly, Alice Guy Blaché's short film *La malagueña et le torero* (1905) was possibly the first narrative film in *cine taurino*'s history. Secondly, Gaumont shows a cultural *fil rouge*, called by Martínez Gil "the Gaumont connection" (2015: 105), between Guy Blaché, Louis Feuillade and Jeanne Roques 'Musidora'. The personal and professional relationships between the three directors, of mutual artistic influence, reveal interesting

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<sup>9</sup> The Golden Age of Bullfighting refers to the years 1913-1920, years of the rivalry between Juan Belmonte and Joselito 'El Gallo'. The first brought about a major revolution in the technique of fighting bulls and became a worldwide celebrity. Joselito also holds a special place within the history of cinema: following his tragic death in the bullring in 1920 he was immortalised in various contemporary documentaries.

correspondences between Guy Blaché's 1905 short film, an episode of Feuillade's serial *Les Vampires* (*Les yeux qui fascinent*, 1916), and the film *Soleil et ombre* (1922), directed by 'Musidora'. Thirdly, Gaumont is also exemplary in the use of its own literary and artistic sources, opposed to the one preferred by Spanish cinema.

Analogously, Films H. B. Cuesta is not only the first production company to develop fiction; it also displays the two aforementioned theoretical elements: the importance of new techniques and contents of foreign cinema, and relevant specificities of its own national culture. Likewise Gaumont, Films H. B. Cuesta progresses from primitive narratives of documentaries and reportages to melodrama and comedy. Both companies lay the foundations for the first archetypes which were successively perfected and heterogeneously intertwined with other sources.

### **2.2.2 Gaumont, the metamorphosis and the anthropomorphic bull**

The relevance of *La malagueña et le torero* (1905) is not exclusively limited to the fact that it was produced by the first female filmmaker in history. Alice Guy Blaché marked a pivotal moment in the history of cinema, though her work has been only recently recognised from official historiography, which has almost ignored for decades women's contribution (Hollinger 2012: 233). In the case of Guy Blaché, her role in history was considered only at the end of the 1980s (McMahan 2006: 41). Well-known for *La fée aux choux* (1896), Guy Blaché was a scriptwriter, producer, and director; she regularly used powerful visual symbolisms; and she dealt with controversial topics, such as sexual identity and social conventions on gender, using pantomime and transvestism in her films (McMahan 2006: 303-35).

*La malagueña et le torero* belongs to the category of 'dance films'. Technically a phonoscene (a film accompanied by music), it was shot in Seville during Guy Blaché's stay in Spain, where she was sent by Léon Gaumont to boost the film catalogue of the company. The film has the same title and theme of a previous Lumière short (*La malagueña et le torero*, 1898): indeed, plagiarism was not a preoccupation for an industry still lacking in specialist legislation. Notwithstanding, Guy Blaché's film stands out from the original

short, a choral performance of a group of dancers, and focuses on a single couple: a man dressed as a bullfighter and a woman in regional clothes. The interest is therefore placed in the implicit narrative of their dance. Barely two minutes long, the film tells a story of seduction through a metaphorical bullfight, as never previously seen. It is the oldest preserved filmic document which shows a woman as a symbolic bull. Surprisingly, the short does not appear in any lists of films about bullfighting, nor are there references to it in the publications on *cine taurino*.<sup>10</sup>

In the dance of the couple, the female represents the bull, dominated by the dancer-bullfighter. Using movements similar to traditional dances (such as *sevillanas* or flamenco) and bullfights (see Landborn 2015), a meta-corrída takes place. In the first part the bullfighter ‘fights’ with his *capote* the female-bull in a series of interchanging positions, as in the first *tercio* of a bullfight. In the second part, now without the *capote*, the man replicates the *tercio de banderillas*, including a virtual stab towards the female’s back, raising up his arms and simulating the placing of the spears.

For a moment, the female squats on the ground in a clear parallel between the seduction-domination of the male over the female and the domination-penetration of the bullfighter over the bull. However, at the end of the film a subtle feminist emphasis can be perceived, as a sort of subversive nuance in gender representation, which characterises the work of Guy Blaché (Foster 1995: 163): the ‘stabbed’ female is revived, gets up, and finishes the dance in the same position as the male, re-establishing the original symmetry of the couple in front of the camera.

Soon after *La malagueña et le torero*, Guy Blaché became captivated by the figure of Rafael González ‘Machaquito’, a popular Spanish bullfighter at that time, while filming him in Nîmes (*Course de taureaux à Nîmes*, 1906). As the director herself recalls in her memoirs, the well-known audacity of bullfighters did not appeal to her, nor the insolence of how they paraded around with women (Blaché, Blaché and Slide 1996: 51). However, upon finishing her film and spending some time with the matador, she admits that, “in spite of the

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<sup>10</sup> Despite the explicit title, the film does not appear in the lists of Fernández Cuenca (1963) and Feiner (2010). The identification of this short film was possible by a thematic search in the Film Archive of Valencia.

cruelty of the spectacle, the courage of the matador stirred me often” (Ibid.: 57). Ultimately, the filmmaker’s experience with a real bullfight and her meeting with a famous bullfighter correspond to traditional visions of romantic literature and travelogues, with mixed feelings of admiration for bravery, and repulsion for an activity considered barbaric.

Furthermore, the work in Nîmes adds two more elements linked to the development of the film genre. The first is that the film is one of the first examples of a ‘bullfight à la carte’, organised by the production company, responsible for hiring the bullring and for contracting the bullfighter (Ibid.: 56). This highlights the noticeable commercial potential which bullfighting provided to cinematographic industry: indeed, the organisation of a bullfight in a prestigious bullring and with high-level professionals (and the spectators) had a considerable cost, and the economic benefit would have been clearly ascertained in the pre-production stage. The second element is the presence of Louis Feuillade, who began his cinematic training precisely with this film under Guy Blaché supervision. The director *in nuce*, a bullfighting *aficionado* and a bullfight reporter for the French press for several years (Bernard 1988), was her film assistant director and bullfighting consultant. The day after the corrida in Nîmes, Feuillade goes with Guy Blaché to Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer to film another corrida (Ibid.: 58).

This initial connection between professionals at Gaumont draws another symbolic link related to cinematographic narratives. Feuillade inserts a taurine scene in the episode of his successful serial *Les Vampires* (1915-1916), *Les yeux qui fascinent* (1916), and uses a similar allegorical language of *La malagueña et le torero*. In the episode, a real bull is thrust by a soldier, in an early ‘film within a film’, an advanced technique which distinguishes Feuillade as a ‘master’ filmmaker amongst others (Abel 1998: 388). In this adventure of his ‘vampires’, Feuillade inserts a story of a Napoleonic soldier who, in Spain, is chased by a fighting bull released by a woman seeking revenge for the death of some family members. The brave soldier draws his sword, stabbing and killing the animal. When the bull dies, literally stretching out its legs in an impacting and emotional shot, the director adds a title card with words of forgiveness for the woman. In the following shot, the soldier cleans the blood from his sword on the animal’s carcass, closing symbolically the sequence of the animal’s death:

the soldier is content with defeating the bull as a figurative gesture of the woman's defeat.

The allegoric language of Feuillade, although in this case it is a French soldier who virtually thrusts a woman, is consistent not only with that of Guy Blaché. In Feuillade's previous production, the taurine film *Les fiancées de Seville* (1914), he also appears to maintain this image, this time creating a parallel between a knife wound and a death by a (bull) goring. Given that no copies of the film exist in archives, we have to use Fernández Cuenca's synopsis (1963: 53) to hypothesise a correlation between the man who penetrates the flesh of his enemy with a knife and the bull which restores the original harmony by goring the sinful bullfighter.

The example relating to the cultural *fil rouge* of the 'Gaumont connection' ends with the protagonist of *Les Vampires*, the film star Jeanne Roques 'Musidora' who, like Guy Blaché, is introduced to bullfighting by Louis Feuillade. What differentiates the French actress from her mentor is her total immersion in the romantic *españolada* universe: 'Musidora', during a period working in Spain with Feuillade, meets famous bullfighter Antonio Cañero and spends a few years in his company, becoming his lover. In her Spanish period, the filmmaker directs two taurine films, acting in them with Cañero (*Soleil et ombre*, 1922; *La terre des taureaux*, 1924). Her Spanish adventure ends melodramatically like her cinematic heroines: abandoned by Cañero, the French star returns to her native country in 1926.

Despite her real embodiment in the role of a woman seduced and abandoned by a bullfighter, 'Musidora', similarly to Guy Blaché, adds to her films a certain feminine and feminist touch. *Soleil et ombre*, produced by Musidora herself, follows and develops the cultural path opened by Gaumont.

The *mise-en-scène* of the film, with the use of insistent *chiaroscuros* and psychological close ups of the main characters, builds a story about the passions and misfortunes of (Spanish) humankind, through intertextual insertion of bullfighting images. Set in a Castilian village, the melodramatic meta-corridos are performed by 'Musidora' herself, in her double role of the nameless mysterious foreigner (the *femme fatale*) and of Juanita, the girlfriend forsaken by the matador Antonio (Antonio Cañero). Juanita is secretly loved by the old antiques dealer (Paul Vermoyal).

The exploration of the dark and possessive side of desire and feelings, in fact, begins during one of Antonio's bullfights which both women attend. Reproducing a staging which was already dominant in international cinema, the cape passing between Antonio and the bull during the 'real' bullfight is alternated with close ups of the two females in the audience. This space becomes the place in which the double symbolic aspect of the bullfight is developed, with the *femme fatale* 'fought' by the man in the ring, but simultaneously 'fighting' Juanita. The blonde foreigner is Antonio's bull, but in the same time is bullfighting Juanita, stealing her fiancé.

The scene relating to the first figurative use of bullfighting – the male who fights the bull-female – is significant and relates to numerous North American productions. As in *Carmen* (Cecil B. DeMille, 1915) and *Blood and Sand* (Fred Niblo, 1922), the fight between the bullfighter and the bull is placed in parallel to the seduction of the woman. The correspondence is created with similar shots and counter-shots of the bullfighter and the bull, alternated to the ones of the bullfighter and the woman, creating a crisis woman-bull. However, depending on the emphasis on who is allegorically bullfighting in the sequence, the bull can follow a masculine or feminine anthropomorphic dynamic.

Similarities between the production of 'Musidora' and the above films have been highlighted by researchers on *españoladas* (Claver Estéban 2012: 196; Navarrete Cardero 2009: 116); nevertheless, the analysis of taurine intertextualities, with their multiple intricacies, has been often ignored. *Soleil et ombre* is, in fact, a sort of compendium of the richness of the symbolic use of bullfighting language in films. 'Musidora' includes other conventional scenes of the genre, like the one in which Juanita is threatened by a bull in the countryside and saved by a reluctant Antonio, already sentimentally engaged with the foreigner, or when Antonio is dramatically gored during a corrida, a consequence of his sins.

In addition to that, the director concludes her melodrama with a feminine variation on the theme, in what can be considered one of the most original sequences in the history of *cine taurino*. 'Musidora' reproduces the death of the *femme fatale* as the death of a bull, probably referring to *Carmen*, but with a different symbolic matador. In Cecil B. DeMille's film, in fact, the gypsy woman

dies from a stab wound, in the same position as a bull receiving the *puntilla*<sup>11</sup>, by the hand of her lover José. The final sequence of *Carmen*, which represents one of the most violent scenes in film history (Babington 2007: 53), puts the power of life and death in the hands of a man. Instead, in the French film these actions are carried out only by females, omitting male characters.

Through this meta-corrida, the foreign *femme fatale* is killed in the bullring at knife-point (*apuntillada*) by Juanita, the murderer-matador (matador, literally, means killer). The tragic end to the story is created with a combination of high-level and eye-level shots of Juanita, crossing the centre of the bullring in a symbolic *paseílo*<sup>12</sup> towards her 'bull'. With incisive editing – 'Musidora' plays the role of both characters – Juanita selects the sharpest dagger to assassinate the foreigner, who dies *apuntillada* like a bull. The deaths in the bullring of Antonio and the *femme fatale* are followed by the social death of Juanita. The antiques dealer, who had yearned for the woman but was unable to attract her attention ("If I were a bullfighter..."), helps Juanita to escape a certain death sentence and hides her in a cloistered convent. If the foreigner died in the *chiqueros* (stables) of the bullring, the other is 'enclosed in the *chiqueros*', behind the bars of the convent<sup>13</sup>.

Other interesting representational details of the bullfighting world are highlighted in the last Spanish production of 'Musidora': in *La terre des taureaux*, the film star and filmmaker appears in another bullfighter role, but this time fighting a real *becerro*<sup>14</sup>. Producing a modern and rare hybrid style between documentary and fiction (Navarrete Cardero 2009: 117), the filmmaker alternates the lead role with Cañero in a didactic journey through the life of a fighting bulls ranch (*ganadería*), and depicting the life of a bullfighter and bull-breeder. The traditional masculine image of life amongst bulls is dashed with an

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<sup>11</sup> In the event that the stab does not produce an instant death, the bull approaches the outer boards of the ring to seek support during the agony. In order to avoid prolonging the animal's suffering, the *puntillero* of the bullring, or one of the matador's assistants, uses a special dagger (the *puntilla*) to pierce the nape of the bull's neck, severing the spinal cord, resulting in the immediate death of the animal.

<sup>12</sup> The *paseílo* is the initial stage of the bullfight, when the bullfighters and all their assistants and participants in the fight parade across the arena, acknowledging the authorities and the audience, before killing the bulls.

<sup>13</sup> In Spanish, the expression 'to be in *chiqueros*' colloquially refers to being in prison (Abella 2015: 113), because the bull remains 'imprisoned' in this space of the bullring from its arrival until its entrance in the arena.

<sup>14</sup> A young and small fighting bull.

entertaining comment from 'Musidora', in a scene in which she is helping Cañero to train, moving the simulation bull-cart used in practice: "I think this is the only way a woman can decently be allowed to have horns"<sup>15</sup>. For everything else, this "avant-garde cinematic-theatrical experience" (Pérez Perucha 2009: 76), perpetrates many of the Spanish stereotypes.

Despite the intentions of *La terre des taureaux* to show the "true Spain" (the adjective is underlined in the title card), the cinematographic genre model to which 'Musidora' refers does not move away from either the French discursive paradigm (Claver Estéban 2012: 196) or, most certainly, from the visions of Spain promoted by foreign *españoladas*<sup>16</sup>. In this example of French development of the genre, as in North American cinema, the visual elements of *cine taurino* – the bullring, the bullfighter and his women, and the bull – form almost homogenous cultural discourses: the bullring is often reduced to an allusive space in which passionate dramas take place (a sort of bedroom metaphor); the bullfighter is the embodiment of the most sensual desires (his own and those of the females); the bull is reduced from its spiritual meanings to a hegemonic representation of the most 'beastly' human qualities.

In the face of a proliferation of foreign *españoladas*, the weaker Spanish film industry reacts. The narrative development of Spanish taurine cinema looks towards its successful foreign competitors whilst simultaneously evolving use of its own sources and cultural legacy. The historiography of Spanish cinema unanimously recognises the central role of Films H. B. Cuesta in the creation of national cinema.

### 2.2.3 Films H. B. Cuesta and the birth of Spanish *cine taurino*

If, in the history of taurine cinema, Gaumont is attributed with an exemplary role in narrative development and with a chronological primacy in terms of the

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<sup>15</sup> In Spanish, *poner los cuernos* (lit. to place/put horns) means betraying a partner. The betrayed person is *cornudo* (horned).

<sup>16</sup> *Soleil et ombre* itself is an adaptation of the French novel *L'Espagnole* by Maria Star (pseudonym of Ernesta Stern). The publication date of Star's novel is unknown, and it has not been located in any library. However, reference to *L'Espagnole* as a source for *Soleil et ombre* are confirmed both by Alan Goble (1999: 439) and by the technical notes on the film as catalogued by the French Film Archive ('Soleil at Ombre Fiche Film' 2016, *online*). In both references, the publication date of Star's novel is not indicated.

bullfight as an intertext of films, Films H. B. Cuesta can be considered the creator of the bullfighter as a film star, and one of the founders of Spanish fiction films. The dynamic progression from the proto-narrative of early cinema to the medium and full-length fiction films, as previously mentioned, is shown in the work of Gaumont. However, whilst the French company departs from its 'orientalist' sources, the Valencian production company exploits the economic potential of stars of the bullrings, moving from the bullfight reportages and creating fiction with cultural and technical elements, both national and international.

Regarding its position in the history of Spanish cinema, there is a general agreement concerning the commercial vision of the Cuesta family, which was capable of transforming a small photo shop into a production company with international distribution. Yet only in recent years has research explored in detail this role in the construction of popular cinema, thanks to a renewed academic interest in early cinema. For instance, Fernando Méndez Leite, the prominent representative of the first generation of film historians (Diez Puertas 2003: 13-4), acknowledged the economic success of Antonio Cuesta, defined as a "nice guy who considered himself as a serious producer", as a result of the support of his family (Méndez Leite 1965: 58), and considered his films as popular productions with "plots for non-demanding audiences" (Ibid.: 59). Julio Pérez Perucha and Vicente Benet, second and third-generation historians, now place Films H. B. Cuesta in a central position within Spanish film history (Pérez Perucha 1989: 50; 2009: 31; Benet 2012: 39).

Finally, historiography is indebted to Juan Ignacio Lahoz Rodrigo for his vast work of historic revision, carried out with the contribution of many notable researchers of national cinema (2010a). The magnitude of his investigations in filmic and bibliographic archives proves his central argument: the Valencian production company "occupies a prominent place in the origin of Spanish cinema because of its productive development of a cinematic model based in popular culture, beginning one of the richest categories in Spanish film production" (Lahoz Rodrigo 2010b: 297). Furthermore, considering the scale of its taurine reportage catalogue and its use in fiction, it places tauromachy in a foundational part of national cinema: "The place of tauromachy [...] is undoubtedly central in the development of the cinematographic market. Of the

52 films produced between 1905 and 1915, 19 are taurine, 2 are listed as comical taurine, and there are innumerable reportages and documentaries about bullfights” (Ibid.: 302).

Firstly, it is important to recognise the ability of Films H. B. Cuesta to convert the sale of taurine reportages into a very profitable business venture, fine-tuning the ‘*corrida à la carte*’ model, as seen in Gaumont productions, with the lure of prominent matadors’ performances, at times without even leaving the editing room. In fact, in contrast to the bullfight organised in Nîmes by Guy Blaché in 1906, Cuesta used archive material previously shot in Valencia and edited it in order to create attractive corridas which never existed. Though Cuesta is not the first producer to artificially create glamorous corridas (Fernández Cuenca 1963: 15), the company begins and ends its decade of existence with formal and aesthetic advances on these films (Lahoz Rodrigo 2010b: 308).

The film *Corrida de toros en Valencia con Gallo, Paco Madrid, Flores, Belmonte* (Anonymous, 1914), preserved in the Film Archive of Valencia, combines two different bullfights and is a clear example of advanced production. With reduced costs and maximised return on investment, the film shows a more mature *mise-en-scène*, with multi-camera shots and editing focused to aesthetics, excluding any scenes which lack emotion and artistic beauty. For example, one scene shows Rafael ‘El Gallo’ performing an imperfect *estocada* (thrust) which would suggest a slow and most likely agonising death for the animal. However, the shot of *estocada* is followed by a long-shot of the bull already dead, dragged out of the ring by the mules. The temporal ellipsis is evident, omitting the most unpleasant details of the bullfight, and producing an effect which is intentionally ‘beautiful’. The title cards accompany the *paseíllo*, introduce the bulls’ and the bullfighters’ names, reinforcing a lineal narrative structure, chronologically built as a single bullfight, from the beginning to the end of the *fiesta*. The four bullfighters are the ‘all-star cast’ of a fictional corrida.

From the ‘Roaring Tens’ of the taurine reportages there are other documentaries with similar formal structure, such as *6 toros por Gallito 6* (Anonymous, 1914), a single bullfighting film produced by Iberia Cines, a company based in Barcelona. In it, it can also be observed intentionality in its aesthetic, and a clear narrative structure (“*Paseíllo*”, “*Primer toro*”, “*Banderillas*”,

etc.). In other films, the distinguished role of the bullfighters is reiterated: Joselito 'El Gallo', Antonio Fuentes and Juan Belmonte can be considered as part of the particular history of Spanish stardom. It is precisely in this unique role of bullfighter as film star that Román Gubern identifies one of the keys of the atypical nature of Spanish cinema:

It is interesting to observe how famous characters from outside the world of cinema were used in front of the cameras, from silent cinema, to promote its commerciality [...] This symbiosis of autochthonous extra-cinematographic fame and cinematographic star system was produced without any effort from the bullfighting world (1989: 24-5).

Gubern starts his list of bullfighters-actors from the 1920s. However, considering the potential commercial factor of the matador in cinema, in this work it is proposed to move the chronology of the Spanish taurine star system to ten years earlier, assuming that bullfighters were the first extra-cinematic characters used to promote commercial potentiality of cinema. If Films H. B. Cuesta became the most important distributor of Spanish cinema thanks to its taurine catalogue, it is also thanks to its atypical and profitable stars. As in 'real' bullrings, spectators choose its corrida in the theatres, which were publicised widely in the press.

The professional bullfighter, with his triumphs and fame, is a protagonist of reportages and documentaries throughout film history, enjoying further 'golden eras', such as the 1950s and 1960s, thanks to specialised producers (among others, José Hernández Gan and Julián de la Flor). In the 1920s, the commercial potential of the bullfighter is already relevant, up to the point that even his death is converted into a spectacle through the filmic reconstruction of fatal gorings, edited with archive material. The most widely covered examples are the death in the arena of Joselito 'El Gallo' in Talavera de la Reina (1920) and Manuel Granero in Madrid (1922). In terms of the consolidation of the taurine documentary during this period, Juan Belmonte is an indicative figure, about whom further observations will be made later, including those relating to the use of bullfights in fiction<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> With reference to the specific role of Juan Belmonte as the prototype for bullfighters-film stars, I have published a broader study in a monograph book about the Sevillian bullfighter (Caramella 2013).

In fact, and secondly, this use of the *fiesta* in the narrative development of cinema also finds its origins in the activity of Films H. B. Cuesta. The company is a precursor in the dramatic development of film plots through the insertion of real corridas “for uses different to those strictly bullfight-related” (Lahoz Rodrigo 2010b: 310).

Amongst the earliest taurine dramas is *La lucha por la divisa* (José María Codina, 1910), which dates from the period of the birth of Spanish fiction cinema (Colón Perales 1999: 143). The lost film, a pioneer of the rural-taurine subgenre (Porter i Moix 1985: 53), portrays the rivalry between two men, set during a popular bullfighting festival. The synopsis of the film (Fernández Cuenca 1963: 50) details how the two men, in an attempt to win the love of a woman, enter the bullring to retrieve the breeder’s coloured ribbon, the *divisa*<sup>18</sup>, from the back of the bull. The struggle for love is introduced with a ‘fight for the *divisa*’ and ends with the re-established harmony between the men: one of the young males is gravely injured by the bull, and the other, seeing the woman unconcerned about the fate of his adversary, throws the bull’s *divisa* at the female’s feet with contempt.

This element of masculine camaraderie in a romantic melodrama characterises *cine taurino* at various stages throughout its history, especially during the Civil War and the initial stages of Franco’s dictatorship, two moments in history defined by the cult for the military world, and by a wave of filmic productions about masculine solidarity and alliance. In several films, male camaraderie will include disdain towards the *femme fatale*, a symbol of both moral and social danger. In *Un caballero famoso* (José Buchs, 1942), a similar ‘fight for the *divisa*’ becomes the incentive behind the deeds of two bullfighters in the First Carlist War (1833-1839); in *Carmen, la de Triana* (Florián Rey, 1938), the death of the bullfighter is edited in sequence with that of the soldier José, creating a *post-mortem* connection between the characters. In both films, the moral superiority of the male characters over the female is drawn from bullfighting meanings and values, and *La lucha por la divisa* can be considered as the first filmic depiction of this narrative’s dynamics.

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<sup>18</sup> ‘Decorative’ element with the colours of *ganadería* attached to the animal with a harpoon before entering the bullring.

In Codina's later taurine drama produced by Films H. B. Cuesta, *La barrera número 13* (1912), the inserted scenes are from a real corrida, as are the images of the bullfighter injured by the bull, lying on the ground before a shocked crowd. In this case, the bullfighting scenes undoubtedly come from the company's catalogue: in the preserved fragment of the film, the heterogeneity between the shots is evident. In spite of technical difficulties in the search for uniformity, which would continue for years, it can be seen as an attempt to entail a sense of pursued realism. Codina is certainly a forerunner of this realist technique which was to become more sophisticated in the near future.

On some occasions, the inclusion of bullfights is limited to some shots of famous bullfighters as guest stars, such as Rafael 'El Gallo' in *Los arlequines de seda y oro* (Ricardo de Baños, 1919); at times, it involves bullfighting performances by the main character, such as Miguel Cuchet in *Rosario la cortijera* (José Buchs, 1923). An inserted bullfight adds action, emotion, and economic benefits. Extremes of forced insertions can be found in *Frivolinas* (Arturo Carballo, 1926), in which a corrida performed by Juan Belmonte is placed in a plot which otherwise has nothing to do with bullfighting. The inclusion of this bullfight is extemporaneous with the film's plot (a romantic comedy), linked to the girl's father's Sunday habits: the man attends one of Belmonte's bullfights. However, it is the incongruent subplot which brings success to *Frivolinas*. The film actually was intentionally re-edited with the bullfight at the end to ensure that the spectators in theatres without a sufficient musical accompaniment (the film is a *cine-variété*) did not leave their seats during the screening. With this technical amendment and a new film poster announcing Belmonte's performance, the film was able to be distributed with success across Spain (Berriatúa 2000: 139).

*La barrera número 13* is no longer a rural drama, but rather an urban story of love and seduction, with the bullfighter fatally injured by the fighting animal following his betrayal of his wife with a flamenco dancer. In spite of the short duration of the fragment (less than ten minutes), the analysis of the film discloses some basic characteristics of taurine cinema.

The first constant is provided by the plot, typical of *costumbrismo*. The story of an extra-marital passion between the bullfighter and the flamenco dancer perpetuates the recurring stereotypical view of Spain as a country populated

with peculiar characters, which is not only typical of foreign *españoladas*, but also of Spanish cultural productions about picturesque behaviour. The subtle line between the 'orientalisms' and the 'self-orientalisms' of literary and artistic productions is difficult to delimitate in a period marked by the legacy of 19<sup>th</sup> Century popular culture, with foreign influences in the treatment of the most 'autochthonous' topics. From early cinema, details of clear external influences can be detected, as in the case of the novel *Sangre y arena* (Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, 1908), where Claver Esteban identifies within the love triangle – with the bullfighter in the centre – some “prefixed outlines of the French romantic triptychs” (2012: 261). Furthermore, the peculiar professional activity of the two characters – the bullfighter and the flamenco dancer – cannot fail to serve as a reminder of the seductive force of the bullfighter and the gypsy art of *Carmen*. In *La barrera número 13*, the gypsy Carmela dances surrounded by men who are captivated by the spectacle; this is one of the first 'male gaze' sequences in the history of Spanish cinema, and a symbol of the exoticism of national idiosyncrasies.

These two 'typical Spanish' professions are depicted within an Andalusian setting. The association between the southern region and the nation, and its depiction as the land of bulls, bullfighters, bandits and gypsies, is another foundational quality of national cinema: the incipient representation of Andalusia as the stereotype of the nation is shared by both national and foreign cinema (García Carrión 2007: 67). With the passing of time, Andalusia acquires more 'nationalist' nuances, gradually usurping the northern regions in their role as a geographical synecdoche of the nation (Navarrete Cardero 2003: 23).

The *femme fatale* of Codina's film drives her bullfighter lover to extreme jealousy. Though he is a married man, he demands exclusiveness from the woman. Indeed, the goring of the bullfighter is a consequence of his fatal distraction in the ring, upon realising that his lover appeared in the audience with a wealthy male companion. The similarity with the ending of *Sangre y arena*<sup>19</sup> – Doña Sol also arrives at the bullfight of her former lover accompanied by an escort of high-birth – introduces another element which becomes a hegemonic discourse of taurine cinema: the question of social mobility and the

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<sup>19</sup> Antonia del Rey Reguillo defines *La barrera número 13* as “a probable adaptation of *Sangre y arena*” (2005: 36).

social space reserved for bullfighting. In this film, with a brushstroke representation of class, Carmela's friend emerges in the stand during the bullfighter's dedication of the bull to his lover, daring to respond to the bullfighter with his elegant hat as if the dedication were for him<sup>20</sup>. The allusive superiority of the bourgeois man over the bullfighter, manifested through the 'purchasing power' over the dancer, and the limited social space of the matador outside the arenas, will be predominant in Spanish taurine cinema throughout its history.

The fatal injury of the bullfighter in *La barrera número 13* contains *in nuce* the social nuances which, disguised or mixed with elements of sentimental romance, emerge later as one of the most notable differences between Spanish and international cinema, often achieved through the symbolic representation of the bull as an sign of divine justice, almost absent in French and North American cinema. The anthropomorphic function of the bull, hegemonic in foreign *cine taurino*, is superimposed by religious allegories by Spanish cinema, avoiding for example the parallels between fighting the bull and seducing the woman, and placing the animal in the position of a strategic *deus ex machina*.

The sequence of the goring in Codina's film presents the bull with a title card which predicts danger ("*Un toro, toro*") and the editing does not show any association with the human world: the animal is introduced to punish humankind, in a redemptive role for the sins of the man and the woman. In fact, the dying bullfighter in the infirmary violently repels his lover from the room, exhaling his last breath after being forgiven by his wife and daughter, as though he were in a church confessional. As for the dancer, she is snubbed by her bourgeois companion, either as an example of cross-class masculine solidarity, or one of higher-class superiority. This man is the only one who remains unsanctioned, as he was allowed to maintain a different lifestyle to that of the common people.

In addition to taurine melodrama, Films H. B. Cuesta also introduces another long-lasting cinematographic subgenres of tauromachy in films: *Benítez quiere ser torero* (Ángel García Cardona, 1910) is the first comic chase-film in the history of Spanish cinema; it uses tauromachy for a comical parody (Lahoz Rodrigo 2010b: 305); and even pre-dates dramas in the progression of narrative

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<sup>20</sup> Before the beginning of the *tercio de muleta*, the bullfighter can dedicate (*brindis*) the death of the bull as a sign of friendship, love or admiration.

from the 'views' to the full-length films (Pérez Perucha 1989: 50). In this film, the character of Benítez, an aspiring bullfighter with no opportunities, 'fights' a series of characters or objects (from a chair to a civil guard); he stabs cakes and fruit baskets; he finishes his journey around the city returned by the police and chastised by his angry wife who, with a series of lashes, forces him to remove his *coleta*<sup>21</sup>. In a completely different mood, the film reproduces similar dynamics of infraction and punishment of melodrama, and also opens a window, through its representation of family life, to social discourses. Benítez is constantly frustrated in his ambitions, and his own fear in the face of a simulated bullfight shows the lack of bravery of the aspiring bullfighter. The exaggerated body language of the character is influenced by the style of actor André Deed, the first comic film star (del Rey Reguillo 2010: 317). However, to the influence of the French actor can be added a certain 'typical Spanish' element: the comic bullfight (*toreo cómico*).

Thus, also in *Benítez quiere ser torero* elements from multiple cultural sources are combined and reformulated. In fact, amongst the origins of comic bullfights we can find *mojigangas*, taurine scenes comically reinterpreted to provoke hilarity: between exaggerations and parodies of 'serious' bullfighting, carried out with relatively non-dangerous young bulls, scenes of fleeing from bulls are included as the only aspect of bullfighting which permits such shows of cowardice (De Torres 1989: 115). Benítez's cape and *banderillas* movements (respectively using a napkin and cutlery) and his dodging invisible bulls seem manifested allusions to comic bullfighting, already in vogue at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (Saumade 2006: 224). Curiously, there are no references to *toreo cómico* in the studies on textual analyses of *Benítez quiere ser torero*.

The *mojigangas* were shows including *señoritas toreras*, and other variations on parodic themes and taurine transvestism. With cinema, influences and homages have been fruitful and reciprocal. If in this film the presence of the comic bullfight is still allusive, the comic bullfight itself is soon altered by

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<sup>21</sup> Until the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, bullfighters were recognisable by their peculiar haircut, growing a ponytail (*coleta*) which was plaited into a bun during bullfights. The ponytail is symbolically cut, generally at the end of the bullfighter's last appearance, as a sign of terminating his professional activity. Nowadays, bullfighters wear a false ponytail during their appearances, but they have continued the tradition of removing it in this ceremony. The expression *cortarse la coleta* (to cut off the ponytail) remains part of colloquial language to indicate retirement.

cinema. In the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century some shows of comic bullfighting are generically called *charlotadas*, in a clear reference to Chaplin's 'Charlot', main actor of his parody of Cecil B. DeMille's film (*Charlie Chaplin's Burlesque on Carmen*, 1915). Spanish clones of 'Charlot' coexist therefore both in cinema (*Clarita y Peladilla van a los toros*, Benito Perojo, 1915; *El Charlot español torero*, José Calvache 'Walken', 1929), and in comic bullfighting. The first 'Charlot'-bullfighter in history, Rafael Dutrús Zamora 'Llapisera', is filmed by Films H. B. Cuesta (*La novillada cómica*, Anonymous, 1915). Nevertheless, it is due to *Benítez quiere ser torero* that the subgenre of comic taurine cinema begins. Another French comic film star, Max Linder, will refer to Benítez's gags in *Max toréador* (Max Linder, 1913) (del Rey Reguillo 2010: 319).

Finally, another element introduced by this film is the role of comic couples, whose hilarity is constructed by the female teasing the aspiring male bullfighter who cannot overcome his fears. The laughter provoked by the relationship between Benítez and his wife, which begins with the female's disapproval of the male's attempts to 'fight' his food during a family meal and ends with the cutting of the *coleta*, will be pursued in several films with the insertion of similar couples. In one of the most successful primary sources for taurine cinema, the *zarzuela Rosario la cortijera* (Joaquín Dicenta and Antonio Paso, 1922), the characters of Varillas and Carmela are reminiscent of the couple in *Benítez quiere ser torero*. In the depiction of the orphan Rosario's story, the couple soften dramatic moments with interjections of humour, and the filmic adaptations with the same title (José Buchs, 1923; León Artola, 1935) maintain these supporting characters. Similarly, echoes of Benítez could be found in some male characters, such as 'Gazuza' and 'Copita' in *Currito de la Cruz* (Alejandro Pérez Lugín, 1925), used as elements of temporarily slapstick comedy to make less tense the dramatic tone.

After the end of Films H. B. Cuesta's activities, numerous companies follow the same production model, with reportages and documentaries sharing space with fiction films in the main catalogue (Pérez Perucha 2009: 80). In terms of taurine cinema, many of the models created by Cuesta's company are developed, in parallel and subsequently, following similar cultural and commercial paradigms. The sources and the cultural legacy of the newly born cinema, this mixture of French and autochthonous influences, set the standards

for the genre. The manifested intentions of Films H. B. Cuesta of producing full-length films about “genuine Spanish themes” (Lahoz Rodrigo 2010b: 306) leaves a legacy of a model for a successful national cinema which includes bullfighting amongst other Spanish themes: the *bandolerismo* (bandits) in *Los siete niños de Écija* (José María Codina, 1911) and *El lobo de la sierra* (José María Codina 1912); the rural environment in *El pastorcito de Torrent* (Ángel García Cardona, 1908) and *El tonto de la huerta* (José María Codina, 1913); the social melodrama in *El ciego de la aldea* (Ángel García Cardona, 1907). As Pérez Perucha claims: “Cuesta does not only represent the golden age of Valencian cinema, [...] but the golden age of early Spanish cinema” (1989: 53).

From the second half of the 1910s the archetypes of Spanish *cine taurino* are developed and the sources are diversified; the cinematographic models identified in Films H. B. Cuesta are soon augmented by others, reinforcing one of the most constant practices of Spanish cinema throughout its history: adaptation. The height of the Golden Age of Bullfighting implies an increase in the number of successful popular cultural productions on taurine themes, to such an extent that they are considered to have “provided the content which largely ended up shaping a new urban and commercialised popular culture” (Sánchez Salas 2007: 87). The seeds of such publications are fertilised by cinema, which consolidates the genre.

Starting from aspects of fame, strength and male bravery, integrity and honour - ‘typical Spanish’ themes - social elements are strengthened and enhanced in the following filmic production. The representation of society and the nation is profiled with variations and specificities. From this period, Spanish taurine cinema begins to distinguish itself not only from its competitors, France and North America, accused of stealing its foundational myths, but also from Mexican and Portuguese cinema, which establish their own national idiosyncrasies through their specific taurine cultures and their own popular culture productions.

## 2.3 Sources, subgenres and themes in the development of *cine taurino*

### 2.3.1 *Fiesta Nacional*, 'national' sources, 'national' archetypes

The Spanish literary source which has enjoyed most success is undoubtedly the novel *Sangre y arena* which, since its publication in 1908, transformed its author Vicente Blasco Ibáñez into the most popular Spanish author in the world during the 1920s (Sánchez Salas 2007: 79). The novel has been adapted on two occasions by Hollywood (*Blood and Sand*, Fred Niblo, 1922; *Blood and Sand*, Rouben Mamoulian, 1941), and twice by Spanish cinema: the first film was directed by the novel's author in 1917 (*Sangre y arena*), and the second by Javier Elorrieta (*Sangre y arena*, 1989). As the probable inspiration for *La barrera número 13*, *La España trágica* (Rafael Salvador, 1918) and *Los arlequines de seda y oro* (Colón Perales 1999: 159; Claver Esteban 2012: 215)<sup>22</sup>, *Sangre y arena* has had such a significant impact that it may be considered cardinal for the cinematic genre *per se* (Claver Esteban 2012: 176).

The story of Juan Gallardo, the young sub-proletarian from Seville who turns himself into a rich and famous bullfighter, and ends as a victim of a fatal goring, becomes one of the most persistent formulas whilst simultaneously being the source for parodies and allusions in various productions. Whilst the Hollywood versions, as it will become clear, focus their interest in the extra-marital relationship of the bullfighter with the aristocrat Doña Sol, the first Spanish version prioritises exploring social issues derived from the realist novel, identifying Gallardo's main sin in his excessive ambition of social mobility. Alongside the tragic tone of the original plot, the parodic versions, taking advantage of the films' success, remove the drama from the storyline. Following the successful version by Fred Niblo, the film is parodied by Stan Laurel in *Mud and Sand* (Gilbert Pratt, 1922) and Sid Smith in *Bull and Sand* (Del Lord, 1924). In 1941, the same year in which Rouben Mamoulian's *Blood and Sand* is premiered, Mario Moreno 'Cantinflas' releases his Mexican comic version *Ni sangre ni arena* (Alejandro Galindo, 1941).

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<sup>22</sup> The production of *La España trágica* benefitted from the wave of popularity of Vicente Blasco Ibáñez's 1916 film. However, Sánchez Salas suggests the origin of the plot is a novel – with no specified title or date – by Pedro de Répide (2007: 107).

On the other hand, national cinemas generally opt to choose between 'indigenous' sources, following the commercial success of the novels in the country of the film's production, or to search for works which are potentially close to the preferences of their own audience, as in the case of Blasco Ibáñez's novel or the myth of *Carmen*. Spanish cinema exploits the success of its own cultural productions, choosing from a range of national sources, with a few exceptions of adaptations of 'foreign' texts. Spanish taurine cinema offers few examples of adaptation of foreign literature: *Magda* (Alberto Marro y Ricardo de Baños, 1913), a taurine interpretation of the 1893 melodrama *Heimat* by the German Hermann Suderman (Colón Perales 1999: 158); and *Militona, o la tragedia de un torero* (Henry Vorins, 1922), the transposition of a text by Théophile Gautier (*Militona*, 1847), carried out by a French director temporarily resident in Spain.

As previously mentioned, 'Musidora' adapted the novel *L'Espagnole* written by traveller and writer Ernesta Stern (Maria Star) for *Soleil et ombre*. Equally, the North American directors Raoul Walsh and Tom Terriss based their taurine films *The Spaniard* (Raoul Walsh, 1925) and *Bandolero* (Tom Terriss, 1924) on the publications with the same title written, respectively, by Juanita Savage (1924) and Paul Gwynne (1904).

Concerning the adaptations of successful and recognised contemporary texts into films, the primacy of *Carmen* should be highlighted, both as a filmic version of Mérimée's novel (1845) and of Bizet's opera (1875), as depicted on-screen in numerous international adaptations, becoming one of the "outlets for the diffusion of bullfighting in the early days of cinema" (Claver Esteban 2012: 191).

During the time of silent cinema alone, there were numerous French productions (*Carmen*, Alice Guy Blaché, 1900; *Carmen*, Anonymous, 1907; *Carmen*, André Calmettes, 1910; *Carmen: air du toréador*, Anonymous, 1910; *Carmen*, Jean Durand, 1911; *Carmen*, Jacques Feyder, 1926); American (*Carmen*, Cecil B. DeMille, 1915; *Carmen*, Raoul Walsh, 1915; *Charlie Chaplin's Burlesque of Carmen*, Charles Chaplin, 1915; *The Loves of Carmen*, Raoul Walsh, 1927; *The Terrible Toreador*, Walt Disney, 1929); and Italian (*Carmen*, Girolamo Lo Savio, 1908; *Carmen*, Giovanni Doria, 1913). This long list, somewhat incomplete given the notorious difficulties with indexing early and

silent cinema, includes pioneers from a range of nationalities, such as the Dutch Theo Frenkel (*Carmen*, 1911), the Mexican Ernesto Volrath (or Vollrath) (*Carmen*, 1921), and the renowned German director Ernst Lubitsch (*Carmen*, 1918).

In a similar way to *Sangre y arena*, particularly in the parodic versions, the comic elements originate almost entirely from the pantomime of the bullfight. In Disney's *The Terrible Toreador* – a caricature of *The Loves of Carmen* – the bullfight occupies almost the entire plot. However, independently from the tone of the adaptation, according to an ascending dynamic, the presence of bullfighting and the significance of the role of the bullfighter are intensified to such an extent that it is often difficult to employ the adjective 'taurine' only to describe the subgenre of the film.

Surprisingly, in the same period there can be found only two Spanish Carmens: *Carmen, o la hija del bandido* (Alberto Marro and Ricardo de Banos, 1911) and *La otra Carmen* (José de Togoeres, 1915). Whilst it may be surprising that the nation in which the drama of the gypsy is set was the one which least exploited its commercial potentiality, it is possible to identify a number of factors which lead national filmmakers to choose other sources. In fact, with its *españolada* characteristics and abundance of exaggerated stereotypes, *Carmen* does not foster the image of the bullfighter as a popular hero. Even if the role of the bullfighter Lucas/Escamillo is strengthened, his importance is shared with Don José, a soldier fallen from grace who similarly does not extol the ideals which the Spanish filmmakers wished to emphasise. Furthermore, the bullfighter is objectified, being the recipient of the desires of a promiscuous woman, and it is sometimes difficult to increase the taurine scenes – appreciated by Spanish audience – in a story in which, in any case, a woman is the protagonist.

The manipulation of the original plot in the Spanish versions attempts to invert the *españolada par excellence*: in *Carmen, o la hija del bandido* all overly 'orientalist' references are removed to the point that the bullfighter is substituted by a painter and there are no traces of bulls or bullfights in the whole film. On the contrary, in *La otra Carmen*, Carmen is an aristocrat who falls in love with a bullfighter. The male character is given a more central role, to the extent that it fuelled suspicions about the true literary source of the film. The change of social

classes in the main roles can indicate a possible *mélange* of sources, between *Carmen* and *Sangre y arena*. Unfortunately, Togo's film is one of the lost silent productions, and only secondary sources are available<sup>23</sup>.

To sum up, in the period leading to the 1920s there is a clear commercial predisposition within taurine cinema to exploit popular cultural productions well-known and appreciated by spectators. The gypsy *Carmen* and the 'orientalist' version of Juan Gallardo may be considered as the matrix of the genre in non-Andalusian nations. In Spain, as mentioned above, Vicente Blasco Ibáñez's novel, well before its first cinematographic adaptation, provides the main archetype of the bullfighter: poor, orphaned, brave, extremely ambitious, and generally Andalusian.

Whilst some of these texts have been already identified by researchers as fundamental and foundational references for taurine cinema, it is curious to observe that there are no references to the two countries which share similar bullfighting traditions and a similar 'national' taurine cinema with Spain: Mexico and Portugal. In fact, the analysis and comparison of the primary sources of each *cine taurino* is extremely illuminating for a better understanding of the peculiarities of each tradition.

Firstly, it is interesting to note how the main taurine texts of these two nations are novels dedicated to the misfortunes of a disgraced woman: the Portuguese drama *A Severa* (Júlio Dantas, 1901) and the novel *Santa* (Federico Gamboa, 1903) are named after their female lead characters. As with the gypsy *Carmen*, the *fado* singer *Severa* and the peasant-prostitute *Santa* both live passionate relationships with a bullfighter: *Severa*, the lover of the aristocrat *cavaleiro*<sup>24</sup> Conde de Marialva; *Santa*, a lost soul which not even the Spanish bullfighter 'Jarameño' can save.

The overly high social status of the Conde de Marialva and the 'wrong' nationality of the bullfighter in love with *Santa* create interesting variations in the

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<sup>23</sup> Claver Esteban (2012: 251-7) has meticulously reconstructed the plot through information obtained by the magazine *El Cine* and the newspaper *El Diario de Córdoba*. The latter followed the production and its premiere more closely, given that the filming took place in the Andalusian city.

<sup>24</sup> Portugal has preserved its own bullfighting tradition on horseback (*rejoneo*), formerly performed by the nobility and aristocracy, across the Iberian territory. The practice of *rejoneo* continues in all taurine countries, although as a branch it is significantly in the minority. Given the elevated costs associated with horses, it has traditionally been considered an activity or profession reserved for the higher classes.

consolidation of the cinematographic genre in their respective countries: Mexican and Portuguese cinema are looking for their popular hero, and therefore are in need of solutions to class and race issues. The film *A Severa* (José Leitão de Barros, 1931) is the first Portuguese film with sound and, as indicated by the production year, denotes the tardy development of fiction taurine cinema in Portugal. The *tourada à portuguesa* was already a notable presence in ethnographic documentaries and amateur films from early cinema: however, in fiction, looking for national heroes was made difficult by the behaviour of Marialva as an aristocratic womaniser, hardly an example of a perfect citizen.

It is the subsequent cinematic alliance between the landowning *cavaleiro* and his *campinos* (the Portuguese cowboys) that will perfect the ideal depiction of the nation. It is therefore no coincidence that the actor who plays the main male character in *A Severa*, the professional *cavaleiro* António Luís Lopes, will play a *campino* in his following film, *Campinos do Ribatejo*, directed by him in 1932. As in Spain under the dictatorships of Miguel Primo de Rivera<sup>25</sup> and Francisco Franco, the Portuguese nation under dictator António Salazar is embodied in cinema also by taurine figures, and the political nuances of the two countries can be distinguished through differences in the bullfighting world. Whereas Spanish cinema portrays the perfect citizen through the filmic clones of Juan Gallardo, able to change his social position to a certain degree, the 'social stagnation' in Portuguese cinema continues throughout Salazar's dictatorship (1926-1974), justifying unfair social differences as derived from a natural and ontological background (Vieira 2011). There is evidence that *A Severa* presents national stereotypes *in nuce*, within a melodrama in which the moral weaknesses of a high class male *cavaleiro* are portrayed with less severity than the outlaw *fadista* gypsy (Vale de Almeida 1997; Baptista 2010).

Equally, *Santa* (1903) becomes a model for Mexican cinema but, in contrast to *A Severa* – only adapted once – and similarly to *Sangre y arena*, will enjoy a trans-generational success, being adapted in cinema four times. Federico Gamboa's novel endures almost the whole 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and the analysis of the four filmic versions (Luis G. Peredo, 1918; Antonio Moreno, 1932; Norman

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<sup>25</sup> General Miguel Primo de Rivera led a military dictatorship from 1923 until 1930.

Foster, 1943; Emilio Gómez Muriel, 1969), all Mexican productions, can offer an interesting research opportunity for diachronic analyses.

Though *Santa's* bullfighter is a Spaniard, 'Jarameño' incorporates ideal Mexican values. In spite of tensions between the American former colony and the Spanish 'mother land', which are revealed in a range of following taurine films, 'Jarameño' can be considered the starting point for the representation of the qualities of the Mexican citizen-bullfighter: honour, generosity, and Catholic faith. 'Jarameño' offers the prostitute true love, and tries – unsuccessfully – to release her from her miserable life: when he discovers her dishonesty, the bullfighter throws her out of his house. The man's qualities of impeccable morals and strong Catholic faith will be later associated with Mexican bullfighters, and juxtaposed with their Spanish rivals. *Santa* marks the creation of significant masculine and feminine archetypes in Mexican melodrama (Vázquez Mantecón 2005), as in the corresponding Spanish and Portuguese novels, which will be developed according to a more specific nationalist emphasis.

The four texts, *Sangre y arena*, *Carmen*, *A Severa* and *Santa* are prototype and exemplary models for *cine taurino*. However, and somewhat evidently, they cannot be considered as the sole sources: there are other cultural productions in the ambit of film adaptations which were the inspirations for highly distributed productions.

### **2.3.2 The novel as the main source of Spanish *cine taurino***

Given the preeminent place of Blasco Ibáñez's novel, it is worth highlighting the importance which other taurine publications have in the consolidation of the cinematic genre in Spain. Indeed, in the period between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the end of the Civil War (1939), the *novelas taurinas* reach a productive and qualitative peak (Martínez Shaw 2007: 15). As with *Sangre y arena*, other publications are adapted, and some are directed by the same author of the novel. All enjoy great commercial success; some also have a previous theatrical adaptation before proceeding to the silver screen. A number are adapted for cinema in different versions over a large temporal range, and

almost all of them achieve considerable recognition. Above all, in almost every case, the plot deals with the social advancement of a poor young man (often an orphan) from the lower classes through a sort of forced vocation to bullfighting. After a rising career, at a some point the harmony is shattered due to a woman (often from a higher social class), and the man is rewarded with glory or punished with death in the bullring, according to a moral conduct in line with society's ethical demands. The classic plot of taurine novels fits into the narrative structure of classic cinematic melodrama (see, for instance, Mercer and Shingler 2004: 30).

As God in the Old Testament book of Job, the bull always intervenes to remind the rags-to-riches bullfighter that his rise to the heights of fame and wealthy could be undone by misfortune or, with a relapse into sin, by death. At times, as seen in the first bullfighter biopics, death occurs unexpectedly and inexplicably for the human mind: the bulls, as Job's God, 'give and take away', without any requirement of justification<sup>26</sup>.

Amongst the numerous novels adapted between the latter half of the 1910s and the end of the 1920s, *Currito de la Cruz* (Alejandro Pérez Lugín, 1921) occupies a prominent place. The adventures of the orphan from Seville, raised by nuns and in love – initially unrequited – with the daughter of a former bullfighter turned bull-breeder, Manuel Carmona, see the young man enjoy a happy ending with Rocío, not before suffering her rejection due to his social background. The competition for Rocío's heart from the already famous bullfighter 'Romerita' forces Currito to retire from fighting. He would only return to his taurine vocation for motives stronger than his love for his profession: when he discovers Rocío's miserable situation, homeless and with a child of 'Romerita' but deserted by him, Currito returns to bullfighting to look after the young woman and the baby. The bull becomes responsible for seeking justice for all, killing 'Romerita' in a bullfight in which Currito also performs. The providential fatal goring causes 'Romerita' to seek forgiveness from Currito on his infirmary deathbed, the sort of confession reserved for bullfighters in literature.

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<sup>26</sup> The colloquial expression "bulls give and take away" (*los toros dan y quitan*) is practically a taurine version of Job 1:21: "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away". Bulls, as God with Job, bless and punish, sometimes without any 'provocation' by the human.

Manuel Carmona's forgiveness of his erring daughter is achieved thanks to the intervention of Currito and a providential song to Our Lady, during the Holy Week processions in Seville. The Lenten limbo experienced by Currito, being the child of an unknown mother, and Rocío, rejected by society like the mother of Currito, is turned into renewed harmony initially by the intervention of the divine bull which punishes 'Romerita', and finally by the grace of the Mother of God.

The celebrated novel, which "was conceived to be successfully popular and achieved it" (del Rey Reguillo 1998: 19), shared a naturalist nuance with *Sangre y arena* (1908), along with regionalist stereotypes and hints of an erotic novel (Sánchez Salas 2007: 106). The two publications, indeed, allow their lead characters and those of a similar social background to 'speak' in Andalusian, something which both authors upheld in the title cards in the two cinematic versions which they directed. In fact, Pérez Lugín also wanted to experiment with cinema and, as with Blasco Ibáñez and other intellectuals, created his own filmic text. His silent version of *Currito de la Cruz* (1925) was initially a colossal work lasting for four hours, promptly re-edited into a shorter version after the complaints of spectators who, viewing the film screened at high-speed (other theatres opted to screen over two days), "could not enjoy the scenes" (Berriatúa 1995: 41-2).

Furthermore, as with Blasco Ibáñez's novel, the one by Pérez Lugín was adapted four times for cinema. Whereas the adaptations of *Sangre y arena* allow a comparative study of Hollywood and Spanish taurine cinemas, as will be discussed later, the adaptations of *Currito de la Cruz* – all Spanish – detail the political history of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Whilst the first version in 1925 may be considered an excellent example of national cinema during Primo de Rivera dictatorship, the second, directed by Fernando Delgado (1936), is first screened in the final year of the Second Spanish Republic. The third (Luis Lucia, 1949) and the fourth (Rafael Gil, 1965) can be associated instead with two distinct cultural periods of Francoist regime: the paternalistic nationalism of the 1940s and the clash with modernity in the last decade of the dictatorship. Of the four versions, only three have been preserved: the loss of the 1936 film unfortunately means an incomplete synoptic study of *Currito de la Cruz*.

Although there are many parallels between the texts of Blasco Ibáñez and Pérez Lugín, their focus on tauromachy is substantially different: the ‘political’ anti-bullfighting sentiments of the Valencian writer – which will be discussed later – are contrasted with the writer’s professional sympathy for bullfighting. Pérez Lugín has a veritable literary *corpus* encompassing bullfighting chronicles (published under the pseudonym ‘Don Pío’), essays, and novels (Labrador Ben 2007). The first silent adaptations of *Sangre y arena* and *Currito de la Cruz* start the narrative development of social criticism through bullfighting images which, although almost absent during the silent period, will return more consistently in future, politically and cinematographically more ‘bifurcated’.

This sort of visual methodology will become more evident between 1955 and 1965, a decade characterised by taurine film production both close to the regime and to anti-Francoism (i.e. the ‘New Spanish Cinema’). Criticism or praise of contemporary society will be portrayed through a taurine plot, symbolically placing citizens, governments, and nations with images of bullrings, bullfighters, *femmes fatales* and devoted wives. Realist depictions of human misery, weaknesses of the bullfighters and moral debauchery of the bullfighting business (*mundillo taurino*) will be the images to build a metaphoric and critical image of the nation itself. Conversely, film texts positively praising bullfighting and its *mundillo*, will often offer a happy ending, and a related triumphalist depiction of Spain and Spanishness. These variations in taurine cinema will be discussed in the second part of this work.

During the consolidation of *cine taurino* in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the first adaptations of these two important novels only employ this symbolic use of bullfighting as a metaphor for the social world, with political insights still in an embryonic form, though the work of the progressive and republican intellectual Vicente Blasco Ibáñez emphasises social discourses, compared with the vast majority of other taurine texts, more ideologically homogenous. In general, from taurine films, as well as from taurine novels, emerge conservative contents, usually linked to the defence and the promotion of bullfighting culture. Sometimes, there are noticeable political correspondences within the filmic *corpus* of a particular director or producer: for instance, Pérez Perucha describes Fernando Delgado as an “organic filmmaker of Primo de Rivera’s proto-fascism” (2009: 21).

The textual analysis of the novels and films confirms, as will become clear, the pre-eminence of works with more traditionalist values or significance, although with nuances. More than social injustices as allegorically represented by bullfighting, the genre develops more conventionally in relation to duties of the 'citizen-bullfighter': the death and life of the matador in full-length fiction films depend on the man's behaviour, according to the ethics of his time. Even winning and achieving economic stability, the bullfighter cannot commit the gravest sin: greed.

In another taurine novel with an orphan-turned-bullfighter as protagonist, *El niño de las monjas* (Juan López Núñez, 1922), the temptation to bypass social spaces is also embodied by a woman. Gloria, the daughter of a wealthy bull-breeder, tricks protagonist José Luis, cared for like a son by a convent gardener. José Luis' ascending parabola in the bullfighting hierarchy is intertwined with his love for the rich girl, saddening his stepsister Soledad, who is secretly in love with him. Only a providential goring saves José Luis from falling into hell. However, the 'salvation' in the novel – the redemptive death of the bullfighter – is soon transformed in the theatrical version (1923), and original source of the cinematographic adaptations, with the salvation of the young orphan's soul by sparing his life. In these other versions, in fact, José Luis returns home to care for his wound and realises that his love for Gloria is not authentic. With the help of his nuns and a priest, he understands that it is God's will for him to be with Soledad.

In this variation can be found one of the highest moments of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Spanish conservative rhetoric: in the face of the inevitable moral risk which cross-class relationships would entail, the nation's ethics, here represented by the Church as its most eminent spiritual representative, prefer a quasi-incestuous union.

Since the bullfighter is portrayed within a limited social space, even censorship, (which commenced its activity in Spain in 1912), is not concerned. The first filmic adaptations of *El niño de las monjas* (José Calvache 'Walken', 1925; José Buchs, 1935) adhere to the script of the play<sup>27</sup>, and only the fourth version by Ignacio F. Iquino in 1958 allows the young bullfighter to marry his

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<sup>27</sup> The first version has been lost. The plots of the films are detailed, with references, in González López and Cánovas Belchí (1993: 110-1) and in Vallejo and Heinink (2009: 206-7).

Gloria, perhaps because of the participation of the famous bullfighter Enrique Vera in the role of José Luis, or because of the new social attitudes towards the 'citizen bullfighter' in the 1950s<sup>28</sup>. The detailed mechanisms of adaptation are often difficult to delineate, but it is curious that there are no references in previous studies to these plot developments in the novel, the play, and the filmic adaptations<sup>29</sup>.

The extremely mundane thread between the callings to bullfighting and religious vocations, a sort of model for a taurine Christology, produces a cinematographic bond between priestly chastity and the chaste life of a bullfighter. The conversion of a tragic novel into a film with a happy ending starts another subgenre which will be exploited from the beginning of the 1920s until the end of Francoism: the tauro-religious. In another taurine novel adapted to film by its author, the sacred nature of bullfighting is reiterated in a light comedy of love, bulls and faith, with numerous references and paraphrased biblical allusions.

*El patio de los naranjos*, directed by Guillermo Hernández Mir in 1926 follows the success of his novel with the same title (1920), also set in Andalusia, and softens the dramatic tones of bullfighting with the story of a humble man from Seville who becomes a successful bullfighter in order to seek approval to marry the niece of a priest. The filmic version includes the participation of Faustino Bretaño in the role of the supportive friend of the young bullfighter. His role, together with that of the uncle-priest-bullfighting agent character, brings a certain comic intertextuality to the work.

Bretaño, who had already debuted in a role of 'taurine host' in *Currito de la Cruz*, will repeat this role of mentor also in another successful taurine film: *¡Viva Madrid, que es mi pueblo!* (Fernando Delgado, 1928), accompanying the male protagonist, another small-town male aspiring to a bullfighting career. It is interesting to highlight how Delgado's 1928 film ends in the same manner as *El patio de los naranjos*. Both films, in fact, are explicit in limiting the social position of the 'citizen bullfighter': having achieved a comfortable economic space for his family thanks to bullfighting, the protagonist should no longer aspire to rise in

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<sup>28</sup> *El niño de las monjas* also led to four cinematographic adaptations. In addition to the three already mentioned, there is a Mexican version directed by Julio Villareal in 1944.

<sup>29</sup> The plot differences in the films are not highlighted in any of the books on taurine cinema. Sánchez Salas (2007: 90), referring to the novel, summarised the storyline of the theatre play.

the social ladder. The films conclude therefore with an opportune 'ponytail cutting' for the matador in order to relieve his family members of their distress during the man's performances. In Hernández Mir's film, the bullfighter leaves his profession for the tranquillity of his wife and child, and in Delgado's work the protagonist cuts his *coleta* for his mother's sake. Both productions insistently associate the calling to bullfighting to a 'divine' vocation, but the 'priesthood' of a matador does include social limits in his aspirations.

Indeed, the vocation to the profession considered the most heroic in Spain is justified, both in the literary sources and in the cinematic adaptations, for two main reasons: the renowned bravery of Spaniards and the financial stringency. Once the latter is solved, the brave man is requested to give up his innate inclination for bullfight and retire. He has been able to excite and to entertain the masses in the bullrings for a while; he can economically support his family; now, he can make space for somebody else. The matador vocation has an expiry date.

Adapting bullfighting-themed novels in the 1920s was undoubtedly a successful commercial strategy for filmmakers and producers who took advantage of the genre's popularity, looking for lucrative productions more than for approval of critical evaluations. *En las entrañas de Madrid* (Rafael Salvador, 1925), adaptation of *El Madrid de los abuelos* (Pedro de Répide, 1908), considered a "gruesome *folletín*" by historian Fernández Cuenca (1963: 73), was actually a fortunate production in its time. Following its premiere in Madrid in January 1926, the film continued to be screened in the capital's main theatres for four months<sup>30</sup>. In some cases, the screening of the film was accompanied by a complete *cuadro flamenco*<sup>31</sup>.

A further example of divine justice fulfilled through the action of a bull in the arena is offered by an accidental filmmaker whose work was driven by his will to pay tribute to his father: Carlos de Arpe's only experience in film direction, *El capote de paseo* (1927), is based on the novel of the same name written by his father Celedonio José de Arpe, and published in 1910. The divine bull in the

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<sup>30</sup> In the absence of reliable and comprehensive studies on the history of cinematic distribution in Spain, the information relating to the success of films in silent cinema have been extrapolated through a chronological search in the digital archives of the *ABC* newspaper, analysing the screenings in Madrid's theatres. The same methodology is used by Valeria Camporesi in her analysis of the most successful popular films between 1940 and 1990 (1993).

<sup>31</sup> Flamenco group formed by musicians and dancers.

story frustrates the ambitions of two aspiring bullfighters, preventing the two unworthy men from marrying their fiancées.

Filmic adaptations of the 1920s include *Los mártires del arroyo* (Enrique Santos, 1924), from the 1896 novel of the same title written by Luis de Val (Sánchez Salas 2007: 317), and *El embrujo de Sevilla*, published by Carlos Reyles in 1922 and turned into a film in 1930 by Benito Perojo. Both stories are linked to Andalusian *costumbrismo*, but present the main character of the bullfighter at the opposite side of the social spectrum: one is an orphan and the other an aristocrat, this latter a rare character in taurine novels as well as in the real world of bullfighting. Notwithstanding, in both films social tension is a crucial theme, and as usual is metaphorically represented through sentimental relationships, with the placing of the lead female character in the opposed social class.

These thematic and ideological constants as offered by literary sources can also be found in other sources. Either as a more unrestricted adaptation or an enhanced revision of the chosen source, *zarzuelas*, *pasodobles* and bullfighters' biographies are a further exceptional combination of resources for the consolidation of *cine taurino*.

### **2.3.3 *Zarzuelas* and *pasodobles*. Music and lyrics for glorious bullfighters**

The sources of Spanish *cine taurino*, which characterises itself from its earliest days as a cinema of adaptation, include other formats of popular cultural productions such as *zarzuela* and *pasodoble*. The Spanish operetta even becomes a proper film genre: the “cinematic *zarzuela*” (Sánchez Salas 2007: 129). Extremely popular since the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, this show “is a genuine display of musical nationalism which coincided with the evident xenophobia in those years [...]. Its music is defined by typically Spanish melodies and the proliferation of dances such as the fandango, boleros, seguidillas, jotas, or tiranas” (Navarrete Cardero 2009: 63).

The plot of *zarzuela* reflected themes which would contribute to build the identity of national cinema (Cánovas Belchí 2007: 65): regional locations (generally set in Madrid and Andalusia); stories about folkloric characters; and events shaped into a “genuine Spanish lifestyle” which attracted even the most

reticent audience to the newly born cinema, Madrid (Pérez Perucha 2009: 89). Many producers exploited the genre, including Segundo de Chomón (who directed several cinematic *zarzuelas* for Hispano Films in the 1910s) and José Buchs, director of the much-acclaimed *La verbena de la Paloma* (1921).

The latter was responsible for the debut on the silver screen of a successful taurine *zarzuela*: *Rosario la cortijera*, composed by Joaquín Dicenta and Manuel Paso in 1922, adapted by Buchs in 1923 and later (with sound) in 1935 by León Artola. Applying variations to the preeminent theme of bullfighters' desires, the plot of the *zarzuela* highlights the problems arising from the love of two men for the same woman. The orphan Rosario, engaged to the *mayoral*<sup>32</sup> of the farmhouse, Rafael, falls in love with the bull-breeder Manuel. The woman manages to break up the friendship between the two men, strengthened since the *mayoral* saved his master's life by protecting him during an altercation with a herd of bulls in the countryside. The story ends in tragedy, with the bullfighter being stabbed to death by his former friend, destined to live as a fugitive. The romance of the plot discloses in the filmic version a social drama. The tragedy of the overwhelming passion between Rosario and the bullfighter is set alongside the loss of honour of a man who achieved the well-being of his farm as well as the glory of bullfighting. The film explores classic themes of rural melodramas.

Rural taurine drama is notable for a specific vision of the countryside, reinforcing an idealised version linked to the rural world through the spiritual symbolism of bulls: the following Francoist cinema will develop its own taurine rural subgenre which, in this work, is defined as tauro-western. The Spanish vision of the countryside as the cradle of national identity, highly used during Francoist autarchy (Faulkner 2006b: 37), has significant antecedents in several films from the silent period, from the *zarzuelas* *Rosario la cortijera* to the rural drama *La aldea maldita* (Florián Rey, 1930) (García Carrión 2007: 129).

*Rosario la Cortijera* contains all the essential elements for the cinematic construction of an ideal nation in which the nature of creation – the countryside – is dominated and guarded by the sacred animals and is only managed by

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<sup>32</sup> The *mayoral* is the cowboy in charge of a fighting bull farm. As confidant of the farm owner, he is responsible for the rearing of fighting bulls and is an expert in the breed. Numerous Spanish, Portuguese, and Mexican productions highlighted this role in tauro-western films, as it will be discussed further in the second part of this work.

humans. In the film, it is through a fortunate intervention during an altercation with a bull that the 'social contract' is determined, and it is the daily life on the farm, which defines social spaces (men with the bulls and women with their housework). It is because of the betrayal of a fraternal pact that Manuel receives his first warning: a goring during a bullfight. Overlooking this, the man dies being stabbed with another sharpened weapon: a knife. In Buchs' film, these elements are visually reinforced, thanks to the possibility of filming in the countryside and to the composition of the scenes as offered by editing. The sequences on location add lyricism to the words and the music which accompany the scenes.

Music, in fact, is the ignored element of silent cinema, to such a point that it is often forgotten that musical cinema as a genre began relatively early, before the arrival of sound in cinema (Langford 2006: 84). Without uncritically accepting the "silent-films-were-never-silent" thesis (Altman 2004: 193), given that it is not always possible to confirm the musical accompaniment of each and every one of the films screened during the early and silent period, it is worthy of mention that, in addition to *zarzuelas*, the previous example of *Carmen* was on many occasions adapted from Bizet's opera and accompanied by his famous arias. Screenings had live music, a narrator, and sometimes dancers. The cinematic *zarzuela* exploited the fame of the theatrical version and, with renewed plots, was promoting new musical compositions. With the arrival of sound, the performers often moved from the theatrical representation to the filmic one, with their recorded voices accompanying the images. The second Rosario of the silver screen, Estrellita Castro, along with another famous singer in the role of Rafael, Juan Mendoza 'Niño de Utrera', are no exception in an industry which had amongst its stars famous singers such as Raquel Meller, the first artist to achieve overwhelming success both in Spanish and Hollywood cinema whilst still 'silent'.

Raquel Meller was crucial for the worldwide familiarity with *pasodoble*, intimately connected to the bullfighting world and its portrayal in cinema<sup>33</sup>. Her sung version of the famous *El relicario*, composed by José Padilla in 1914

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<sup>33</sup> The *pasodoble* is a march in duple meter which traditionally accompanies bullfights in instrumental form. The texts, sung in theatres and recorded by singing stars, are often dedicated to famous bullfighters, bullrings, or events relating to the bullfighting world, such as a success or a tragic death of a bullfighter in the arena.

(Román Fernández 2007: 32), was performed in prestigious national and international theatres and, with a tragic text dedicated to the death by goring of a bullfighter despite having his lover's reliquary on his chest, was adapted three times on the screen in another example of trans-historical success. However, before the Spanish version directed by Ricardo de Baños in 1933 and Rafael Gil in 1970, a Mexican director temporarily working in Spain, Miguel Contreras Torres, released a silent version in 1927. This film, as it will be detailed later, provoked fierce criticism, being labelled as profaning such a beautiful 'national' story, converted into a mere *españolada*.

Further musical works enjoyed long success onscreen, such as *El gato montés* by Manuel Penella, premiered in Valencia in 1917 ('El gato montés' 1917: 17), adapted first by Ernst Lubitsch (*Die Bergkatze*, 1921) and by George Melford (*Tiger Love*, 1924), and later by Spanish filmmaker Rosario Pi (*El gato montés*, 1935). In general, popular songs offered freedom of imagination to Spanish filmmakers who often used only a few lines of the text as inspiration to create a plot *ex novo*. This is the case with the cinematic *zarzuela* *¡Viva Madrid, que es mi pueblo!*, its title derived from the refrain of a popular song (Martínez Vicente 2011: 373).

The relationship between music and cinema is undoubtedly mutually beneficial. Similarly to other national cinemas, in the 1920s music or songs are already able to make popular a mediocre film, and vice versa (Spring 2013: 70). Thanks to some films, including taurine films, some compositions enjoy renewed fame, such as the music by Antonio Pol for *El suceso de anoche* (León Artola, 1929); the 1870 compositions by Guillermo Cereceda in *Pepe-Hillo* (José Buchs, 1928); and the music adapted by Tomás Bretón for *Flor de España*, a film which has a particular meaning in Spanish film history for being the first production directed by a female director, Helena Cortesina, in 1921.

Cortesina, a professional dancer briefly involved in film direction, suffered a range of technical problems during the production: the film was not premiered until 1923. However, and despite her difficulties, it was well received by audience and screened in theatres for several weeks. In addition to music and dance performances, the director benefitted from the presence of an authentic bullfighting star, the Basque matador Pedro Basauri 'Pedrucho', who was already a film star due to his previous acting in *Militona, o la tragedia de un*

*torero* (1922) and *Pobres niños* (1923), both directed by Henry Vorins. The cinematographic glory of 'Pedrucho' was so profitable that Vorins dedicated a biopic to him in 1923 (*Pedrucho*) which, although the script had little to do with his real life, used the bullfighter's name to attract spectators. At the same time, cinema benefitted the bullfighter, acclaimed in American bullrings by fans that came to know him thanks to the film bearing his name (Orts Ramos 1927: 19). Between his career in the bullrings and his subsequent teaching role in the Bullfighting School of Barcelona, 'Pedrucho' ended up acting in other films, with incursions into other genres, such as the spaghetti-western (i.e. *I lunghi giorni della vendetta. Faccia d'angelo*, Florestano Vancini, 1967).

#### **2.3.4 The matador as a global star: biographies as 'realist' sources**

As mentioned above, the relationship between bullfighters and film stardom, and stardom with bullfighting, have their roots in early cinema. The links between the commercial exploitation of the bullfighter's fame in the history of *cine taurino* and the fame acquired by film stars in the role of bullfighter are intertwined, and are undoubtedly a field of study in need of further research<sup>34</sup>. As highlighted by Martin Shingler in his overarching study of stardom, "considerable scope remains for this field to further expand or diversify" (2012: 181-2). In fact, there are numerous areas of research worthy of further exploration.

Firstly, there are a significant number of bullfighters who, apart from their unintended distinction in bullfight reportages, also acted in fiction films, either with short cameos or as co-protagonist or protagonist. Moreover, some matadors even became producers and/or directors of their own films.

In the long list of names, in addition to those already mentioned, other bullfighter film stars of silent cinema are: José García Carranza 'El Algabeño', actor in *La medalla del torero* (José Buchs, 1925) and *La hija del corregidor* (José Buchs, 1925); Eladio Amorós, lead character in *El niño de las monjas* (1925); José Pérez 'Chiquito de la audiencia' in *En las entrañas de Madrid*

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<sup>34</sup> A study is being carried out on this aspect of taurine cinema by the Centre for Research in Media and Cultural Studies-University of Sunderland and the Fundación de Estudios Taurinos in Seville, with the participation of academics from international institutions, with the aim of an initial output in 2017 of a monograph on the subject.

(1925); Manolo Martínez in *Los amores de un torero* (Juan Andreu Moragas, 1927). Nicanor Villalta and Marcial Lalanda, in addition to being lead characters in, respectively, *El suceso de anoche* (1929) and *¡Viva Madrid que es mi pueblo!* (1928), produce their films, and Lalanda even collaborated on the script. Meanwhile, Juan Belmonte, the restless figure renowned for his shyness and discretion, will opt for direction. During the republican period, he will direct a docu-fiction about the life of fighting bulls from the pastures to the bullring in *Del prado a la arena* (1933).

This alliance between bullfighting and cinema includes sometimes the definitive professional progression of matadors from the bullring into acting, producing, and direction, whether as a sign of artistic and intellectual curiosity, or as a lucrative means of exploiting their taurine passion without risking their lives on a daily basis. Amongst the first professionals who moved to cinema we can find the Calvache brothers, Antonio and José 'Walken' who, aside from the family business of taurine photography and bullfighting performances (Antonio was a professional bullfighter for some years), progressed definitively to the world of cinema. Antonio Calvache was cast in *La España trágica* (1918) and *Currito de la Cruz* (1925), and ended up working as an author, director, and producer for the cinema division of Falange Española<sup>35</sup> (*El derrumbamiento del ejército rojo*, 1939) and for the film company CIFESA (*Boy*, 1940). His brother José was more inclined towards direction (*El niño de las monjas*; *El Charlot español torero*, 1929), but his career was cut short, falling victim of the Civil War (Feiner 2010: 43).

Throughout history, other bullfighters chose similar paths, alternating their performances between the bullring and the sets, or abandoning the arenas in favour of the glamour of the silver screen, such as Rafael Albaicín, active from the 1940s to the 1960s; Mario Cabré, film star until the end of the 1960s (known for his romance with Ava Gardner); and more recently, from the 1970s, Máximo Valverde.

In their professional life in cinema, matadors have proven to be from the silent era onwards competent and scrupulous businessmen, far from the stereotype of the uneducated bullfighter who could only carve out a profession

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<sup>35</sup> Fascist political party active from 1933 to 1977.

because of his bravery and hunger. Choosing their roles in films to promote their career in the bullring, they exploit the additional publicity proceeding from cinema and negotiate with authors and producers about the image they are supposed to embody in fiction. In the same way, Spanish cinema exploits commercially specific cultural meanings associated with the bullfighter star, as an 'added value' to the story, according to the dynamic as underlined by Richard Dyer:

This market function of stars is only one aspect of their economic importance. They are also a property on the strength of whose name money can be raised for a film; [...] they are part of the labour that produces films as a commodity that can be sold for profit in the market place. Stars are involved in making themselves into commodities: they are both labour and the thing that labour produces (2004: 5).

Secondly, the links between bullfighters and stardom are also complex and intertwined with other sources. Within the narrative sources there can be often biographical events taken from bullfighters' real lives. The matador creates and nurtures the universe of taurine cinema through a multi-faceted *trait d'union* between biography, fiction, and archetypal characters.

The fame of some bullfighters and, in many cases, the tragic end to their lives, is connected with the creative re-elaboration of literary and artistic sources. Sometimes, the filmic embodiment is combined with the acting of a professional bullfighter, who adds elements through his own persona, reinforcing or reformulating discourses. It is precisely the process of transforming elements of reality into fiction, that is, the formation of the myth, which becomes interesting in extrapolating the formation and representation of social hierarchies, cultural practices, and elements of national identity (Eliade 1998). Often coming from poor backgrounds, bullfighters regularly became the inspiration for the flourishing taurine cultural production: *in primis*, for the propagation of novels and *folletines*. This literature appeared in a period in which the accounts of successful bullfighters went viral; the ability of brave men to escape poverty and become successful was extolled; and the tragedy of a fatal goring was made into a heroic act, or a divine punishment.

For instance, *Sangre y arena* (1908) is partially inspired, amongst other bullfighters, by the true story of Julio Aparici 'Fabrilo', a sort of real proto-version for the Juan Gallardo-model (Torres Nebrera 2014: 96). The Valencian

bullfighter, from humble beginnings but with ambitions much greater than his social standing, forsook his studies to follow the more lucrative career of bullfighting (Peris 'Chopeti' 1907). A bon vivant and a social climber, he fell in love with the aristocrat Constantina de la Figuera de la Cerda, (the 'real' Doña Sol), but because of his turbulent life, he gradually lost the backing of his supporters, the *aficionados* of the 'seats of the sun'<sup>36</sup>. In an attempt to recoup his fame, he performed ever closer to the bulls and ended up fatally gored in 1897. The similarities between the story of 'Fabrilo' and the protagonist of Blasco Ibáñez's novel are remarkable, and it is particularly interesting to highlight that one of the matador's *banderilleros*, nicknamed 'Gallardo', was a friend of Blasco Ibáñez and became his confidant, unloading the bullfighter's most personal events (Torres Nebreras 2014: 96).

Whereas the life of 'Fabrilo' may be considered a special type of biographical adaptation, the life of another bullfighter was 'mythologised' in a singular film with a subtle pro-divorce argument (Méndez Leite 1965: 248). *La malcasada* (Francisco Gómez Hidalgo, 1926) used the real life of Mexican bullfighter Rodolfo Gaona, reversing the events of his betrayal by his wife to produce a film where he is portrayed as a womaniser. In fact, Gaona's wife, the actress Carmen Ruiz Moragas, spent her life as mistress of King Alfonso XIII<sup>37</sup>, and her marriage with the matador, celebrated in 1919, only lasted a short time after the discovery of her infidelity. Legal and personal issues followed the bullfighter to his native Mexico (Antigüedad 1946; 'Don Justo' 1950); the divorce proceedings in Madrid only ended with the death of the actress in 1936; Gaona lost his celebrity status in Spain and never returned again to the Spanish bullrings (Orts Ramos 1922).

In Gómez Hidalgo's film, pro-divorce themes are all linked to the character of the bullfighter, playing the role of a womaniser, and relegating the female

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<sup>36</sup> The 'social' distribution of a bullring, an open and uncovered space, is defined by the more comfortable shaded areas, which are more expensive and generally occupied by wealthier spectators, and the seats in direct sun, which are the cheapest and exposed to the high temperatures which are reached during the height of the bullfighting season. Therefore, 'those in the sun' (*sol*) are commonly associated with the working class, whilst 'those in the shade' (*sombra*) are considered to be for the wealthier attendees who can afford the better seats and a season ticket.

<sup>37</sup> The relationship between the monarch and the actress resulted in two children, Leandro Alfonso and María Teresa de Borbón Ruiz, who were legally legitimised upon the death of the king.

character to the more traditional role of the betrayed. The protagonist Félix, a Mexican bullfighter, marries a young Spanish aristocrat from Toledo. Comfortable with his wealthy lifestyle, and enjoying success in the bullrings and with female admirers and extra-marital relationships, he discovers he has had a son from his first love when still in Mexico. Regretting that he abandoned the mother of his son, Félix starts an impossible journey through the Spanish (Catholic) bureaucracy to process a legal separation. Similarly to the real-life Rodolfo Gaona, Félix's only chance is to go back to Mexico, but differently to Gaona's end, Félix concludes his Spanish residence with a happy ending.

Spain, indeed, has offered a new life to the cinematic matador. In his years in the Iberian country, Félix has enjoyed a special social life, spending his time with numerous celebrities.

In fact, the journalist Gómez Hidalgo's only venture into cinema (he was also the first biographer of matador Juan Belmonte) represents an original use of Spanish celebrities. Dozens of cameos were inserted in the plot, including other bullfighters (Juan Belmonte, Ignacio Sánchez Mejías, Victoriano Roger 'Valencia II'), artists and writers (Julio Romero de Torres, Wenceslao Fernández Flores, Eugenio D'Ors), and even military and political characters of Spanish history: General Miguel Primo de Rivera, the then dictator, and General Francisco Franco, who would later rule Spain for forty years. Each and every one acted in the film, introduced by title cards exalting "a semi-true story" in which "various national figures [are introduced], as a reflection of who is at the top of the nation". In the synthesis of the best elements of the nation in *La malcasada*, bullfighters appear as true stars, amongst intellectuals, politicians, and artists.

The renowned real-life events in the lives of bullfighters, whose popularity was also nurtured by novels, press and the radio, are sometimes openly recognisable in their filmic representations, such as in the cases of 'Fabrilo' and Rodolfo Gaona. On other occasions, only a meticulous analysis can discover the bullfighter who inspired a film plot. For instance, *El niño de las monjas* (1922) is partially based on the true story of the Basque bullfighter Florentino Ballesteros (González López and Cánovas Belchí 1993: 110). The real life of the bullfighter, raised in an orphanage and gored in his chest in 1917, can

explain the tragic ending to the original novel which, as previously mentioned, was revised in the theatrical and filmic adaptations.

Bullfighters' lives as an implicit source of *cine taurino* are combined with more explicit sources, such as in the cinematographic *zarzuela Pepe-Hillo* directed by José Buchs in 1928. The fictionalised life of José Delgado Guerra 'Pepe-Hillo' (1754-1801), including his fatal goring which was immortalised in Plate 33 of Goya's *Tauromaquia* series, is portrayed through the use of the Sevillian bullfighter's legendary romantic escapades with high-class women and the rivalry in the bullring with Pedro Romero (De San Martín 1870). Biopics of bullfighters will enjoy a long success, with further films inspired by acclaimed matadors 'Manolete', 'El Cordobés', 'Palomo Linares' and many others.

Finally, and thirdly, the life and death of famous bullfighters boosted documentaries, which were showing already in the 1920s some elements of *cinéma-vérité*, and were commercially exploiting a morbid interest in the cruellest tragedies. The life and death of matadors created therefore a further subgenre with enduring success in the history of Spanish *cine taurino*: the biographic documentary.

The titles of the long list of documentaries screened between 1896 and 1920 include cardinal events in the professional life of a bullfighter, such as the *alternativa*<sup>38</sup> and retirement from the bullring (Bello Cuevas 2010: 311-29). In the 1910s, Enrique Blanco directed the first documentary on the breeding of bulls, *La historia del toro de lidia* (1911): the animal, both in fiction and documentary films, shares the lead role with the bullfighter. However, it was the death of Joselito 'El Gallo' in 1920 and Manuel Granero in 1922 which had the biggest impact in 1920s documentaries. The real tragedies of the gypsy (Joselito) and the Valencian (Granero) bullfighters reach the theatres, amplifying the already extensive media coverage of their fatal goring. Their deaths transformed taurine cinema, reinforcing discourses on nation and society analogously to fiction films, but with the enhancement of 'realism of reality'.

Both deaths were shocking for the nation and totally unexpected: in the case of Joselito it was said, given his knowledge of bulls, that "a cow gave birth to

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<sup>38</sup> The *alternativa* is the corrida in which a bullfighter becomes a professional matador.

him” (Aguado 1999: 205)<sup>39</sup>. The goring took place on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1920 in the bullring of Talavera de la Reina, and in few days several documentaries were produced and screened in theatres<sup>40</sup>: *Cogida y muerte de “Gallito”, o la tragedia de Talavera* (Fructuoso Gelabert and Rafael Salvador, 1920); *Joselito, o la vida y muerte de un matador* (José Gaspar, 1920); *La vida de Joselito y su muerte* (Anonymous, produced by Sagarra, 1920); *La muerte de Joselito* (Juan Oliver, 1920). The French company Gaumont also produced a montage of his best performances from archive material (Fernández Cuenca 1963; 61-2). Gaspar’s documentary, *Joselito, o la vida y muerte de un matador*, opens with an introductory title card, presenting the documentary as “*cine de actualidad*” (newsreel): “Always striving to be current, the filmmaker, dressed in mourning, today offers you an animated account of Joselito’s tragic end. Today it is a bullfighter, tomorrow a politician, a pilot, a man whose talent brings us into the present, the only thing which can regulate our actions”.

The relevance of newsreel, the ability of the filmmaker to bring the spectator emotionally closer to the event, played an important role in the documentaries of the silent cinema period. Wars, revolutions, and events of national and international interest were shot, edited, and retold in narrative form: real life films provided and developed “curiosity, seduction, objectification and even identification” (Gunning 1997: 59). The death of a bullfighter was lived by taurine countries as a national grief, emotionally powerful and, for the producer, as a profitable event.

In fact, before Joselito ‘El Gallo’ and Manuel Granero, the death of Florentino Ballesteros in 1917, the bullfighter who inspired *El niño de las monjas*, became the subject of a short documentary bearing his name, *Florentino Ballesteros* (Antonio de Padua Tramullas, 1917). The documentary, less elaborate than the ones dedicated to the more famous matadors Joselito and Granero, is comprised of an introduction of images of his corridas, and of a conclusion with the funeral procession and burial. The camera captures from a high-angle the crowd around the coffin.

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<sup>39</sup> “A Joselito le ha parido una vaca”.

<sup>40</sup> The day after Joselito’s funeral some of these documentaries were already advertising their release in various theatres in Madrid, and the sequences included “the transportation of the body and the burial” of the bullfighter (see, for instance, *ABC* 23/05/1920, pp. 20-1).

*Joselito, o la vida y muerte de un matador*, longer in duration, shows a similar composition and adds a close up of the dead Joselito lying on the infirmary bed. The entire first part of the film summarises the bullfighter's career with archive material, probably bought from other production companies<sup>41</sup>; the second part focuses on the details about the death. The camera fixes with close ups the posters from the bullfighter's last performance, still stuck to the wall of the bullring (underlining temporal proximity); shows the exact place in the arena where the goring took place; follows the transportation of the body by train from Madrid to Seville, ending with the burial in the cemetery of Seville. The crowd around the coffin during the funeral procession evokes another death which will have similar impact in the media: that of Rudolph Valentino in 1926. In the sequences of Gaspar's documentary, the mass of people is impressive; several people try to climb upon the large horse-drawn cart to seize the opportunity to touch the sarcophagus containing the body of their idol before its burial.

The scenes featuring the dead bullfighter or those of his goring, apart from the first shot in the infirmary which is probably a still from a photo, are absent for one logistical reason alone: the bullring in Talavera de la Reina, a small locality in the province of Toledo in Castilla La Mancha, was not on the list of producers' destinations, which were more focused on the important bullrings of Madrid, Seville, Barcelona, and Valencia. Furthermore, Joselito did not appear in the original event line-up and his presence was announced last-minute. The photographers in the audience did not have time to capture the goring, and they were only able to go to the infirmary to photograph the dead body. The photographic images are, together with the summary reports in the newspapers, the only testimony which we have of the fateful incident (Halcón 2012; Gómez Espinosa 2012).

Conversely, the producer Rafael Salvador was in Madrid to shoot what became the final appearance of young Manuel Granero, unanimously

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<sup>41</sup> The archive material in José Gaspar's film appears to come from at least three sources. The images of the family journey to Madrid, the city where he took his *alternativa*, seem to come from the family's filmic archive. A great-nephew of Joselito 'El Gallo', the journalist and economist Ignacio Sánchez-Mejías, interviewed personally, confirms that the images belonged to the family, and that they were probably granted to a producer long before the bullfighter's death, to facilitate their inclusion in taurine films. Other images from the performances of Joselito clearly show that they were taken from *Despedida de Bombita* (Enrique Blanco, 1914) and from *6 toros por Gallito 6* (Anonymous, 1914), both produced by Iberia Cines. This first textual analysis requires further studies.

recognised by taurine critics as the new Joselito. Salvador, also from Valencia, had already produced a film about the bullfighter, visually reconstructing his childhood and his bullfighting career in *Corazón de España, o el triunfo de Granero* (1921). However, on the day of Granero's death, Salvador's cameras did not have the time to shoot the horrifying goring: the bull's horn entered the bullfighter's skull through his right eye, killing him instantly. The lifeless body of the bullfighter was taken to the infirmary. There, the camera was ready to record the morbid details of the impressive injury. Within few days, Rafael Salvador produced a new film, *Gloria que mata* (1922) (Fernández Cuenca 1963: 66). The instant movie was created partially re-using material from his previous production, to introduce the bullfighter's life. The director reproduced the goring (similarly to modern biopics), and edited the images of the dead body with the scenes of the funeral, inserting fiction to homogenise the narrative and to increase the emotional appeal (Colón Perales 1999: 159).

With the gruesome goring being reproduced also in the famous erotic novel *Story of the eye* by Georges Bataille ([1928] 2013) (the eye referred to in the title is the bullfighter's eye which was penetrated by the bull's horn), the emotional impact of Granero's death was so extraordinary that twelve years later, during the Spanish Republic, Salvador's film was still circulating in national cinemas with a newly-added soundtrack<sup>42</sup>.

The death of the young bullfighter is also converted into an allegoric spectacle of a nation mourning its hero. In fact, Salvador insisted on certain stereotypical elements, superimposing his artistic and commercial interests over the personal friendship with the bullfighter (Fernández Cuenca 1963: 66). The well-educated Valencian bullfighter, who came from a well-off family and who also played classical music on his violin ('El hombre del trajecito negro' 1921:

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<sup>42</sup> The history of *Gloria que mata*'s distribution is noticeably interesting. The film is located in the Film Archives of Valencia and Zaragoza, solely in its sound version. However, the film is indexed with the premiere date: 1922. During the analysis of the film in Valencia, after noting the addition of a soundtrack, I wished to investigate with the archive director, Ignacio Lahoz Rodrigo, the apparent inconsistency with the production date – at the height of silent cinema – and the synchronised soundtrack. Surprisingly, Lahoz Rodrigo confirmed that no one has previously queried the technical contradiction and thought my suggestion of re-editing and re-release was plausible. After tracing the presence of the film in Spanish theatres, I can thus far confirm that, in addition to the commercial success in 1922, *Gloria que mata* was also distributed in July 1923, January 1925, January 1927 with “unprecedented success” (*ABC* 05/01/1927, p. 27), and on three different occasions in 1935, in March, November, and December, in a “spoken and sung [version] in Spanish” (*ABC* 01/12/1935, p. 64).

16-7) was therefore presented fictionally as a working-class child who took part in mock bullfights with his friends, dreaming about a better future. Other fictional inserts show a group of women around the train track transporting the body of the bullfighter, throwing flowers onto the carriages as a sign of mourning, unable to participate in the ceremony in any other way.

Actually, the images of Granero's funeral in *Gloria que mata*, as with those of Joselito in *Joselito, o la vida y muerte de un matador*, show how women, not permitted to attend funerals<sup>43</sup>, are notably absent. In all of the scenes in the funeral procession, only men are seen, in strict social order. The bullfighter's *cuadrilla*, which defends the coffin from the frenzied crowd, is followed by businessmen and *aficionados* bourgeois, protected by the security forces. Common people and working-class men crowd behind and around the funeral carriage, attempting to find a vantage point from which to see their idol up close, whilst the most daring disobey the authorities and attempt to touch the sarcophagus.

Just as in the bullring and the bull-breeding countryside, men and women carry out different yet specific roles in the final gesture towards the bullfighter, and they occupy specific and defined spaces. Analogously to fiction, the documentaries portray an ordered and exemplary nation, depicted through the main events linked to the life and death of a matador. The literary legend of the bullfighter, a symbol of social advancement of the disadvantaged classes (González Troyano 1988), is visually portrayed as the only man who can overcome social stagnation, glorified in life and receiving a public funeral with the participation of the whole community.

However, the images from documentaries omit any instance of social conflict. In the case of Joselito 'El Gallo', the celebration of his requiem mass in the Cathedral of Seville, which provoked confrontations between aristocrats and intellectuals regarding the scandal of a solemn ceremony for a gypsy<sup>44</sup>, is

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<sup>43</sup> Women not attending funeral processions continued until at least the 1950s. In addition to other audiovisual testimonies, such as the funeral of 'Manolete' in the images of the Spanish newsreel *NO-DO*, Encarna Benítez, the sister of the bullfighter Manuel Benítez 'El Cordobés', in her account of her father's death, tells how she defied the ban and accompanied the coffin "until the restricted area of the cemetery" given that her father had died in absolute solitude (Lapierre and Collins [1967] 2012: 213).

<sup>44</sup> Canon Juan Francisco Muñoz y Pabón was the greatest defender of Joselito's funeral in the Cathedral of Seville, who also wrote a number of articles in *El Correo de Andalucía*. One notable article, entitled *A ella* from 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1920, responds to a scandalised female reader

visually absent. Whereas the life of Manuel Granero was manipulated in order to adhere to a more traditional script, 'lowering' his social class, the commemoration of the death of Joselito essentially became a state funeral, overlooking social controversies. The Sevillian bullfighter, in fact, even challenged the body of noblemen who owned the bullring in Seville, one of the most prestigious and the most expensive in the country. Joselito invested his own money in the construction of a monumental bullring in the city, with more seats and lower prices to make the bullfights more accessible to the people. The popular bullring conceived by the bullfighter, inaugurated in 1918, died along with him following pressure and complaints relating to the structure which, according to the complainants, was unstable.

The class war of Joselito only achieved its Pyrrhic victory with his high-level funeral in the Cathedral. That said, Gaspar's documentary omits these details preferring the depiction of national unity resulting from a tragic event. Joselito, as described by one of the title cards, "has died for his audience"; in cinema, he can rest in illusory social peace. The portrayal of the nation and of social peace continues in this type of films throughout film history. Other national mourning will follow in Spain, with the death of Manuel Rodríguez 'Manolete' in the 1940s and that of Francisco Rivera 'Paquirri' in the 1980s. The latter will receive posthumous glory through a different mass media, which will also play an important role in the shaping of Spanish national identity: television.

#### **2.4 Nation and society in silent *cine taurino***

As may be implied with an analysis of the origins of taurine cinema and the use of its sources, cultural productions present an image of the Spanish nation bound to its most original *costumbrismo*: stereotypes of bullfighters, beautiful women, *ganaderías*, *bandoleros*, and gypsies all present a typical image of the nation and simultaneously promote its glorious bullfights. In the land which boasts an animal with divine qualities – the bull – man is able to aspire to a future of honour and acclaim, unless he has committed the blasphemy of greed.

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about the true Christian faith of the bullfighter and the love shown to him by the population as an essential element for hosting the solemn act.

Furthermore, Spanish cinema became a cinema of adaptations: in the 1920s alone, they were distributed 130 filmic versions of previous texts, of a total of 230 full-length films (Cánovas Belchí 2007: 26). Equally, the themes of taurine cinema reflect those themes and plots which are dominant in other narrative adaptations: a romantic story, although not the principal storyline; orphans; illicit relationships; the loss or defence of honour; and a dominant urban environment which does not represent a modern, cosmopolitan culture, but rather is closer to rural values (Sánchez Salas 2007: 128-35).

In terms of style, this cinematic genre is conceived as popular cinema, and it is not listed amongst productions by so-called 'authors': the surrealist cinema of Luis Buñuel or the directors *engagés* of the 'New Spanish Cinema' later contributed towards the portrayal of bullfighting as a symbol for the class struggle, but at the height of the 1920s the dominant metaphoric use is relatively standardised, despite social nuances. Narration often follows the chronological order of the classical narrative structure to facilitate audience consumption. The example of the novel *Sangre y arena* is emblematic, with its modern narrative structure assuaged in the 1917 filmic adaptation by the same author.

In the original source, the story begins with Juan Gallardo at the height of his bullfighting career and returning to his childhood through a flashback: in the film, Blasco Ibáñez choses to simplify the script and starts with the unfortunate orphan's childhood, constructing a chain reaction of cause-and-effect events, typical of a classical narrative structure. Generally, direction and cinematography do not stray far from the practices of the majority of productions, with artistic references to the most influential techniques, such as the symbolic use of *chiaroscuros* and other cinematic conventions (Benet 2012: 68).

The filmic texts set out the conventions of the cinematic genre and introduce the main subgenres. Before the addition of sound, taurine-themed productions include melodramas, comedies, rural and urban films, 'musical' films, documentaries, and, with *El toro fenómeno* (Fernando Marco, 1917) even cartoons (Candel 1993: 22). Independently of tones, aesthetics, and contents, films present discourses about the nation, and demonstrate a very specific symbolic use of taurine language, different from foreign equivalents. The view of

the nation as depicted in these films at times comes close to nationalist contents, and almost all present the country through similar metaphors drawing on imagery from the bullfighting world.

Films present an ideal nation starting from the more evident elements. The titles, title cards, and locations insistently refer to Spain, and specifically to a Catholic and patriotic nation. As highlighted by Marta García Carrión, these elements are characteristic of the cinema which has more than explicitly contributed to the formation of the archetypes of national cinema (2007: 112). The word 'Spain' appears in the film titles, such as *La España trágica* (1918); other works add a subtitle to explain specific contents related to the nation: *Corazón de España, o El triunfo de Granero* (1921); *Flor de España, o La historia de un torero* (1923). Other titles identify the locations of Madrid or Andalusia: *¡Viva Madrid que es mi pueblo!* (1928); *En las entrañas de Madrid*, (1925); *El patio de los naranjos*, (1926), and reinforce with title cards the geographic synecdoche of one part – the city or region – for indicating the whole country.

The repeated acclaim for Spanish treasures is accompanied by touristic promotional images, typical of heritage cinema<sup>45</sup>, as evidenced by *La hija del corregidor* (José Buchs, 1925), *Sangre y arena* (1917) and *Currito de la Cruz* (1925). The last here devotes the first minutes of the film to a series of scenic shots in Seville, dedicating the film to the city. The content extolling Andalusia (or rather, Spain) is continuous throughout the entire film, to such an extent that “the spatial packaging of the story ends up stealing the lead role from the subjects living there, even turning them into a pretext for its presentation and exhibition” (del Rey Reguillo 2007: 88).

Spain is the Promised Land, transformed into an earthly paradise thanks to the opportunities which bullfighting presents to men of all classes, provided that they demonstrate the bravery befitting a worthy son of that land. Even the Mexican Félix in *La malcasada* (1926) arrives in Spain by boat in a scene which reverses Christopher Columbus discovering of the Americas. Indeed, his companion alerts him to the pending arrival: “Spain! Look, Spain!”, he says, and

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<sup>45</sup> Originally associated to films with a nostalgic approach to the past ('costume dramas', 'period films' etc.), the polysemic term of heritage cinema has become “a supple term to refer to the ways in which national cinemas turn to the past at the different moments in their histories in search of their own foundational myths” (Vidal 2012: 3).

the superimposition of the image of a bullfighter taunting a bull with his cape confirms the visual association which Félix's mind makes when he heard the name of the country. Félix's America is Spain, the place in which he can be a successful and rich bullfighter, an immigrant who, once he has achieved his goal, is happy to feel that he is a citizen ("I will not be a foreigner in your land").

Bullfighting is presented in films as the country's greatest phenomenon, the only means of "study to become a millionaire" (*La malcasada*). It is "the spectacle *par excellence* in the world" (*Currito de la Cruz*). The seriousness of bullfighting is reiterated in *Currito*: bullfighting is "the only serious thing there is in the world", prophetically anticipating the words of Federico García Lorca<sup>46</sup>. In *cine taurino*, the portrayal of the nation and the citizen-bullfighter's social ascent are interconnected by special locations – the *ganaderías* and the bullrings – and through a particular rhetoric image: the parabola.

Films therefore introduce the bullfighter's social rise with a series of shots of various bullrings ranging in size and importance as the story progresses and the aspiring bullfighter's career develops. From amateur bullfights in the countryside, often undercover during the night, to the first training efforts in the poor neighbourhood of the city, the montage follows a growing geographic order, culminating with the bullrings of Seville and Madrid. Even in the retrieved fragments of lost films, as in *La España trágica*, the only images which have been conserved depict a man jumping over a farm fence with his cape in-hand, the only required resource for an aspiring bullfighter. Once learnt in the countryside or in the street, the first incursion by the aspirant into a bullring is often, again, achieved through anti-conformist means.

With few opportunities to enter society, including taurine circles, the brave man must make his own way by a number of different methods. Sometimes, he must leap in like an *espontáneo*<sup>47</sup> during a bullfight, as Juan de Dios in *Los arlequines de seda y oro* (1919), and can start his profession thanks to the bullfighter from whom he 'stole' the bull ("Rafael El Gallo watches him", reads

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<sup>46</sup> In the poet's last interview, given to the newspaper *El Sol* (Bagaria 1936: 5), García Lorca defined bullfighting in the following way: "I think bullfighting is the most cultured *fiesta* that exists in the world today. Bullfighting is, perhaps, Spain's poetic richness and greatest asset".

<sup>47</sup> Lacking any initial opportunity to perform, many aspiring bullfighters jumped into the bullring during a bullfight, attempting to perform a few moves in order to catch the public's attention and, above all, impress the businessmen before being remanded by the police and spending the night in jail. Some of the major bullfighters of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, such as Manuel Benítez 'El Cordobés', began their professional adventures in this way.

the sign following the sequence), or *Currito de la Cruz*, who jumps into the arena during Manuel Carmona's performance, the father of his later loved Rocío. On other occasions, the young character is fortunate enough to save the daughter of a landowner (or the lover of a businessman) from a bull's wrath in the open countryside, as in the case of José in *La hija del corregidor*, or Luis in *¡Viva Madrid que es mi pueblo!*. Gratitude becomes a professional opportunity, as generally a corrida is sponsored by the landowner.

In other films, the initial social space is reduced to the wall of a bull farm *plaza de tienta* (testing ring)<sup>48</sup> where the protagonist, along with other characters desperate for an opportunity, hopes to be able to demonstrate his bravery. The distinction between social classes and their portrayal through bullfighting spaces actually begins before the division of bullring seats. In various domestic and amateur films from the 1920s<sup>49</sup>, several detailed panoramic shots show how the social micro-cosmos of the *plaza de tienta* reproduces class distinction, with uninvited proletarians sitting on the wall of the *plaza* with their legs hanging down, looking for a chance, but outside the social space.

The portrayal of taurine territory as a social space continues in almost all fiction films, with temporal ellipses which speeds up the ascension of the main character within the bullfighting hierarchy: from the open spaces of far-away villages, with carriages arranged in a circle to create an improvised bullring, such as in Chinchón (which appears in several films), through to small secondary bullrings, such as Arcos de la Frontera or Écija, until he arrives at the highest triumph in Seville or Madrid. At times, without sufficient funds to shoot on location, the jump in time is achieved by simply editing a montage of signs that mention the localities. For instance, in *El suceso de anoche* (1929) the rise of José, the lead character, played by the bullfighter Nicanor Villalta, is reduced to a short sequence of Villalta performing with a bull, accompanied by a single

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<sup>48</sup> Each *ganadería* has a small ring where it can be tested (*tienta*) the character of brave cows in order to select the best for breeding purposes. The *tienta* is generally carried out by the farmer's most trusted bullfighters in a training exercise. Those animals which are not suitable for reproducing are used in amateur countryside festivals.

<sup>49</sup> The private film archive of matador Juan Belmonte, to give an example, includes reels of 1928 in which this image of social spaces is clearly visible. An extensive study of this aspect of cinema has been published in collaboration with Dr. Steve Cannon from the CRMCS-University of Sunderland (Caramella and Cannon 2016). Other similar films from that period, analysed in Spanish, Portuguese, and Mexican film archives, are listed in the extended filmography.

title card: “Since that day, provincial bullrings have been a place of triumphs for José”, followed by his *paseílo* in the bullring of Madrid, symbol of his “recognition before the Court audience”.

During the years of silent cinema, one visual ellipsis is still not regularly used to portray the social parabola of the matador: the sequence of bullfighting posters from various localities, with the name of the bullfighters in them, from the least up to the most important. This allegory will be used more commonly in sound cinema, not only to condense time but also to contain film budget, avoiding cast and crew travels around Spain. In the silent years, filmmakers are more involved in the promotion of national treasures as a nationalist commitment, and scenes in Chinchón or in Seville are most common, prior to the finale in the capital’s bullring. These sequences are part of a general tendency to configure national identity through touristic promotion, notable in numerous cultural productions (Afinoguénova 2007).

Representations of the social organisation of the nation through the image of bullrings imply several elements of the *mise-en-scène*, with persuasive allusions to a world ordered by social classes in the seating areas, and organised by exclusively male *cuadrillas* structured according to inflexible hierarchies. In the bullring depicted as *umbilicus mundi*, “social characteristics are not different to any other place where an event takes place” (Echegaray 2005: 99). Nuances about questions of class and gender fit with traditional values of that time: patriotism, Catholicism, and the construction of a national identity based on the revival of imperial Castilian legends over the regeneration – or generation – of a new Spain (López Martín 1995).

On a social mobility level, the bullfighter is permitted to move around his space, the bullring, and only there. His bravery earned him a place at the centre of the arena in which to develop his career with an adoring public, being labelled with grandiloquent words: “colossus”, “ace of aces”, “supreme”, “unique” (*Frivolinas*, 1926). However, a bullfight is governed ultimately by a bullring president who, on behalf of the audience, announces the success or failure of the bullfighter. In cinema, what the matador recreates during his ritual in the arena are the effects of his behaviour outside the bullring: the divine bull can offer his body for the man’s salvation, or can punish the one who did not follow his commandments. Therefore, the portrayal of triumphant bullfights,

resounding failures, and gorings (fatal or not) are parallel to the matador's behaviour.

As mentioned in *Currito de la Cruz* and *La barrera número 13* (1912), the bullring infirmary becomes a symbolic confessional, where mortal sins are forgiven. Sometimes, as in *Rosario la cortijera* (1923) and *¡Viva Madrid que es mi pueblo!*, the bullfighters receive only a warning goading, to alert them to what can happen if they persist in acting against a socially acceptable conduct. If unheard, the bull will not show any more mercy. In *Pepe-Hillo* (1928), the aristocrat lover of the bullfighter does not listen to her father's arguments against her illicit relationship ("A girl of your standing cannot speak with him!" he tells her) and, after an attempted elopement, it is the bull that closes the matter, by killing the ungrateful bullfighter. Of all the films produced during the first thirty years of *cine taurino*, only the lead characters of *La Malcasada* and of *El suceso de anoche* are allowed to marry an upper-class woman without paying with their lives. However, the first marriage ends with a separation, and the exception that confirms the rule in the second films is perhaps due to the main role of the bullfighter Villalta, also producer of the film. Viewers would have to wait decades before enjoying another cross-class happy ending.

In turn, the public – witness and judge alongside the bullring president – participates as an amplifying element of what is in the bullfighter's soul: jubilant and triumphalist in times of social progression for the hero, which in cinema is portrayed with shots of elegant spectators who, on occasion, look at the camera and blow kisses or wave (*Sangre y arena*), or violent and aesthetically displeasing in the dark times of the matador. The bullring's audience in Spanish taurine films always reflects the spiritual condition of the bullfighter, like a mirror image of all citizens and of all spectators. The emotions and achievements of the bullfighter are experienced in the first person, with the most emotional moments "raising the audience from their seats" (*El suceso de anoche*) when the bullfighter deserves support, or complaining when he performs badly. In practice, the audience is the hyperbole of the bullfighter and, as with the bullfighter, is represented as masculine.

Indeed, taurine images inserted in films not only increase the symbolism of Spanish man's social space, the citizen-bullfighter. They also portray the female world which, in a bullring or in a *ganadería*, is notable for its non-participation in

the governing and social ritual of this world. Not only were women not permitted to perform in bullfights then (although no ban existed in Portugal or Latin America), but space in the audience was also restricted. Women involved in the world of bullfighting followed a protocol, which is reflected in cinema to create allegories on family, the primary social group. Films restrict female presence in the bullring: apart from casual female spectators - seated in the '*sombra*' with their husbands as an aesthetic embellishment on a social event - the females who attend the bullfights are the daughter of the bull-breeder or the bullring president, or the bullfighter's mistress (flamenco dancers or aristocrat *femme fatales*).

As per the woman predestined to be the bullfighter's faithful wife, as soon as the engagement is made official, there is only one place left for her during the bullfight: the family chapel. Her only task is to pray for the life of her man. As with lay parishioners during mass, women participate with prayers, whilst the ritual - taurine or religious – is celebrated by a man. From Carmen in *Sangre y arena* to the wife of Manuel Carmona in *Currito de la Cruz*, the lawfully wedded wives do not accompany their husbands to the bullring, nor do they dare to appear in the audience during the performance. They stay at home, in their private chapel, in front of the image of Our Lady or Christ. In *cine taurino*, the most popular amongst bullfighters are the Virgen de la Esperanza Macarena (Our Lady of Hope Macarena) and the Cristo del Gran Poder (Christ of Great Power).

In *Sangre y arena* this gender distinction in the social space is emphasised with short scenes in sequence, which place the protagonists through the use of a few words or a brief shot. In one of them, Juan tells Carmen the bullfighting season is about to begin in Spain ("I'm going travelling"); soon after, the woman enters a church ("Every day Carmen prays earnestly to heaven"). Mothers are also requested to stay at home: in *Rosario la Cortijera*, the matador's father accompanies his son to the bullfight, reminding his wife and Rosario that it is time to pray in the house chapel, as part of their duties. Both in the bullring and in civil society, there is no place for women; there are no useful tasks which they can undertake. The bullfighter's mistress is also a troublemaker in the bullring: tragedy always strikes when she is present. However, sometimes women cause tragedies even at home, as a result of a weak faith or misbehaviour. In *Currito*

*de la Cruz*, after Rocío and 'Romerita' elope, her father blames his wife for the dishonour of the family. From that moment, the man accuses the wife of being a "bad mother" and Rocío stops being called his "little girl", becoming "her mother's daughter".

Although the bullring is a male environment and the home chapel is the female space, men are not exempt from a spiritual life. Though Spanish ontological masculinity is phenomenologically configured through his profession ("I'm now a man! I'm now a bullfighter!" proclaims young *Currito*), bullfighters are analogous to religious ministers. They are not 'lay parishioners': they are the priests of the bullring, carrying out a role equivalent to ordained ministers, by spilling the blood of the sacrificed bull as in the celebration of a Sacrament (Delgado Ruiz 1986: 213). They are also required to have an unbreakable faith and must respect their peculiar religious precepts. The bullfighter has two specific sacramentals associated to the celebration of the sacred rite of the bullfight<sup>50</sup>: an initial prayer before leaving his home (or his hotel room) before a portable altar, and a second in the bullring chapel. Spanish taurine films dedicate considerable time to the depiction of these two moments: long sequences follow the dressing of the matador (as a priest in the sacristy) and his prayer before the portable altar, as well as the camera focusing on the man kneeling in the bullring chapel, before the beginning of the *paseíllo*. On the contrary, 'foreign' *cine taurino* does not show the same insistence on these rituals.

For example, in *Blood and Sand* (1922) Christian references are limited to Carmen's single prayer in the bullring chapel, where she runs following a bad omen. After the goring of her husband, there are no other religious elements around the man's deathbed than the thin cross on Carmen's necklace. Sets and props of Spanish films are brimming with religious items. In *Currito de la Cruz*, faith is the only consolation for the protagonist who, in a moment of immense desperation, approaches a large bronze cross in a Sevillian square where he finds solace, almost hugging it. The recognisable location offers a redundant

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<sup>50</sup> Sacramentals (*sacramentalia*) are objects or actions separated by the rite of the celebration of a Sacrament which add symbolic meanings linked to the Sacrament itself (i.e. the candle in Baptism as a symbol for light).

rhetoric: *Currito de la Cruz* (of the Cross), is near a cross, in the Plaza de Santa Cruz (Holy Cross), in the district of Santa Cruz (Holy Cross).

Names and characters also refer to Christianity: *Currito* is 'de la Cruz'; Juan in *Los arlequines de seda y oro* is 'de Dios' ('of God'), and José Luis chooses the artistic name of 'El niño de las monjas' ('the son of the nuns') in the film with the same name. Priests, nuns, and monks are common characters in taurine films: they are always ready to assist the protagonist in his career, even to the point of becoming their manager. This is the role of Father Lolito in *El patio de los naranjos*, as well as the nuns of the convents being the protectors of the young bullfighters of *Los arlequines de seda y oro*, *Currito de la Cruz*, and *El niño de las monjas*. In return, the convents receive a donation from the first earnings of the bullfighter, as a sign of gratitude.

The role of the religious characters, notable in silent cinema, will become more important in later tauro-religious films, in which the task of saving a convent involves the most famous bullfighters, as in *La becerrada* (José María Forqué, 1963), or sees a monk himself becoming a bullfighter, as in *Fray torero* (José Luis Sáenz de Heredia, 1966). In the 1920s, only Father Lolito in *El patio de los naranjos*, in a flashback to his youth, demonstrates his bullfighting ability by performing in an event, once again unifying the spiritual ties between the two roles.

Even in taurine films in which there is no secondary character following a religious life, a 'spiritual' cameo is often added to underline the close relationship between the daily life of a Spanish citizen – including the bullfighter – and the need in life of the Catholic faith. In *Sangre y arena* there are no priests or nuns, but Juan Gallardo is a practicing Catholic, not only on days with bullfights: to show gratitude to Our Lady for curing his injury, he takes part in a mass which he asked for in an act of thanksgiving<sup>51</sup>. Even the *bandolero* 'Plumita', who meets the bullfighter during a visit to his country house and tells him how he has become a bandit, declares to Gallardo that in his previous life he was a 'priest' (in the novel, a sacristan).

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<sup>51</sup> In Catholicism it is commonplace to leave an offering in the church where you wish to hold a special mass, either in thanksgiving for a grace received, an offering for the soul of a loved one, or to ask for a miracle.

Spanish taurine film scripts also reinforce the religious allegory with insistent biblical allusions and references to God and Our Lady, at times making parallels between a sacrificed life and the earthly life of Mary, the Mother of God. Félix's wife in *La malcasada* sets him free to return to his first love – and mother of his child – and then chooses to work as a volunteer nurse in Morocco during the Rif War (1911-1927), refusing to make a new life with another man who is in love with her. As a woman, she feels she is not allowed to do it if she wants to maintain her honour (yet Félix is not required to give up anything): during the film, the woman loses her name and is simply called as “the little Virgin” (*Virgencita*).

Particularly in *El patio de los naranjos*, metaphors refer to events in the history of the Church (the bullfighter's wife is a “martyr”, like “the Christian martyrs, she is a martyr of bullfighting”), or to paraphrased biblical verses. Father Lolito compares the life of a priest to the bullfighter's, reminding the matador that, to fulfil his vocations, “we have no mother, no children, and no wife”, evoking the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark 10:20 about the vocation of a disciple (“Come and follow me”), and the implications to family ties that results from following the universal call of Christianity in Matthew 12:48 (“Who is my mother? And who are my brothers?”). To follow his vocation, the bullfighter is required, like a priest, to put his ministry first.

Like priests, bullfighters deal with life and death, mystery, symbols, and rituals. Therefore, opposite to anthropomorphisation and metamorphosis of French and North-American *cine taurino*, the bull in Spanish cinema is rarely a tame and seduced woman or a dominating man. The role of the bull is pre-eminently divine, though not exclusively.

In fact, the preeminent presence of a specific symbolism does not preclude the use of others. Whilst in non-Spanish *cine taurino* the socio-religious elements are not over-emphasised, that does not mean that they are not present in the development of the film. In other words, foreign productions exploited Spanish themes without the ‘didactic’ purposes of Spanish cinema, more concerned with meanings related to its own culture. In world cinema, male and female honour, loyalty, romance, and emotions were portrayed through stories of an exotic country which, given its particularly eccentric and violent cultural customs, offered producers a series of ‘sinful’ events which their own

country did not have. In the representation of the 'other', reference to the 'us' relates to the differentiation of the self in terms of values and emotions, and not to universal traits (Richardson 2010: 14).

Spain only partially shares with Mexican and Portugal cinema its religious fetishism, whilst Hollywood and French films emphasise psycho-sexual allegories. In Spanish cinema there are also references and parallels between the domination of the fighting bull and the taming of women in that, at times, there are allusions to the bullfighter's masculinity made through the bull's symbolism: "Women are more difficult to command than bulls", is claimed in *La malcasada*; "My bulls are like me; they always come face to face and never deceive", say the bullfighter in *Rosario la cortijera*; "If you perform well, she will come back to you", suggests a friend to *Currito de la Cruz*.

These allusions and references, nevertheless, are not supported by any visual reinforcement, typical of French and North-American cinema. Spanish films lack montages of links between bullfight and seduction. Similarly, in the sequences of the fatal goring, associations of the bullfighter's death to the bull's death do not prevail. The bull in Spanish cinema has transcendent meanings and values of success or failure; and only infrequently is an immanent creature.

As above mentioned, the animal is presented as the custodian of the idyllic harmony on the farm (*Rosario la cortijera*); it first appears onscreen in order to allow the social progression of a low-class man, without the need to visually link his debut to the presence of his lover in the audience (*Sangre y arena*); for 'Romerita' in *Currito de la Cruz*, the bullfighter's death is "like a biblical punishment" (del Rey Reguillo 2007: 87); the bull provides "glorious and applauded" victories over and above that of a wealthy man or women (*¡Viva Madrid que es mi pueblo!*; *Currito de la Cruz*). Bulls acquire a greater importance than human relationships: even marrying a good woman can "achicar" (belittle) the man (*La malcasada*).

In the crucial scenes, the role of the bull is developed through editing to refer to the social relationships between men: performances, close ups of the bull's snout, gorings and stabbings are linked to social discourses. The bull raises the man-citizen: "In Spain there is but one profession: bullfighting" (*¡Viva Madrid que es mi pueblo!*).

Instead, what unites the different taurine cinemas, regardless of their country of origin, is the absence of subjective shots of the animal (apart from few shots in which the animal is charging the matador). The different cultural sensibilities regarding the bull as a living creature killed in a public spectacle are not revealed through P.O.V. shots nor through the editing. Despite debates between *taurinos* and *antitaurinos*<sup>52</sup> which were already heated in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (McKinty 2015b), in cinema the representation of the bull is merely symbolic, never *per se*. Anti-tauromachy sentiments and reflections are mainly focused on social questions in films. Eventual nuances of criticism of tauromachy are related to the welfare of men, rather than on animal welfare. In general, *cine taurino* does not differ from other genres or styles in the representation of animals, including Surrealism and Avant-garde, such as the cinema of Luis Buñuel and Sergei Eisenstein (Durgnat 1977: 18; De la Vega Alfaro 2015: 34).

Though Buñuel professed his moral rejection of animal suffering (Fuentes 2000: 105), he had no ethical difficulties in shooting long scenes of bullfighting, such as in *La fièvre monte à El Pao* (1959). Similarly, the Soviet filmmaker, openly impressed by tauromachy, exploited the image of the bull as an emblem for Mexican society in *¡Qué viva México!* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1931). The bulls always represent something else. Whether they represent human brutality whether divine justice, animals in films, as in literature and other arts, are never simply animals (Burt 2002; Fudge 2002).

With its specific treatment of bulls, bullrings, bullfighters, and women, Spanish *cine taurino* emerges and develops with uniqueness and distinction. Bullfighting in cinema shapes debates on a virile and Catholic nation whilst simultaneously distancing itself – or attempting to do so – from ‘other’ national cinemas which are also competitors. In fact, it is interesting to note how Spanish taurine cinema, in contrast to the Portuguese and Mexican equivalents, suffers an ‘invasion’ of foreign films with Spanish themes.

In Portugal, taurine documentaries are predominant over fiction until the 1930s: its specific identity in *cine taurino* remains linked, during the silent era, to ethnographic depictions of their local *fiestas* (*Uma grande tourada à corda nas*

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<sup>52</sup> People pro-tauromachy and against tauromachy.

*Doze Ribeiras – Ilha Terceira dos Açores*, António Luís Lourenço da Costa, 1929) or to extol the Portuguese (masculine) virtues (*Tourada à Antigua Portuguesa*, Anonymous 1932). Conversely, following the appearance of Spanish bullfighter ‘Jarameño’ in *Santa* (1918), Mexico seeks its own national spirit through a series of films involving Mexican bullfighters - especially Rodolfo Gaona - and particularly through the portrayal of the *charro*<sup>53</sup> bullfighter, as in *Oro, sangre y sol* (Rafael Trujillo, 1925). With sound cinema, the encounters-disagreements between these two archetypes, the Spanish and the *charro* bullfighter, will be a predominant subplot of many Mexican film scripts, by symbolically placing the authentic (and republican) American nation against the former Spanish conqueror which, reminiscent of its colonial past, seeks to reign in the American bullrings.

Mexican revolutionary, liberal, and nationalist propaganda is reflected in its cinema through the revival of its own folklore: dances, music, *ranchos*, and suggestive locations promoted a specific Mexicanness (de los Reyes 2011: 58-74). In this branch of taurine cinema, Mexican nationalism mixes with themes of differentiation from the ‘mother land’, monarchist and colonialist, through filmic confrontations between *mariaquis* and Spanish guitars; *jarabe tapatío* and flamenco dances; *chinas poblanas*<sup>54</sup> and Spanish gypsies; *charro* bullfighters against *señoritos* bullfighters. Sometimes, subtle discourses of hispanophobia and hispanophilia are mixed, as in the case of *¡Ora, Ponciano!* (Gabriel Soria, 1936) (Vázquez Mantecón 2001).

The dynamics of nationalist discourses within the various traditions of *cine taurino* can almost be summarised through a *reductio* focused on specific masculinities. In fact, early 20<sup>th</sup> Century nationalisms contributed to the formation of an idealised masculinity combined with racial ideals (Mosse 1996). Bullfighters, particularly in Mexican and Spanish taurine cinema, embody their respective nations just as archetypal masculinities have represented racial and cultural characteristics of a nation in other contemporary national cinemas, such

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<sup>53</sup> The *charros* are the cowboys from the Jalisco region, an area which is representative of national cultural stereotyping, including in cinema, similar to Andalusia in Spain and Ribatejo in Portugal. The *charros*, like the Portuguese *campinos* or the Spanish *vaqueros*, are involved in bull breeding and some bullfighters have a *charro* background. They stand out due to their unique dress, with a particular hat (the *sombrero*) which has become globally popular.

<sup>54</sup> *China poblana* is the female equivalent of a *charro*.

as the fighter Maciste and the Italianness (Reich 2015) or the cowboy in westerns (Coyne 1998).

However, Spanish silent *cine taurino*, opposite to Mexican and Portuguese cinema, has a special and powerful antagonist in its business: the foreign *españolada*. In Spain, cinematic representations of the nation are also used to differentiate themselves from 'orientalist' perspectives, foreign counterfeiting of Spanishness. The cultural debate therefore ranges from commercial aspirations and strategies to 'nationalise' films dealing with Spain, and the intellectual need to distinguish Spanish cinema from the foreign *españolada* (García Carrión 2013). The first decades of Spanish *cine taurino* reflect a complex critical debate: with the sheer quantity of *españoladas* it is necessary to promote Spanish cinema.

## **2.5 Spanish cinema versus *españolada***

### **2.5.1 Critics, filmmakers, censors: battles won, wars lost**

The place of tauromachy in Spanish cinema does not restrict its importance as a film genre or subgenre that has produced a noticeable number of films. Bullfighting as a theme is an integral part of reflections and controversies, both in the business world and in intellectual circles, opposed to the invasion of foreign *españoladas*. The production and distribution of Spanish-themed films by foreign companies provoke a considerable argument within the national cinema industry and the press.

From the 1910s onward, producers and directors claim a patriotic role as filmmakers. To the will to make cinema is added the intention to create an artwork; in the words of Blasco Ibáñez, "for Art and for the Nation" (Vinaixa 1916). Similarly to Films H. B. Cuesta, producers seek to promote Spanish themes or, as the production company Barcinógrafo, to adapt distinguished literary works by authors such as Cervantes and Calderón de la Barca, to spread national culture. However, although the initial gaze is more centripetal, in the 1920s the focus regularly shifts to the comparison and the controversy with other national cinema industries. The Madrid magazine *La Pantalla* becomes one of the key publications in the debate: in 1928 it organises the

Spanish Cinema Conference, and between March and June 1929 promotes a survey on which approach should national cinema have (García Carrión 2013: 83).

Concerns in cinema for Spanishness and its portrayal in foreign films occupy considerable space in publications and press. One of the concerns of film critic Alfredo Serrano, author of the first critical study on Spanish cinema in 1925, is the treatment of Spanish themes and characters in foreign films, produced without any knowledge or respect for the Spanish 'race' (Serrano 1925). Publications openly support theories on the lack of ability of foreigners to deal with Spanish themes, urging national productions to promote in their films an authentic portrayal of Spanish idiosyncrasies. Amongst economic concerns and more or less sincere political ideals, the polemic reaches a notably widespread and severe climax. In these controversies, *cine taurino* is almost a constant presence.

In *Cine-Revista*, Arturo de Acevedo (1922: 8) analyses the unique interest that Spain arises abroad, not for its historic ruins, like Italy, or ludic attractions, as in Montecarlo. Spain attracts attention for the "preservation of its legends": in Spain one does not visit historic amphitheatres, but rather enjoys a bullfight. Whilst the interest of foreign cinema in authentic Spanish heritage is laudable, it can become a "deeply damaging calumny". The author cites Ernst Lubitsch's *Carmen* (1918) and other successful cinematic adaptations as an example of cultural defamation. Of the German film, Acevedo is deeply annoyed by the fact that the bullfighter appears "walking around the cafes and his house, showing off his bullfighting outfit and carrying a sword, just like a military officer". On top of that, in the bullfight the matador begins the performance by wielding his sword "as in a duel". The article ends with a rhetorical question hoping for a properly organised national cinema industry: "Who better than ourselves could portray the customs of Spain to the world through cinema?" (Ibid).

The debate about authentic Spanish cinema compared to the more vulgar *españolada* becomes so pointed that even Mexican cinema is not exempt from controversies in specialist publications. The Spanish premiere of *El relicario* by Miguel Contreras Torres (1927) in February 1928 is met with irritation from the critics who do not hesitate to highlight the Madrid audience's rejection of the film for being Mexican and not Spanish: "It was almost entirely set in Mexico, with a

Mexican author, director, and lead actor [...] The bullfighter Gaona, with his Indian complexion, even tries to play a character from our country" ('El relicario' 1928: 7-8). Issues of race in a production of a Spanish-themed film not only imply the authors and production team nationality, but also the bullfighter star Rodolfo Gaona, considered ethnically inappropriate to portray a Spanish man.

In 1928 Miguel Contreras Torres again scandalises critics with *El león de la Sierra Morena*, a film of *bandoleros*. Faced with attempts to ban the film, accused with misrepresenting national life, the director claims Spanish ancestry in order to defend his right to deal with certain topics. In an interview for magazine *La Pantalla* the Mexican states: "I love Spain like my own country, Mexico, because Spain is, if I may say so, also my land; because my grandparents were Spanish and my blood is Spanish. I have worked in Mexican cinema and then in Hollywood, and I wanted to come to Spain to make a clear and emphatically Spanish film" (cited in García Carrión 2013: 175).

The interest in the defence of an authentic representation of race is not reciprocated, particularly comparing echoes of *mexicanada* in Spanish films. For instance, in *La malcasada*, Spanish actor José Nieto is acclaimed in his role as a Mexican bullfighter. An extensive reportage in *ABC* omits any reference to the main character's origins and focuses on the presence of national characters in numerous cameos, indicating his delight with the film as a clear example of "genuine Spanish cinema": a film which marks the "position of national cinema", as "tastefully Spanish" (Martínez de la Riva 1926: 8-10).

In the debates on authentic national cinema and foreign misrepresentations, few foreign films about bullfighting are absolved from the *españolada* label. Amongst them, Jacques Feyder's *Carmen* (1926), considered respectful of the racial depiction of Carmen, interpreted by Spanish star Raquel Meller, and of emblematic Spanish settings, such as the bullring. The choice of Ronda's bullring as the set for the bullfights is appreciated for being "the oldest Spanish bullring, with authentic decorations", and the presence of Guerrero de Sandoval in the role of the bullfighter is highlighted ('Carmen, por Raquel Meller' 1927). The reviews of the premiere laude the choice of Mérimée's novel as a source, considered "less stereotypical" than Bizet's work ('Carmen, en el Real Cinema' 1927). *Popular Film* praises Feyder's film as "clearly Spanish" in spite being a French production, not only for the choice of the novel, but also for combining

the film with authentic Spanish music, in place of music by Bizet, whose opera is considered as a “*falsa españolada*” (Desjardins 1926: 3).

With controversies about distribution, bans and censorship of the most offensive foreign *españoladas* (‘Las españoladas en el cine’ 1927), at the end of the 1920s national cinema is included in the evaluations. Spanish films can actually risk exaggeration in their imitation of foreign cinematic models in order to compete with international productions. In an attempt of repossess the word, *Fotogramas* claims the term *españolada* should be correctly applied to a Spanish production, but warns about the use of simplistic social theorems developed through *cine taurino*:

Therefore, we think that the lives of bullfighters, of former bandits, etc., etc., are elements which should not be dismissed but, on the contrary, they should be used [...]. What should be attempted is the avoidance of screening signs which clearly state that the only method in Spain to become rich and famous is by becoming a bullfighter, because it is neither true nor was it ever and, even if it were, we should be saying it ourselves (Antem 1929: 25).

Tauromachy is aesthetically appropriate for cinema: sometimes, critics absolve a national production considered mediocre because of successful taurine scenes, such as in *El patio de los naranjos*. *Fotogramas* reviews the film as technically poor, but negative judgements are mitigated by positive comments about bullfights scenes, considered “as a strong cinematic expression which appears very original and attractive” (‘El patio de los naranjos, en el Cine Bilbao’ 1927).

Both in critiques of false *españoladas* and of ‘real’ Spanish cinema, the presence of the bullfight is never questioned. However, Luis Gómez Mesa, renowned film reviewer, though declaring his personal patriotic spirit and his sympathy for bullfighting, recognises that “the distribution abroad of anything concerning tauromachy brings us more harm, culturally, than benefit” (Gómez Mesa 1928: 4). The general concern is about distortions of the image of the nation which certain films promote *ad intra* and *ad extra*: misrepresentations are exported around the world, but they can also corrupt native spectators. For this reason, attitudes often include support for censorship, with pleas for government interventions: “Prevent once and for all this improper mockery promoted by certain unscrupulous foreign producers [...]. Let them do it in their own country” (‘Películas que deben prohibirse’ 1928: 25).

The controversy on *españolada* and Spanish cinema will follow during the 1930s, where the republican Spain will face a harsh confrontation with Paramount for the scandal provoked by *The Devil is a Woman* (Josef von Sternberg, 1935), a film which leaves a mark in the history of Spanish censorship (Gubern 2009a: 124). The tormented triangle between a blonde Sevillian (Marlene Dietrich), a bullfighter, and a civil guard generates a fierce campaign of protectionism, including requests to destroy the original nitrates. The “shameful and offensive *españolada*” (‘Una españolada indigna e injuriosa’ 1935: 6), is accused of mocking Spanish women, bullfighters, and military figures.

In this prolonged argument, even the celebrated *Sangre y arena* is tainted. In fact, the American adaptation directed by Fred Niblo in 1922 does not appear on Spanish screens until 1928, the year of Blasco Ibáñez’s death, and two years after the death of Rudolph Valentino. The film receives positive reviews as a posthumous triumph for the author and the cinema star (‘Notas de Paramount’ 1928: 8). In an over-zealousness promotion, the film is praised as “the best adaptation of any novel to date” (‘Cine Ideal’ 1928: 40): a very different attitude from the critiques of 1922.

Indeed, on the night of the premiere in New York in 1922, the scandalised *ABC* reporter declares his disappointment for having experienced the umpteenth *españolada*: though he admits the film is aesthetically enjoyable, Spain is portrayed as “a province of Mexico” (De Zarraga 1922: 6). The film is considered a successful work “from a cinematic point of view”, but “from a Spanish point of view, it is much less so” (Ibid.).

Nothing is more effective in changing critics’ attitudes than marketing. The film, which takes six years to be distributed in Spain, achieves good results in the box office, as do many other foreign productions of taurine films. Compared to the first filmic adaptation directed by Blasco Ibáñez himself, the film shows almost all the characteristic elements of the highly criticised foreign *españolada*. In these two versions of the same novel, cultural meanings of bulls, bullfighters and bullfights become almost antithetic.

### 2.5.2 'Spanish cinema' versus the *españolada*: *Sangre y arena* (1917) and *Blood and Sand* (1922)

By placing the two films in a synoptic overview, a sort of formal congruence in the plot can be observed. In general, as summarised by Rafael Corbalán, both versions share the main plot, dealing with a man's attempts to reach fame and fortune through bullfighting. However, "For Blasco Ibáñez, it is social pressure which forces the bullfighter to put himself in front of the bull [...]. The interest of the Hollywood version is the passionate relationship and the submission of the bullfighter, the symbol of masculinity, to the attraction of the femme fatale that Doña Sol represents" (1999: 18).

As previously mentioned, the narrative structure of the novel, more 'cinematic' with its use of flashbacks, is transformed in the filmic adaptation. It is not only Blasco Ibáñez who chooses to narrate the story following a linear line of events; also Niblo's film begins with sequences on Juan Gallardo's miserable childhood. In spite of this similar narrative strategy, the opposing nuances, as summarised by Corbalán, are evident from the initial shots.

Both films follow the same temporal order: the poverty of Juan Gallardo's social background, fatherless and with few possessions; the need to become a bullfighter to escape destitution; the amateur bullfights in the countryside to prepare for his debut in Seville. However, whilst the *mise-en-scène* of the Spanish version connects his sacrifices to economic hardship without further additions, Niblo's version adds an interesting prologue inserting ontological qualities unique to Spaniards. Whilst Gallardo, as explained in the introductory title card, "is a son of the people", he belongs to an ethnic group with peculiar attributes: "To the Spaniards, the love of the bullfight is inborn. A heritage of barbarism, its heroes embody the bravery of the knights of old". *Blood and Sand* immediately shifts its focus on the parable of Gallardo as the product of a culture which not only turns to bullfighting to flee from poverty but does so due to an innate brutality. This same savageness, which sees him confront the bull and gives him the strength to pursue his dreams, is reflected in all of the protagonist's human and professional relationships.

Gallardo, as interpreted by Rudolph Valentino, travels around towns and villages leaving his mother anxiously awaiting his return ("For five days the

widow Gallardo had not heard from her son"). Despite having a limited education, he succeeds through his courage: his contempt for his life in front of the bull comes from a lack of intellectual mediation. The man is like "the old Spanish conquerors, who laughed at death", and is unable to overcome his "mad fascination" with Doña Sol. His life is dominated by his instincts and his actions are not thought through, making them somewhat contradictory. Gallardo-Valentino satisfies carnal desires and mistreats women, abusing of them both verbally and physically. The matador compares Doña Sol to the biblical snake of temptation, and claims his hatred of all women, in a sequence of a post-bullfight celebration in which his adrenaline pushes him through a dance with a gypsy, and ends with his pushing the woman to the ground. He declares his love only to Carmen, his legitimate wife: however, she is suffering constant lies and betrayals.

Fred Niblo's film is a succession of dramatic scenes morally amplified by title cards, and almost always connected to Gallardo's violent profession: he is rough because of the brutality of his profession which, after all, is not so different from the activity of the bandit 'Plumita'. It is the *bandolero* who explains the analogy: "Señor Juan, you and I are much alike. We both live by killing. Only you get the plaudits of the world!" The ego and the animal instincts of the bullfighter are nurtured by the acceptance of a society which has similar characteristics to its protagonist.

Juan Gallardo in the 1917 Spanish film, conversely, is almost naïve in comparison with the sensuality of Rudolph Valentino. Focused on his own wellbeing, he does not frequent flamenco taverns after his bullfights, preferring to return home and, after a family meal, to read the report of his performance in *La Lidia*, the most prestigious bullfighting magazine. The Gallardo of Blasco Ibáñez, both in his novel and his film, is an ambitious and self-centred young man, focused on economic gain.

The narrative structure of *Blood and Sand* follows the sequential dynamic of successful performances in the bullring; success with women; marriage to Carmen; and infatuation with Doña Sol. The structure of *Sangre y arena* portrays the dealings of a former sub-proletarian man who wants to conquer the world. Soon after his debut in the arena, Gallardo chooses a trusted friend to become his agent, and Carmen, "a childhood friend" and suitable woman to

become his official partner. He promises to marry her once he is rich and famous. The Spanish Gallardo follows the standards imposed by (Spanish) society, and the script displays the progress of this brave citizen. The man prays before the bullfight, performs, triumphs, and earns multi-million contracts: this all takes place within a logical and ordered series of short scenes with brief title cards, yet without the moralistic emphasis of Niblo's film. Both the visual style and the words of *Sangre y arena* provide a philosophical *epoché* in which moral judgements are initially suspended. On the contrary, Fred Niblo's film starts with pre-determined moralistic assumptions.

Indeed, in order to emphasise drama and downfall, Niblo creates an additional character, the philosopher Don Joselito, an expert in "humanity and human cruelty", enthused by a comparative study of the lives of the bullfighter and the bandit 'Plumita'. Whilst Don Joselito asks himself at the start if Gallardo's "love for Carmen will overcome the plaudits of the populace and the cruelty of the national sport", he later offers his own answer as a moral warning: "Happiness and prosperity built on cruelty and bloodshed cannot survive". The character of the republican *banderillero* 'El Nacional', a member of Gallardo's *cuadrilla* who in the novel represents the inner voice of Blasco Ibáñez (Corbalán 1999: 16), loses importance in the American filmic version, confined to the role of confidante for Gallardo's romantic woes.

*Sangre y arena* does not portray the social opinions of 'El Nacional' either. In the novel, he constantly condemns bullfighting as a negative reflection of society, complaining about the lack of education and culture which for him are the true means to a better life. In the 1917 film, his role is restricted to the moral ending of the story, with a shot of his saddened face following the death of the bullfighter whilst the "senseless crowd" continues watching the bullfight in spite of the tragedy. However, in the Spanish version the social critique of 'El Nacional' is embedded in the script.

The string of events progresses differently throughout the narrative development of the two films. Juan Gallardo's decline in Fred Niblo's version is fast, and linked to the matador's insane love for Doña Sol. From the beginning of the extra-marital relationship, the story moves quickly to the visit of Doña Sol to Gallardo's country house and their meeting with the bandit 'Plumita'. From there, a temporal ellipsis shows the matador's last bullfight. The script

announces the bullfighter is performing in the bullring under the weight of a dissolute life.

Conversely, Blasco Ibáñez gives a more gradual portrayal of Gallardo's demise, connecting it with his moral downfall: to his illicit relationship with Doña Sol follows a goring as a warning, to which the bullfighter responds with initial remorse. When Doña Sol reappears in his life, the matador's success in the bullring is affected, and he loses support from *aficionados* of the 'sol'. Blasco Ibáñez details this moment with sequences of bullfights in which the bullfighter attempts to recover his place in society as a popular idol, totally absent in the North-American version. The Spanish film focuses on the matador's downfall because of his greedy self-centredness. Even his gambling addiction is linked to professional disappointments more than emotional reasons: after reading in the press a negative chronicle of his bullfight, Gallardo "surrenders to gambling to forget his failures".

Bullfighting, which has given him so much, turns against him; the man is unable to find peace in his profession. Each image of a bull becomes a *memento mori*. In addition to the warning from the first goring, Gallardo tries to recover serenity by visiting the bullring stables and by contemplating the bulls. However, he meets there a former bullfighter who now "lives in misery in oblivion", begging for a donation. The man warns Gallardo: "The audience quickly forgets". As with the previous warning, Gallardo does not pay attention to him, filled with blind pride, declaring that his "wonderful life, full of glory" will never be ridiculed or forgotten. With this spirit, the bullfighter faces his final bullfight.

The stereotypical depiction of the bullfighter as an erotic Latin fantasy, and a dangerous risk for the Anglo-Saxon woman (Corbalán 1998: 116), does not match the Spanish filmic embodiment. The two Juan Gallardos are conceived from distinct pedagogies which accord to opposed cultural visions. Rudolph Valentino's Gallardo, the 'other' Latin-lover, is contrasted to the Spanish man who aspires to be a *señorito*. These two perspectives – one of an exotic man who lives on instinct and one of an ambitious young man who cannot survive outside his social space – differentiate between the 'foreign *españolada*' and Spanish cinema.

In Niblo's production, the film is shaped around Valentino's stardom, built on the peculiar sensuality of his previous roles in *The Sheik* (George Melford, 1921) and in another adaptation of a Blasco Ibáñez novel, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (Rex Ingram, 1921):

Valentino was the quintessential Latin Lover of his generation. [...] In *Blood and Sand*, both his physical energy in bullfighting scenes, and his sexual energy with Nita Naldi's Doña Sol, were designated to liberate North Americans from their common mores. In the magical world of an imaginary Spain ordinary rules of conduct do not apply, making possible a passion that was not permitted in the Puritan and Deistic traditions of the United States (Cumberland 1998: 51).

In Blasco Ibáñez's film, the role of Juan Gallardo is played by an unknown actor<sup>55</sup>, free from *costumbrista* exaggerations and overacting. The actor's body language is never disproportionate, and subtly suggests Gallardo's discomfort in social events and ease in domestic scenes: the bullfighter appears relaxed only with his mother, his wife, and those from his social class.

In general, studies dedicated to the Spanish filmic version offer similar textual analyses, highlighting social tensions more than romantic nuances (Corbalán 1998 and 1999; Claver Esteban 2012: 260-70; Faulkner 2013: 18-21). Faulkner's research underlines Blasco Ibáñez's film as an example of middle-class moralism, with a subtle manichaeism in the depiction of the working-class. In addition to Gallardo's inability to operate outside of his social milieu, *Sangre y arena* insists on depicting common people, both in their collective representation in the bullring and as individual characters (Gallardo's sister, brother-in-law, *cuadrilla*), in a generally unpleasant way. In the ridiculed bad taste of Gallardo's brother-in-law, and in the medium and full shots of the "senseless crowd", can be denoted a negative depiction of the working class and the masses. The camera treats with more favour middle and upper class characters: "For all Ibáñez's democratic approach, *Blood and Sand* in fact ultimately divides the people by flattering only a distinct, middle-class audience" (Faulkner 2013: 21).

Finally, the two versions differ in the allegory of the bull. The 'North-American' bull is given an exclusively anthropomorphic role, often matched with

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<sup>55</sup> The first name of the actor is uncertain. The copy restored by the Spanish Film Archive (Madrid) calls him M. Luis Alcaide. In literature, it is also listed as P. Alcaide (i.e. Sacks da Silva 2004: 331).

Juan Gallardo, particularly accentuated by the editing of the bullfighter's death. Fred Niblo places the death of the bull and of the matador in the same perspective, through a long shot of the two lifeless bodies separated by a puddle of blood, followed by the words of the wise Don Joselito. He sadly comments on the tragedy with three exclamations: "Poor matador", "Poor beast!", and "Out there is the real beast".

The claim that the audience represents the real beast is also made at the end of *Sangre y arena*, but again the focus is different. The association between the animal space, the bullring, and the human world, emphasised by the scenes of the corridas in Fred Niblo's film, is mitigated by Blasco Ibáñez. Indeed, the scenes of the bullfights and the shots of the bull are, in his adaptation, of only a short duration. As Benet highlights, the emotion of the corrida is treated "in quite a dubious and unexciting manner, almost leaving out the corridas entirely. In any case, the theme which appears to really interest Blasco Ibáñez, and to which he directs his sermon, [...] is the audience cruelty" (2012: 49-50).

In *Sangre y arena*, the scarcity of scenes featuring the bull and the bullfighter's performances are notable. Considering the attraction of bullfighting in films and its potential in their promotion, it is surprising to find few taurine scenes. In a period in which cinema has found a valid and profitable ally in bullfighting, the Valencian author inserts the bull only in necessary sequences (the dedication to Doña Sol, the gorings, etc.) without exploiting tauromachy's visual potential. The cameras stay more on the public than on what happens in the arena, prioritising critical focus on social aspects of Spanish society, to the detriment of the promotion of myths linked to bullfighting. From the frames containing the bullfighter fighting for a place in society, the camera often moves to the faces and reactions of spectators.

At the end of the film, Ibáñez adds a further parallel. The removal of the dead body of 'Plumita', shot by a civil guard in the area surrounding the bullring, creates an analogy with the matador and the bull, united by the common denominator of death (Corbalán 1998: 104). In the turmoil of events, a title card combines with a long shot of the audience, moving impatiently around the seated area: "Back to your seats! Sit down!" Spectators-citizens, belonging to different social classes, must remain in place.

Blasco Ibáñez also makes few concessions to romance in his film: only the courtship and the mutual seduction between the bullfighter and Doña Sol are accompanied by sequences shot in romantic natural locations, such as the cities of Seville and Granada. It is therefore surprising to read Sánchez Salas claiming that the writer changed the story from his realist novel for the film, adding the romance and the bullfights for commercial purposes, diminishing the original social critique and betraying his assumed anti-bullfighting ideals. In his opinion, *Sangre y arena* is adapted by the writer as a “melodrama in which the romantic and taurine plots, and secondly the promotion of exoticism for foreign spectators, take precedence over all other aspects” (Sánchez Salas 2010: 173). The anti-bullfighting spirit of Blasco Ibáñez, however, is not analysed in Sánchez Salas’ study, staying on a level of generic assumptions linked to the writer’s indifference towards attending corridas.

The business dynamism of Blasco Ibáñez, with his special ability to profit from his cultural productions, is not a recent evaluation. Blasco Ibáñez was, indeed, an excellent promoter of his work: his ability to develop commercial relationships with Hollywood studios was notable, and because of this the critics did not forgive him for selling his soul to “Yankee-land” (‘La obra y la vida de Blasco Ibáñez’ 1928: 3). The author did not have concerns about ‘orientalist’ adaptations of his texts: he worked on a number of occasions with producers and scriptwriters in Hollywood and sold them original screenplays of popular films (Corbalán 1998: 123-56). As a republican and progressive intellectual, he never felt contradictions between his intellectual and political aspirations and his commercial ambitions, and defended his practice of writing for the masses without the need to “live like a monk” in order to maintain his intellectual dignity (Ibid.: 57).

Actually, his cinematic adaptation does not lose its social focus despite being a popular film with romantic nuances. The production avoids many of the oversimplifications of the *españolada*, distancing itself from excesses, including the bullfighting performances. The intertextuality of the scarce bullfights in Blasco Ibáñez’s film fosters social discourses more than psycho-sexual symbolisms. The film does not represent, *strictu sensu*, a taurine film, as claimed by Sánchez Salas, nor can Blasco Ibáñez be considered in *strictu*

*sensu* an *antitaurino*. The writer-filmmaker, in fact, disapproved of corridas only for their social implications.

For him, bullfighting is a vulgar social reflection of a retrograde nation which dedicates more space to public killings than to the education of its citizens. The novel emphasises its disappointments with the nation which sends humans to death in order to quench the public's thirst for blood. It also regrets on a number of occasions the lack of opportunities for those who genuinely wish to have another chance, such as 'El Nacional'. Gallardo's republican *banderillero* curses his country, his profession, and the environment in which he was born and raised, because it did not offer him any escape other than stabbing sharp sticks into a bull's neck. However, bullfighting in itself as a 'problem' is merely circumstantial: Blasco Ibáñez scorns bullfighting for being an obstacle to the cultural development of the nation. If it were not so important and promoted by politicians who anaesthetise people with 'bread and bulls' (the Spanish version of 'bread and circuses'), there would be no moral difficulties at all.

The writer himself explains his position in relation to bullfighting in an article published in 1900 by *El Pueblo*, in order to avoid a misinterpretation of his humanist sensitivities:

Bullfights do not excite me. On a rare evening, accompanying some foreigners as an obligated guide, I may go to the bullring. And I do not like this spectacle because it is boring and monotonous. [...] But if I find the event boring, I cannot stop laughing at all those who curse it on behalf of civilisation, saying that it is a school of brutality and the primary cause of our country's misfortune. What about French horse races? Or boxers in England and the United States? Or cock fights in Belgium? Or the monstrous and horrible drunken gatherings which have become institutional in northern countries? (cited in Smith 1982: 176).

Predicting his future novel and film, he recognises the artistic potential of tauromachy:

The country which is free from brutal pastimes, the shame of the human race, speaks now against bullfights which, despite being monotonous for me and many others, will always be more entertaining and artistic than watching a race of scrawny horses, or two fat idiots destroying their faces with punches, or two revolting cocks with bare backsides scraping at each other with spurs. If there is some distinction to be made in universal brutality, let it be favourable to bullfighting, for being the spectacle presenting least danger to the audience (ibid.).

In his filmic adaptation of *Sangre y arena*, Blasco Ibáñez does not betray his supposed ideals of *antitaurinismo*. On the contrary, it uses them as a visual tool for social discourses. At the same time, the film does not focus on depictions of the beauty of performances in the bullring. Other filmmakers in the 1920s will achieve greater success in this regard, particularly from the second half of the decade, producing bullfighting films with a more 'political' propaganda. However, this comparative textual reading of the two first versions of *Sangre y arena* permits the closure of this first stage in the history of taurine cinema, dedicated to its genesis and development in the silent period, as an example of 'foreign' *españolada* and Spanish cinema.

Blasco Ibáñez's version contains, as an unquestionable primary source of the cinematic genre, the main elements of Spanish cine taurino, just as the film by Fred Niblo encompasses the fundamental characteristics of the *españolada*. The portrayal of the nation in taurine films until the end of the silent period defines two distinct versions of the citizen: the Latin Lover in Hollywood films and the social climber in Spanish productions. The bullring and the bull become the world stage, and the animal is symbolically transformed into the reflection of the man's soul, or into a merciless but fair god. Spanish cinema's search for and vision of the ideal nation, leaves a legacy of political defence for the social *status quo*. Its films present, with more or less emphasis, a world of ordered social classes in which social mobility is only partially permissible for the brave, virile, and Christian citizen. Not even the republican intellectual Blasco Ibáñez allows space for greater social mobility.

In 1928, the film which symbolically ends the consolidation of the genre, *¡Viva Madrid que es mi pueblo!*, directed by the later Falangist Fernando Delgado, harmonises the values of its contemporary political regime with the classic plot of cine taurino, as provided by *Sangre y arena*. The film marks a more definite alliance between marketing strategies and nationalist purposes to portray an ideal Spain: "On the one hand, the "international" tendency, or rather the influence on styling, content, and practices from Hollywood cinema [...]; on the other, the nationalist perspective of film as a means of mass communication in the construction of an imagined community" (Benet 2012: 67).

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE EVOLUTION OF *CINE TAURINO*: SOCIAL MOBILITY, CLASS STRUGGLE AND CONSUMERISM (1931-1975)

#### 3.1 Spanish *cine taurino*, Republic and Civil War

Major technical advances in film history often coincide with turbulent socio-political events in Spain. If the beginnings of the film industry occurred during the Spanish-American War, the introduction of sound starts during the transition from monarchy and Primo de Rivera's dictatorship to the Republic (1931). On the one hand, Spanish cinema evolves from silent to sound (1929-1931) during a complicated political period. On the other hand, the transition from silent to sound is not made easier by the endemic limitations of the industry, insufficient investment in technology, and the inability of the majority of theatres to adopt new systems of film projection (Cerdán 1997: 75). The new regime otherwise absorbed in the promotion of republican ideals, disregards cinema as a tool of propaganda, actually affecting its development.

Spanish filmmakers resort to different resources, moving film production or post-production to better equipped foreign studios, or attempting to adjust sound to images through the less advanced technology of accompanying projections with the soundtrack played on discs. Still under the monarchy, the first experiments end in failure: *Fútbol, amor y toros* (Florián Rey, 1929), a romantic taurine comedy whose plot evokes Romeo and Juliet, is a flop, running in theatres only for a few days (Sánchez Vidal 1991: 117). The consolidation of sound in films and the recovery of the weak industry are slow in comparison to foreign cinema, and during the Republic only two production companies, CIFESA and Filmófono, become competitive in the market. Only in 1936, with the outbreak of the Civil War, does Spanish cinema appear to have connected with its audience, "to the point of preferring it over North American cinema" (Gubern 2009a: 163).

National cinema barely addresses its attention to the new form of government: Román Gubern lists *Fermín Galán* (Fernando Roldán, 1931) as a

unique example of a proper “republican film” (Ibid.: 124). Spanish productions maintain a cultural liaison with the former cinema, adapting historic and folkloric dramas. Some successful titles from the silent period return, with sound, by the same director, as in the case of Rey, who repeats *La hermana San Sulpicio* in 1934 (his first version was released in 1927), once again with actress and singer Imperio Argentina as protagonist. Like Rey, other filmmakers (José Buchs, León Artola, Fernando Delgado, Ricardo de Baños, and Benito Perojo) attempt to incorporate the new technology into their films, with differing results. A new generation of directors appears in the market: it is in this period that professionals such as Juan de Orduña and Edgar Neville start their career.

A revival of remakes and adaptations of successful melodramas and zarzuelas, including *El relicario* (Ricardo de Baños, 1933), *El niño de las monjas* (José Buchs, 1935), *Rosario la cortijera* (León Artola, 1935), and *Currito de la Cruz* (Fernando Delgado, 1936), maintains popular *cine taurino*, with the addition of a few new titles (*El sabor de la gloria*, Fernando Roldán, 1932; *El niño de las coles*, José Gaspar, 1934; *Un día de toros*, Juan Pallejá, 1934). Rosario Pi adapts the acclaimed zarzuela *El gato montés* (1935). The outbreak of the Civil War in 1936 does not only divide the nation, but also almost paralyzes the industry. The lack of security and the economic struggle rarely allow taurine films to be shot on location (bullrings and countryside). In the war years, we are only aware of a few films with rural locations: *El torero herido* (Ricardo de Baños, 1938), *Tarde de toros* (Carlos Rigalt, 1939), and *Los apuros de un torero*, an unknown production of 1939 by Hércules Films about which there is no further information (Vallejo y Heinink 2009: 42).

*Carmen, la de Triana* (Florián Rey, 1938) is filmed in Berlin’s UFA studios, in a double German and Spanish version, and is premiered following the end of the conflict in 1939. The film, financed by Nazi Germany and starring Imperio Argentina, marks the beginning of the process of the Spanish re-appropriation of the myth of Carmen, overcoming past cultural resistances to portray an *españolada*. The story of the gypsy heroine will be the recipient of further textual variations which, as in Rey’s version, will sometimes include a political touch.

The analysis of the few preserved taurine films of this period shows a cultural continuity with the main elements of the cinematic genre, and the bull

maintains its primacy both as a spiritual symbol of creation's harmony and in its role of a punishing god. The sound version of *Rosario la cortijera* dedicates long sequences to the tranquillity of the bulls in the countryside; the animals manifest their fighting nature only due to a *deus-ex-machina* intervention. Alongside the key initial scene in which the *mayoral* saves the bull-breeder-bullfighter from a certain goring, a powerful finale involves the whole livestock. The tragedy unfolds through a sequence in which the *mayoral*, guiding the herd of bulls, blocks the car in which Rosario and the bullfighter are fleeing, the latter dying at the hands of his former friend. The bulls are depicted as fierce or docile according to the actions required in the script and, following the crime, facilitate the *mayoral's* escape.

*El relicario* equally follows consolidated narrative models of the genre: this second screen version of the film inspired by the popular song, and the first one produced by a Spanish company, also uses the woman as the cause of tragedy, a disturbing element for the men whom she has relationships with in the film. As in *Rosario la cortijera*, the *mayoral* commits a murder, although he does not kill the bullfighter. The protagonist Rocío is saved on two occasions by the *mayoral* 'Caranegra': the first time from a goring by a bull in the countryside; the second from an attempted rape which ends with the death of the farm owner's son. 'Caranegra' is imprisoned and Rocío, helpless, starts a relationship with matador 'El Macareno'. Out of prison, 'Caranegra' and 'El Macareno' confront each other; however, the bullfighter recognises the sacrifice of the *mayoral* in order to save Rocío, dedicating a bull to him. Unfortunately, the bullfighter is gored during the corrida, though he survives. 'Caranegra' understands he must leave Rocío who is living a better life with 'El Macareno'. Once again, the bull has acted with justice, pardoning the life of an innocent matador.

*El relicario* does not manage to launch the career of its leading actors; on the other hand, *Rosario la cortijera*, with popular singers Estrellista Castro and 'Niño de Utrera' in the roles of Rosario and 'Caranegra', marks the debut of film star Rafael Durán playing the role of the matador.

Bullfighters continue their idyllic relationship with cinema: Antonio García 'Maravilla' plays 'Romerita' in *Currito de la Cruz*; Luis Gómez 'El Estudiante' is the protagonist of *El niño de las monjas*; and Ricardo González, through his role

in *El sabor de la Gloria*, discovers that the professional world of cinema could present the solution to his problems within the bullring. As a victim of “the most terrible illness of bullfighters; that is, fear” (Fernández Cuenca 1963: 84), he retires from bullfighting and continues his career only in cinema.

The Republic ends the ban on women bullfighters, yet they remain outside the bullring’s social space in cinematographic representation. The performances of Juanita Cruz, the Spanish bullfighter then successful in Europe and America, are only recorded in Mexico. The *matadora* appears in the documentary *Mujeres que torear* (Ignacio Rangel, 1940) alongside the other most significant female bullfighter in history, the American Conchita Cintrón.

In addition to the invisibility of women bullfighters in cinema, the social changes initiated during the Republic, such as the Agrarian Reform in 1932, the educational policies to counter illiteracy, and the new civil rights, are also excluded from the themes of taurine cinema which, as other popular genres of Spanish cinema, maintains:

[...] very explicit and more conservative, if not reactionary, ideological propositions. It is therefore pertinent to ask if at the centre of the reformist and modernising Republic there was a cinema which would echo the most polemic and palpitating social and political questions. The answer is very disheartening (Gubern 2009a: 158).

The few attempts to produce a cinema *engagé*, for instance *Las Hurdes/Tierra sin pan* (Luis Buñuel, 1932), a documentary about the misery of mountain villages in Extremadura, experience problems of censorship. The right-wing republican government which wins the elections immediately after the premiere of Buñuel’s film in 1933, bans further screenings, considering the documentary contradictory to the vision of the nation promoted by the bourgeois government (Benet 2012: 120).

In general, taurine fiction cinema prolongs a cultural *fil rouge* with silent cinema, occasionally reinforcing some qualities linked to the archetype of the bullfighter as a citizen, using metaphors linked both to the civil and military world. The celebration of the matador as a distinguished citizen is made clear in *El gato montés*, whilst the association between the honour of a bullfighter and the dignity of a soldier in *Carmen, la de Triana*, produced during the Civil War, will particularly evolve during the first period of Franco’s dictatorship.

*El gato montés* displays a series of folkloric elements and personages with strong popular appeal: the film is set in Andalusia, and the protagonists are a gypsy woman, a bullfighter, and a *bandolero*, who form the classic love triangle. However, the cinematic *zarzuela* adds nuances about gender, ending with the tragic death of all three. The bullfighter dies in the bullring from a goring, the gypsy of a broken heart after the first death, and the *bandolero* allows himself to be murdered by his own band, unable to survive without the woman he loves.

Director Rosario Pi, in fact, inserts scenes into the original script, adding a feminist touch in the treatment of the female protagonist, Soleá (Melero 2010; Andújar Molina 2014), and challenging hegemonic narrative depictions of women: the morally antithetical portrayal of the male characters is built on their differing behaviour with Soleá. While the gypsy-*bandolero* Juanillo is only able to express his feelings for the woman through violence, the bullfighter 'El Macareno' behaves as a gentleman. The social distinction between the *bandolero* and the matador is introduced by two sequences shot in the same location, in which the men respond with opposite attitudes.

The woman wants to live freely in a world governed by men, but each time she reacts to verbal and physical harassment, she is reminded of her social and gender inferiority. Soleá is maltreated on two occasions by the clients of a tavern in which she goes to beg. However, in one sequence, Juanillo reacts with violence by stabbing the abusers, whilst in the other the bullfighter defends her with the power of his authoritative word. Following the parallelism of these sequences, an encounter between the protagonists takes place in the bullring, and again the action highlights the differences between the two men. Juanillo reacts to the bullfighter's courteous attitude toward Soleá with uncontrollable jealousy, commanding her to leave the bullring. The diametric social space of the main male characters is finally reinforced during the scene of Soleá's detention by the Civil Guard, in which the civic role of the bullfighter emerges in a facet previously unknown in *cine taurino*: the woman is released from prison thanks to the bullfighter's intervention. The Civil Guard accepts 'El Macareno' as a legal guarantor for the woman's good behaviour.

The bullfighter is also portrayed in Pi's film as sort of Pygmalion with a significant role in society, respectful of a woman's free will: the matador never tells Soleá what to do, but rather offers her support and love, acknowledging

man should not “possess” a woman’s body. Pi’s political view is therefore represented throughout the film not only through the characterisation of the woman, but also through the depiction of the positive masculine role of the bullfighter, here portrayed as a man who has civil rights and duties, independently of his ethnicity. Half-gypsy, ‘El Macareno’ has acquired a higher position on the social ladder through his profession.

The director’s treatment of gender remains a *unicum* in the group of taurine films produced in Republican Spain. The filmmaker is part of the long list of artists and intellectuals considered as ‘red’ (communist), who must choose exile as soon as the Francoist regime is installed: Pi, Buñuel, Carlos Velo, and many other cinema professionals (directors, actors, technicians, and musicians) move abroad, often ending their life and career with no chance to see their country again (Gubern 1976). Pi, in contrast to many of her male colleagues, does not manage to stay within the film industry, forming part of the list of female filmmakers erased from film history until recent times (Torres 2004: 274).

The forthcoming authoritarian regime will re-appropriate, with its forms and methodologies, any discourse about social classes’ and ethnic groups’ reconciliation. In his own way, the bullfighter will acquire new places and functions within an ideal equal society, in which peace has been restored under the shelter of Francoism. The gypsy bullfighter will also be liberated from social stigma, proudly showing off his origins, repeating (or often singing) his pride in being *calé* (gypsy). Gypsy bullfighters, such as Rafael Albaicín, will share lead roles with *payos* (non-gypsy) bullfighters in Spanish productions, whilst Joaquín Rodríguez ‘Cagancho’, protagonist of the Mexican film *Los amores de un torero* (José Díaz Morales, 1945), will contribute to the consolidation of the exotic and fascinating character of the Spanish gypsy bullfighter in foreign cinema.

The second distinguishing quality of the bullfighter in 1930’s Spanish *cine taurino*, the soldier’s honour, is promoted by a film produced during the Civil War. *Carmen, la de Triana*, a free adaptation of *Carmen* directed by Florián Rey, also portrays the male characters through their relationship with a gypsy woman but, contrary to Rosario Pi’s depiction, also conveys meanings of masculine moral superiority through sophisticated parallelisms between the soldier Don José and the matador Antonio Vargas Heredia.

Indeed, in *El gato montés*, the civil role of the bullfighter is depicted in contrast to the *bandolero*'s defects. 'El Macareno' represents everything that the *bandolero* is not: democratic and respectful of women's rights, a brave man and a respected citizen. Conversely, in Rey's film the bullfighter possesses the same qualities as his male antagonist, the soldier Don José who becomes a *bandolero* because of Carmen. Furthermore, the political nuances of the film, directed by a filmmaker enlisted with Franco's rebels and directly co-produced by the German Nazi government, reinforce militarist aspects of the bullfighter so illustrating the similarity of spirit to a fighting soldier. The model of the matador-fighter, in the following years will match the model of the bullfighter-religious minister, associating the patriotism of matadors to the martyrdom of soldiers and priests.

With this original adaptation, Spanish cinema also starts the re-appropriation of the myth of *Carmen*, French in its origins and Spanish in its themes, with an "underlying fear of national identity when figured by the female. In the key Spanish *Carmen* films, responsibility for the assertion of nationality must be taken over by male characters" (Perriam and Davies 2007: 156). Actually, the national spirit is embodied in Rey's film by matador Antonio Vargas Heredia and soldier Don José, both martyrs because of Carmen's sins. Though the bullfighter is still represented through the stereotype of the bon viveur, his character is soon linked in the film to the soldier by a sequence in the tavern, in which Carmen dedicates a *copla* about Vargas Heredia to Don José. Carmen stares into Don José's eyes while singing her *copla* about a man "so good, so handsome, and so honourable", in prison "because of a gypsy woman". The song acquires a prophetic allure. The two good, handsome and honourable men will share the same destiny. As well as the bullfighter, Don José loses his honour and freedom because of Carmen. In addition to that, both men will die.

The shift towards the centrality of male characters in this version of *Carmen* is also due to the excessive intervention of the German producers, as concerned as the Spanish about positive portrayals of masculinity and the military world, altering the script away from an exaggerated celebration of *costumbrismo* (Muñoz Aunión 2009: 46). The bullfighter and the soldier, introduced by shared virtues as listed in Carmen's song, are battling for the same woman through a face-to-face confrontation about who has renounced

more for the love of Carmen, both underlining lost honour: the one through imprisonment, the other through his new life as an outlaw. Finally, the traditional storyline of Carmen is distorted with a reversed finale, in which Carmen outlives both men. The bullfighter dies from a goring during a corrida attended by Carmen: when he picks up a carnation thrown into the ring by the gypsy woman, he is gored by the bull on his back. Don José, discovering that the *bandoleros* are organising an attack on his former platoon, chooses to sacrifice his own life for the sake of his comrades. The man is rehabilitated *post-mortem* and receives a military funeral.

Once again, the parallel between the bullfighter and the soldier is suggested with an analogous visual link, associating the military elements at the funeral of Don José with the religious symbols in the bullring chapel at the death of the bullfighter. The deaths of the two men are followed by Carmen's mourning and repenting, creating a moral *trait d'union* between the victims. Whilst the soldier's funeral displays flags and soldiers in uniform, after the death of the matador Carmen is focused on by the camera before a large crucifix, near the bullfight poster which highlights the day of the corrida: 14<sup>th</sup> September, the Feast of the Cross. The nation and the faith are united through the sacrifice of two heroic men.

This film marks the emergence of a more political orientation of popular cinema: "Linked to the political circumstances of the period in which they were carried out, a metamorphosis of the *españolada* was created which would delineate the trajectory for development during the Franco dictatorship. The most notable case is *Carmen, la de Triana*" (Benet 2012: 147). The film is produced when the Civil War divides the nation, its families, and also the film industry: both Republicans and Francoists produce fiction films and distribute documentaries and newsreel with financial help of foreign allies. As soon as Franco wins the war, the help of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany will continue to promote a cinema used as an intentional weapon of political propaganda. During the War, bullfighting in cinema, as real bullfighting, is linked to the opposing values represented by the two sides.

Bullfighting is split in two: across the nation, corridas are organised to support one or other political regime, and only later on tauromachy becomes a symbol of *one* specific Spain. In general, the world of bullfighting, composed of

different social groups (from aristocrat land-owners to subproletarian *banderilleros*) responds to the Civil War according to class affinity, or simply struggling to survive in each side:

It is curious that the evolution of the war can be observed alongside bullfighting. The fiesta nacional is intertwined with political and military events, like a phenomenon worth being studied by sociologists. Each day of the conflagration produces something to do with bulls or with bullfighters. It can be a bullfight unusually close to the front, or some bullfighters joining the national side or the *banderilleros* the republicans; patriotic festivals, or overexploited bull farms. There is a dramatic calendar, often sinister, which links the world of bullfighting to the war (Gutiérrez Alarcón 1978: 12).

Many bull-breeders and numerous bullfighters welcome the Francoist uprising and, in specific circumstances, enlist on the insurgent side (Fernández Casado 2015). Some of the most significant representatives of *cine taurino*, such as Marcial Lalanda, Antonio Cañero, and José García Carranza 'El Algabeño', participate in the war. 'El Algabeño', bullfighter-actor in *La medalla del torero* (1925) and *La hija del corregidor* (1925), participates as a Falangist in some of the bloodiest acts of the war. His death in the battlefield in 1936 transforms the man into a legend to such an extent that, during the first years of the dictatorship, the magazine *Primer Plano* envisions the production of a film depicting his heroic life and death: "Why cinema does not portray the life and death of José García "Algabeño"? [...] A great bullfighter and a great Spaniard, he was also a fervent Falangist who, whilst young and healthy, fell in active service during our Crusade" (Puente 1942: 22).

Other bullfighting professionals defend the Republic, embracing the values of the regime with which they identify. Those who fight in the republican brigades often belong to the lower echelons of the bullfighting hierarchy: some *banderilleros*, *picadores* and *novilleros* join a single brigade, number 96, in the People's Army, now known as 'The Bullfighters Brigade' (Pérez Gómez 2005). Further, the deaths of two anarchist *banderilleros*, Joaquín Arcollas Cabezas and Francisco Galadí Melgar, assassinated in 1936 in the Sierra of Huétor (Granada) alongside the poet Federico García Lorca, are loaded with a special symbolism. The North-American bullfighter Sidney Franklin, originally from Brooklyn and also an actor in the tauro-musical comedy *The Kid from Spain* (Leo McCarey, 1932), is also caught up in the war, accompanying the war correspondent and writer Ernest Hemingway around the country.

In many cases, the professional bullfighters, as with the majority of the Spanish population, are confined to one side or the other, within one of the bloodiest civil wars in recent history, in an attempt to survive. Both sides continue to promote corridas and taurine festivals in order to raise money for the war, and bullfighters battle with each other to maintain their place in the bullrings without ideologically positioning themselves, or even changing side simply to continue their profession, as in the case of Domingo Ortega. The bullfighter, celebrated in Valencia in 1936 after a benefit bullfight for the Republic, will have no issue in participating in the *Corrida de la Victoria* held on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1939 in Madrid, as part of the celebrations for the Francoist victory.

Bullfighting during the Civil War is still a popular form of entertainment and its celebrity is politically exploited. The values associated with the art of killing fighting bulls become republican propaganda as an allegoric exaltation of working-class bravery, as well as the use by Francoism of analogous metaphors to celebrate the bullfighter-soldier. Bullfights are held with placards or painted bullfighting capes, extolling symbols and acronyms of labour unions or troops from both sides.

The appropriation of bullfighting as a means of political propaganda can be illustrated by two images proceeding from opposed audiovisual productions. The first, the republican documentary *Amanecer sobre España* (Louis Franck, 1938), produced by the *Solidaridad Internacional Antifascista* (SLA) committee, opens with a section relating to the efforts of republican citizens across the nation with a long shot of the countryside in which men are breeding brave bulls, followed by a short sequence of Rafael 'El Gallo' performing in the bullring. The second, the documentary *La Corrida de la Victoria* (Rafael Gil, 1939), is the account of the bullfight celebrated at the end of the war, with performances of Marcial Lalanda, Vicente Barrera, Pepe Amorós, Domingo Ortega, Pepe Bienvenida, Luis Gómez 'El Estudiante', and Antonio Cañero. In the first case, the presence of Rafael 'El Gallo' in the SLA documentary can be considered a simplistic association between his ethnicity (gypsy) and his proximity to the working class (however, 'El Gallo' was never interested in politics and retired just before the Civil War). In the second documentary, the bullfighters' performance in the *Corrida de la Victoria* is intentional. Though the film is lost, secondary sources (press, photos, etc.) underline the personal

involvement of the matadors in the tributes to General Francisco Franco, who attended the event (Fernández Casado 2015: 182).

*La Corrida de la Victoria* is the first taurine film produced after the end of the Civil War and the first which marks the beginning of the political-cultural symbiosis between bullfighting and Francoism. As an effective and popular propaganda tool, the filmic portrayal of bullfighting will become a lasting accurate reflection of the regime's cultural policy which, as with the system itself, will experience different phases. *Cine taurino*, by virtue of the political support from which bullfighting benefits during the dictatorship, will enjoy a further Golden Age. Fiction will be accompanied by documentaries, and its presence in video will be particularly strengthened by the newsreel of *NO-DO* and, later, by television.

### **3.2 Francoism(s), cinema and mass media**

Film history always entails complications in terms of the approach to the cultural nuances in any particular historical period. This often includes the risks of reducing these differences to one qualifying adjective, as in the case with 'Francoist cinema'. Similarly to the 'white telephones' genre in Fascist Italy, "such totalizing negative evaluations are also based upon extremely casual research into the evolution of the film industry and certainly did not involve systematic revisiting of the films" (Ricci 2008: 21).

*Cine taurino* produced during Francoism has been the subject of numerous evaluative simplifications, often proceeding from summary judgements frequently expressed without detailing a textual analysis of the films. Films about bullfighting from the Francoist period continue to be defined by their affinity to the macro-genre of the *españolada*. Although on a few occasions some qualitative progress is recognised in the genre's *corpus* during the 1950s and 1960s (Monterde 2009b: 275), there are no academic publications which have dealt with the cultural theme of bullfighting films during Francoism, even in studies dedicated to popular cinema (for example, in Lázaro-Reboll and Willis 2004; and Kinder 1993). The only exception is, indeed, the monograph by Colón Perales (2005).

Whereas taurine cinema of the early and silent periods is classified, as highlighted, by a generic definition of cinema *costumbrista*, films from the dictatorship period are often simply listed as 'Francoist' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas 1998: 63-4). However, whilst various political-cultural phases can be identified throughout Francoism, the history of cinema also reflects variations in themes. Taurine cinema, always characterised by its permanent stress on identity, can offer interesting reflections on *continuismo*<sup>56</sup> and also on differentiation, as seen through the evolution of Francoism.

Francoist culture, in fact, was never homogenous:

It was cross-cutting and changing. It was never uniquely Fascist, but neither was it uniquely "National-Catholic", although the predominance of this political culture appears beyond any doubt. But it was this game of cross-cutting conflicts, uncertainties and, at times, contradictions, which created a framework, a model, a culture, and for a long time proved to be effective. Anti-liberal, anti-democratic, and anti-Marxist, against *Anti-Spain* [...] Francoist culture was nationalist and Fascist, elitist and populist, defender of major economic interests and rhetorically "populist" (Saz Campos 2014: 51).

Spanish cinema produced under these cultural patterns (or through their rejection as in the case of anti-Francoist cinema or New Spanish Cinema) reflects this cultural complexity; it moves from the promotion of autarchy via Fascist values and contradictions between elitism and populism in the 1940s; it reproduces illusions of modernity and political reconciliation in the 1950s; it is simultaneously captivated and appalled by consumerism and the relaxation of moral habits in the 1960s. *Cine taurino* finds itself at the heart of these trans-cultural idiosyncrasies, associating meanings and values of each particular cultural phase of Francoism to its characters, as in the case of the matador, portrayed either as a hero, a martyr, or as a victim.

Taurine filmography between 1939 and 1975 becomes the most extensive in the history of the cinematic genre, and corridas and bullfighting festivals obtain a remarkable presence also in amateur and domestic videos<sup>57</sup>. Tauromachy is transformed into a spectacle of mass-consumption.

This period sees the production and distribution of dozens of fiction films and documentaries, a visual reflection of the strengthening and promotion of

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<sup>56</sup> Circumstance (in politics, in culture, etc.) in which the state of things does not endure change or alterations.

<sup>57</sup> Some of the amateur and home-videos analysed in the archives are listed in the extended filmography.

bullfighting by the regime. Political authority aligns itself more than ever with bullfighting, considered alongside football as a pastime which does not involve dangerous intellectualisms. Franco also enjoys the public attention offered by corridas: his preferential seating in bullrings soon becomes the set for public relations, with important national and international guests, and with the dictator posing for photographers alongside the most famous bullfighters. The matadors dedicate their bulls to the *Caudillo* and his prominent guests (Gutiérrez Alarcón 1978: 102-3).

Bullfighting, in addition to *cine taurino*, gains notable presence in other film genres. The insertion of taurine sequences, a visual strategy already used in silent cinema in films such as *La bodega* (Benito Perojo, 1930) or *Frivolinias* (1926), increases during Francoism in comedies and musical films (*Duende y misterio del flamenco*, Edgar Neville, 1952; *Pan, amor y Andalucía*, Javier Setó, 1958; *El balcón de la luna*, Luis Saslavsky, 1962; *Calabuch*, Luis García Berlanga, 1956).

In addition to films, the rise of bullfighting in theatres is further intertwined with newsreel and documentaries produced by *NO-DO*, reaching also spectators who have paid to watch a film from another genre. The *NO-DO* news, regularly projected before the film screenings, frequently includes bullfighting. Tauromachy becomes therefore a constant presence in the narrative on current affairs, even before the arrival of television in Spanish homes: the Franco regime's achievements and the country's apparent economic and industrial progress are complemented with football matches and special corridas, the latter promoted as an indisputable sign of the brave nature of the Spanish race. As with the evolution of content in fiction cinema, the *NO-DO* productions throughout the decades display changes and variations of emphasis within this particular genre.

In fact, as highlighted by Raymond Fielding (2006: 168), newsreel can be mainly considered as a product of entertainment and not a merely tool of information. With the benefit of being current, events and news are used to create programmes which, essentially, entertain the spectator. This occurs in a few minutes of short films about military events or natural disasters; the arrival of tourists to the nation's beaches; or football championships. Although with its own idiosyncrasies, the production process and the contents of the news are

not so different from other cinematic genres (Tranche y Sánchez-Biosca 2000: 82-95). The *NO-DO*, as with fiction cinema, can also relay the history of the different phases of Francoism through bullfighting, moving from the austere spirit of the 1940s, as represented by the stern figure of Manuel Rodríguez 'Manolete' (*Toros y toreros*, Christian Anwander y Alberto Reig, 1948), to the glamour of Hollywood stars in the bullrings during the 1960s, such as Orson Welles (*NO-DO* no. 956B, 1961).

The evolution of the subgenres linked to bullfighting follows a similar development. Some subgenres are gaining popularity, like the tauro-western which reaches its peak alongside spaghetti-westerns; some others have a declining presence in theatres, like historical films with bullfighting plots. Film aesthetics and language are influenced by the most prominent trends, which include Hollywood melodrama and a late arrival of (Neo)realism.

The inclusion of taurine themes by *engagés* filmmakers transforms some of the main elements of the genre, adding new perspectives. The bull interchanges its divine religious role with a more human one. The bull's religious sacrifice is often associated to the social martyrdom of the man. The bullfighter gradually loses his aura as an *übermensch*, and his fears and weaknesses are disclosed. The bullring is transfigured from an orderly world into a Dantesque hell. Some other variations on the genre include a new spotlight on former minor characters linked to bullfighting, who in some cases assume the lead role of the film, as in Jordi Grau's *El espontáneo* (1964). However, women are still confined in the domestic social space.

Bullfighting becomes a theme even in other cultural productions linked to cinema: articles on bullfighting and bullfighters, frequent in cinema specialist press since early cinema<sup>58</sup>, become in the 1940s a constant feature in *Primer Plano*, the film magazine most closely associated with the regime.

The consistent presence of glamorous matadors or film stars/amateur bullfighters is remarkable. Extensive reportages are published about a successful annual *fiesta* held in the most important bullring in the world, Las

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<sup>58</sup> See, for instance, *El Cine*, published in the 1910s in Madrid, Barcelona, and Valencia, and *Fotogramas* (1920s).

Ventas in Madrid: the benefit corrida performed by film stars<sup>59</sup>. The events with *novillos* (young bulls) take place with actors and directors assuming the role of bullfighters and *banderilleros*, and actresses complete the 'cast' by presiding over the bullfight. For several years, those who have performed in Las Ventas include the most prominent celebrities of the period. Thus, film critic Pío García Viñolas divides his space in *Primer Plano* between film reviews, bullfight reportages about actors in the bullring (García Viñolas 1943: 32; 1946: 16), and other 'hybrid' articles which mix tauromachy with film stardom, narrating visits of actors and actresses to bullfighters' *ganaderías* (Ibid. 1956: 4-9).

With the arrival of television in the 1950s, bullfighting finds a further ally in media. Whereas in the 1930s radio offers reportages and news on bullfights to those who cannot afford to personally attend the events (or to those who cannot read newspaper reportages), from the 1960s the new audiovisual medium allows Spaniards to *attend* a bullfight from their living room or from their local *taberna*. Even the first experimental broadcast, carried out by the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) to promote its technology, has bullfighting as a protagonist. In fact, RCA chooses to broadcast a corrida from the Vistalegre bullring (Madrid) on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1948 which, by virtue of the occasion, would become known as "The Television Bullfight" ('La corrida de la televisión' 1948: 4). During the years of TV's technological development, bullfights form part of the scheduled programming, and the widespread ownership of television sets in Spanish family homes transforms the corrida into a domestic pastime (de Haro de San Mateo 2016).

Some former radio announcers become familiar through the convergence of this medium with television and cinema: journalist Matías Prats, head of programming and lead speaker of *NO-DO*, would combine his popularity from bullfighting reportages with appearances in films as himself, such as in *El relicario* (Rafael Gil, 1970)<sup>60</sup>. The press, cinema, and television would also

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<sup>59</sup> Benefit bullfights have a long history. From the 1940s, film stars begin to take part in bullfighting festivals, fighting and killing *novillos* not only in the bullrings of Spain but also in Mexico. Mario Moreno 'Cantinflas' stands out, having filled the Monumental bullring in Mexico City on a number of occasions. 'Cantinflas', a fervent bullfighting *aficionado* and a fighting bull-breeder, is also the protagonist of a documentary about a festival in aid of the Police and Fire Brigade, *Cantinflas torero* (Fernando A. Rivero, 1940), with the active support of other actors such as Jorge Negrete and Marcelo Chávez 'Tin Tan'.

<sup>60</sup> The radio speaker Paco Malgesto enjoyed similar fame in Mexico, appearing in several national productions.

participate in the creation of the social phenomenon Manuel Benítez 'El Cordobés':

One of the leading lights of the Spanish star system that state television worked hard to promote during the Franco regime was Manuel Benítez (El Cordobés), a highly popular torero who became an authentic social phenomenon. Although Benítez was exceptionally good at using the medium for enhancing his personal and professional image in and out of the bullring, research indicates that TVE live broadcasts of corridas during the period examined provided more exposure to several other toreros. However, the government did promote his career as part of its ongoing efforts to project a positive image of Spain (Ibid.: 83).

In four decades, Francoism transforms and adapts itself: from the fascist rhetoric borrowed from 1940s Italy, it moves to the international promotion of Spain as a tourist destination for foreign visitors. Spanish cinema, controlled by a strict system of double censorship – of scripts and reels – also experiences a phase of apparent concessions during the 1960s, albeit more ones of appearance than of substance.

As in other genres and subgenres, *cine taurino* becomes progressively weaker in line with the weakening of Franco's regime. Similarly, taurine cinema in Portugal ends with the fall of Salazarism (1974), and films about *charro* bullfighters ceased to be produced in Mexico in the 1970s. French cinema and Hollywood also move away from filming bullrings and bullfighters.

The process towards the genre's decline is long and gradual: in Spain, bullfighting in cinema experiences the same shifting phases as the national cinema itself. Within Francoism, Román Gubern (2009b: 15) highlights a Fascist and National-Catholic period (1939-1943; 1944-1961); the decade of *aperturismo* (openness) (1962-1968); and the late-Francoism crisis (1969-1975). However, when considering these conventional cycles, it is worth highlighting how the evolution of taurine cinema itself, whilst definable by this periodisation, shows a more specific dating.

After the 1940s, a decade characterised by Fascist and National-Catholic references, taurine cinema develops during the 1950s and 1960s with several variations. Alongside the most popular subgenres (tauro-musical, tauro-religious and tauro-western films), two opposing cultural perspectives co-exist in taurine dramas between 1955 and 1965, stemming from the same artistic influence: realism. Indeed, the cultural *aperturismo* experienced by Spain as a nation

(openness to international tourism, to modernity, etc.) appears in cinema, with two antithetical representations of the nation through bullfighting. Finally, during late-Francoism, a fastened and progressive decline of taurine cinema marks the quasi-disappearance of bullfighting from the silver screen.

### 3.3 The 'glorious' and 'dark' 1940s.

Within the most recent perspectives of research on Spanish cinema, the prevalent trend may be defined as "neo-historicist" (Hueso Montón 1999: 77). Amongst the concerns for 'datable' aspects of national cinema, accompanied by tangible data, it is noteworthy that, "in the face of contempt formerly shown towards textual analysis, this approach is now perhaps excessively defended, marginalising concerns for a deeper contextualisation of films themselves" (ibid.). Such concerns become clear with generic evaluations of Spanish cinema in the 1940s as a dark era, only recently reconsidered and selectively reevaluated by the compelling study of José Luis Castro de Paz (2002) (Gubern 2009b: 15).

From a film history perspective, the attempt to highlight the spirit of the Spanish autocracy risks detaching the film production of this decade from any cultural link with the previous films produced under the Spanish Republic. However, just as the republican period presents a relatively harmonious continuity with cinema from the Primo de Rivera's dictatorship, analogous themes and aesthetics of the 1930s can be found in films from the 1940s.

In terms of a general context, some specific elements predominate in Spanish cinema from 1939 to 1950, including the defence of the race, the country, the family, or religious and moral habits: all aspects comparable with the depiction in previous film productions. Even the militaristic lauding of *caudillaje*<sup>61</sup> is not an 'innovative' element; its evidence *in nuce* has been highlighted in *Carmen, la de Triana* (1938). Furthermore, productions follow cultural patterns and models analogous to those previously employed, whether in films' genres whether in filmic adaptations of literary and theatrical works.

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<sup>61</sup> *Caudillaje*, or *caudillismo*, refers to the system of culture of revering the *caudillo*, the leader which embodies the entire nation. One of the dictator Francisco Franco's titles was *Caudillo de España*.

What is different, however, is the excessive mystification in the desire to build a stereotypical and false image of the country from a range of perspectives, “through historical mystification, the biased selection of national literature, the reaffirmation of regional stereotypes, and the reaffirmation of apparent racial and religious values, etc.” (Monterde 2009a: 215).

A characterising element of cinema from this period originates from outside the filmic text *per se*, that is, from the organic intervention of the authorities through a renewed censorship system, equipped with a systematic structure of controlling, common to authoritarian regimes: “Franco considered that cinema was important (and politically dangerous). Protectionism and censorship were his tools to control it” (Galán 1997: 113-4). In practice, controls of script and reel are established and, from 1941, when dubbing of foreign language films becomes compulsory, a further method of control of film contents is set. A new policy of subsidies is also employed, placing the industry under the criteria – and the whims, since until 1962 these remain publicly unknown – of the censors. At the end of the 1940s, national cinema is almost entirely dependent on the financing provided by the state (Monterde 2009a: 202-3).

In this way, spectators are ‘protected’ from those elements which would be contrary to cultural and moral policies of the regime, resulting in an often ridiculous output. Censored topics generally concern adultery, sex outside marriage, homosexuality, a lack of respect for the Catholic Church, suicide, abortion, euthanasia, and any sympathetic references towards socialism and communism. In order to deal with these contents or allusions, the censors remove any scenes involving kissing or hugging; they demand substantial changes in film posters (usually demanding alternative outfits for the main female character); and they ban productions which attempt to portray any circumstance which can downgrade the image of the nation.

Some of these censorial interventions have gone down in history; some of the most renowned examples include the cuts to the character of Rick Blaine (Humphrey Bogart) in *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942) and his role in the Spanish Civil War for the republican side. Similarly, Rita Hayworth in *Gilda* (Charles Vidor, 1946) provokes harsh debates about dangers of moral decay. Both films and their relative cuts arrive on Spanish screens in 1946, but it is Charles Vidor’s film in particular which expands the controversy. The

involvement of bishops, associations of catholic parents and students, together with several private citizens in the avalanche of telegrams and letters which inundate censor offices, provokes a turning point in the control of film contents, which becomes even more relentless and moralist from this time (Gil 2009: 81).

*Cine taurino* is not exempt from cuts. In 1939, in the adaptation of *El relicario* directed by veteran filmmaker Ricardo de Baños, a comparison between the role of the bullfighter and the papal nuncio is eliminated, probably as a result of an excessively defensive attitude to the good name of the Catholic Church (González Ballesteros 1981: 212). In 1945, prior to the Spanish premiere of Mexican film *Maravilla del toreo* (Raphael J. Sevilla, 1942), all scenes, shots, and dialogues involving the wife of the bullfighter Morera and her lover Eduardo are erased (Ibid.: 231).

The North-American *españolada* also suffers censorial interventions: following the permission in 1949 to screen the third version of *Sangre y arena* (*Blood and Sand*, Rouben Mamoulian, 1941), 'offensive' references are omitted from Spanish screens, such as the shots of deprived kids, or the distribution to poor people of the waste parts of the bull killed in a bullfight. In addition to that, the arguments between matador Juan Gallardo and his wife are cancelled, as are their kisses. Any reference which could diminish traditional representations of bullfighters' masculinity is deleted. The compliments of some women towards the bullfighter are removed (the cut is justified by the defence of the dignity of the male body), as are those in which the bullfighter is applying after-shave in the bathroom, dissonant with the matador's virility. Censors have a defensive approach to bullfighting culture and its environment: they remove Doña Sol's surname Miura<sup>62</sup>, and delete a sequence in the bullring in which the camera focuses on the implausible "gallery of bullfighting widows" (Ibid.: 240-1).

The intrinsic folly of this last sequence – visible onscreen only outside Spain – would be parodied even in a Mexican film, *Me quiero casar* (Julián Soler, 1967), in a sequence in which the female protagonist, the *gringa* Jane Freeman (Angélica María), during her first attendance to a bullfight, asks her dismayed

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<sup>62</sup> In the original novel, Doña Sol belongs to the family of the Marquis of Moraima, but in Mamoulian's adaptation, she is called Doña Sol de Miura, a clear reference to the Sevillian bull farm Miura, considered to have the most dangerous bulls. For the viewer who is well-versed in taurine culture, the association between the dangerous Miura bulls and the *femme fatale* becomes more coherent throughout the film, by the fact that the woman is portrayed in attitudes and movements symbolically associated with a fighting bull.

Mexican companion the location of the balcony reserved for women who have lost their husbands in the bullring.

Aside from foreign *españoladas*, the authorities' control of taurine cinema is almost anecdotal, becoming more proactive in the following years, with taurine films directed by filmmakers more distant from the regime's political vision, and who attempt to remove triumphalist and sanitised aspects of bullfighting world. By the 1940s, taurine films fit with Francoist culture, as with films from other popular genres, and are characterised by mystified recoveries of the nation's history; avoidances of contrasting social discourses; and denials of the extreme poverty caused by war and autarchy. Film production, with an average of thirty to forty films distributed annually, focuses on works which follow the path of the Francoist revision of history, concentrating on religious and political themes. *Cine taurino* conveys meanings related to patriotic death in praise of the nation, and portrays alleged qualities of the Spanish man, viewed primarily as a fighting soldier, analogously to films of different genres, such as *Escuadrilla* (Antonio Román, 1941), *Raza* (José Luis Sáenz de Heredia, 1942), or *La fe* (Rafael Gil, 1947).

Between praise of the hero-*caudillo*, moral manichaeism, and the recovery of the past in order to legitimate the present (Monterde 2009a: 235-6), the taurine theme is intertwined with Fascist-Falangist values during the first half of the decade. In the second half, *cine taurino* embraces National-Catholicism, depicting mystic representations of the bullfighter. The only discrepancy which is observed in the pre-eminent cinema of this period is the absence of comedy, the hegemonic film genre of this decade (Ibid.: 230).

In fact, the only parodic film about bullfighting, *¡Olé torero!* (Benito Perojo, 1948), a taurine comedy of errors in which Argentinian film star Luis Sandrini exchanges his identity with a dead bullfighter, is dubiously received by the censors, and the irreverent treatment of bullfighting is largely unappealing: "At such a politically and culturally serious time, bullfighting also becomes serious and grave" (Gubern 1994: 424). Benito Perojo's taurine farce is rated by Luis Gómez Tello in *Primer Plano* as an "insignificant film" (Gómez Tello 1949: 25). In the eyes of critics, the filmmaker demystifies the bullfighting world, generally revered by Spanish cinema, and avoids the tragic or triumphalist purposes advocated at that time.

Almost all taurine films refer to dramas which extend beyond a story of individual social escape. The bullfighter is often attributed with combatant – sometimes even brutal – masculine qualities which belong to a social order which overcomes class distinctions. The battle is no longer against poverty: rather, it is the reaffirmation of Spanish men's unconditional bravery. The drama is achieved or fulfilled on numerous occasions through the nuances of various subgenres: historical as in *Un caballero famoso* (José Buchs, 1942), *La maja del capote* (Fernando Delgado, 1943), *María Antonia la Caramba* (Arturo Ruiz Castillo, 1950); melodrama, as in *Leyenda de feria* (Juan de Orduña, 1945), *El traje de luces* (Edgar Neville, 1946), *La fiesta sigue* (Enrique Gómez, 1948), *Brindis a Manolete* (Florián Rey, 1948); or literary adaptation, like *Currito de la Cruz* (Luis Lucia, 1949) and *La mujer, el torero y el toro*<sup>63</sup> (Fernando Butragueño, 1950).

Themes addressed by taurine cinema are consistent with openly stated suggestions of *Primer Plano*, directed in the early 1940s by Manuel Augusto García Viñolas (a brother of film critic Pío), who is also the political supervisor of Francoist censorship, and later on will become the director of *NO-DO*. Indeed, García Viñolas and 'his' *Primer Plano* can be considered a sort of ideological vehicle within Spanish cinema in general (Minguet i Batllori 1998: 187-201).

For the magazine, praise of soldiers can be achieved through *cine taurino*, highlighting the characteristics that bullfighters share with them:

Bullfighters are Spanish? No one doubts that! Chancing death with joy and elegance through duty, or simply for sport, has been for centuries the most Spanish of attitudes. In the stretched *falanges* of the crusade, in the Blue Division, there were and are, undoubtedly, several bullfighters [...] The Spaniard, bullfighter or not, on a number of important occasions has been at the forefront of history. He has known when to relinquish the bullfighting outfit, or any other more or less ostentatious, in order to put on a more serious, masculine, and authentically Spanish uniform: that of a soldier ('España de pandereta' 1942: 4).

The similarity between the bullfighter and a soldier is combined with a promotional campaign for film contents which can present exemplary lives of bullfighters who lived (and died) like a soldier. Whilst the invitation to depict the life and death in the Civil War of 'El Algabeño' remains unattended, the

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<sup>63</sup> Adaptation of *La mujer, el torero y el toro* (Alberto Insúa, 1926). See Sánchez Álvarez-Insúa (2007: 105-28).

suggestion of featuring the adventurous life of Rafael Pérez Guzmán (de Medina 1941: 16) is effectively transformed into a film, *Un caballero famoso*, directed in 1942 by José Buchs and premiered in 1943.

The 19<sup>th</sup> Century aristocrat, belonging to a distinguished family (amongst his predecessors is the famous knight of the *Reconquista* Guzmán el Bueno), is mythologised in a script which alters his real story that of a cavalry officer who turns himself into a bullfighter. His romantic dandy life, and his death under a *bandoleros* assault in 1838, is converted into a bullfighter-soldier adventure during the first Carlist War (1833-1839). The patriotic overtone of the film, augmented by taurine scenes which extol man's bravery and courage, is embedded with metaphors "which did not refer to specific political ideas, but rather to decisive disguising gestures" (Benet 2012: 158). The film starring Alfredo Mayo, already a cinematic *alter ego* of Franco in *Raza* (1942)<sup>64</sup>, mythically depicts the Carlist uprising, underlining the benefit of a rebellion (such as Franco's own).

History and bullfighting are also ideologically linked, promoting values of (masculine) citizenship. The image of the bullfighter as a romantic hero is depicted in the further revival of the personage of José Delgado 'Pepe- Hillo' and his illicit love affairs in the films *La maja del capote* and *María Antonia la Caramba*. In both films, the fatal goring of the bullfighter is no longer the result of his passions, but rather is due to the matador's self-sacrifice. He chooses to die, unable to survive his furtive adventures in love. In contrast to the 'Pepe-Hillo' of the 1920s film, the 1940s bullfighter dies as if on a battlefield.

In the first film, his lover, forced to marry a wicked rich man, shows the strength of her moral values, refusing to flee with the bullfighter. 'Pepe-Hillo' is killed on the same day and by the same bull which, having escaped from the pens prior to the bullfight, attempts to gore his lover. The bullfighter saves her life, and sacrifices himself in the following corrida. Even the evil husband does

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<sup>64</sup> The script of *Raza* was written by Francisco Franco under the pseudonym of Jaime de Andrade, and its plot portrays the history of Spain from the Spanish-American war until the Civil War. Through the account of the military and personal feats of a family, Franco superimposes biographical elements onto the fictional characters (Gubern 1977), such as the division of two brothers in their affinity to different sides of the Civil War (Ramón Franco, Francisco's brother, found difficulty joining the insurgent side due to his republican past). *Raza* (1942) (re)writes a story which "attempts to portray the brave and selfless Spanish spirit, which completely correlates with the regime's National-Catholic ideology initiated following the Civil War" (Cabezuelo Lorenzo 2012: 26).

not escape his fate, and dies by falling from his horse whilst attempting to pursue his wife.

In the second film, *María Antonia la Caramba*, the bullfighter sacrifices himself to save his own soul, dedicating a bull to the legendary popular singer, an act which becomes an omen: “I dedicate this to you, Maria Antonia. If you can’t give me life, may the bull kill me”. The rivalry with Pedro Romero, the bullfighter with whom he competes for the woman’s heart, is closed with ‘Pepe-Hillo’ fatal goring, and the value of masculine honour is defended even in the most extreme circumstances. The opponent abandons with contempt the singer in another display of male solidarity.

The loneliness which follows the woman<sup>65</sup>, undeserving of Pedro Romero, contrasts with the freedom enjoyed by the female protagonist of *La maja del capote*, an exemplary woman who renounces true love for family duties. This female role is more representative of pre-eminent women’s depictions of the 1940s cinema. Whether strong or weak, rational or mentally unstable, women in cinema uphold strong Catholic values, and their devotion to the family or to the country overcomes any personal desire. With starring roles in films of the decade, especially in historical productions, female characters are offering female spectators – the most numerous in the audiences of the period – a mirror for their personal moral reflection (Labanyi 2002).

The male roles, in addition to the characteristics previously outlined, are representative of ‘Fascist’ Spain, characterised not only by a nostalgia for the past but also for the value placed on death, “a basic ingredient of this variant of kitsch” (González González 2009: 34). Whether a historical film or one from another subgenre, the bullfighter can die irrespective of his moral integrity. Whereas in previous films success or failure are more linearly associated with the behaviour of the citizen-bullfighter, in this decade death relates to the courage of the man who, both in Civil War battles and in the bullring, disregards his own life for the others’ sake (either for the nation or for the bullrings’ audience).

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<sup>65</sup> Distorted by historical sources, María Antonia Fernández, nicknamed ‘La Caramba’ was also a real personage, although it is unknown whether she actually ended up alone in a convent, as recounted by Díaz de Escovar (1930: 18).

For instance, the protagonist of *La fiesta sigue* is gored in a story which begins with a group of poor *maletillas* (aspiring bullfighters) attempting to fight an animal which, in the words of a countryman, has disappointed the audience by only killing three men the previous year. The film's protagonist, played by the gypsy bullfighter Rafael Albaicín, does not achieve the bullfighting career he deserves, in an "unusual narrative development which continually frustrates the expectations of an audience which has been institutionally accustomed to the happy resolution of conflict" (Castro de Paz 2002: 207). The resolution of Enrique Gómez's film extends beyond the reiterated social discourse which characterises taurine cinema. In spite of being a story focused on the love of bullfighter Rafael for the rich daughter of a bull-breeder, *La fiesta sigue* concentrates more on two related discourses: the dignity of the bullfight as the *fiesta nacional* and the defence of the nation's image, both for the benefit of foreigners who are unable to understand and experience the heroic bravery of Spanish men.

The defence of bullfighting is built through the introduction of three characters from an international anti-bullfighting association. With the insertion of comic situations, designed to mock the *antitaurinos*, bullfighting is presented as an art which can be performed only by special men. The characters, almost effeminate in the emphasis of their foreign accents and their body language, finally succumb to the beauty of corridas. Any argument is settled through reiterations of the innate values of bullfighting, which go beyond rational discussion of animals' suffering. *La fiesta sigue* insists in presenting tauromachy as something humanly unintelligible. The life and death of the bull, as with the life and death of the bullfighter, are inexplicable for those who do not belong to the Spanish 'race'. In Gómez's film, not even the sensual desire of a temptress dancer can distract Rafael from his mission. Since the bullfighter kills bulls "because the public likes it", he proclaims to the woman with a vocational spirit: "I will continue killing bulls until they kill me". In the post-war Spain, even the dedication to entertain *aficionados* is of paramount importance.

The second focus of the film is linked with 'negationist' attitudes about the true difficulties of the social reality. In this case, the sequences also include the presence of non-Spanish characters: the female companions from the exclusive Swiss boarding school where the daughter of the bull-breeder is studying. She

recounts the story of Rafael's bullfighting career to her schoolmates, omitting his early days of hunger whilst still a *maletilla*, and his performances in comic bullfights, considered indecorous for a professional bullfighter. In the letter in which the young woman relates this to Rafael, she explains that her friends are impressed by his career, as dazzling as that of 'Manolete'. She does, however, omit uncomfortable truths, suggesting that "it is not advisable to repeatedly bring up our sorrows, as heroic as they may be". In the face of foreigners, it is best not to admit that hunger exists within the nation.

In *La fiesta sigue* Enrique Gómez expands the themes which, in a previous production, he did not successfully develop as a scriptwriter. In *Leyenda de feria*, filmmaker Juan de Orduña and scriptwriter Gómez associate the social critique of bullfighting to retired bullfighter Pepe Carmona, who attempts to put his foreign wife in her place. Carmona initially justifies his former profession as a mere necessity ("I was forced into bullfighting", "bullfighting does not have any special spiritual requirement"), but returns to it through jealousy: his wife flirts dangerously with a young Sevillian matador.

To teach her a lesson, the woman is faced with an altercation between a gypsy couple during a flamenco party. Attempting to stop the man from hitting his wife, the former defends his 'right': "If you don't beat them daily, they won't be happy". Even the abused woman defends her man: "When my husband hits me, he has his reasons", because "he really loves me". The host of Carmona minimises the events: "It's a sign of restless affection". The narrative plot which mixes bullfighting with a foreign wife's lessons in morals, however, contains extemporaneous changes in tone, and the lead character, who should be the hero of the film, ends up overly unstable, out of control due to excessive jealousy. The link between the subplot of the gypsy couple and the more 'sophisticated' methods to 'beat' Carmona's wife is unclear (the matador returns to bullfighting to punish the woman with worry). Furthermore, the visual presence of the bull and the bullfighter is not effectively portrayed, although the scarcity of bullfighting scenes is probably due to the lack of brave bulls in the years following the Civil War<sup>66</sup>.

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<sup>66</sup> When the Civil War ended, bull farms were decimated, partly because the livestock was used to feed soldiers and civilians. Bullfights in the 1940s were performed with smaller bulls, less imposing in their presence (Gutiérrez Alarcón 1978: 87-121).

Few productions of this decade film bulls in the bull-breeding countryside, with some exceptions: *Campo bravo* (Pedro Lazaga, 1948), *Currito de la Cruz* (1949); *El centauro* (Antonio Guzmán Merino, 1946). The diversification of plots and styles either provides or removes visual representations of the bull and its surroundings, though without dramatically diminishing its importance as a totemic animal. At times, even the visual absence of bulls may reinforce its allegoric values, especially in their role as a spectre of death, which exists without it being seen.

A further subgenre, the tauro-musical, also visually penalises the bull and the bullfighter performances. In films like *Jalisco canta en Sevilla* (Fernando de Fuentes, 1948), tauromachy is demoted to a mere setting of decorative elements (a ranch, a bullfight poster, etc.); to a few rare shots of *tientas*; and even, at times, to simple props (a bullfighting cape).

Cinematic archetypes of the bullfighter in the 1940s are not always characterised by a sexually active manhood. The mysticism which surrounds matadors sometimes stands out, to the detriment of sensuality and the sexual potency usually associated with their portrayal. It is of great interest to note how *cine taurino*'s glorification of masculinity, enacted through camaraderie between men or through the isolation of the (morally weaker) female character, at times exalts the sexual continence of matadors, similarly to *cine de cruzada*<sup>67</sup>, characterised by a "typically Fascist Nietzschean misogyny" (Labanyi 2002: 44).

The similarities in the cinematic treatment of men, who sacrifice their potency for something greater (both at war and in the bullring), are in keeping with cultural processes of domesticating brutish and uncontrollable masculinity, which now "requires the 'castration' of the nationalist warrior values which brought the nationalists into power" (Ibid.: 48). The 'taurine castration', carried out through the bullfighter's representation as 'sexless for the cause', is highlighted in two of the most representative bullfighters of *cine taurino* of the moment: Manuel Rodríguez 'Manolete' and the cinematic *Currito de la Cruz*.

The former, a real matador from Cordoba gored to death in Linares on 29<sup>th</sup> August 1947, embodies in his performing style and in his tragic death the stern

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<sup>67</sup> *Cine de cruzada* refers to war-themed films of the post-war period in which the political struggle is portrayed with religious symbols and characters, akin to a renewed national Christian *Reconquista*, as seen, for example, in the aforementioned *Raza* (1942).

spirit of those years. The latter, in this third filmic adaptation played by famous matador Pepín Martín Vázquez, reinforces the myth of Francoist *übermensch* at the end of the 1940s, inspiring dozens of young Spaniards to emulate this, and contributing to the expansion of the social phenomenon of *maletillas*. Disguised as a sentimental novel, like many other taurine films, to appeal also to the overwhelmingly female audience, *Currito de la Cruz* embodies the domestication which the historical moment requires from the Spanish warrior: “Masculinity is ordered according to loyalty and marriage and not to sexual attraction, which represents a threat for the institution, either on the part of females (seductress) or on the part of males (seducer)” (Colón Perales 2005: 176).

### **3.3.1 Mystical bodies, order, and social mobility. The christological sacrifice of ‘Manolete’ and the priestly chastity of *Currito de la Cruz* (1949)**

Whereas Joselito ‘El Gallo’ and Juan Belmonte embodied with their bullfighting art the spirit of the Spanish nation at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, with their reputed rivalry symbolising the tensions between classicism (Joselito) and modernity (Belmonte), Manuel Rodríguez ‘Manolete’ is undoubtedly the image of the 1940s (González Viñas 2007). His slender figure and his clean-cut face, dominated by a long sharp nose and subtle yet serious lips, were the personification of a nation slimmed by hunger and sorrowed by the severity of the period. From a taurine family in Cordoba, his bullfighting style and his character defined an entire period.

‘Manolete’ is the most celebrated bullfighter in history in terms of publications and artistic representations. His sternness in the bullring, his tendency to remain motionless in front of a bull with his feet firmly placed on the sand only a few millimetres from the animal’s horns, and particularly his tragic death, all contributed to the myth of this significant bullfighter and to that of a dramatic hero. Because of this, an endless list of publications has been produced, by both Spanish and foreign authors, for instance Barnaby Conrad, the author of the well-known book *Matador* (1952). Nicknamed ‘*Monstruo*’ (‘The Monster’) also by the international press, the matador’s death was considered

the most tragic event since the Civil War. Following his death, Franco's government declares three days of national mourning, and even Winston Churchill sends his sympathies to the bullfighter's mother' (Del Arco 2005: 250-1).

Doña Angustias, the mother of a dead bullfighter and twice widowed by bullfighters (Rafael Molina 'Lagartijo Chico' and Manuel Rodríguez, father of 'Manolete'), becomes the image of a Spanish *Stabat Mater*. Conversely, Lupe Sino, the bullfighter's partner, is condemned to the *damnatio memoriae*: the actress, with a chequered former relationship with a republican and her current sinful relationship with 'Manolete' (they are not legitimately married) is almost erased from history (Sánchez Agustí 2006). Nothing, nor no one, can stain the icon of a nation in mourning.

The appropriation of the personage and his reconstruction as a myth are so effective that even the anti-Francoist press in exile condemns the politicisation of his death. The daily newspaper *Ruta*, printed in Toulouse by exiled anarchists, compares the media coverage of this death with the Government's silence about a military base explosion in Cádiz only a few days before the bullfight in Linares<sup>68</sup>:

Manolete was honoured with an enormous funeral. More than 100,000 people attended. A plane followed the funeral procession from above, dropping red carnations. All balconies displayed symbols of mourning. Franco is inconsolable. The day of the funeral is declared a day of national mourning. A monument will be erected in Cordoba in memory of the Falangist bullfighter...No-one remembers Cadiz, the martyr city [...] No planes, no aid, no monuments. In Franco's Spain, a city isn't worth the life of a bullfighter ('Manolete, Manolete, Manolete' 1947).

The funeral of 'Manolete' is transformed into a visual allegory of Franco's Spain, united in an orderly fashion like his funeral cortege. The portrayal of the bullfighter's death across a range of media is doubly impressive, for the space occupied and for the rhetoric. The sector's magazines produce almost monographic editions (e.g. *El Ruedo*), and the generalist press, such as *ABC*, continue to publish lengthy editions about the tragedy for a number of days. Foreign press echoes the mourning of the nation (Pope Brewer 1947: 7). The

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<sup>68</sup> On 18<sup>th</sup> August 1947 a disastrous explosion in the Submarine Defence Base in Cádiz caused significant damage, destroying entire neighbourhoods and producing many victims, including the children of a central orphanage. The regime, through its control of the media, silenced reporting of the terrible event.

life of the bullfighter, born “with a vocation to die” (Álvarez de Miranda [1947] 2008: 279), in a Spain “where sensitivity for sacrifice abounds” (Ibid.: 280), becomes a narrative for the reporting of his funeral.

Similar to the documentaries on the death of Joselito ‘El Gallo’ and Manuel Granero, films about ‘Manolete’ depict a society divided by class and gender yet, in contrast to the tragedies of the 1920s, the tone of the films marks the death of the matador in a different way. Whilst the previous deaths reinforce the discourse about an ephemeral life which can be cut short for no reason, the death of ‘Manolete’ acquires the sacrificial martyrdom of a soldier, a priest, a citizen from a historic period that, like his style, is “serious, dramatic, and full of stoicism” (*NO-DO* no. 243B, 1947). The figure of the dead man’s mother, in all types of media, marks the distinction from the previous deaths. The symbolic *Pietà*, represented by the numerous images of the dead bullfighter and his weeping mother, almost in a faint on a chair whilst receiving the sympathy of dozens of people, is at the core of the Christianised mythologising of an angelic ‘Manolete’. The photograph of the bullfighter’s motionless body shown to the nation is related to the female world only through the love of his mother.

Comparable to the idea of the Church as the mystical body of Christ, in the film *Brindis a Manolete* (Florián Rey, 1948), the matador becomes the mystical body of Spain. A few weeks after the bullfighter’s death, Rey begins a feature-film project which develops, following classic narratives of *cine taurino* (a poor young man who struggles to be a bullfighter and overcome his and his family’s hunger), the figure of ‘Manolete’ as a cinematic Christ-like figure<sup>69</sup>. The dead matador is, in fact, the lead in the film, resurrected from archive images. An incredibly similar double, the amateur actor Pedro Ortega, interprets ‘Manolete’ in the fictionalised sequences. The film offers spectators a story of hope, protection, and redemption in which the bullfighter acts as the saviour of the taurine microcosm.

The voiceover at the beginning of the film, accompanied by a montage of superimposed taurine images, introduces “tauromachy as a sign of lineage and predestination”, associating the innate vocation of (Spanish) souls to the predestination of success in the bullring. Amongst the stills of the setting in

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<sup>69</sup> A literary or visual figure referring or alluding to the Biblical Jesus, or events or characteristics which may be attributed to the Messiah (Passion, redeeming death, etc.) (see Baugh 1997).

Cordoba, the camera stays longer on the image of Christ: “May this film” – the voice continues – “be a tribute to a dead hero, to his immortal spirit”.

The immortality of ‘Manolete’ is represented through the relationship which the bullfighter fosters with young aspiring bullfighter Rafael (José Greco), and which starts in a *tienta* in a *ganadería* owned by the family of Dolores (Paquita Rico), a beautiful young woman who has lost her father in a bullring. The affection between Rafael and Dolores is maintained in secret, due to the resistance of Dolores’ mother, who would never give permission for her daughter to marry someone who works daily with death. However, Rafael’s vocation is confirmed by ‘Manolete’, himself impressed by the bravery with which the young man performs in the bullrings. In the development of the story between Rafael and Dolores, and Rafael and his profession, there appears Javier, a wealthy man who Dolores’ mother would have as a fiancé for her daughter.

Hence, in every tense situation, ‘Manolete’ acts as an element for re-establishing harmony. His intervention restores the peace during Dolores and Javier’s engagement party, as well as his mediations always being central to the evolution of Rafael’s bullfighting career. ‘Manolete’ raises Rafael, teaching him how a matador should behave in the bullrings and in society. He calms the young bullfighter from a potential fight in a flamenco bar: “In this place you have to behave like a man, let’s leave bravery for the bulls”, he tells him in a solemn and authoritarian tone.

On each occasion, ‘Manolete’ performs a priest-like role: he is celibate (he always appears alone) and virtuous (either bullfighting or protecting Rafael). The matador even uses a language which resembles that of a confessor, stifling any of Rafael’s reactions which may be provoked due to his instinctive impulses. Rey’s camera focuses on the figure of ‘Manolete’ with low-angle shots, conferring solemnity on the character. Depending on the mood of the sequence, the lights on him are bright or in *chiaroscuros*, used ‘theologically’ as in Rey’s previous film *La aldea maldita* (1930). Like Rafael’s agent, ‘Manolete’ alerts Rafael to the danger women can represent for matadors; however, only ‘Manolete’ is listened to with respect. The matador preaches to his disciple, reminding him that men can overcome anything; they can even renounce

women. The only thing which cannot be overcome, he sombrely concludes, “is death”.

The last months of ‘Manolete’s life are fictionalised in Rey’s film, and interweaved with the growing friendship with Rafael. The film follows the official 1947 chronology, including the bullfighter’s journey to Mexico, visually reproducing the press images and the *NO-DO* reportages, with the strategic omission of the presence of Lupe Sino. In a sequence shot at the airport, amongst those who turn up to embrace the bullfighter before he boards the plane to America, the matador is shot alone, surrounded by men. The documentary style of the scenes from the final season in the Mexican bullrings, edited with archive material, reinforces the emotion of the sequences, having taken place only months before his death.

‘Manolete’s journey to Mexico leaves a spiritual vacuum in Rafael, divided between his vocation to bullfighting and his love for Dolores. The matador’s protégé has lost his guiding light. Rafael ends up in a fight in which he is wounded with a dagger. Once again, the return and reappearance of ‘Manolete’ is reconciling and redeeming; his presence can even change the heart of Dolores’ fiancé Javier. Indeed, when Dolores breaks off her engagement with him for Rafael, Javier reacts magnanimously. He maintains his composure and suggests Dolores tell her mother to: “Blame me”. In a world governed by men of honour, even the ‘third man’ is righteous.

With the exception of ‘Manolete’ as a Christ-like figure, both human and divine and sexually inactive, a number of traditional ‘male dominance’ models are maintained in the film, that is, the configuration of gender practice “embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or it is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (Connell 2005: 77). Rafael’s corporeality is congruent to filmic models of a working-class bullfighter, whilst bourgeois Javier knows how to control his passions. The angelic figure of ‘Manolete’ therefore acts as a mediator between two forms of body language which, although effective in their “commonly accepted strategy” (Ibid.), require the intervention of a semi-god figure.

Rafael still needs to complete his training as a man: ‘Manolete’ visits him during his convalescence and, again reminding him about the innate danger of

women (the stabbing was to defend a young female), gently orders him to look after himself in order to return to the bullring. Unfortunately, death claims 'Manolete', interrupting the master-disciple relationship. The young bullfighter is left with his devotion to the mythical figure: as with saints, his memory of the bullfighter leads him to make the right choices.

The death of 'Manolete' is also inserted in Rey's film with an all-male cast, one more time erasing Lupe Sino, who actually went to Linares after the goring. In place of Lupe Sino, in Rey's film it is Rafael who is in the hospital. In contrast to Lupe Sino, who was not allowed to approach 'Manolete' on his deathbed, Rafael is shot beside the priest who, in a long scene, administers the Last Rites to the bullfighter. When death arrives, the camera approaches the emaciated, martyred body of 'Manolete', settling on a medium shot, reinforcing similarities with the iconography of the death of Christ. The editing alternates close ups of nuns praying at the bullfighter's bedside and of Rafael supporting the body of the dying man. The light weakens like a candle being extinguished, and the extra-diegetic sound – a chorus of angelic voices – increases in volume, culminating in the moment of the final breath.

In the sequences of the funeral cortege and burial, to archive material are added superimpositions of images with Soviet avant-garde influence: hideous close ups of sorrowful faces; shots of gypsy children dancing flamenco; images of a coffin distorted by the angle of the camera; shouts from groups of *aficionados* asking for more corridas. The powerful images, reflecting Rafael's internal struggle, progress along with his redemption. The young man goes to the cemetery to visit the grave of his mentor and there meets Dolores, dressed in mourning and praying. At the graveside, Rafael confesses that he does not have a sacrificial attitude which would allow him to dedicate himself to a profession in which bullfighters "aren't killed by bulls, but by the audience". Not everyone can be a national hero, but everyone can learn the greatest lesson taught by 'Manolete': honour. Rafael decides to perform in one final bullfight in order to please his guardian angel: his salute to heaven (*brindis al cielo*)<sup>70</sup> is for the "greatest bullfighter in history, who has arrived in Cordoba's heaven".

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<sup>70</sup> When the matador dedicates the death of a bull to a dearly deceased, he raises his *montera* (bullfighter's hat) towards the sky.

The filmic celebration of the life of 'Manolete', which should have had the signature of French director Abel Gance and the presence of the matador in the leading role<sup>71</sup>, is posthumously realised in Rey's film. *Brindis a Manolete* marks the symbolic conclusion of a decade of austerity in which death is, paradoxically, the true protagonist in the life of the nation, to such an extent that it is even present in cartoons.

Indeed, taurine cartoons, productions destined for an audience of children and families, do not avoid the harshest details of a professional bullfighting career, nor bloody details of the bullfight itself. In *Quinito sangre torera* (J. Pérez Arroyo<sup>72</sup>, 1947), the cartoon begins with the difficulties of a *maletilla* who travels to Madrid hidden amongst the hardware in train cars, and ends with sequences of the lance and death sections of the bullfight, with explicit images of jets of blood which pour out from the bull's back.

Whilst *Brindis a Manolete* symbolically closes an era, *Currito de la Cruz*, directed by Luis Lucia, opens the following, interweaving the spirit of sacrifice and the denial of a sexualised body with a narrative oriented towards marital loyalty. The third *Currito* in film history perfects the development of a cinematic 'taurine National-Catholicism'. This film precedes a series of productions in which the bullfighter's (traditional) masculinity will be represented exclusively in the bullring, portraying sometimes a homo-erotic affinity with the fighting animal, either to compensate for abstinence from sexual pleasure, or to visually castrate a generation of men who must become part of the new order of an authoritarian and paternalistic state. Filmmaker Lucia transforms his film into an exemplary vision of the whole nation.

In *Currito de la Cruz* the role of the spiritual mediator is eliminated: the new model of masculinity is directly embodied by Currito. This filmic version of Pérez Lugín's novel is less 'regionalist' and more 'national': Currito's strong

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<sup>71</sup> The distinguished filmmaker of the First French Avant-garde, of Jewish origins, moves from France to Spain at the end of 1943. Fascinated by the performances of 'Manolete', he decides to shoot a film about him, with the participation of the bullfighter as the lead character. Gance begins to follow 'Manolete' in the bullfighting season, recording his bullfights. A break in the matador's performances allows for a fortnight of recording in the Augustus Films studios in Madrid. Interrupted by financial difficulties, Gance would have to definitively abandon the project at the beginning of 1945: 'Manolete' resumes bullfighting and can no longer take part in shooting (Icart 1983: 331). A dozen minutes of the film is preserved in the National Film Archive in Madrid. These depict a few (silent) scenes of the bullfighter, shot in an impressionist style.

<sup>72</sup> The first name of Pérez Arroyo is unknown, always appearing with the initial 'J.' in the credits of his films and in publications about the history of the cartoon in Spain (see Candel 1993: 58).

Andalusian accent is refined to a lightly accented Castilian Spanish; his gestures become more refined and polite, despite his background as an uneducated orphan. His bullfighting style also becomes more elegant and calm. Currito's controlled and pure corporeality is opposed to the brutal nature of 'Romerita'.

Lucia writes the script alongside Antonio Abad Ojuel, former collaborator of Rafael Gil in his religious films (*La reina santa*, 1946; *La fe*, 1947). Together, they present a socio-Christian re-reading of the original story, changing the realist linguistic and visual registers into a more immaterial one. Though respecting the narrative structure of the novel, the film accentuates discourses on social order and masculinity, through reiterated emphases on a disciplined body, recovering the use of bullfights in films in their metaphysical intertextuality. The insertion of corridas in film, as highlighted, is limited in the post-war years due to logistical difficulties. Usually, as seen in the case of *Brindis a Manolete*, circumstantial insertions are made to create narrative liaisons, or are added for the audience's visual pleasure. Conversely, Lucia recovers the bullfight's potential ritual symbolism.

The antagonism between Currito (Pepín Martín Vázquez) and 'Romerita' (Jorge Mistral) is emphasised precisely through the distinction between what someone does with their body, whether in the bullring or in society. Pepín Martín Vázquez's physique is slender and delicate, opposite to the sex appeal of Jorge Mistral, a star working exclusively for CIFESA, producer of the film. Several antithetical parallels between the two men are underlined in the script, with *ad hoc* interventions to express the focus on the cultural model to which the film refers.

'Romerita' is respected in the bullring by Rocío's father, Manuel Carmona, but "[...] outside, as a person, is another story. It's not manly to exploit fame, and that physique which God gave you? Only good for sowing sadness around the world". With 'sowing sadness', Carmona refers to a sexually disordered life ('Romerita' is relatively uninhibited and overly physical in his contact with women), but more so to the consequences of this lifestyle: an unwanted pregnancy and the loss of the woman's honour. In fact, Carmona repeats the

metaphor to refer to Currito, (who is an *inclusero*<sup>73</sup>), the son of a woman victim of a man who “travelled about sowing sorrows”. Currito, in contrast to ‘Romerita’, is defined as “a full-bodied man” (“*hombre de cuerpo entero*”): the physique of ‘Romerita’ is opposed to the full-body of Currito, in the sense of a person with (moral) integrity.

Bullfighting symbolism enters into this discourse through appreciations about the style of the bullfighter Martín Vázquez. The matador belongs in fact to the so-called Sevillian School, whose style is distinguished from those of Madrid and the Basque Country by an unhurried rhythm and by the search for aesthetic symmetry. In the film, his performance is used to highlight a further contrast between the two models of masculinity. ‘Romerita’ exhibits a renowned bravery in getting close to the bulls, but his style “is war-like, he doesn’t perform”. Whilst a behaviour lacking in rules and delicacy is acceptable for the art of war, in social life, once again metaphorically represented by the bullring, one must be full-bodied like Currito.

Currito’s long bullfighting sequences are accompanied by the voiceover of a radio commentator who describes the *corrida* through feminine imagery. Currito’s cape “has a winged grace like a fan in the hand of a flirtatious woman”; his *muleta* “moves softly” throughout the passes which are “soft like the wings of angels”. The reportage stresses Currito’s angelic style of performance as though it were a poetic expression of his peculiar chastity. Bullfighting depicts a *sui generis* traditional masculinity, symbolically expressed only with the bull: when Currito performs, “the bullfighter and the beast combine”, producing a “sculptural beauty”. The matador “performs like God”, and in his performance *in persona Christi*, an extra-diegetic song to Our Lady accompanies the ritual. Lucia edits the sequence of Currito’s bullfights in slow-motion, creating the cinematic *pase en redondo* (circular passes), linking a series of unconnected passes through editing in order to create the circularity required of ‘beautiful’ bullfighting (Lucia in Gregori 2009: 104).

Currito’s body, characterised by a control of appetites, usually associated with female characters, is defined by another adjective borrowed from liturgical

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<sup>73</sup> *Inclusero*, in contrast to orphan, refers explicitly to the situation in which a child is anonymously abandoned. The *inclusas* were the charitable organisations created to allow single women (including prostitutes) to place illegitimate children in the care of institutions.

language: transfigured. The matador is defined as “transfigured” when he is required to carry out his peculiar priestly duty: unleashing the wrath of the bull-god in order to restore justice. As such, in the contest with ‘Romerita’ for the love of Rocío, Currito is transfigured, whilst ‘Romerita’ is not. Furthermore, when Currito approaches the man, who has abandoned Rocío and her daughter, to remind him of his responsibilities as a man and as a father, he is exercising a role of spiritual mediator. The sequence, a variation to the original source, reinforces Currito’s specific ministry, through his attempt to restore what would be the correct solution to Rocío’s dishonour. It is only ‘Romerita’s’ negative response that allows Currito to feel free to take care of Rocío. However, the matador releases his prophecy to ‘Romerita’: “I promise you that we will meet again in the bullring within a month, and there you will pay for all the bad which you did to her and to me. [...] We will settle this matter alone with the bull”. The bull-god, effectively, ends ‘Romerita’s’ life.

Religious parallelisms follow with Currito’s return to bullfighting, which is praised by the *aficionados* as a “resurrection”. Lucia, similarly to Delgado’s 1925 version, inserts after the fatal goring of ‘Romerita’ the final confession of the dying matador, who seeks forgiveness from him and Rocío. Currito forgives his former enemy in the name of both, and ends his mission restoring the peace between Carmona and his daughter.

Currito’s priestly role is further reiterated with a curious addition relating to the salvation of a young bull from Carmona’s farm, having remained, with the death of its mother, “motherless like Currito”. Currito and Rocío decide to both look after the *torito* and she asks about giving it a name, through a Christian metaphor: “We will have to baptise it”. The young man offers to find a bucket of water to simulate the sacrament, and to the woman’s whimsical attitude, Currito responds with seriousness. The young bull’s role as a sort of taurine godson, in fact, continues throughout the whole film, growing alongside the figure of Currito. Equally symbolic is the end of Lucia’s film: the happy ending of the last image of Currito and Rocío finally together includes, in place of Rocío’s daughter, the bull which they both raised.

The holy and sanctifying vision of the bullfighter will return in subsequent films. Lucia himself repeats the model in *Un caballero andaluz* (1954), and also re-employs Jorge Mistral, who moves from the role of the antagonist to the lead.

On this occasion, Mistral plays a widow and virtuous bull-breeder *rejoneador* (horseback bullfighter) who offers his art, money, and property to help the social rehabilitation of gypsy orphans, opening a shelter and a school on his land.

As in the case of the model of the soldier, brave regardless of his social milieu, the protagonist of *Un caballero andaluz* reconciles his model of masculinity with the social order. As with Currito, the noble gentleman is attributed a special 'feminine' grace, put now to the service of the social recovery of gypsies. The syllogism of the new style of masculinity continues in its reconciliatory mission: if men submit to the new social order as women submit to men, then men should embody some feminine traditional virtues (essentially, sexual continence) and, due to men's 'innate superiority', even surpass women in the practice of these virtues. In this case, the script gives the protagonist's son some of the most inclusive definitions for his exemplary manhood: "You are both a father and a mother". Whilst in *Currito de la Cruz*, Currito's extreme kindness successfully "returns Rocío, an independent self-assertive woman, to domesticity" (Bentley 2008: 107), Mistral's performance involves a redeeming fatherhood.

The reconciliation between social classes and ethnic groups is distinctively pre-eminent in *cine taurino* during the Francoist regime. It is present throughout the four decades and supplants the focus on merely national identity that silent cinema had in relation to foreign cinema. Now, social mobility and national reconciliation become hegemonic discourses, maintaining a centripetal vision, focused on an internal reality. Spanish cinema is influenced, as in the past, in style and form by external trends: however, foreign *españolada* is no longer considered the enemy, but rather a mere filmic language of an industrial system which is now looked upon as a model.

*Currito de la Cruz*, one of the most successful films of the Francoist era (Camporesi 1993: 127), borrows its filmic language from Hollywood melodrama and reformulates it in its own way. The film recreates an "American-style *españolada*" (Castro de Paz 2002: 134), but successfully engages through Spanish themes with its national audience, composed of thousands of 'Curritos', who were orphaned during the war. Amongst them, in the theatre in Palma del Río, a small village in the province of Cordoba, a teenage war orphan, the son

of a republican assassinated in 1936, sees a bullfight for the first time in his life – albeit only on screen – and is captivated by Currito's story.

That night, Manuel Benítez, later 'El Cordobés', and his friend Juan Horillo:

[...] observing the display of imperfect images, understood and believed. Because, really, that was the truth. The bravery displayed in front of a bull, like that of Currito de la Cruz, continued to be the best key with which to open the doors of the rigidly structured Spanish society. [...] Manolo watched open-mouthed the image of that boy, whose hunger must have been the same as his own, moving around the world which he conquered with his bravery. [...] But, above all, the success of the young lad in the bullfighter's outfit had earned him the ultimate trophy of material well-being. [...] Arriving at the door of his hut, Manolo turned to Horillo: - You'll see - he told him-; there will be a day when my belly will be as full as his (Lapierre and Collins [1967] 2012: 221-4).

Whilst in 1925 the first film about Currito de la Cruz praised bullfighting as a the professional world which can best enlighten the virtues of working-class Spaniards, in 1949 tauromachy can save a wartime generation, which now dreams to have, like Currito, a luxury Chrysler (Ibid.: 223). The taurine dream of a generation reflects the increasing number of films about bullfighting, which will release the imaginary of the nation. Taurine themes also find a place in cinema *engagé*, and both commercial and *auteur* films become visual symbols of the nation's contradictions.

At this time more than ever, Spain becomes a metaphorical bullring. The cinematic archetypes of the bullfighter coexist with Francoism's political eclecticism, and adapt – or succumb – to modernity and middle-class consumerism. Allegories of the bull fluctuate between religious and sexual meanings, often within the same film. Women attempt to demand a new social space, trying to overcome their traditional roles in domestic life or as a stereotyped *femme fatale*. Amidst *continuismos* and ruptures, contrasting depictions of the nation are proposed through social concord or class struggle.

### **3.4 *Continuismo(s)* and rupture(s): the second Golden Age of *cine taurino* (1950-1965)**

#### **3.4.1 Contrasting models of the cinematic bullfighter**

The cultural 'fusion' of National-Catholicism and (homo-)eroticism, as depicted by *Currito de la Cruz* (1949) and by the rich landowner in *Un caballero*

*andaluz* (1954), continues throughout the years, persisting as one of the main models of the bullfighter in the new era. In addition, the Christian chastity of the bullfighter also involves discourses on class mobility. For instance, in the fourth adaptation of *El niño de las monjas* (Ignacio F. Iquino, 1958), the orphaned bullfighter, in contrast to the original novel, can finally marry the rich bull-breeder's daughter rather than settling for her poor quasi-stepsister. With regard to sexual continence and celibacy, *Fray Torero* (José Luis Sáenz de Heredia, 1966) sees the advent of the Christianising apotheosis of bullfighting, fusing two characters in one. Paco Camino, a famous bullfighter in real life, embodies masculinity in the bullring and virginity in the bedroom, in his role as a monk by vocation and a bullfighter by the grace of God, a profession that he must follow in order to save the convent from financial debacle.

The survival of a convent is also the reason for the presence of three other famous bullfighters in the final sequence of *La becerrada* (José María Forqué, 1963). Antonio Ordóñez, Antonio Bienvenida, and Juan García 'Mondeño' make their cameo appearance in this comedy about the organisation of a charitable bullfight by a convent of nuns without even needing to perform any bullfighting in the film. The mystical aura surrounding the three men does not require bullfighting images and, curiously, fiction is soon mixed with reality: in 1964, one of the three taurine icons of *La becerrada*, 'Mondeño', decides to relinquish his *traje de luces* in order to enter the Dominican convent in Burgos (De la Lama 1964: 43).

Exploiting the similarities between taurine liturgy and religious symbolism, the repeated sequences and expressions relating to the priestly aspect of bullfighting (such as the taking of the habit, prayers in the bullring's chapel, etc.), already present in silent cinema, are mobilised in service of a cultural space (not only a cinematographic one) which locates the Catholic Church in a central position within national life. The implicit and explicit religiousness in a series of taurine films are accompanied by numerous productions relating to miracles, conversions, and apparitions. Religious cinema is, at that time, one of the most successful genres. Films such as *La señora de Fátima* (Rafael Gil, 1951) and *Marcelino pan y vino* (Ladislao Vajda, 1955) are just two of the most famous examples of a productive period in which nuns, monks, and priests acquire more visibility onscreen. Beyond the *cine de cruzada* of the 1940s,

which related more to the spirit of the post-Civil War, religious-themed cinema enjoys success in both Europe and Hollywood during the 1950s and 1960s. Hollywood, which also develops archetypal masculine heroes who contribute to the shaping of the nation (Wright 2007: 65), influences Spanish cinema in both style and content, for instance in the elements of anti-Communism, which is also the new post-Fascist terrain of Francoism (Monterde 2007: 94).

Although the period from 1951 to 1960 is often defined by its National-Catholicism, in the 1950s and 1960s other diverse cultural elements stand out, and different aesthetic forms influence film production. As with the 1940s, cinema at this time must be placed in a space considered to be “an active focus of contradictions, of impenetrable relationships (not always univocal) which determine and transverse all fields: the political, the social, the cultural, the industrial, the creative, the aesthetic, or the theoretical” (Heredero 1993: 12). These contradictions become characteristics of national cinema in the 1960s, indicatively described by Sally Faulkner as “a cinema of contradiction” (2006a).

Whilst true that at the end of the 1940s the control of culture shifts towards the conservative Catholic movement Opus Dei<sup>74</sup>, including censorship until the beginning of the 1960s (Monterde 2009b: 244), it is important to approach Spanish cinema of this period not only in its religious-political *continuismo*, but also in terms of its ‘rupture’ (Ibid.: 239). Spain moves from years of repression and ultra-Catholic belligerence to a period of economic transformation (the ‘Spanish economic miracle’) and, with this,

mutations in social and cultural structures, with an emerging consumer society, a progressively urban population, a metamorphosis in productive organisation, and the unstoppable 1970s which burst on the scene due to the tourists flocking to the coasts, and the televisions and radios which were introduced in *desarrollistas*<sup>75</sup> homes” (Box 2014: 263).

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<sup>74</sup> Opus Dei (Work of God) is an institution within the Catholic Church founded in 1928 by Spanish priest Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer. Following a spirituality which seeks holiness through work in the secular world, Opus Dei is a conservative movement closely connected to economic and political power, with many *supernumerarios* (secular members) being in strategic positions within banks, financial companies, Ministries, etc. In Franco’s 1950s Spain, the appointment of various Opus Dei members, of liberal-capitalist orientation, provoked a change in the direction of the State’s economic policy, clashing with the previous Falangist ideology (Box 2014: 257-9).

<sup>75</sup> *Desarrollismo* (developmentalism), which took place in the 1960s, is characterised by the state intervention in plans for industrialisation and social progress.

Just as the cultural models of Francoism in the 1950s and 1960s began to vary and diversify, there is a corresponding shift in cinematic models: in content, form, and style, not without significant contradictions. At this time of change, adaptation, and contrast with modernity and consumerism, bullfighting - one of the topics most closely connected with tradition and mythology - paradoxically reaches its peak of popularity in films (Colón Perales 2005: 199). The archetype of the National-Catholic bullfighting hero is therefore just one amongst many, in the same way the 'American *españolada*' is merely one of many cultural influences. Production companies are also evolving in their business: while some seek to imitate the American Studio system (from the star-system to co-productions with other countries), others create cooperatives or independent companies, seeking to develop an *auteur* cinema.

In terms of creative development, the most popular genres of the period continue to be, amongst others, religious films, melodramas, and musical comedies. Furthermore, following the overwhelming success of Pablito Calvo in *Marcelino pan y vino*, films starring children enjoy special success, creating a veritable phenomenon (Aguilar 2013). Pablito Calvo himself appears, for the second time under the direction of Ladislao Vajda, in the taurine film *Mi tío Jacinto* (1956); likewise, Marisol stars alongside *rejoneador* Ángel Peralta in *Cabriola* (Mel Ferrer, 1965).

Taurine elements are more often inserted in films of other genres. The commercial potential of a romance between a bullfighter and a *folclórica* (a flamenco dancer or a *copla* singer) is exploited in musical films and popular comedies: famous cinematic couples are Carmen Sevilla and Luis Mariano in *El sueño de Andalucía* (Luis Lucia, 1952), or Paquita Rico and the bullfighter-actor Manuel Capetillo in the Spanish-Mexican co-production *Dos novias para un torero* (Antonio Román, 1956). At times, the role of bullfighter is inserted into musicals as a mere symbol of seduction, such as in *El balcón de la luna* (1962), a film intended to show-off the female stars Paquita Rico, Carmen Sevilla and Lola Flores. On special occasions, a simple scene of a *tienta* in the countryside is shown to bolster the Spanish 'essence' in co-produced films, such as in the case of the Spanish-Italian production *Pan, amor y Andalucía* (1958), in which an aged Vittorio De Sica takes up bullfighting to impress the young beauty Carmen Sevilla.

Tauro-musical elements are also inserted in melodramas; for instance, in *La tirana* (Juan de Orduña, 1958) and *La novia de Juan Lucero* (Santos Alcocer, 1958). In the latter, the musical talent of Juanita Reina shares the limelight with Ángel Peralta's art of bullfighting on horseback. Peralta is, in those years, a bullfighter-film star, being co-protagonist of the aforementioned *Cabriola*, and a notable guest-star in the Spanish-British co-production *That Lady* (Terence Young, 1955).

The new direction of national politics, which seeks to promote a fresh image of the country, more open to the world and more international, also coincides with a considerable increase in the number of films co-produced with other nations (Monterde 2009b: 255). In many cases, the Spanish setting of the script includes a bullfight or, on certain occasions, the presence of a bullfighter. These films relaunch the bullfighter in its role of romantic seducer, typical of 'orientalist' visions of the once-condemned foreign *españolada*.

The greatest success of the period, *El último cuplé* (Juan de Orduña, 1957), may be considered an exemplary Spanish production of 'American *españolada*'. The film establishes Sara Montiel as a film star, and her songs and tempestuous romantic relationships, including one with a young bullfighter who dies in the bullring, mix nostalgia for the genre of *zarzuela* with the sophistication of a modern musical (Benet 2012: 286-7).

Whilst up until the 1930s the fierce debate about the depiction of the Spanish nation in foreign films causes an outcry in almost every circumstance, now the interest in the participation of a famous bullfighter in French, British, or North-American films becomes important for the international promotion of Spain as an exotic destination for tourists. Whilst co-productions with Mexico create a "mix of traditions" (Ibid.: 286) of *coplas* and *rancheras*, Mexican and Spanish bullfighting styles, flamenco and *jarabe tapatío*, in general, the image of the bullfighter and bullfighting reflects a cultural continuity with previous French or North-American *españoladas*. This is the case of the co-production with France *Châteaux en Espagne* (René Wheeler, 1954), with the 'cinematic Currito' Pepín Martín Vázquez, or the Spanish-British film *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman* (Albert Lewin, 1951). In the latter, matador Mario Cabré seduces Ava Gardner, both on and off-screen.

The press, once extremely critical of, and over-sensitive about, the image of Spain held by foreigners, now gazes benevolently on Spanish themes in foreign films. *Primer Plano* and *NO-DO* are joined in their praise by other publications, such as *Fotogramas*, which “would combine rigorous information with the cult of celebrity” (Nieto Ferrando 2012: 52). This new hybrid model of journalism, which combines elements of film critique with gossip (Ibid.), looks now with favour even upon those films that do not enlist Spanish bullfighters or Spanish actors to portray national characters.

Towards the end of the 1940s, the pre-production of *Fiesta* (Richard Thorpe, 1947), in spite of the announced parodic tone of the film with a cross-dressing Esther Williams in the bullring, is announced favourably in *Primer Plano* (‘Lo español está de moda’ 1945: 8). Cine-magazine *NO-DO*, despite the ‘orientalism’ of *Blood and Sand* (1941), with Tyrone Power’s representation of Juan Gallardo as illiterate and uncouth, dedicates a substantial reportage to the journey around Spain, which the Hollywood star carries out to promote the Spanish premiere (*NO-DO* no. 290B, 1948). The model of the bullfighter as a seductive Iberian *macho* is not only tolerated but promoted, while the myth of *Carmen* is now presented as a genuine Spanish theme (i.e. *Carmen la de Ronda*, Tulio Demicheli, 1959).

The bon viveur, seductive, and glamorous bullfighter appears on Spanish screens embodied by Spanish actors-bullfighters, like Mario Cabré, or by international film stars: Anthony Quinn, the Mexican matador in *The Magnificent Matador* (Budd Boetticher, 1955), receives a positive response from critics, to the extent that the words of film reviewer Alfonso Sánchez (“Those in Hollywood are now able to make good films about bullfighting”) are reproduced in the film’s advertising (‘Santos el magnífico’ 1956: 11). Echoes of the old debate on national or international *españolada*, as well as reflections on escapism and realism, survive only marginally. Audiences still prefer popular cinema, and only a few newly founded film magazines, such as *Nuestro Cine* and *Film Ideal*, propose fresh perspectives on cinema (Nieto Ferrando 2012).

Contrasting cinematic models of the bullfighter, depicted as a chaste man or in a more ‘orientalist’ style, share the national screens. Through the influence of western films, the archetype of the taurine heroic cowboy increases its presence in films. Director Vittorio Cottafavi incorporates the qualities of the

North-American cowboy in the Spanish *mayoral*. In his Italian-Spanish production *Toro Bravo* (1960), professional matador Francisco Moreno Vega 'Curro Puya' interprets an original variation on the taurine Spanish male. The protagonist of the film, in fact, works passionately raising fighting bulls, yet, in spite of possessing the inner strength of a bullfighter, he does not want to become a matador: "I would never harm a bull", he responds to those who urge him to change profession. However, the goring of the bullfighter who is supposed to fight his favourite bull, offers him the opportunity to become a bullfighter for a day. To avoid any further suffering to 'his' bull (the risk of the bull being fought by an amateur), he chooses to perform the *corrida* himself ("He is a good bull. He deserves it"). The cowboy-bullfighter not only 'saves' the honour of a fighting bull, but the whole farm of his employer, demonstrating that the bravery of the animals bred in the farm is still extraordinary.

In this long period of varied *cine taurino*, the range of symbolism linked to bulls and bullfighters is equally expanded; even the personality of the matador-actor acquires a strengthened intertextuality. The twenty years following autarchy finds material in these bullfighters from which to mould discourses on the new Spain. The elegance of the style of bullfighting exhibited by Pepín Martín Vázquez, used to highlight angelic qualities, and the impeccable moral life of the bullfighter-monk 'Mondeño' and of the Opus Dei *supernumerario* Antonio Bienvenida, sit alongside the seductive aura of high-profile matadors who are part of the star-system, such as Luis Miguel Dominguín.

Dominguín is the bullfighter who assumes the legacy of 'Manolete', and not only due to his presence in the bullfight in Linares during the final *corrida* of the matador from Cordoba. Dominguín's style in the bullring, in contrast to the serious and solemn approach of 'Manolete', reflects his attitude in daily life. The young matador lives as he performs, surrounding himself with famous people, from Orson Welles to Ernest Hemingway and Pablo Picasso. He is an international sex-symbol, and he maintains intimate relationships with numerous actresses, such as Ava Gardner, Lucia Bosè (later his wife), and Miroslava Stern, whose suicide in 1955 is said to be linked to her disappointment following the bullfighter's marriage to the Italian actress<sup>76</sup>.

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<sup>76</sup> For further detail on the life of Dominguín, see the comprehensive biography by Andrés Amorós (2008).

His star persona becomes legendary in Ernest Hemingway's reportage for *Life* magazine in 1959, regarding the rivalry between Dominguín and his brother-in-law, the equally celebrated Antonio Ordóñez (compiled in posthumous publication *The Dangerous Summer* in 1985). In the Spanish media, Dominguín is a constant presence in *Primer Plano* and, although he does not appear in fiction films (except for some short cameos such as in *Around the World in 80 Days*, Michael Anderson, 1956), he is regularly on-screen in theatres in the news and documentaries of *NO-DO*<sup>77</sup>. In the 1960s, he finally participates in the docu-fiction *Yo he visto a la muerte* (José María Forqué, 1967). Far from any idealistic representation of the exemplary citizen of Spanish *cine taurino*, Dominguín embodies the most international stereotype of the Latin Lover. Living a glamorous life like in Hollywood films, the matador is part of the 'cultural script' of his era.

A further matador as an inspirational character for films is Miguel Báez Espuny 'El Litri', proceeding from a long line of matadors, all known as 'El Litri'. His father Miguel Báez Quintero, himself the son of a bullfighter, would never have wished his career for his second son. A widower by his first wife and distraught at the death in the bullring of his first son Miguel Báez Gómez in 1926, he marries for a second time, to a young admirer of his late son. Until his death, he does everything within his power to dissuade his second son from following the family tradition. However, the youngest of the 'Litris' rises to fame in the 1950s, and the original story of three generations is turned into a film by a director who, like Luis Lucia, can boast about a 'cycle of taurine films': Rafael Gil. His film *El Litri y su sombra* (1959) depicts the life of the Huelva bullfighting dynasty, tying one generation to another with the spiritual thread that is the taurine vocation, creating visual metaphors for the destiny that unites a man with a fighting bull.

Miguel Báez Espuny plays himself: his persona in the film reinforces the mythical and mystical image of the bullfighter, depicted in fiction as a predestined hero of the arenas. The true story of the dynasty is portrayed as a family with an innate – even genetic – vocation for bullfighting. All members of

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<sup>77</sup> Between 1947 and 1973, Dominguín appears in more than thirty *NO-DO* newsreels and documentaries (*Revista Imágenes*). See, for instance, *La beneficencia y su festejo*, 1946; *El toreo y sus glorias*, 1948; *Toros en Valencia*, 1951; *Antología taurina*, 1972.

the three generations involved show the qualities expected from cinematic matadors: high professional ambitions are justified with the display of the bullfighter's Christian virtues. Their calling to bullfighting is god-given. With Rafael Gil's films, 'El Litri' joins the long list of bullfighters who do not merely appear in cameos, but who star in one or more films, as the most appealing cast member. In this Golden Age of Spanish *cine taurino*, the list of bullfighters-actors in fiction cinema – hitherto already significant – becomes impressive, both in number and in prominence.

Indeed, in addition to those already mentioned, we may also name Enrique Vera in *El último cuplé*, *El niño de las monjas* and, with Domingo Ortega and Antonio Bienvenida, *Tarde de toros* (Ladislao Vaida, 1956); Antonio Borrero 'Chamaco' in *El traje de oro* (Julio Coll, 1959); Oscar Cruz in *Los golfos* (Carlos Saura, 1959); Francisco Moreno Vega 'Curro Puya' and Rafael Peralta in *Toro bravo*; Manuel Benítez 'El Cordobés' in *Aprendiendo a morir* (Pedro Lazaga, 1962) and *Chantaje a un torero* (Rafael Gil, 1963); Jaime Ostos in *Valiente* (Luis Marquina, 1964); Manuel Cano 'El Pireo' in *Currito de la Cruz* (Rafael Gil, 1965); Sebastián Palomo Martínez 'Palomo Linares' in *Nuevo en esta plaza* (Pedro Lazaga, 1966), *Solos los dos* (Luis Lucia, 1968) and, in the years of transition, *Carmen* (Julio Diamante, 1976); Andrés Torres 'El Monaguillo' in *Clarines y campanas* (Ramón Torrado, 1966); Blas Romero 'El Platanito' in *Jugando a morir* (José H. Gan, 1966); Pedro Benjumea Durán 'Pedrín Benjumea' in *Las cicatrices* (Pedro Lazaga, 1967); Ángel Teruel in *Sangre en el ruedo* (Rafael Gil, 1968); Miguel Mateo Salcedo 'Miguelín' in *El momento de la verdad* (Francesco Rosi, 1965) and *El relicario* (Rafael Gil, 1970); Agustín Castellano 'El Puri' in *El paseíllo* (Ana Mariscal, 1968); and José Luis Feria 'Gallos' in *Un torero para la historia* (José María Zabalza, 1974).

The presence of such numerous names of bullfighters playing themselves in films based on their own lives, such as 'El Cordobés' and 'Palomo Linares', or interpreting fictional characters in taurine films, is not only due to their popularity, nor to technical limitations in shooting bullfights with a non-professional matador. In contrast with the past, technical advances allow the director more wide-ranging options, and the previous problems of heterogeneity in editing have been by this time almost overcome.

In fact, it is during these two decades that some actors acquire the status of 'cinematic bullfighter'. Jorge Mistral builds his stardom also thanks to roles in *Currito de la Cruz* and *Un caballero andaluz*, whilst actor Pepe Nieto is insistently celebrated by the press as a former bullfighter ('Biografía gráfica de José Nieto' 1941: 7-8; 'Pepe Nieto estuvo a punto de ser torero' 1942: 3; De la Torre 1943: 18-9).

The 'dialectic of actor and role', the process by which "the star is more than an actor incarnating characters, he incarnates himself in them, and they become incarnate in him" (Morin 1957: 38), reaches its height with Francisco (Paco) Rabal. At the end of his remarkable acting career, Rabal is called – even by professionals in the bullfighting world – by the greatest title which may be bestowed upon a bullfighter: *maestro* (de Armiñán 2004: 9). Rabal is a bullfighter in *Los clarines del miedo* (Antonio Román, 1958), *A las cinco de la tarde* (Juan Antonio Bardem, 1961), *Currito de la Cruz* (1965), and *Sangre en el ruedo*. The dialectic between the bullfighter and the actor continues until his *corte de coleta* with fiction, moving to television for the serial *Juncal* (Jaime de Armiñán, 1989), in the role of a retired bullfighter.

The choice of the professional bullfighter is not simply due to the opportunities offered by their commercial potential, although that is clearly the intention of some filmmakers of popular cinema (Gregori 2009: 86-90). In general, the matador acts in the film to bring realism as sought by filmmakers, and to add or reinforce meanings, by linking his star persona to his character. Ladislao Vajda, Francesco Rosi and New Spanish Cinema director Carlos Saura cast specific bullfighters to strengthen social discourses through realism. The bullfighter, on more than one occasion, embodies powerful intertextualities, at the point of becoming part, through his presence, of political discourses.

Pedro Lazaga in *Aprendiendo a morir* is able to construct, as will become clear, a film with analogies between the life of a torero and the qualities of the *Caudillo*, established through some episodes of the real life of 'El Cordobés' (he achieves success through a personal 'insurgence'). Conversely, Carlos Saura chooses a Colombian *novillero*, Oscar Cruz, to play a young outlaw boy who aspires to be a bullfighter, and who miserably fails in his attempt to be part of a society, which, as in real life for non-Spanish bullfighters, manifests racism towards citizens proceeding from former Spanish colonies.

Whether the directors are sympathetic to the regime or anti-establishment, many of the films share aspects which relate to one of the most interesting creative phases in the history of national cinema, and which includes the involvement of realism and the representation of tensions with modernity and the class struggle. For directors like Rafael Gil, Luis Lucia, Pedro Lazaga, or Juan de Orduña, the representation of contemporary social reality is limited to the focus of the camera on that which was hidden in the 1940s: hunger, squalor, and public cruelty in the bullring are used as metaphors to portray an individual's struggle with the rest of the world: "There are two types of scar", says the protagonist of *Las cicatrices*: "those caused by a bull, and those caused by the *aficionados*".

In films such as *Aprendiendo a morir*, *Nuevo en esta plaza*, *Valiente*, and *Las cicatrices*, the difficulties or the most unpleasant details are no longer cut in the censors' office or in the editing room. The *mise-en-scène* now includes prominent images of blood stains on the bullfighter's outfit and on the animal, and often (real) sequences depicting goring of actor-bullfighters or repeated *estocadas* are inserted. The proximity of the camera in these visually distasteful episodes which have become a taboo in comedies or musicals, marks the new style of realist taurine dramas. In contrast with a more sanitised filmic language of Spanish films influenced by Hollywood, which often cut out the thrust while emphasising the beauty of some performances, the dramas that wish to display realism recover 'the moment of truth' (the *estocada*) as seen in silent cinema. The camera focuses on the blood, as a symbol of the high price men must pay to entertain a bloodthirsty audience, which seeks excitement at someone else's risk. Between bull and bullfighter, whose blood is mixed, is often performed an allegorical ritual of (human) sex, (social) life and (religious) death.

As highlighted by Fouz-Hernández and Martínez-Expósito (2007: 23): "despite all its implications of physical strength and sexual potency, the bull is also a symbol of vulnerability: the spectacle consists of its gradual weakening through deadly penetrations [...] and both the bull and the bullfighter are also exposed to the castrating, blood-hungry gaze of the audience". Indeed, in several dramas, the bull's role as a punishing god appears to have weakened, and despite the dramatic plot, the story ends with the triumph of the matador.

The bull is therefore anthropomorphised to refer to humanity's cruelty, embodying the enemy. The new demons are no longer the *femme fatale* but rather the public. At times, the 'modern' bullfighter fights to obtain economic benefits more than glory in society. In that case, the fighting bull assumes the role of a more worldly deity: the god of capitalism.

The scripts of the dramas repeat narrative formulas in their *plot*: the brave young man becomes successful when his behaviour reflects the ethics of the regime. The novelty in the classic formula proceeds from the possibility, for the matador, to finally overcome class discrimination. In the new era of Franco, everything is possible for the heroic bullfighter, and cross-class marriages or love relationships with bourgeois or aristocratic women are now allowed. 'El Cordobés' initiates an affectionate friendship with an upper-class lady in *Aprendiendo a morir*, 'Palomo Linares' with a rich girl in *Nuevo en esta plaza*, and Jaime Ostos, in *Valiente*, marries, as described by a former partner of the matador, "a señorita".

As claimed by Faulkner, if "Spanish cinema of the 1950s is populated with metaphors for frustrated social stasis [...], as Spain developed as a capitalist, consumerist society throughout the 1960s, the defining characteristic of both the country and its cinema became mobility" (2013: 81). In several taurine films, social mobility is achieved with the overcoming of the main obstacle which previously would have provoked a fatal goring. Now, the sub-proletarian bullfighter can aspire to a Chrysler or a rich woman, and, if brave enough, can face and overcome any social stratum.

In the specific class struggle of realist dramas culturally sympathetic to the political regime, mobility and social reconciliation even involve the upper-class milieu: Pedro Benjumea, bullfighter-actor in *Las cicatrices*, endures his torment within his own family, having to convince his father, a doctor, that his bullfighting vocation is authentic. His father's conversion to bullfighting is not the only obstacle to his career. In order to earn a place in bullfighting, the upper-class bullfighter must defeat in a bullfight Simón, the son of a rich bull-breeder and manager of several bullrings. The battle between the incorruptible (bourgeois) Pedrín and the degenerate (bourgeois) Simón ends with the price paid for victory: blood. Pedrín survives a violent goring in the bullring, earning a contract for thirty bullfights.

Conflicts in these melodramas are no longer conveyed through romantic relationships. Formerly, the *femme fatale* has been the key character in triggering the bullfighter's tragedy, whose greed and lust symbolised the gravest moral transgression. In this new phase of social equalisation and materialistic desires, the representation of social conflicts through a sentimental debacle becomes implausible. The new generation of bullfighters experiences success with females akin to that of a rock star, being the model for other males, and symbols of the nation's new economic strength (Echegaray 2005: 131).

The new enemy, in addition to the public, can be embodied by modernity. In the period of *desarrollismo* and cultural openness, the dangers of modernity arrive with cultural contamination: emigration (Spaniards 'corrupted' by their life abroad) and tourism (tourists 'corrupting' Spain) provoke not only a gradual end of economic autarchy, but also changes in moral and ideological structures (Monterde 2009b: 245). The bullfighter in a film is responsible for bringing a sense of modernity in such a way that he is not altering tradition, here represented by all the values and virtues connected to bullfighting. Conversely, women become the vehicle of the corruption of modernity. Their seductive power diminishes, but their interference in the social space of men can be dangerous.

For instance, the wife of the lead bullfighter in *Valiente*, despite her consciousness of her place in the domestic world ("My duty is to keep quiet"), once she chooses to speak, gives her husband erroneous advice. The *señorita* attracted to 'Palomo Linares' in *Nuevo en esta plaza* is equally unhelpful: in the bullring she is more likely to comment on the beauty of the matador than his bravery; she drinks alcohol with her friends; she listens to (and dances) rock music. The presence of such a woman would be inappropriate, then, when the young bullfighter conquers the bullring in Madrid (that is, the world). "Is she not here?" asks the matador. "It's her loss", sharply replies his manager, predicting the bullfighter's triumph.

The greatest dangers come from women who raise professional expectations, especially when their interference takes place in areas that are – by law – reserved exclusively for men. In *Las cicatrices*, it is the aspiring bullfighter's sister who helps him as a manager. When the female appears to begin enjoying her professional role, a well-known bullfighting reporter puts her

in her place: “I’m not anti-feminist, but bullfighting is for men, and you can’t continue to be responsible for your brother, if you want him to be successful”.

The tensions experienced during the 1960s between the imposed duty of women to remain within their domestic role and the regime’s growing need for a workforce (Brooksbank Jones 1997: 77), are reflected in Spanish cinema within the various genres and subgenres. Faulkner offers a clarifying example (2006a: 29):

This uneasy alliance of tradition is revealed by the government’s contradictory actions in the early 1960s: while on the one hand its Ministry of Labour legally recognised certain women’s rights in the workplace in the 1961 ‘Law of Political, Professional, and Labour Rights of Women’, on the other, its Ministry of Information and Tourism awarded the pronatalist *La gran familia* the ‘National Interest’ prize, which led to the top level of subsidy of 50 per cent and benefits in promotion and distribution.

Whereas *La gran familia* (Fernando Palacios, 1962) clearly praises the reproductive ability of the female body (the lead female character is mother to fifteen children), in the taurine cinema of the time the girlfriend of the matador is asked to balance her aspirations with the prioritisation – both professional and moral – of the man’s career. Rocío, in the fourth cinematographic version of *Currito de la Cruz* (1965), is no longer the *muñequita* (doll) of her father, but a modern young lady, with short hair and short skirts, who this time directly challenges her father’s authority. It is Currito who then guides her back on track.

Marisol, former child prodigy who falls in love with ‘Palomo Linares’ in *Solos los dos*, recognises that even as a successful singer and *chica yé-yé*, she knows when she must stay at home to pray for her triumphant bullfighter. Both films refer to the fact that the well-being of several families depends on the success of the bullfighter, and both females end up ‘choosing’ their place once they realise the price the male is paying. In both cases, it is after a serious goring that the women acknowledge their unconditional love. The blood of the bullfighter and the bull, which stands out even more in colour cinema, accentuates the tragic reality of the profession, the tradition of baptism by blood which no modern artifice can change.

The most pro-government taurine cinema continues to represent a strict division between genders. The man is permitted to broaden his desire for social mobility and he is allowed to indulge in consumerism, as benefits for those who

continue to defend the most traditional values. On the other hand, the Spanish woman needs re-education in the values and customs which she risks losing. In exchange for a change in hair and wardrobe styles, she must not continue with moral waywardness. Put simply, women must not desire as men do.

The realism of conservative taurine films is confined to a triumphalist and optimistic outlook which the Francoist regime wishes to transmit:

[...] the assimilation of the neo-realist aesthetic in Spanish cinema consisted more in using a repertoire of stylistic features for its own benefit rather than a transformative cultural and aesthetic approach. The purpose of this appropriation of neo-realist stylistic resources was, in many cases, about creating a decorative mortar which would bind the diverse components which made up the pastiche (Benet 2012: 268).

In contrast, it is during this same period, particularly from 1955 to 1965, when the attempt to challenge an ideal, and superficial, vision of the nation sees the emergence of what are now considered the best taurine films in history (Heredero 1993: 275-8; Colón Perales 2005: 205; Monterde 2009b: 275). In the period of major development in taurine cinema, which also coincides with the first publication on the genre by Carlos Fernández Cuenca (1963), a new view demystifies Franco's nation through the demythologising of bullfighting.

### **3.4.2 Realism(s) and rupture(s): 'communists' in the bullring, bullfighters and *aficionados* in the film industry.**

Despite the partial assimilation of realism in Spanish cinema, it is worth noting that several realist films produced between the 1950s and the 1960s have had a remarkable cultural impact, questioning major aspects of contemporary society through taurine metaphors. According to Colón Perales (2005: 204):

In terms of taurine-themed cinema, Vajda's "formal realism" in *Tarde de toros* or his "emotional realism" in *Mi tío Jacinto*, the "conventional realism" in *Los clarines del miedo* by Román, the neo-realism in Carlos Velo's *Torero*, the "limited realism" in Bardem's *A las cinco de la tarde*, or the "new realism" in Saura's *Los Golfos* enrich the sub-genre, [...] by portraying the universe of the bullfight from previously un-filmed points of view and with a greater loyalty even to the immediate reality.

Without discussing Colón Perales' evaluations of the realism in each film (formal, emotional, limited, etc.), it is interesting to note how some films can

actually deconstruct the myths most associated with the stereotypes of Spain and Spanishness.

Firstly, they approach representations of masculinities by weakening the bravery of the matador which, along with hunger, is the main quality that rhetorical propaganda considers the key to all success. The Spanish film *Tarde de toros*, directed by Hungarian director Ladislao Vajda, and the Mexican film *Torero*, masterpiece of the exiled Spaniard Carlos Velo, appear in cinemas in 1956, demystifying the aura of successful bullfighters. Both directors cast professional matadors as lead characters to portray the internal drama of those who face the possibility of death in their daily life.

In Vajda's film, the seriousness of these tensions is expressed through a plot about events which occur on a single afternoon, in a bullring where three bullfighters are performing a corrida. The middle-aged Ricardo Puente (Domingo Ortega), the popular bullfighter Juan Carmona (Antonio Bienvenida), and the young 'Rondeño' (Enrique Vera) embody three emotional stages of a single life: the fear of decline (Puente); the fear of being unable to remain at the top (Carmona); and the fear of failure as a beginner ('Rondeño').

References to reality begin with the first shot, showing the poster advertising the bullfight with the real names of the matadors, superimposed by another with the fictional names they assume in the film (Díaz and de la Fuente 2015: 59). Through a *mise-en-scène* which mixes drama and documentary, Vajda's film stands out in the history of Spanish cinema as being the first film candidate from Spain for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film – a competitive category created in 1956 – and also as being one of the biggest box office successes of the decade (Monterde 2009b: 262).

*Torero* has a more emphasised style of docu-fiction; the camera follows the personal life of well-known Mexican bullfighter Luis Procuna. The voiceover, as if the character's internal voice, accompanies the images of his daily life, associating them with the matador's psychology: it begins with breakfast in the family home on a day of corrida, it goes through the ritual actions the man carries out every time he has to perform (he visits the grave of his mother and stays alone for a while before he goes to the bullring), and it ends in the arena, bullfighting for the spectators' pleasure. In each of these moments, Procuna's inner voice reflects on life and death, and expresses his fears. Fear is the most

repeated word in the film, the fear which the bullfighter battled throughout his life and was the inspiration through which Velo – without being an *aficionado* – would begin the development of the script.

*Torero* receives international praise, including from André Bazin (“It refines the perspective of cinematic realism”), François Truffaut (“It shows us, almost without any artifice, the life of a bullfighter”); and Gillo Pontecorvo (“If I had not previously seen *Torero*, I would never have been able to make *La battaglia di Algeri*”) (Taibo 1987: 94-5). On the other hand, *Primer Plano* avoids directly naming the director – an anti-Francoist republican – but highlights with emphasis his Spanish origins (Deslaw 1956: 4-5; Barreira 1956: 30). *Torero* “would be globally considered the best taurine film in the history of cinema” (Gubern 1976: 196).

Secondly, the realism of some films turns the camera towards the ones who have failed, the ‘last ones’ whose presence was generally reduced in taurine films to simple companions or auxiliaries of the popular matador. Now, some plots focus on the *maletillas*, on the bullfight’s secondary characters, on those figures previously ignored, the *torerillos* left on the battlefield of small bullrings in unknown villages, whose death is reduced to a half-column in the newspapers’ chronicles. The protagonists are no longer courageous males who journey from poverty in their village to achieve popularity and glory in Barcelona or Madrid: misfortune follows the characters in both places.

Misery can continue throughout a wandering life from village to village, without even managing to leave the rural environment, as in *Los clarines del miedo*, an adaptation of the 1956 novel of the same name written by Ángel María de Lera. The protagonists of Antonio Román’s film are two hungry *torerillos* who travel around the village fairs in search of opportunities, and the only change they experience is the fatal goring of the younger man. The city does not offer better conditions either: both the protagonist of *Mi tío Jacinto* (1956) and the young boy in *El espontáneo* (Jordi Grau, 1964) fail to achieve their dreams.

The protagonist of Grau’s film does not even have a bullfighting vocation: he just wants to escape from a life of frustrated aspirations. His life ends miserably with a mortal goring the first and only time he jumps into the bullring as an *espontáneo*. Conversely, *Mi tío Jacinto* focuses on a middle-aged sub-

proletarian who has spent his life attempting to be a matador, one of many failures. This time, Jacinto's hopes are dashed by rain (corridas are suspended in case of adverse weather), and he returns to his humble house in the Madrid suburbs disheartened: "When [...] Pepote and Jacinto return to their shanty, nothing will have changed, except the awareness of the characters about the difficulties they will encounter attempting to leave the vicious circle of marginalisation" (Díaz and de la Fuente 2015: 61).

Carlos Saura's cinema debut comes in 1959 with *Los golfos*, a dramatic account of a group of youngsters on the criminal margins, amongst whom there is an aspiring bullfighter. The film symbolically opens the New Spanish Cinema<sup>78</sup> era, being inspirational for a new generation of filmmakers. In the same year, Italian filmmaker Marco Ferreri directs the Spanish production *Los chicos*, a further story set in a working-class environment. Many committed filmmakers turn to bullfighting purely in an attempt to confront, as in the words of Saura, "Spanish reality and its transformations" (Rentero 1976: 23).

Juan Antonio Bardem, whose script for the French sentimental taurine drama *Châteaux en Espagne* (1954) shows numerous references to corruption in the bullfighting world, writes and directs in 1961 *A las cinco de la tarde*, a realist drama in which the metaphor of bullfighting as business is developed in its tragic lack of any humanity. Bardem's film, doubly inspired by the play *La cornada* (Alfonso Sastre, 1959) and by the plot of his unfulfilled project *La fiera*, coincides with the entry of Luis Miguel Dominguín's family (also bullfighters) into the management of Bardem's production company, UNINCI.

In addition to filmmakers devoted to fiction, directors of documentaries face tauromachy as a social phenomenon, avoiding visual homage to the aesthetic of the corrida, too often celebrated as a 'pure' form of art. Like the committed filmmakers mentioned above, they are in general non-*aficionados*, but are interested in the *fiesta's* connection with social reality, with which they are engaged. They are both fascinated and horrified by the magnitude of the phenomenon of the *maletillas*, leaving their families to face an unknown future,

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<sup>78</sup> *El Nuevo Cine Español* is a heterogeneous movement of the 1960s characterised by realist aesthetics and partially influenced by the French Nouvelle Vague (especially in its aim to produce films against the *cinéma de papa*). With varying results at the box office, it includes cineastes from different parts of Spain and with varying cultural influences (for instance, Basilio Martín Patino, Mario Camus, Pedro Olea, etc.).

which is often a severe wound or a fatal goring in a provincial bullring. Moral judgements on the *fiesta* itself are withheld. Tauromachy is portrayed without rhetoric whilst class differences are highlighted, as are the romantic illusions connected to the world of bullfighting and its alleged heroes.

The happy and prosperous contemporary world portrayed by the *NO-DO* and on television (Gutiérrez Lozano 2013), finds in these documentaries direct cinematic opposition. Therefore, unlike the numerous documentaries by Julián de la Flor, José Hernández Gan, and the audiovisual productions destined for the *aficionados* market or for the promotion of 'Marca España' (Brand Spain), *Torerillos 61* (Basilio Martín Patino, 1962) and *52 Domingos* (Llorenç Soler, 1966) detail the real lives of the *maletillas*, whilst *Juguetes Rotos* (Manuel Summers, 1966) reveals how successful matadors can be relegated to oblivion.

Summers' choice of protagonists is actually original and significant: for his documentary, which deals with the harsh present of former national heroes of boxing, football, and bullfighting, he chooses, amongst others, Nicanor Villalta. The now elderly bullfighter, former star of *El suceso de anoche* (1929), is shown in solitude and sadness through the shooting of one final, solitary appearance in a bullring. The bullfighter, in his *traje de luces*, fights his last bull at almost seventy years of age, in front of Summers' camera.

The director contrasts the empty seats with the extra-diegetic sound of a cheering crowd, evoking distant memories of former success. In spite of the predominant nostalgic tone with which Summers seeks to depict the idols of his youth – “the film's truth”, says Jaime Iglesias, “is its own intentionally subjective style” (2001: 63) – the documentary suffers some strategic cuts from the censors. The interview sequences with citizens from different social milieux were prohibited “because they presented, in one way or another, a sorrowful face of the miserable economy of Spain [...] which could disturb the conscience of the regime” (Cotán Rodríguez 1993: 46).

Conversely, Soler and Martín Patino are interested in those aspiring bullfighters who will never experience a moment of celebrity. Particularly in Martín Patino's documentary, the distancing tone is disheartening. *Torerillos 61* develops the script entirely from press cuttings, read by a voiceover whilst images of economic destitution are displayed. Between statements from helpless *maletillas* and mothers who cannot locate their children who fled to

Madrid to become bullfighters, the film announces the death of a further *espontáneo*, or retells the difficulties of dozens of youngsters who sleep under the arches of the capital's bullring, waiting for an opportunity.

Realism and reality are the slogans of all these filmmakers, both of fiction and documentaries, committed to the social world: "We wanted to portray Spanish reality", says Carlos Saura introducing *Los golfos* as "an almost documentary cinema, rooted on the ground, with men that are like men, and who struggle between good and evil" (Saura in Lamet 1960: 9). *Film Ideal*, advertising *Los chicos*, quotes the words of the critic Luis Gómez Mesa: "It accurately reflects, with its realism, that sector of a disorientated youth" ('De Los Chicos ha dicho la crítica' 1960: 23). The intellectual urgency of filming the reality of Spain depends on a number of interconnected factors, and the realist cinematic strategies adopted often have a Spanish accent.

A belated influence of Italian Neorealism<sup>79</sup> can be found in the large number of bullfighters enlisted in films, as well as in the new perspectives of showing the dark side of bullfighting, instead of maintaining a celebratory visual approach. Together with other aspects of realism borrowed from Italian filmmakers, such as shooting in natural locations and having a fresh view on society, non-professional actors playing the role of 'themselves' (workers, fishing villagers, etc.) are part of the search for cinematic authenticity. Thus, professional bullfighters and real *maletillas* become part of the realist approach.

This search for authenticity goes further than the varying types of realism, such as 'black' dramas or 'pink' realist comedies (Velázquez García 2012: 166), just as creative strategies to avoid invasive censorship are also varied. José María García Escudero, General Director of the governmental department of Cinema and Theatre (Cinematografía y Teatro) in those years, expressed unease at the thematically and stylistically stagnant national cinema, unable to compete on the international stage. The new generation of directors from the recently formed Institute of Cinema (IIEC), such as Berlanga, Bardem, and

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<sup>79</sup> For many reasons, including a ban on the distribution of some films - *Roma città aperta* (Roberto Rossellini, 1945) is only screened in Spain in 1969 -, Italian Neorealism arrives in Spain in the 1950s, when in Italy it is already fighting for survival. Neorealism is introduced in Spain through specific events, such as the Italian Cinema Weeks in Madrid in 1951 and 1953, and through collaboration between Spanish and Italian authors, such as Cesare Zavattini and Ennio Flaiano with Luis García Berlanga, Rafael Azcona, and Ricardo Muñoz Suay (Velázquez García 2012).

Saura, politically and intellectually restless, believe in films as a means of debate and critique, rejecting a simple escapist role for cinema. Other protagonists come from the world of Film Clubs (the so-called *Cineclubismo*) and universities, and they contribute to the development of a new wave of critics and filmmakers. New film magazines are published: *Nuestro Cine* and *Film Ideal*, for instance, are committed to the cause of realism and the 'politique des auteurs' (Nieto Ferrando 2012).

One of the most prominent figures proceeding from Film Clubs is Martín Patino, the cultural architect of the event in 1955 which marks a watershed in the history of cinema: the so-called *Conversaciones de Salamanca* (Conversations in Salamanca). In the conference dedicated to national cinema, which brings together authors and producers as diverse as the anti-Francoist activist Pere Portabella and Sáenz de Heredia, director of *Raza* (1942), the topic is debated for five days. During the conference, a provocative statement by Bardem survives in the conference's closing document and in the annals of history: "Current Spanish cinema is politically ineffective, socially false, intellectually deficient, aesthetically worthless, and industrially crippled"<sup>80</sup> (García Escudero et al. 1995: 79).

The director's provocation represents the mood of a whole community desiring radical change in a cinema which had for too long been culturally and commercially isolated from the rest of the world:

It addresses more-or-less sincere attempts to move away from provincialism [...]. Evidently, the road was not one of mimesis, but rather one of delving into our own reality, one of finding our darkest thoughts and our most shameful past. That was the answer of Rafael Azcona and Berlanga in *Plácido* (1961) and *El Verdugo* (1963); of Fernán Gómez in *El extraño viaje* (1964), and, especially, of Luis Buñuel in *Viridiana* (1961). The terrible and divided Spain under Franco was present in all of them, in the dark nightmares which disturbed some leaders so much they saw themselves as incapable of controlling those creative areas in which reality did not permit cloaks or cellophane (Lara 1995: 35).

Although only partially, cinema achieves its objective of delving into its own reality, whilst at the same time emerging from isolation. In the films which take part in prestigious international festivals (sometimes even winning awards), or are internationally successful, realism includes, as previously outlined, culturally

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<sup>80</sup> "El cine español actual es políticamente ineficaz, socialmente falso, intelectualmente ínfimo, estéticamente nulo, industrialmente raquítico".

oppositional productions. Different political perspectives and varied interpretations of the role of cinema produce ideologically opposed films, such as *Aprendiendo a morir* and *El momento de la verdad*. Realism in Spanish cinema of this period, in the words of Lara, puts forward both perspectives: “the tolerated lie” or “the tolerable truth” (Ibid.: 31).

Bullfighting is located in this cultural panorama within this double perspective, supporting a triumphalist or perhaps pro-government rhetoric or, in productions by independent and/or anti-Francoist authors and producers, demystifying social lies. Anti-Francoist filmmakers, even when non-*aficionados*, show an impressive care and efficacy in addressing questions of class through bullfighting symbols; to challenge traditional representations of masculinity through the character of the matador; to depict the social world through the business of tauromachy. This is partly due to their personal interest in the mass phenomenon and to the time they spend following ‘their’ bullfighter-actors in their daily life, to better understand the psychological and social details of the profession. However, in addition to that, cineastes surround themselves with trusted (and politically close) collaborators who have a taurine cultural background, or are even former *novilleros*.

One of them is Pedro Beltrán, former *novillero* who makes his first appearance in a sequence of a popular bullfight in *Calabuch* (Luis García Berlanga, 1956) (Heredero 2008: 44). After his cinematic debut, Beltrán doubles José Luis López Vázquez for a taurine scene in *Días de feria* (Rafael J. Salvia, 1960). He decides to follow his career in the film industry, and because of his know-how he often works as a scriptwriter for films about bullfighting. In the script of *El momento de la verdad*, Beltrán, a republican and anti-establishment bohemian, conveys his personal opinion of the high price which an aspiring bullfighter must pay to obtain public favour. Rosi’s film, in fact, as a story of a matador’s rise and (mortal) fall, is also a visual reflection of Pedro Beltrán’s thoughts on the death of bullfighters: “Recalling those events has made me question the extent to which it is fair to expose a man to such danger merely for a spectacle, whether it is just to allow a person to risk his life in pursuit of entertainment” (Beltrán in Heredero 2008: 56).

Beltrán, who also contributes to other films as co-scriptwriter and/or bullfighting advisor, such as *El espontáneo* and *Carmen* (Francesco Rosi,

1984), is not the only contributor with a high-profile bullfighting background. In *El momento de la verdad*, Ricardo Muñoz Suay and Pere Portabella both feature, like Beltrán, in multi-faceted roles shared between production and scriptwriting. Both are also active anti-Francoists and associated with the Spanish Communist Party (PCE).

Valencian Muñoz Suay stands out in the field of taurine cinema because of his role of assistant director in the French film *Sang et lumières* (Georges Rouquier, 1953) and his work on the script of *La becerrada*. Catalan Portabella, the renowned director of cult film *Cuadecuc* (1971), before his work on Rosi's 1965 film, is the producer of Saura's first film *Los golfos*. One of his projects, never completed, is a film about Dominguín, not only a friend but also belonging to the family now involved in the management of UNINCI, with which Portabella also collaborates.

The involvement of the Dominguín family in this production company alongside both their work in taurine cinema and their political role is noteworthy. The bullfighting dynasty's role in UNINCI is crucial in developing the cultural and political connotations between film industry and bullfighting, which go beyond the mere presence of corridas and bullfighters on screen.

The arrival of Domingo Dominguín (Luis Miguel's brother), at UNINCI in 1960, starts a phase in which "the relationship with the PCE is clearest" (Salvador Marañón 2006: 353). The family does not limit its involvement in the company to a superficial public relations role (the family enjoys 'political immunity' because of good relationships with the Francoist milieu), but helps with the business. The Dominguíns also increase the company's capital and facilitate contacts between filmmakers and the Communist Party. The company's offices move to the dynasty's office, giving UNINCI a 'surrealist' touch, with filmmakers and scriptwriters sharing rooms with bullfighters, *picadores* and *banderilleros*.

Domingo Dominguín is an extraordinary person. Saura, Francisco Regueiro, and Joaquín Jordá highlight his unusual intellectual curiosity and his sincere communism. Jordá even affirms that:

Domingo shook UNINCI from head to toe. *Viridiana* was made because of him, not because of Bardem [...] Yes, Domingo revolutionised UNINCI; at the same time he sank it, of course, but he sank it in the best sense of the word, that is to say, it sank itself, because life was like

that, wasn't it? *Viridiana* was too explosive a task. It was too intense to be tolerated and no, it wasn't tolerated, even by the regime. [...] It finished UNINCI off, but that was fine, as it was an honourable death. Dying with *Viridiana* was a glorious sinking (Ibid.: 365).

In the words of the Catalan director, the role of the bullfighter is crucial in the production of the film which symbolises the struggle with power of a whole generation of intellectuals and their cry for freedom<sup>81</sup>. *Viridiana* (Luis Buñuel, 1961) ends up being seized and banned in Spain until 1977, two years after Franco's death.

Finally, a special mention is due to Rafael Azcona, co-author of cult and popular scripts such as *El cochecito* (Marco Ferreri, 1960) or *El verdugo* (Luis García Berlanga, 1963). The scriptwriter, who dreamt about being a bullfighter, was the son of an amateur bullfighter. Within his extensive career, which encompasses half a century of Spanish cinema, there are bullfighting-themed films such as *La vaquilla* (Luis García Berlanga, 1985) – whose script was written in the 1950s -, the last adaptation of *Sangre y arena* (Javier Elorrieta, 1989), and *Suspiros de España (y Portugal)* (José Luis García Sánchez, 1995).

The author amused himself by inserting taurine scenes and references to bullfighting in numerous films, from a short dialogue on horse meat (“from a picador's horse”) eaten in *El pisito* (Marco Ferreri, 1959) to a picaresque insertion about the correct execution when placing the *banderillas* in the bull's back in *Tranvía a la malvarrosa* (José Luis García Sánchez, 1997). The film, in fact, is an adaptation of the novel of the same title written by his friend Manuel Vicent, a vehement *antitaurino*. Amongst other visual or dialogue inserts of taurine elements, in *Los desafíos* (Claudio Guerín, José Luis Egea, and Víctor Erice, 1969), Azcona describes “the attraction of the particular atmosphere in a bull farm, the abusive hereditary control of the landowners, the degeneration of the señor, the submission of workers, sexism, cultural differences, the attitude of a lady who marries the farmer” (Azofra 2006: 152).

Indeed, as listed by Azofra, in the hands of specific authors the bullfighting world can be turned into an instrument of social and political critique, but unlike filmmakers more sympathetic with Francoist values, the social world as represented through a realist, surrealist or hyper-realist bullring does not show

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<sup>81</sup> Unable to return to Spain since the Civil War, Buñuel moved to Mexico, where he remained in exile until UNINCI invited him back (Stone 2014: 52).

the triumph of the proletariat. Authors, who aim to fulfil a purpose of awakening critical consciousness through the popular theme of tauromachy, end their stories with a bitter finale. Through a comparative analysis of *Aprendiendo a morir* and *El momento de la verdad*, two exemplary productions of the period, it is possible to highlight how similar plots and filmic style can develop contrasting discourses.

### 3.4.3 *Caudillismo* and social critique: ‘El Cordobés’ versus ‘Miguelín’

“Do you know how much a bull is worth?” asks the bull-breeder to young Manuel Benítez. The boy, in the Civil Guard headquarters, has been arrested for illegally thrusting an animal on a prestigious bull farm. Benítez, poorly dressed and injured from the violent beating received from the *vaqueros*, defiantly replies: “Less than a man”.

In this statement about the value of human life we can find the key difference between two films which, with similar storylines, build opposing discourses. *Aprendiendo a morir*, a biographical account of the mass-idol Manuel Benítez ‘El Cordobés’ directed by Pedro Lazaga in 1962, moves the deity from the totemic bull to the man. Conversely, Rosi’s *El momento de la verdad* (1965) reduces the transcendental sacrifice of two Christs, the bull and the man, to the immanent exploitation of human life which is equal to that of an animal.

Both stories follow an analogous plot: they are both located in the contemporary Spain of the alleged economic miracle, and the lead characters are portrayed on their journey which begins with hunger in the Andalusian countryside and continues through struggles towards success in the most important bullrings of the country. The films employ realism as a stylistic and formal frame; however, Lazaga builds the main male character as a symbolic taurine *caudillo*, whereas Rosi depicts the dark side of Spanish consumerism and capitalism, which have converted the bullfighter into a marketing product. Whilst Lazaga directs ‘El Cordobés’ in the process of becoming a matador (he is still a *novillero* in 1962), *El momento de la verdad* is produced in 1965, when Benítez has changed the rules of bullfighting and professional matador

‘Miguelín’ must confront the bulls in the dangerous style imposed by ‘El Cordobés’.

The tauromachy of Benítez, who offers spectators a never-before-seen closeness to the bull, actually costs the protagonist of Rosi’s film his life, because he is asked to display in the bullring a similar *tremendismo*<sup>82</sup>. The emphasis on the ascending social parabola of ‘El Cordobés’ becomes in *El momento de la verdad* a social critique of the bullfighter as a ‘product’, used by a business which, after the death of ‘Manolete’, is in need of a new icon.

The real life of Benítez is itself like a film. In addition to his ambition, as previously mentioned, to be as rich and famous as Currito de la Cruz, the team he forms with his first manager, Rafael Sánchez ‘El Pipo’, successfully converts a hungry *torerillo* into a powerful symbol of social mobility. The thin bullfighter with long hair like the Beatles, smiling and insolent both in the bullring and in private life like bourgeois Dominguín, proceeds from the ‘right’ social milieu to be turned into a model for the whole nation.

‘El Pipo’ realises that the youngster’s ambition is stronger than all (upper-class) moral values. By bribing bullfighting reporters, purchasing advertising space in magazines, and dubious agreements with bull-breeders, he soon has before him an efficient money making machine. Magazines alternate reportages about the luxury items which the bullfighter has bought with his massive earnings, with those that highlight his generosity towards the disadvantaged. The building process of ‘El Cordobés’ is described by its creator with these words:

You sell a bullfighter in the same way as you would sell soap. There are many classes of soap and many classes of bullfighter. The winner is not always the one with the higher-quality product, but the one who knows how to sell it. I knew that the young boy was worth his weight in gold [...] Manuel Benítez really wanted to have a Mercedes, he really wanted to become, in his own words, “a man with a hippy hat and a cigar”, who was prepared to do all sorts of crazy things. [...] That’s where my fortune was (Lapierre and Collins [1967] 2012: 406).

Pedro Lazaga’s film is a visual portrayal of the project which ‘El Pipo’ designed for Benítez; the manager is also hired by the production company as a consultant for the film. *Aprendiendo a morir*, which from the pre-production

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<sup>82</sup> From the word tremendous, associated with a style of bullfighting which shows constant danger. In literature, too, *tremendismo* refers to a style characterised by crudity and violence.

stage was intended to be shot from a realist perspective, is initially offered to Basilio Martín Patino. However, following disagreements over the participation of some of the actors suggested by the author (Bellido López 1996: 250), it is finally directed by Lazaga, a prolific filmmaker able to work in any film genre or style according to the requirements of the production (Sánchez Barba 2007: 163).

Following 'El Pipo's suggestions, the script remains close to the official hagiography: Benítez, imprisoned in Cordoba for having illegally fought bulls on a landowner's farm, moves to Madrid to achieve fame and fortune. With the help of a priest, a nun, and a manager, he achieves his goal, becoming a symbol of the nation's hope. On his journey, he loses his *maletilla* companion who is killed by a bull; he begins a close friendship with a wealthy and cultured woman; he buys a house for his sister, a luxury car for himself and a bicycle for a poor man who is walking fifteen kilometres every day to work. At the end of the film, 'El Cordobés' suffers a serious goring, but survives. His female partner, the wealthy young lady who he met during his struggling times, feels herself responsible for the goring, but she is reassured by the manager. There is no woman who could be dangerous for 'El Cordobés'. The goring, as the manager explains to the woman, is caused by the man's complete dedication to his fans: "Sometimes the public demands too much".

The synopsis of the bullfighter's story follows a symbolic path, parallel with Franco's insurgency. Like Franco, he rises up against a socially unjust law; he triumphs thanks to his bravery and the support of the Church and the upper-classes; he becomes the icon of social reconciliation and national hope; and he dedicates his life to the public-nation: "The biographical impact of someone who has changed class [...], capable of reaching success because of his tenacity and his personality, responded to interests in building identity thoroughly rooted in the new direction of Francoism" (Vellón Lahoz 2008: 16).

The bull, which opens the film in the sequence of Benítez's illegal bullfight, is also the last image of the film. In it, the convalescent bullfighter sees himself with a bull in the centre of the bullring in his dream. When he awakens, he asks his manager: "When is the next bullfight?". 'El Cordobés' receives a silent sign of approval from the man. The matador realises he will return to his profession

and smiles with relief. Bull and bullfighter, like two resurrected Christs, open and close the film, as a cinematic allegory of the alpha and omega of the world.

In addition to that, this bullfighting version of *caudillismo* places the miraculous power of the bullfighter in the care of those who can wisely manage it. As in *Valiente* (1964) or *Nuevo en esta plaza* (1966), the figure of the manager as a faithful advisor and companion becomes central for the bullfighter's success. This alliance between classes softens the nuances in discourses on social conflict, which are inevitable in the first part of any taurine film, related to the overcoming of poverty:

Francoism uses cinema to delimit the post-war habitus in an *anthropophagous* relationship which relegates social groups to a lower position aside mechanisms of social control. The only dialogue with the state is one of alliance with it. This type of appeal is understood to be positive in demanding the incorporation of groups and social classes within the mechanism of social consensus imposed by power (Martín 2005: 67).

Censorship refines eventual details which could offend the iconography of the military world, and cuts dialogue which refers to emigration. *Aprendiendo a morir* suffers the loss of sequences in which Civil Guards are excessively repressive in the arrest of 'El Cordobés' following his illegal incursions on the farm, and must cut any reference to the bullfighter's possibility of fleeing to France to work. Men in uniform should maintain an impeccable reputation in films, just as it is forbidden to allude to Spanish citizens who are forced to work abroad (Vaquerizo García 2014: 76-7).

The sociological approach of *El momento de la verdad* is remarkably different, and so is the censors' attitude. From the moment in which Rosi sets foot on Spanish soil, following the success of his previous, socially committed, films (*Salvatore Giuliano*, 1962; *Le mani sulla città*, 1963), he is under strict control. Surrounded by 'red' contributors such as Beltrán, Muñoz Suay, and Portabella, Rosi's film initially suffers notable delays in obtaining the necessary 'filming permission' from the authorities, and ends with substantial censorship changes to the filmed material, provoking the director's public objection (Baquedano 1966: 544). In any case, the efforts of the censors do not erase the harsh portrayal of the darkest side of Francoist Spain, which does not only allow its *maletillas* to sacrifice their lives in the bullring in their effort to move from

extreme poverty, but also allows the exploitation of those who supposedly achieve success.

Rosi demystifies social mobility and equality in Franco's Spain, building political discourses through tauromachy. In fact, in spite of being an original idea by the Italian director (Bolzoni 1986: 31), *El momento de la verdad* can be considered as a film directed by a 'foreigner' which is representative of (Spanish) national cinema. Rosi's film is comparable to Vajda's work, a long-standing international director whose role as a Spanish cinema author is rarely questioned (Camporesi 2007: 69), and his film's 'national identity' is similar to *L'espoir* (André Malraux, 1945), "a Spanish film with a French author" (Zunzunegui 2002: 38). *El momento de la verdad* is an Italian-Spanish co-production (Federiz and As Films); directed by a non-Spaniard (Rosi); written by Spanish authors (Muñoz Suay, Beltrán, Portabella); and shot in a realist style which depicts the social phenomenon of bullfighting through intertextualities which often address only a Spanish audience (for instance, 'Miguelín as an anti-'El Cordobés').

The film's script follows, at least in the first part, a similar journey to the *fabula* of Benítez: Miguel moves from the Andalusian countryside to Barcelona, to work in construction. However, his earnings are not even enough to pay for his accommodation. Aspiring to a better life, he decides to be a matador. To achieve this, he moves to Madrid and fulfils his ambitions: 'Miguelín' becomes a famous bullfighter and can buy his mother a house. Until this moment, the narrative *fil rouge* does not show notable differences from the majority of taurine films. However, the life of 'Miguelín' is, from the beginning, intertwined with unfortunate encounters with people who exploit him.

As soon as he arrives in Barcelona, he is facing a situation of *caporalato*<sup>83</sup>; once a famous bullfighter, his income is dramatically decreased because of his manager's greed. 'Miguelín' is always at the mercy of those taking advantage of him. Even his physical appeal to women is reduced to a whimsical impulse with a fascinating foreign *femme fatale*: Linda Christian. The actress, in a visual tribute to Rita Hayworth, who in *Sangre y arena* (1941) 'bullfights' Christian's

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<sup>83</sup> A system of illicit organisation for temporary or seasonal work (in the countryside, construction, etc.) in which an intermediary (*caporale*) organises a group of workers in exchange for a percentage of their salary.

ex-husband Tyrone Power, stars in a similar sequence with 'Miguelín'. During a party she 'bullfights' the matador with a red scarf symbolically anticipating their further sexual relationship. Like 'Miguelín's manager, she is also using the bullfighter's body for her personal benefit. Miguel does not have any other encounter with women; there is no place for sentiment in his life as a money making machine.

The economic exploitation of the matador reaches its peak in his professional relations with his manager. The body of 'Miguelín' moves from bullring to bullring, and even a period of rehabilitation following a goring is cut short to continue earning money. The number of bullfights is increasing each year because, as his manager says, "to earn money you must seize the moment". Seizing the moment ultimately finishes the man: 'Miguelín' dies from a goring received in a bullring of a provincial town, in which he had to perform "because they pay like Madrid". The bullfighter dies like 'Manolete' in Linares, like 'Joselito' in Talavera de la Reina.

Rosi's film is significant for the original counter-cultural treatment of bullfighting, which in similarly themed films is expressed through the dark side of the spectacle, focusing on the *maletillas* or the *espontáneos*. *El momento de la verdad*, on the one hand refers to those who have been unsuccessful in the bullfighting profession: "For every one success there are ninety-nine failures which end badly", says the owner of a bullring in which 'Miguelín' first appears in the arena. On the other hand, Rosi chooses to focus on the failure also endured by the one who, in theory, has achieved success.

Throughout the film, the anti-capitalist discourse becomes stronger until the tragic climax: in the exploitation of man over man no one emerges unharmed, not even the apparent winner.

Rosi's most personal contribution – as previously mentioned, it was his idea to tell a story about a Spanish bullfighter – is also reflected in the hyper-realist style of the film: Rosi uses extreme close ups which focus on the drops of sweat on the character's face; shoots the bull's eye at the moment of the *estocada*; and blood is omnipresent in the screen. The persistent vision of the bleeding of men and bulls offers a strong metaphor for the suffering of the world due to human exploitation. Shots of goring and thrusting are remarkably numerous. No one is exempt from goring: in addition to the bullfighter, the three *tercios* of the

bullfight provide the film's viewers with additional gorings of the *picador* and his horse, the *banderilleros*, and the bullfighter's assistants in the ring.

The *estocadas* are edited in sequence in several montages; Rosi ends all corridas with imperfect thrusts. As a treatise on bullfighting errors, *bajonazos*, *golletazos*, and *estocadas caídas*<sup>84</sup> are repeated, that is to say, all the *estocadas* which cause terrible haemorrhaging for the bull, which spits blood from its mouth<sup>85</sup>.

The editing strengthens the parallel between the sacrificed bullfighter and the sacrifice of the bull, placing a sequence of close ups of the bullfighter with close ups of the bull at the end of the corridas. However, the weakening of the bullfighter is inversely proportional to the portrayal of the bull's strength, although both end up being sacrificed: when 'Miguelín' dies, the extreme close up of his last breath shows his head in the same inclined position as the bull's, dying from the thrust. Both creatures, deified in their own way – both embodying a crucified Christ - end as offerings for the enjoyment of a profane and materialistic world. The Christian allegory stays at an earthly level: there are no redemption and resurrection in the capitalist world.

The presence of religious symbols also adds a specific 'Spanish' character to the film. The first and last images of the film are interesting for their intertextual connotations, and facilitate an analogous interpretation for both international and national audiences, although with nuances which only Spanish viewers could infer. *El momento de la verdad* opens with the procession of a *Pietà* around the streets and closes with the procession of the statue of Christ carrying the cross in Seville Cathedral, in front of the enormous silvered monstrance of the Blessed Sacrament.

The association between the dead Christ and the specific cross carried by individual human beings becomes more powerful once identified as the *Pietà* of the fraternity of *Baratillo*, historically linked to bullfighters, and the *Cristo del Gran Poder*, already encountered in previous films. The image, from another famous fraternity, is shot in parallel with the monstrance, which is displayed

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<sup>84</sup> Incorrect *estocadas* which can delay the death of the bull.

<sup>85</sup> The choice of these typologies of failed stabbings which cause the spilling of blood is undoubtedly deliberate given that they tend to be infrequent, especially at the hand of experienced bullfighters. Rosi, who followed 'Miguelín' for an entire season in the bullrings, has thus chosen some of the bloodiest thrusts from his reel.

during the *Corpus Christi* feast, completing the symbolic connection between the dead bodies of the bull and the bullfighter and those of the *Via Crucis* (the *Cristo* and the *Pietà*) and the *Corpus Christi*, a religious celebration which coincides with a bullfight (the so-called *Corrida del Corpus*).

Finally, the choice of 'Miguelín' as main male character displays the elements which are most closely connected to the social critique of Franco's Spain. The suggestion of the Algeciras bullfighter for the principal role is made by Beltrán. Rosi, in his memoirs about the film's production process (Rosi and Tornatore 2014), recalls his desire to find a professional bullfighter who was not as successful as 'El Cordobés', in order to avoid biographical references to the bullfighting phenomenon. However, Beltrán proposes a bullfighter who, without being as famous as Benítez, is already celebrated as an anti-'El Cordobés'. Miguel Mateo Salcedo 'Miguelín', a professional bullfighter since 1958, is part of a group of bullfighters who find themselves in the midst of the revolution of Benítez, who has changed the taste of the *aficionados*.

References to 'El Cordobés' are often made throughout the film, either directly or indirectly. Still in Barcelona, Miguel refers to a bullfighting poster of a corrida performed by Benítez, commenting: "That guy is really lucky. For a million pesetas I would jump in the ring and wait on the bull like that, with open arms". The attitude of Miguel does not mock the scandal provoked by 'El Cordobés' by asking for – and receiving – a million pesetas per bullfight<sup>86</sup> (on the contrary, he envies him), but rather the bulls which he fights. In fact, his bulls were considered by many to be excessively 'commercial' and barely dangerous. Nevertheless, Benítez's style has international echoes, to the point that even Edward Said feels its impact during his visits to Spanish bullfights in the 1960s, describing this new approach to bulls, in contrast to the ones described by Hemingway in the past, as a cultural sign of the times (Said 1985: 231-8).

The extreme closeness to the bull's horns which demands more risks from the bullfighters is widely referenced in *El momento de la verdad*, implicitly and

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<sup>86</sup> The story of the million pesetas per bullfight, an exorbitant figure which 'El Cordobés' first received to perform in Seville, was a controversial topic in the taurine press of the 1960s, prompting similar requests from the most renowned bullfighters, such as Antonio Ordóñez and Paco Camino, and provoking increases in bullfighting contracts, shifting power from the managers of bullrings to bullfighters themselves. See, for example, the periodical *El Ruedo*, particularly between 1965 and 1966.

explicitly. For instance, the dialogue referring to the excessive number of bullfights performed in each season, and the conversations about bullfights in small villages which pay like Madrid, link to Benítez's approach to his career. The instructions received from Miguel's manager ("change yourself") to attract favourable press, are also indicative of the attitude of 'El Pipo' to business. The demystification of Franco's Spain is embodied by the demystification of the bullfighting world of 'El Cordobés', and the exaggerations of the hyper-realist style on the character of 'Miguelín', which evoke the dangerous and deceptive reality to which both *maletillas* and matadors are subjected, highlight the false idealisation of a country which actually cannot promise the earthly paradise that it promotes.

Even the presence of 'Pedrucho' in the film's cast becomes an intertext of the cultural changes which Spain is experiencing; in 1960s Spain, the inherited *bread and circuses* rhetoric does not work anymore. The former star of silent films, mythologised – as seen in the previous chapter – by Henry Vorins, now plays a retired matador who, in return for money, gives bullfighting classes and boasts about being able to obtain contracts for the bravest students. Far from the roles of the past, 'Pedrucho' is introduced by Miguel's friends, with his real name, as "a retired bullfighter who takes the few coins possessed by those poor creatures who think they'll be bullfighters". With a reminder of the real occupation of 'Pedrucho' at that time (he was teaching in the Barcelona Bullfighting School), the film adds a further realist element.

The interrelationships between the fiction in Rosi's film and the reality of the bullfighter's life in 'Miguelín' act as a cinematic prophecy. After his role in the film, the matador will openly denounce the frauds of 'El Cordobés'. Indeed, in 1968, 'Miguelín' attends a corrida of 'El Cordobés' and, to highlight his unprofessional choice of bulls that are not dangerous, jumps into the arena and, without a *muleta* or a sword, manages to stop the *torito* which his rival is bullfighting with *tremendismo*. In front of an amazed 'El Cordobés', 'Miguelín' carries out his protest, demanding justice. The 'French May' of the Spaniard 'Miguelín' ends with a night in prison, a fine of forty-thousand pesetas, and numerous telegrams from his diverse and loyal followers. Amongst them are several priests, who are admirers of the moral integrity of the bullfighter ('*Multa de cuarenta mil pesetas a Miguelín*' 1968: 67).

*Caudillismo* and anti-*caudillismo* co-exist in taurine films. Bullfighting in cinema reaches its height, in terms of number of productions, in the zenith of Francoism. Until this moment, no political event or intellectual movement has managed to weaken the presence and the representative strength of bullfighting, as an emblematic element of the nation. From 1896 until the mid-1960s, Spanish taurine cinema explores the realm of national identity in its ethnic, political, and social aspects. In sixty years, taurine cinema has been both born and has developed, nurtured by its unequivocal relationship with Spanishness.

### **3.5 Keys of Spanish *cine taurino***

The last period of Francoism, which coincides with the physical decline and death of the dictator, is full of tumultuous and contradictory events. Late-Francoism culminates with the nomination as successor to the *Caudillo* of Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco in 1973, and with his assassination in an ETA attack the same year. The regime attempts to preserve the *status quo* but the death of Franco in fact ends the long dictatorship. The country, economically and socially changed, does not want to live under an authoritarian regime, and a period of transition towards democracy begins.

In the final years of the regime, Spain has changed in its cultural practises. Television appliances are in the process of replacing cinema, which has lost in a few years 30% of its spectators (Torreiro 2009: 347). Although popular cinema does not disappear, folklore and bullfighting lose their ability to connect with a new, younger audience. At times, going to the cinema becomes an act of resistance, something which taurine cinema cannot offer. Taurine films become sporadic, and rarely achieve box office success. Some films attempt to absorb critical social discourses into popular genres, such as the taurine musical *De barro y oro* (Joaquín Bollo Muro, 1966); the cultural heritage of 'El Cordobés' returns in *Jugando a morir* (1966); the portrayal of generational conflicts are shown in *Sangre en el ruedo* (1968). None of these films' results can be compared to the success of previous similar productions.

Ana Mariscal, the only woman director to have achieved success in the male-dominated environment of the film industry, twice attempts to profit from a

now obsolete type of cinema. Neither *Los duendes de Andalucía* (1966) nor *El Paseillo* (1968), characterised by traditional folkloric elements and the presence of renowned dancers and bullfighters, are successful at the box office (Fonseca 2002: 257). The models of masculinity and femininity have changed: even Manuel Benítez looks more a young man of the beat generation than a bullfighter. The timid reconciliations between the new female roles in society and the traditional submission of women, as represented in *Currito de la Cruz* (1965) and *Solos los dos* (1968), become a conflict between genders in the last adaptation of *El relicario* which, in Rafael Gil's 1970 version, shows Carmen Sevilla – a flight attendant for Iberia – opting for a sentimental relationship with a businessman, preferring him to his brother, a bullfighter.

The upper-class, Catholic virtues and moral values of Francoism are broken in *La trastienda* (Jordi Grau, 1975), produced in the year of Franco's death. The film, which Grau directs following the producer's aim to depict "the hypocrisy of a society which accepts anything which is done behind closed doors and barely accepts anything done openly" (Grau in Gregori 2009: 502), becomes the visual portrayal of the moral weakness of an upper-class family from Pamplona. During the week of the *Sanfermines*, the sensuality and the carnality which surround the *fiesta* reveal the lies and hypocrisy of the members of a family, affiliated to Opus Dei, and who live a secret life of incomprehension and unfaithfulness.

Though weakened, *cine taurino* does survive in Spain, in contrast to Portugal and Mexico. Fictional taurine cinema in Portugal ends its cycle with *Os touros de Mary Foster* (Henrique Campos, 1972), whilst in Mexico a clumsy attempt to portray gender issues through a taurine film fails (*Un toro me llama*, Miguel Ángel Mendoza, 1968). In both countries, bullfighting survives in ethnographic documentaries or in sporadic scenes in other genres. In France, as well as in Hollywood, the film genre ends its appeal to filmmakers in the 1970s.

Recalling the words of Santos Zunzunegui about what distinguishes national cinema, that is, the ability to "resume, modify, develop, augment, and bring new life to its cultural forms" through the crossing of styles and forms from various sources (2002: 11-24), the first partial conclusion about Spanish taurine cinema is linked to its ability to survive as an emblematic genre.

Secondly, in contrast to its sources, as seen in the previous chapter, Spanish taurine cinema is distinguished by its own cultural elements, derived from its particular political-cultural history. In Spain, the range of models of masculinity is varied and according to the spirit of the time, and stands out for its variety in relation to the monolithic vision of Portuguese and Mexican cinema, which almost never offer a victim or an anti-hero. Whilst the Spanish bullfighter can be, even simultaneously, a soldier, priest, *caudillo*, and seducer, the Mexican bullfighter is restricted to his category in the perpetual search for himself by differentiating his role from that of a Spanish bullfighter, a constant antagonist throughout Mexican film history. There are few exceptions to the preeminent rural or *charro*-themed popular cinema. *Torero* (1956) has a bigger impact on Spanish 'taurine realism' than in the Mexican cinematic genre, with some minor exceptions (*El toro negro*, Benito Alarzaki, 1959). Bullfighting maintains its presence in comedies, in the films of Mario Moreno 'Cantinflas' in which he performs comic bullfights (for instance, in *El Padrecito*, Miguel M. Delgado, 1964).

Whereas in French or Hollywood cinema the bullfighter is framed through a hegemonic depiction of a passionate man, in Portuguese cinema the *cavaleiro* loses his social standing, to become a role protected by the proletarian *campino*. From *Campinos do Ribatejo* (António Luís Lopes, 1932) to *Os toiros de Mary Foster*, the topic of defending a humble life in the countryside does not offer many substantial variations.

Furthermore, particularly in questions of social mobility, there is a third factor which differentiates Spanish cinema. The battle undertaken by the Spanish bullfighter to climb the social ladder is perpetual and more difficult. Whereas in French or Hollywood cinema there are not outstanding elements of class struggle or social critique, in Portuguese cinema, as highlighted above, the theme is avoided. The struggle of the Portuguese hero, both in taurine cinema as in other genres, is to "seek cooperation between employers and employees" (Vieira 2011: 86). The only film which deals briefly with the ascent of a bullfighter out of poverty, *Sol e toiros* (1949), is a Portuguese-Spanish co-production, directed by veteran Spanish director José Buchs, and can be considered a sort of 'Lusitanian *españolada*'.

On the contrary, the Mexican bullfighter, as a citizen of a republic without (formal) aristocracy, manages to enter upper-class environments before his Spanish counterpart. In the 1940s, Lorenzo Garza, a famous Mexican bullfighter and fierce proponent of the distinction between Mexicanness and Spanishness even in his style<sup>87</sup>, marries a rich upper-class woman in *Toros, amor y gloria* (Raúl de Anda, 1944), without having to endure the difficult journey of his Spanish colleagues. Furthermore, the Mexican bullfighter rarely dies in the bullring. With fewer 'mortal' social transgressions than their European counterparts, Mexicans are more successful and fatal gorings almost never occur. In conclusion, questions on class identity in Spanish taurine cinema are more elaborated and complex. The presence of *maletillas* and *espontáneos* is almost exclusive to Spanish cinema.

Conversely, the representation of women reveals many similarities. The relegation of the woman to a socially subordinate role, or as a *femme fatale*, is common to all national cinemas. Even in films directed by anti-Francoist or socialist directors, there is barely any criticism of the dominant sexism. Whether a Hollywood *españolada* or a film by a Spanish director *engagé*, the scarcity of plots developing female characters is indicative of a universal communion in the repetition of clichés associated with women. Whilst on the one hand we can highlight an attitude of distanced objectivity by realist directors, centred on representing raw reality (including the marginal role of women in society), on the other hand the non-existence of films with original treatments of female characters is no less surprising. Nonetheless, Spanish cinema would once again stand out amongst other productions. In the years of democracy, cinema will offer new roles for women in taurine cinema.

Finally, the distinctions and variations in symbolism involve the representation of the bull. Each national cinema follows its own hegemonic fetishism: socio-religious in Spain, Mexico, and Portugal; and psycho-sexual in Hollywood and France, though multiple fetishisms can co-exist within one film or can be differently applied by one filmmaker for narrative purposes. For instance,

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<sup>87</sup> Following Ponciano Díaz (1858-1897), many Mexican bullfighters begin to grow moustaches to distinguish themselves from Spanish *señorito* bullfighters, as a national distinction, and also to emphasise their masculinity (normally, bullfighters do not grow beards or moustaches). Some also choose to wear, instead of the *capote de paseo* (an elegant *capote* worn by the bullfighters just for the *paseillo*), the *sarape*, a type of *poncho* used by Mexican rural workers.

in Buñuel's *Los olvidados* (1950), a film of his Mexican period, the bull appears in the imagination of a group of poor children who are playing in the street, dreaming of future glory in the bullrings. Instead, in *La fièvre monte à El Pao* (1959), a French-Mexican co-production, the three parts of a bullfight are edited according to a seductive conversation between a man and a woman. The sensuality, *in crescendo* like the bullfight in the arena, provides one of the most exemplary sequences relating bullfights to sexual encounters.

As a living creature, the bull is still a mere object of human and divine allegories. In spite of cultural changes between the 1940s and the 1970s, it remains a mere symbol of virility or divinity, and its death is never depicted in the bullring from any other point of view than that of the bullfighter. All the scenes shot with the bull in P.O.V. always refer to men's struggle, and empathy is directed towards the human characters. The only film which deals with the wellbeing of an animal, *El último caballo* (Edgar Neville, 1950), focuses on the destiny to which the horse of a former cavalry soldier is condemned: to be a horse for the *picador* in the bullring of Madrid. The affection which the lead character shows towards Bucéfalo, loyal companion during his military service, is due to the special relationship between man and horse. Although there are plenty of references to the cruelty of bullfighting, the text does not stray beyond the concern for a specific animal. When Bucéfalo is deceitfully used for a bullfight in Madrid, it is the only one saved by its owner, who does not care for the other horses. Moreover, there is no sympathy expressed for bulls in this film, which ultimately sees the horse as a mere symbol of ironic nostalgia for rural life (Hereadero 1993: 237).

Equally, it may be said that the North-American film co-produced with Mexico, *The Brave one* (Irving Rapper, 1956) is unable to overcome the discourse of a personal relationship between a human and a particular animal, given that the efforts to save a bull from death in the bullring are due to a special friendship. Furthermore, the saving of the bull in the arena is more akin to an *indulto*<sup>88</sup> given that, ultimately, the bull's characteristics as a noble and fierce animal are recognised.

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<sup>88</sup> When the bull displays exceptional qualities during a bullfight, its life can be spared. The bull returns to the farm, destined for breeding, without having to return to the bullring or be taken to slaughter.

A unique exception is represented by the documentary *El toro, vida y muerte* (1962), directed by Jaime Camino, a renowned filmmaker from Barcelona. The originality of Camino's documentary, visually impressive also for the lack of a voiceover, culminates with the extra-diegetic sound of the bull's heartbeat, whilst a whole corrida is portrayed. The scenes include the *tercios* with the *capote*, the *picador*, the *banderillas*, the *muleta*, the *estocada*, and the death of the bull. For every shot of human intervention, accompanied by extra-diegetic exclamations of "olés", the heartbeats increase in rhythm and intensity and are combined with reverse shots of the bull, offering a subjective vision of the animal. The ending is also emotive: when the bull falls on the sand (the camera is in the arena), the heartbeats slow to a sudden stop. The viewer therefore experiences the death of the bull from *its* point of view.

In spite of its international recognition (Paramount distributes the film) (Camino in Gregori 2009: 749), *El toro, vida y muerte* remains a creative anomaly in the depiction of bulls in cinema. Empathy with the animal's suffering and a more committed critical view of bullfighting would arrive, as with gender issues, with democracy.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE REVOLUTION OF *CINE TAURINO*: DECLINE, POST-MODERNITY, AND GENDER IDENTITY (1975-2016)

#### 4.1 A period of profound transformations

Between the years of the *Transición* ('Transition', 1975-1978) and the consolidation of democracy to the present day, the cultural industries in Spain undergo a range of transformations. The political situation evolves with governments alternating between left and right, and is characterised by an apparent calm which the economic crisis of 2008 would alter with the radicalisation of ideological stances; the increase in nationalist political unrest; the near impossibility of agreement between political groups (Benedicto 2014: 175-6).

Women are emancipated from the constrictions of domestic life and are offered new professional options which were previously unavailable (including within the bullfighting world); society, traditionally devoutly Catholic, experiences a process of progressive secularisation; and, from 2005, the country becomes a pioneer of human rights within Europe, legally authorising same-sex marriage (Martínez Pastor 2009).

The consolidation of the middle class establishes a form of immediate consumption, converting television into the prime medium (Benet 2012: 375). In the economic panorama of the cultural industries, the commercial potential of cinema declines from the 1970s, suffering a gradual fall in the number of screens and spectators (Torreiro 2009: 366-7). Cinema – particularly in its popular aspect – directs its content, themes, and styles towards the renewed audience tastes and interests. Some factors of significant political interest offer the possibility of exploring new areas.

Firstly, the abolition of censorship in 1977 for the first time allows the treatment of previously taboo subjects, although *El crimen de Cuenca* (Pilar Miró, 1979) is not exempt from military interference, the last bastion of power

over some cinematographic contents<sup>89</sup>. Spanish cinema enjoys the freedom of portraying contents previously prohibited for decades, and exploits this new sense of freedom: bodies are unclothed and sexually liberated, couples separate, and violence escalates. The *cine del destape* – literally, striptease (Muñoz Sánchez and Pérez Flores 2015: 98) – and other subgenres become cultural phenomena. The *terror hispánico* (Spanish horror), full of bloody scenes such as in films by Jesús Franco (Jess Frank), and *landismo*, a type of comedy named after the actor Alfredo Landa, are both well received by spectators. The ‘S’ category, created in 1977 for those films with highly violent or erotic content, whose screening is allowed in special theatres, becomes a commercial panacea for the profitability of a number of films (Torreiro 2009: 371).

The *cine del destape*, with its excessive eroticism, defines in its own way the air of freedom longed for by post-Franco Spanish society. In spite of aspects of exploitation of women’s bodies, the preeminent ‘object’ of the camera, this also becomes a “visual sign of emancipation from sexual repression and ignorance” (Harvey 2011: 317), given that women are now portrayed with more liberal attitudes in their relationships.

Cinematic style and language develop in themes and perspectives. From the 1970s, *cine de la Tercera Vía* (Third Way Cinema) promotes current topics expressed “through fresh and natural dialogues”, (Torreiro 2009: 371) attempting “to distance itself both from vulgar commercial films as well as from *cinéma d’auteur*” (Ibid.: 359-60). With *Volver a empezar*, José Luis Garci obtains Spain’s first Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 1983.

The closure of the Institute of Cinema in 1972 forces the new generation to train abroad (for instance, Agustín Díaz Yanes), or to self-teach, work with Super 8, and undertake the long journey of amateur and independent film festivals. The School only reopened its doors in the 1990s, accompanied by other training centres in the various Autonomous Communities and, more recently, in the universities. Some professionals from other backgrounds turn to cinema from other fields: Juan José Bigas Luna becomes involved in professional filmmaking after working in design and advertising (Fantoni

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<sup>89</sup> Because of this film, which portrayed torture carried out by members of the Civil Guard, Pilar Miró was prosecuted for the slander of that military unit in 1980. The screening of the film was prohibited for a year.

Minnella 2000: 25). The Madrid *movida*, the counter-culture movement which began at the end of the 1970s and which led the country towards a hedonistic culture, gives rise to the phenomenon of Pedro Almodóvar, the most internationally recognised Spanish director, who reformulates, one by one, all the traditional elements of filmic Spanishness, revolutionising them (D'Lugo 2006). The Autonomous Communities facilitate the production of films shot on (local) location, with Catalan and Basque cinema being of particular interest having had their languages banned from cinema during the dictatorship. In 1977, Barcelona hosts the first Festival of Catalan Cinema (Caparrós Lera 1992: 32).

The funding and support models for cinema are adapted, including quotas for financial contributions from television, initially the public RTVE, followed by private channels and multimedia companies from the 1990s (Benet 2012: 425). From the Miró Decree (1983), which *de facto* doubles the costs of production (Ibid.: 396-7; Ansola González 2004) until 2015, with Culture Minister Ignacio Wert considering that “in Spain there are too many films produced” (Cuellar 2015: 49), Spanish cinema experienced varied results, almost always on a downward trend. Little has changed with respect to the fragility of a fragmented industry – due to the size and short lifespan of its production companies – and its intrinsic need to seek subsidies: as Martín Patino admits, “In Spain, for cinema to work it needs to be propped up”<sup>90</sup> (Caparrós Lera 1992: 60).

In spite of the industry’s perennial difficulties, during the years of democracy Spanish cinema breaks beyond the country’s borders. Its most renowned directors, such as Fernando Trueba, Pedro Almodóvar, Alejandro Amenábar, and Juan Antonio Bayona, all boast nominations and victories of Academy Awards, and they enjoy a significant international distribution. Various cinema professionals, such as cinematographer Javier Aguirresarobe and the music composer Alberto Iglesias, contribute to prestigious productions, working with, amongst others, Woody Allen, Oliver Stone, and Ridley Scott.

Outside fiction cinema, documentaries discover other spaces for production, distribution, and screening. They move from the big screen (with the exception of film festivals) to the television screen, finding a niche market in home video.

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<sup>90</sup> “En España, para que el cine funcione hay que ponerle muletas”.

Taurine documentary cinema aimed at *aficionados* (biographies of bullfighters, historical bull-breeding farms, significant bullfights, etc.), finds its own space: some productions continue to enjoy trans-historical success, such as *Toreros para la historia*. The series, directed by Fernando Achúcarro, originally distributed on VHS (1989,) is rereleased in 2005 on DVD. Today, it is still regularly broadcast on television by the pay-per-view channel Movistar Toros TV (previously Canal Plus Toros).

Otherwise, cinema with classic plots on bullfighting and bullfighters, following failures in the box office at the end of the 1960s, decreases in popularity. Post-Franco Spain does not have commercial space for the depiction of a spectacle which can represent a cultural vehicle imposed by the previous dictatorial regime:

If during the 1970s the social – and political and cultural – consideration of the bullfight suffered an important fall in its public presence, it was a historical reaction to the intervention endured during the Francoist dictatorship, in a process of ideological symbiosis which became extremely damaging following the fall of the regime and the transition to democracy (Vellón Lahoz 2008: 13-4).

The cultural impact of bullfighting is reduced in terms of its popular appeal. Although throughout the four decades of post-Franco Spain the bullfighting world continues to offer characters whose fame extends beyond the bullring, such as Francisco Rivera ‘Paquirri’ in the 1970s and 1980s, and Jesús Janeiro ‘Jesulín de Ubrique’ in the 1990s, the close connection between the taurine star system and film stardom has ended. The presence of bullfighter-actors in films, as a unique category of Spanish (and Mexican) cinema, is reduced to almost non-existence. The bullfighter moves his popularity to gossip, both in the press and on television. Significantly, one the most recent role in a Spanish film played by a bullfighter<sup>91</sup> (‘Jesulín de Ubrique’) is that of the foolish friend of a corrupt, fascist policeman, in the final episode of the *Torrente* saga (*Torrente 5*, Santiago Segura 2014). Without having any connection to the world of bullfighting, the film is a grotesque comedy “which draws on scatological humour and on the commercial appeal of graphic and gratuitous violence”

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<sup>91</sup> The recent production *Sobrenatural* (Juan Figuerola, 2017), with bullfighter Andrés Vázquez (born in 1936) in the leading role, is still not distributed (a private screening was provided by producer Rodrigo Rivas from Derivas Films). The film characterises itself for its focus on ageing and death, far from the classic stereotypes linked to the character of the matador.

(Fouz-Hernández and Martínez Espósito 2007: 4). In terms of his character, the bullfighter naively declares himself “very fitting for the role” (‘Jesulín de Ubrique: Me adapté perfectamente a mi papel en *Torrente 5*, estuve muy cómodo” 2014, *online*).

Bullfighters are no longer representative of a noble and heroic lifestyle, their professional choice is considered anachronistic by a nation attempting to present itself as a modern country. Similarly, actors do not gain professional benefit from portraying bullfighters, either in Spanish or international productions. Even animation has lost its once notable interest in the comic potential of bullfighting<sup>92</sup>. The matador and the world of bullfighting in general still find some limelights in other fields, such as music video or fashion.

Bullfighting remains an exotic element, both in terms of ‘orientalist’ dynamics and as a visual sign of national identity. Within pop and rock music, characterised by a legacy in folk music (*copla*, *flamenco*, *pasodoble*, etc.), bullfighting influences the names of contemporary pop and rock bands, such as *Los toreros muertos* (The dead bullfighters), active from 1984, and of songs, such as *Sangre Española* (Spanish blood), a 1984 rock song by Gabinete Caligari dedicated to Juan Belmonte. Bulls also enter national music as condemnation of a barbaric legacy which must be eradicated, such as in *Vergüenza* (Ska-P, 2000): its lyrics see the creation of a slogan of many animal rights organisations: “Bullfighter murderer, shame of the nation”<sup>93</sup>.

Conversely, some international artists portray the fun-loving world or the seductive allure of bullfighters, as with the legendary *Carmen*, maintaining a dynamic similar to that of the cinematic *españolada*. Amongst others, we may cite here *Fiesta*, by The Pogues (1988), whilst Madonna, in addition to two music videos with bullfighter Emilio Muñoz with highly erotic overtones (*Take a*

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<sup>92</sup> To cite a few of the most renowned ‘animated bullfighters’, there are Mickey Mouse in *Mickey’s Rival* (Wilfred Jackson, 1936); Porky Pig in *Picador Porky* (Tex Avery, 1937) and in *The Timid Toreador* (Robert Clampett and Norman McCabe, 1940); Popeye in *I Eats My Spinach* (Dave Fleisher, 1933), *Bulldozing the bull* (Dave Fleisher, 1938) and *Toreadorable* (Seymour Kneitel, 1953); Woody Woodpecker in *The Hollywood Matador* (Alex Lovy, 1942); Daffy Duck in *Mexican Joyride* (Arthur Davis, 1947); Droopy in *Señor Droopy* (Tex Avery, 1949); Bugs Bunny in *Bully for Bugs* (Chuck Jones, 1953); Goofy in *For Whom the Bulls Toil* (Jack Kinney, 1953); Casper in *Bull Fright* (Seymour Kneitel, 1955); Mr. Magoo in *Matador Magoo* (Pete Burness, 1957); Tom and Jerry in *Mucho Mouse* (Hanna & Barbera, 1957); Pink Panther in *Bully for Pink* (Hawley Pratt, 1965). More recently, only Mickey Mouse has been depicted in bullfighting environments, not in a bullring but rather in the Pamplona bull runs, in *Al rojo vivo* (Dave Wasson, 2015).

<sup>93</sup> “Torero asesino, vergüenza nacional”.

*bow*, 1994; *You'll see*, 1995), chooses for her *Rebel Heart Tour* (2015-16) a taurine-inspired wardrobe created by the renowned tailor of bullfighters Roqueta. Some formal elements are significantly changed: Madonna has now assumed the role of the matador, dressed as a bullfighter in her shows. Her dancers use a mask and a set of horns to portray through dance the role of the taunted bull.

Fashion appears to be the last bastion of aesthetic fascination with bullfighting: bullfighters most valued for their physical appearance or fame are immortalised by Mario Testino's lens for the magazine *Vogue* (José María Manzanares in 2012; José Antonio Morante Camacho 'Morante de la Puebla' in 2016), or take part in prestigious catwalk appearances, such as Cayetano Rivera Ordóñez for Giorgio Armani in the 2007 Milan Fashion Week. Internationally renowned stylists, from Yves Saint Laurent to Dolce & Gabbana, have included in various collections items of clothing openly inspired by the *traje de luces*, or have used the colours of *capotes*, often in a Goya-esque aesthetic. Bullfighters have become consumer products:

What made the case of bullfighting unique was the so-called "pornographic gaze", in the words of Román Gubern (2000), transcending the limit of personal experiences and of specialist TV programmes, in order to achieve the transformation of the bullfight itself. In other activities, except in a small number of irrelevant cases, the appearance of a person using their life to sell products on certain television spaces, as superficial and objectified entities, did not affect the artistic and cultural source genres. Without any doubt, the uniqueness of bullfighting in becoming the subject of focus from outside its own boundaries has a name: Jesús Janeiro, "Jesús de Ubrique" (Vellón Lahoz 2008: 25).

However, bullfighting *per se*, from cinema to politics, is experiencing a cultural change which for the first time includes an active movement in favour of the complete abolition of bullfighting spectacles and the rejection of any reference (visual or otherwise) to it. Without diminishing the importance of individual and collective political movements focused on the defence of animal welfare, which have contributed to a greater awareness of animal suffering through educational projects and other collective actions (volunteering in animal sanctuaries, protests against intensive farming, etc.), the political discourses on bullfighting remain replete with contradictions. As during the Republic or under Franco's regime, the proponents or opponents of bullfighting continue to be, on many occasions, used for political end. Although political debates relating to

bullfighting in contemporary Spain have taken place in local council meetings for decades, it is the Catalan legislation on animal welfare which is best-known and which has had most international coverage for its law to ban bullfighting.

In 2010, the Catalan Parliament banned the corridas in the territory under its jurisdiction, by adding a paragraph about the public death of fighting bulls to its existing Law 2/2008 on animal protection. In the same law (*BOE* 2010 § 73975/1f, *online*), popular *fiestas* with fighting bulls (such as the *correbous*, Catalan word for *encierro*) were protected, with a reference to tradition (*Ibid.*: 73975/2). This last article was later amended by Law 34/2010, which extended protection to all types of *correbous*, declaring them to be “extraordinary events, having the deepest Catalan roots”, and asserting that “the economic impact and the jobs related to them justified their unique nature.” (*BOE* 2010 § 89560, *online*).

Law 28/2010 is often quoted in debates about the tensions between Spain and Catalonia, and alleged to be a ‘cultural cleansing’ operating carried out by Catalan nationalist political parties against Spanish heritage (Carballa Rivas and García González 2014: 971; González Abad 2015). The Catalan legislation on tauromachy recalls an earlier, lesser known law, promulgated by the Canary Islands Parliament in 1991 (*BOC* 1991, *online*), protecting domestic animals from any form of cruelty, and therefore implicitly including bullfighting due to the ‘domestic’ character of the brave bulls (they are bred by humans.) However, traditional cockfighting was excluded from this provision, and is still allowed at the time of writing. Once again, the exception for cockfighting is justified by an appeal to “local cultural traditions” (*Ibid.* § 1).

During recent decades, the political discourse around tauromachy has moved towards opposition to an over-centralised Castilian-Madrilenian culture. However, since the municipal and regional elections of May 2015, (in which the voters punished the Partido Popular, which has governed Spain since 2011), a new dimension has emerged; a (supposedly) anti-bullfighting leftwing versus a pro-bullfighting right-wing. Several City Councils across the nation are governed by alliances between traditional left-wing parties, such as the Partido Socialista Obrero Español, and new political groups formed from citizen associations, in opposition to traditional parties, such as Podemos.

In some towns, for instance Huesca, an essential condition of support for the election of the socialist mayor was the “gradual disappearance of tauromachy” (F.V.L. 2015, *online*). In less than two months, several actions have been taken against popular *fiestas* and *corridos*, often including the removal of funding, or, as in Palma de Mallorca, a formal declaration of the town as ‘anti-taurine’ (Ajuntament de Palma 2015, *online*). The debate has assumed so much importance that even the left-of-centre newspaper *El País* has begun to pay attention to what is becoming a national issue (Lorca 2015, *online*), while some conservative publications are underlining the double standard of city councils which, despite their nationalist or left-wing proclamations, are defending their specific bullfighting *fiestas*, particularly in Azpeitia and Pamplona (Basque region), Andalusia, Castile (Amorós 2015, *online*; Zábala de la Serna 2015, *online*). In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, arguments around tauromachy were traditionally centred on the claims of modernity versus those of the *ancien régime*. In the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the dimensions of nationalism and political allegiance have gained ground.

The arguments over tauromachy have often related more to the discourse around Spain’s place in ‘modern’ Europe, than to concerns about the welfare of the animals themselves. The ancestral traditions of fighting against a brave animal are usually seen as a remnant of an ancient, medieval and barbaric world. As summarised by anthropologist Carrie B. Douglass: “The antitaurinos have hoped that by eliminating fiestas de toros from Spain, Spain would become more European [...]. The pro and con positions with respect to the fiesta were continuously reinterpreted through the European paradigm” (1997: 103). Those who defended the fiesta defended it explicitly from foreign criticisms”. For the North American scholar, issues of animal welfare and/or animal rights appear quite subjacent and secondary (Ibid.: 95-6). Indeed, concerns over animal suffering during the ritual are sometimes said to be a result of the influence of foreign cultures (McKinty 2015b), to the detriment of a growing ‘national’ sensitivity towards animals (Dorado Alfaro 2014).

The use (and abuse) of tauromachy as a political vote-winner is not unique to Spain, where to date two political parties have made the complete abolition of tauromachy a part of their programme: PACMA (Political Party for Animal Welfare) and Izquierda Unida (United Left). In Colombia, for instance, local

governments have attempted to ban bullfighting by means of special laws but, as in Spain, such laws have been overturned by the Constitutional Court (September 2014 in Colombia; October 2016 in Spain). In those nations in which tauromachy is a legal activity, in fact, it is regulated by central government. Therefore, even though local administrators are motivated by a genuine concern for animal rights, they are acting beyond their area of competence when they seek to prohibit a legal activity.

Predictions of the imminent death of bullfighting have been a recurring phenomenon in contemporary Spanish history, whether as a result of the loss of the audience's interest, or of restrictive legislation. However, despite the progressive reduction of public funding for the fiesta (López Martínez 2014), bullfighting is still one of the country's most important cultural practices, both in terms of number of spectators and tax income generated (Medina 2015 and 2016). Whilst in many places it is becoming more and more difficult to attend a bullfight in the local bullrings (which are often, especially in small towns, public properties), the reaction of common people and *aficionados* to recent political events has seen an increase in the personal – and economic – commitments of private investors, in order to maintain local traditions.

The harsh tone of the debates about tauromachy has now led to legal actions from both sides. Several activists belonging to animal rights groups have been sued for libelling matadors (by using the word 'assassin'). Individuals are now facing trial for having violently attacked – via their accounts in the social media – the relatives of Victor Barrio, a young bullfighter killed in the bullring in the summer 2016 (Gálvez 2016, *online*), and for wishing for the death of Adrián Hinojosa, an eight-year-old boy suffering from a malign cancer who was the recipient of a charity taurine festival in Valencia ('Fundación Toro de Lidia denunciará los mensajes ofensivos contra Adrián' 2016, *online*). On the other side, numerous professionals within the world of tauromachy (in particular, some journalists) have used defamatory language against animal rights activists, invoking a conspiracy on the part of an undefined 'animal rights reich' ('*reich animalista*'), comparing pro-animal activists to Nazi sympathisers.

From the death of Francisco Franco in 1975, when tauromachy was the social panacea for the people, to today, the attitude of Spanish society to bullfighting seems to have switched. While, during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, most of the

cultural world was unashamedly fascinated by the matador and the bullfight, today a conference on history which includes the topic of tauromachy risks attracting a noisy protest (Vadillo 2014, *online*). The cultural world of bullfighting has moved from the visual homages of Picasso and Miquel Barceló, celebrated all over the world, to the censorship of a World Press Photo award-winning picture of a matador at an exhibition in Barcelona (Baquero 2013, *online*).

Spanish *cine taurino*, like other arts, and like tauromachy itself, has also moved from being one of the most popular genres to addressing the complications of dealing with such a profound change in popular taste. Spanish cinema post-Franco is characterised by its emphasis on overriding its national identity through the deconstruction, reformulation and recreation of new images and stereotypes (Kinder 1993), and the universe of bullfighting is part of this process. In this dynamic, on the one hand it has dramatically diluted its presence in national productions; on the other hand, it has also revolutionised old traditionalist cultural discourses, as a vehicle for new, original ones.

#### **4.2 Decline and continuity of Spanish *cine taurino*: a diachronic outlook**

Fictional taurine cinema, in its hegemonic function as a promotional vehicle for discourses linked to tradition and conservatism, begins to decline in commercial potential as soon as democracy arrives in Spain. Since 1975, tauromachy has disappeared as a cinematic genre in Mexico and Portugal, and in Spanish cinema only a small number of films ascribable to *cine taurino* are produced. Alongside the reduction in its visibility on national screens, and a reduced impact in popular culture, some taurine films suffer serious problems of distribution, being excluded from theatres, and they end up on television or being distributed directly on DVD.

Hard-core *cine taurino*, that is, films with a classic narrative formula about the vicissitudes of a poor *maletilla* turned into a rich matador and a lover of a *femme fatale*, has seen a dramatic reduction in its presence in theatres. In democratic Spain, the first film with a 'classic' plot was produced only at the end of the 1980s. After *Sangre y arena* (Javier Elorrieta, 1989), there followed a couple of biopics of evergreen matadors (*Belmonte*, Juan Sebastián Bollaín,

1995; *Manolete*, Menno Meyjes, 2008), and a last unfortunate production, *La soledad del triunfo* (Álvaro de Armiñán, 2012). The latter, presented in grand style at the European Film Festival in Seville in 2012, failed to find a distributor.

The only film to achieve success at the box office, *Sangre y arena*, a modern adaptation of Blasco Ibáñez's novel, owes its popularity to the erotic scenes containing Juan Gallardo and Doña Sol. The female actress, Sharon Stone, in fact, gained international celebrity with her next film, *Total Recall* (Paul Verhoeven, 1990) and also appeared on a *Playboy* cover, becoming an effective commercial hook for Elorrieta's film (Elorrieta in Gregori 2009: 1121).

The biopic *Belmonte*, a film about the life of the matador whose name alone was a guarantee of success for films in the 1920s, is soon forgotten, and *Manolete* suffers a similar fate. The latter, a Spanish-British co-production, involves director Menno Meyjes, the renowned scriptwriter of Steven Spielberg's films (*The Color Purple*, 1985; *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, 1989), and two major film stars, Adrien Brody and Penélope Cruz, in the roles of 'Manolete' and his mistress Lupe Sino. The film, shot in Spain in 2006, suffers a series of economic setbacks during its production, and a string of further debts leads to its legal seizure. *Manolete* is finally internationally distributed in 2008 on DVD, whilst in Spain it appears in theatres only for few days in 2012.

In general, these above mentioned features show a traditional treatment of tauromachy. The sporadic inclusion of explicit erotic scenes edited with images of corridas, as a symbolic reinforcement of sensuality, is almost the only novel feature. Visions of bullfighting as a metaphor for society and the treatment of masculinities do not differ from earlier hegemonic representations, though some concessions are given in women's representation through an increased importance of their role in the narrative (for instance, the 1989 Juan Gallardo's wife does not passively accept her husband double life). The use of psycho-sexual fetishisms, predominant for decades in French and Hollywood cinema, is especially prominent in three Spanish adaptations of *Carmen* (Julio Diamante, 1976; Carlos Saura, 1983; Vicente Aranda, 2003). Each version, in its own way, visually reveals the sense of eroticism which was constrained during the long years of prudish censorship.

The filmmakers of successful taurine films abandon the theme, exploring more profitable genres and texts. Ignacio F. Iquino, director of the tauro-

religious film *El niño de las monjas* (1959), would end his career as a distinguished representative of *cine del destape* (Benet 2012: 377). Rafael Gil concludes with *El relicario* (1970) his taurine cycle started in 1939 with *La Corrida de la Victoria*. From the 1970s, Gil would direct successful comedies and adapt to film some of the most popular novels by Fernando Vicaíno Casas (...*Y al tercer año resucitó*, 1980; *Las autonomías*, 1983) (Ibid.: 382).

Traditional values and meanings linked to tauromachy as a sign of distinctly Spanish identity are essentially conveyed by television. Public television (RTVE) produces TV magazines about bullfighting and broadcasts corridas, as well as a pay-per-view channel (Movistar Toros TV). Taurine fiction finds its place on the small screen, in special TV shows on national cinema, such as *Cine de barrio* (1995-today) and, more recently, *Versión española* (2003-today) and *Historia de nuestro cine* (from 2015). Some TV serials achieve notable audience results; for instance, the above-mentioned *Juncal* (Jaime de Armiñán, 1989), broadcast by TVE, and *Paquirri* (Salvador Calvo, 2009), a mini-series in two episodes broadcast by private channel Tele5, on the life of matador Francisco Rivera Pérez 'Paquirri', who died in 1984 in the bullring of Pozoblanco (Cordoba). *Paquirri* is indicative of how a matador's death has lost its lucrative power for cinema in recent years: the series, produced twenty-five years after his death, is for an adult and elderly audience. The last matador who lived a life analogous to a classic plot of a taurine film (humble beginnings, a marriage with popular folk singer Isabel Pantoja, a tragic death in the arena), is turned into a film for housewives and retired people<sup>94</sup>.

More visual homages to tauromachy can be found in other TV series which are set in rural locations or are exploiting nostalgia: amongst others, the RTVE soap *Herederos* (2007-2009), focused on a family of landowners and fighting bull-breeders, and *Cuéntame cómo pasó* (2001- today). In the latter, Episode 25 of the first season (*Amor y toros*, first broadcast 02/05/2002) shows the youngest member of the Alcántara's family, Carlos, enthusiastically dreaming about a future of glory in the bullrings.

In cinema, visual references and parodies are also found in films of different genre, to stand as a visual symbol for the nation, or simply to add irony to the

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<sup>94</sup> The evaluations on *Paquirri* (2009) come from my personal professional experience. In fact, in 2009 I was working for ZZJ, the production company which produced the fiction.

depiction of the 'typical Spain', often caricaturing the Iberian (matador) *macho*. However, unlike TV, cinema often demolishes the imagery linked to bullfighting and bullfighters. Parodic insertions can deconstruct the matador as a sex symbol. This dismantling of the iconography of the bullfighter actually started in the last years of Francoism.

If in *El relicario* (1970), as mentioned, the matador did not exert any attraction on an emancipated modern woman, in *Casa Flora* (Ramón Fernández, 1973), the character of the bullfighter is portrayed as a timid and virginal young man. In this ensemble comedy, a brothel is transformed into a hotel, in order to host the many mourners attending a matador's funeral. One of the guests, a young *novillero*, finds his peculiar liberation thanks to the brothel's madame (the *folclórica* star Lola Flores), discovering the (sexual) pleasures of life. The irony of the subplot is amplified by the fact that the actor who plays the bullfighter is in fact a male sex symbol and a former bullfighter (Máximo Valverde).

Years later, José Luis García Sánchez directs two films (both scripted by Rafael Azcona) with a similar deconstructive caricature of tauromachy. In *Pasodoble* (1988), an ensemble comedy, grotesque and ironic elements are embodied by typical characters of a classic *españolada* (gypsies, aristocrats, priests, soldiers). To the character of the bullfighter is added an embarrassing problem of premature ejaculation. In *Suspiros de España (y Portugal)*, released in 1995, the journey of a couple of exclaustrated horny monks ends in a bullring of Portugal, where the two men are reluctantly performing, in a sort of reversed plot of *Fray torero* (1966), a *pega de touro*<sup>95</sup>.

In post-Franco Spanish cinema, parodies and belittlements of tauromachy, used as a cultural sign for the 'old Spain', provide effective metaphors to contrast it with modernity. Through humour, a sexually explicit visual language and trivial dialogues, these films desacralize the archetypes of the matador and depict the 'clash of ideas' in contemporary Spain (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas 1998: 64). Perhaps, the recent short film *Matador on the Road* (Alexis Morante 2012), in its sixteen-minute duration, offers an exemplary summary of the cultural transformations experienced by the nation. In it, actor

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<sup>95</sup> The *pega* is executed in Portugal by the *forcados* at the end of the corrida, grabbing the bull unharmed.

Juan Diego plays a mature matador, 'Morante de la Bahía', who, after a prolonged career in the bullrings, has lost his popularity. For economic reasons, he agrees to perform in a 'bloodless corrida' in the United States, considered today equally as shameful as comic bullfighting was in the past. His journey in a Cadillac from Los Angeles to Las Vegas becomes a downward trajectory: the car runs over a cow in the middle of a desert road, and the matador chooses to share the animal's destiny. He shortens its agony through a last *estocada*, and abandons his travel companions, walking alone on the road, and slowly taking his *traje de luces* off.

A distinguished exception in the application of visual innuendos to tauromachy in films comes from Agustín Díaz Yanes, renowned scriptwriter and director from Madrid. Son of a respected *banderillero*, Agustín Díaz 'Michelín', and an *aficionado* himself, has no taurine films in his filmography (though he co-scripted the 1995 biopic *Belmonte*). However, in his films Díaz Yanes often inserts a visual reference to bullfighting, from a picture of 'Manolete' on a wall (*Baton Rouge*, Rafael Moleón, 1988), to an extemporaneous bullfighter pass executed by the 17<sup>th</sup> Century soldier Viggo Mortensen, protagonist of *Alatriste* (Agustín Díaz Yanes, 2006).

An allusive metaphor of a symbolic *torera* can be found in *Nadie hablará de nosotras cuando hayamos muerto* (Agustín Díaz Yanes, 1995), a dark comedy in which Victoria Abril stars in the role of Gloria. The woman, whose husband has been left in a coma after being gored (he was a *banderillero*), recovers momentarily from her disturbed mental state in a sequence in which she is asked by her young neighbour, an aspiring bullfighter, to borrow her husband's *capote de paseo* for a corrida. Gloria demonstrates the complex ritual of the dressing on her own body, assuming the visual status of a symbolic *matadora*. In Gloria's 'real' bullring, the bullfights assume the forms of her conflicting relationship with her mother-in-law (Pilar Bardem), a former republican activist, and the abuses suffered by the men she comes across in her life.

Díaz Yanes admits that his choice to limit the use of his personal fascination for bullfighting to occasional cameos is due to the difficulty of portraying this peculiar world through a fresh and modern perspective. In an interview with Muriel Feiner, he asks:

Can you film a 'modern' western? Characters must be riding horses; wearing a gun... You need specific ingredients, but then Clint Eastwood comes and directs *Unforgiven*. For instance, my son sees the bullfighter as a mature and strange old man who has nothing to do with him. The TV broadcasts a corrida and [the reporter] interviews the bullfighter, who is a seventeen-year-old boy, who probably likes to go dancing with his friends, but who talks like an older man, using set phrases: "I want to triumph" (Feiner 2010: 211).

The cultural world of tauromachy does certainly relate to tradition, and its stereotypes and old-fashioned language mean that it does not fit easily in post-modern society. Equally, Spanish *cine taurino* did not have its 'Clint Eastwood', able to regenerate the cinematic genre. However, some Spanish filmmakers have offered original representations of tauromachy, moving away from hegemonic discourses on gender as a visual sign for Spanish identity. If during Francoism, directors *engagées* were successfully depicting class struggle using taurine aspects, the cinema of democratic Spain recovers bulls, bullfights and bullfighters to deconstruct gender identity, undermining masculinities and empowering femininities, "to subvert some notions of national identity" (Fouz-Hernández 2013: 37).

#### **4.3 Bullfighting and nation in post-Franco cinema**

Bullfighting conveys unequivocal political discourses on the nation in *La vaquilla* (1985). When Berlanga finally manages to direct the project written in 1955 with Rafael Azcona, the filmmaker creates a comic tragedy about the Civil War, telling the story of two sides arguing over a *vaquilla*. In order for the republican soldiers to keep the animal, brought by the Francoist *bando nacional* for an *encierro*, a series of comical events take place, aimed at highlighting the country's contradictions. Thus, a republican soldier confesses having been a seminarian in his youth; the nationalist Major reveals his displeasure with a land-owning marquis; both sides end up bathing naked in the same lake, realising how, without uniform, they are all the same.

The grotesque tone of the film reaches its height in the final scene when the *vaquilla* escapes into 'no-man's land'. Two soldiers dressed as bullfighters, cheered on by their respective sides, attempt to entice the animal to their zone. Whilst the two bullfighter-soldiers are lamenting that they will have to await the end of the war to organise a *cuadrilla* together, the *vaquilla* drops dead to the

floor. The troops are in an impasse, some sing *Cara al sol*<sup>96</sup> and some *The Internationale*. Hostilities recommence, and a slow zoom ends on a close up of the dead animal's snout, its wide-open eyes gazing into the void. The *vaquilla* that has caused such conflict ends up as carrion for vultures, leaving only its skeleton, with a pair of *banderillas* still attached.

The image of the nation which unites and divides this handful of men, trapped in a war which they did not want, even on a side they did not choose, is a *vaquilla*. Berlanga comments:

The bull is Spain, given that Spain is known as the bull's skin and all that [...]; I mean, the symbolism has a purpose, that with the war we kill happiness, that is to say, the festival which the nationalists wish to hold, and the economy, which is what the republicans seek, to eat and satisfy their hunger [...] The vultures, as you will understand [...], black in colour and with wings, have always symbolised, let's say, the Church (Berlanga in Utrera, Perales and Navarrete 2005: 16).

*La vaquilla* is screened when Spanish cinema is undergoing a process of reflection on its recent past, though Berlanga's style is distinguished from that of other filmmakers who have stood out in the "more-or-less psychoanalytic development of a trauma", such as Saura (Benet 2012: 367). Berlanga's metaphors are embedded in the grotesque comedy, portrayed by a popular symbol, the *vaquilla*, and performed by emblematic actors like Alfredo Landa. However, Berlanga's 'bull skin'-Spain<sup>97</sup> is not the imposing image of a black bull, but rather a smaller *vaquilla*, awkwardly taunted by its citizens-*banderilleros*, which falls dead in 'no-man's land'. The comedy about a brutal civil war is not exempt from polemics, either from republican ex-combatants, who see themselves ridiculed in comparison with Franco's soldiers (Igartua Perosanz 2007: 74-5), or by researchers, who see in *La vaquilla* some nuances of "historical revisionism" (Sánchez 2009: 122).

A further political cinematic representation of Spain through tauromachy offers a unique point of view within the genre: *El primer torero porno* (Antoni Ribas, 1985) develops an original subtext, focused on the defence of the protagonist's profession, a nationalist-leaning bullfighter, considered as part of

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<sup>96</sup> Hymn of the Spanish *Falange*.

<sup>97</sup> The philosopher and geographer Strabo (64 BC – 24 AD) defines the Iberian Peninsula in his work *Geographica* as a bull's skin, given the similar shape of its outline. The renowned poet Rafael Alberti (1902-1999) repeats the similarity in his poetic production *Entre el clavel y la espada* (Guerrero Ruiz 1991: 171).

Catalan cultural identity. The fact that Catalonia in 2010 became the stronghold of the debate on the bullfight's illegality transforms Ribas' film into a text of current significance and of a certain controversy. The film represents bullfighting as a specific element of Catalanness in the face of contaminant cultural elements from environments outside the peninsula. This subplot becomes particularly interesting because of the debates in the Catalan *Parlament* which, denying this background, has argued for its prohibition.

Ribas, a cult films director (*La ciutat cremada*, 1976; *Catalans universals*, 1980; *Victòria 1, 2 and 3*, 1983-1984) and a polemic figure in Catalan cinema, writes and directs a defiant film with a bizarre plot, shot in a 1980s style in which loud colours, asymmetric outfits, and extravagant hairstyles are mixed with *capotes* and *trajes de luces*. The lead bullfighting character, Jacinto (Joan Vázquez), splits his time between corridas and the reading of voluminous texts about Catalanian freedom, and struggles daily on a number of fronts.

Firstly, his feminist girlfriend Ana María (Emma Quer), employed as a live sex performer in one of the city's clubs, constantly rebukes him for taking part in such a "barbarity", although she admittedly gets excited when he returns home dressed, in her words, "like *Carmen*". Secondly, his political vision confronts an opposed reality: he suffers the lack of professional opportunities for being a Catalan bullfighter; he is forced to defend himself from the exploitation of some secessionist politicians; he confronts the corruption of socialist politicians (and the risk of being sexually exploited by their wives). Thirdly, his own work environment has lost dignity, and his artistic essence has been devalued in favour of appealing to tourists who attend bullfights without any knowledge of the *fiesta* (this last point is a further prophecy of Ribas; see, for instance, González Abad 2016, *online*).

Finally, Jacinto feels obligated to constantly justify his profession, particularly when he is accused of being part of a barbarous activity which originated in non-Catalan territory. One day at the beach, where he casually goes with his work utensils (a *capote* and an *estoque*), the separatist bullfighter finds himself in a discussion with a group of youths playing football, a sport appreciated by his girlfriend ("Post-modernism loves football. Football is progress. Bullfighting is repugnant"). After the repeated insults from the young men, Jacinto scornfully replies: "Postmodernist bastards! Bullfighting is a Catalan spectacle, more so

than football, which is English!”. Very symbolically, Jacinto ‘thrusts’ their football away. His struggle is Don Quixote-esque, as well as is the end of Ribas’s film. The man is forced to switch to the profession of his girlfriend, performing sex, dressed as a bullfighter, in a pornographic version of *Carmen*. They dedicate their performance to “to socialist feminism and to Catalan independence”.

The use of bullfighting as an element of Catalanness in the face of post-modern contaminations is certainly provocative. Indeed, tauromachy in the film has extravagant satirical details: the bullfighter - cultural vehicle of masculinity - argues with his girlfriend about her own feminism, considered to be contradictory due to the commercialisation of her body. It is equally interesting that in the film, shot in Catalan, the few characters that speak Spanish are the only supporters of bullfighting, and are elderly men or members of the Civil Guard. Within *Catalanismo*, Jacinto finds few supporters. Further, some digressions on animal welfare offer a singular *intermezzo*. In a sequence shot in Ana María’s club, concerns are expressed about a donkey, which is ‘performing’ with the showgirls in the number “*El burro enamorado*” (The donkey in love). The protests for his working conditions acquire more importance than the union protests by workers. The subtle intertextuality of the donkey, an animal which has become a symbol of Catalanness in contrast to the ‘Spanish’ bull<sup>98</sup>, increases the political satire in the film.

Ribas’ film, in spite of having been condemned to oblivion, maintains an aura of mystery mixed with some vagueness. The film, which is only available on collector sites in VHS form (it was not distributed on DVD), had on its original sleeve a label which was required in the 1980s, due to the ambiguous title (people bought it thinking it was a porn film): “A wild satire that is not porn”. Furthermore, the only copy available for analysis by accredited researchers is found in the archive of the Catalan Film Archive in Terrassa, on the outskirts of Barcelona, and on 35mm. The copy, to make matters worse, is considerably deteriorated, the sound is faulty, and only someone accustomed to listening to Catalan could understand it.

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<sup>98</sup> The Catalan donkey appears on various occasions (demonstrations, sporting events) on the Catalan flag (*senyera*), just as the juxtaposition of a black bull silhouette is common on Spanish flags (Brandes 2009: 785).

It is not surprising, therefore, that amongst the scarce references to Ribas, a 'damned director' towards the end of his career<sup>99</sup>, there are few mentions of *El primer torero porno*, and ambiguities are carried from one publication to the next, perpetuating simplifications<sup>100</sup>. Although the filmmaker holds a prominent place in the history of Catalan cinema, there are no known monographic works which closely examine his complete filmography.

With its original political treatment, completely different from any other taurine film in the history of the genre, and with the unique connection to the modern debate on national (Catalan) identity and bullfighting, *El primer torero porno* can be considered as an extra-ordinary film which deserves special mention in this work and, in the future, a more detailed analysis. Bullfighting as a Catalan cultural practice actually appears quite repeatedly in amateur and domestic films shot in the region<sup>101</sup>, as an indicative sign of the construction of family memoirs, aside from the fact that bullfighting has become a specific cultural bastion in French Catalan areas<sup>102</sup>, another reason to further investigate the subject.

Catalonia appears tangentially in another recent production, *El brau blau* (Daniel V. Villamediana, 2008), directed by a young Spanish author resident in Barcelona. The film competed in several film festivals, amongst them those in Locarno and San Sebastián, and was candidate for six Goya Awards. The

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<sup>99</sup> Following his successes with epic films financed by the Institute of Catalan Cinematography, Ribas had difficulty finding funding for his subsequent projects. The director held a protest sit-in at the headquarters of the Catalan Government, where he stayed for 166 days. Ribas later published a book of memoirs, condemning the government's corruption in funding Catalan cinema, only available when the content was politically convenient to those in power (Ribas 1994).

<sup>100</sup> Ribas' film has been described as a "farce" in which "a bullfighter lacking contracts gives Catalan classes" (Feiner, 2010: 336); "a sex comedy" (Smith 2000: 74); "a dire sex comedy and curious throwback to the cinema of subgenre of the 1970s" (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas 1998: 166); a "whimsical" film (D'Lugo 1997: 196).

<sup>101</sup> The Catalan Film Archive preserves an important number of domestic and amateur films with taurine scenes, produced throughout history (from the 1920s to the 1980s), in which we can extrapolate how bullfighting became part of daily life in Catalonia, as an element of interest and of shared memories worthy of insertion in the family album represented by the home-video. A part of these films is listed in the extended filmography.

<sup>102</sup> In spite of the bullfighting ban, taurine culture continues in Catalonia through authorised festivals, and it particularly fulfils a type of political 'resistance'. For example, it is because of the Union of Catalan *Aficionados* that hundreds of thousands of signatures were presented to the government in favour of the declaration of bullfighting as an Asset of Cultural Interest (Bien de Interés Cultural - BIC). Whilst anti-bullfighting politics in Spanish Catalonia wishes to remove a cultural legacy considered incompatible with a modern concept of Catalan identity (Maudet 2010: 289), on the other side of the Pyrenees, in French Catalonia, bullfighting is conversely a strong symbol of Catalan identity (Maudet 2006: 384).

hybrid oneiric-documentary film relates the obsession of a young man with the bullfighting performance of José Tomás, the most mysterious and charismatic figure of modern bullfighting<sup>103</sup>. Shot in a slow and very intimate style, it stands out with the exclusive presence of the protagonist who chooses to leave behind the outside world and seek the essence of bullfighting in the silence of a *masía* (a rural Catalan construction). Only a voiceover (in Catalan) accompanies the images.

*El brau blau* is a film about the 'internal' bullfighter, with no presence of real bulls, and is certainly original as a 'taurine' film. Although its narratives on masculinity can sometimes relate with the archetype of the bullfighter-priest, the man's mysticism is linked only to his inner world, nearest to the cinema of Robert Bresson than that of any other Spanish filmmaker. In order to take the intimacy of bullfighting to the extreme, the director transfers the man's body to a place that, in his own words, has nothing to do with the 'traditional' space: Catalonia. Unlike Ribas, Villamediana chooses the region, and its language, to disconnect bullfighting from places with strongest affinity to bullfighting cultural legacy. Indeed, when asked about the decision to choose Catalonia instead of Seville, the director replies:

It was because of the prospect of finding something completely traditional, [...] and taking it to a place which had nothing to do with it. I was interested in taking the technique of bullfighting to my own personal region, in transforming the protagonist into a totally Don Quixote-esque character in whose internal world, instead of giants, there is a bull, and who creates his own adventure like a small child (Fúnez 2015, *online*).

#### **4.4 The cinematic *torera***

##### **4.4.1 From parodies to (timid) protests**

The *torera* goes through similar difficulties encountered by women in other professional environments traditionally considered to be masculine. Without

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<sup>103</sup> José Tomás Román Martín (1975) has created unique public and media expectation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Following his retirement from the bullrings between 2002 and 2006, he reappears in 2007 and cuts any press relations, not allowing film shots of his performances. He takes part in a limited number of events, both in Spain and Mexico. In 2016, his bullfight in the Monumental bullring in Mexico City, with a capacity of 45,000, was sold-out within a few hours of releasing tickets. José Tomás also performed in the last bullfight in the Monumental bullring in Barcelona, held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

entering in excessive historical minutiae, there exists in all countries with taurine traditions evidence of the existence of female *cuadrillas*, specially contracted for comic bullfighting, or of *señoritas toreras* who – to varying degrees of success – attempted to pursue a ‘serious’ bullfighting career, both on foot and on horseback (Feiner 1995). In Spain, the ban on women performing on foot in bullrings is deployed twice, in 1908 and in 1940. The latter, promulgated shortly after the beginning of Franco’s dictatorship, would last until 1974. This effectively eliminated the women’s presence in the profession for decades, given that bullfighting on horseback – still permitted– constitutes a smaller number of events, most of which were reserved for the most renowned male *rejoneadores*.

During the brief period in which females were allowed to perform professionally, during the years of the Republic, the phenomenon of Juanita Cruz emerges, probably the most important female bullfighter in Spanish history (Ibid.: 79). Cruz, affected by the subsequent prohibition, is forced to pursue a career on the American continent. An anecdote about the ban from her manager – and husband – Rafael García Antón is particularly interesting:

[...] There was a man who was very popular in the circles of the Union that promoted the *rejoneadora* Beatriz Santullano, and he protested that his interests were affected. [...] By chance, the then Minister of the Interior refused to sign off on the reforms and said: “And what about Juanita Cruz?”, but they told him a lie: “She’s red, and an enemy of Franco”. We received a telegram from Spain which read: “Females are banned from bullfighting in Spain” and that was the only time that I heard Juanita swear: “Damn! Those poofter Spanish bullfighters have beaten me. And it took a civil war for them to defeat me” (Ibid.: 88).

This episode opens some considerations. Firstly, the distinction between the permission to perform on horseback and on foot is mixed with economic interests, questions of class, and political persuasions. The exception for the *rejoneadoras*, in fact, does not face any particular obstacle in the development of the ruling. In addition to not affecting the economic interests of a businessman linked to Francoism, it does not involve social concerns, given that – as previously mentioned – bullfighting on horseback is traditionally linked to bourgeoisie and aristocracy. Bullfighting on foot, culturally related to social mobility, represents the ‘red’ connection in the specific example of Cruz, although in reality the bullfighter never manifested her political opinion (Ibid.: 89). A woman who sought a space in her profession thus was presented as a

potential weapon for communist propaganda. Secondly, the reaction of the *torera* is striking. The woman insults one of the most valued qualities of matadors: virility. Cruz defines those vetoing the profession as ‘poofers’, disregarding the masculinity of someone professing to be a brave man but who, in her opinion, is afraid of facing a woman in the bullring.

Masculinity in the bullring is defended with arguments similar to those excluding women from entering the priesthood. It is not just about demonstrating bravery, but also defending the integrity of the male body as *conditio sine qua non* for bullfighting. A woman in the bullring is sometimes ridiculed for her masculine appearance<sup>104</sup>; her lack of male reproductive organs is related to the lack of bravery (to be scared is ‘to have no balls’); and her performances are always evaluated according to her gender. If a female bullfighter performs badly in the bullring, it will often be because she is a woman; if she triumphs, it is because of the public’s sympathies (see, for instance, Aguado 2015, *online*).

Cossío Encyclopaedia, the renowned ‘bullfighting Bible’, describes *toreras* as “repugnant” ([1961] 2007: 79), though the author’s role as a historian leads him to deal “with something which goes against nature” (Ibid.: 80). The woman’s role is being a good *aficionada*, essentially for aesthetic reasons (her presence in the audience adds beauty), but in the bullring it is “grotesque”, “strange”, and “ludicrous” (Ibid.: 79-80).

The aversion to female bullfighters, which still exists in spite of legal support, does not only involve males. Researchers in anthropology or in eco-feminism also face difficulties. Sara Pink, responsible for an extensive anthropological study on women bullfighters in contemporary Spain (Pink 1997), has explored how the portrayal of a woman in a ‘decorative’ role in bullrings continues to be perpetrated, although this “does not imply that the gender role segregation model implied by the traditional imagery prevails as the power base of a hegemonic masculinity” (Ibid.: 62). Furthermore, Pink recognises that grappling with a topic which intertwines women’s empowerment and animal welfare can lead to complex debates: however, by her own recognition further research is needed: *toreras* exist and wish to be part of this professional world (Ibid.: 198).

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<sup>104</sup> The word used is *marimacho*, a pejorative adjective which defines women with masculine look and attitudes.

Conversely, philosopher Alicia H. Puleo manifests her binary feeling of attraction to the cause as a committed feminist theorist, and of a personal discomfort with the subject. Indeed, though she recognises that the prohibition on women to bullfight is based on patriarchal culture, Puleo develops an argument based on the same ground, to justify her opposition to the adjective ‘feminist’ in the protests of females in the bullfighting world:

I think that, as feminists, *we shouldn't demand gender virtues* from women but *we have to examine the gender of virtues* to enable a critical revision of culture<sup>105</sup>. It is not about wishing that bullfighting continues to be an exclusively masculine world, nor about welcoming the admission of women into it, but rather of addressing the patriarchal bias of this bloody sub-culture, the horrific logic of domination which legitimises it, and support its abolition. If we wish to expand the concept of humanness with those aspects that were devalued as feminine, [...] then, feminism has something to say about bullfights (Puleo 2004: 77).

The merely patriarchal origin of taurine activities may be challenged with historical references<sup>106</sup>. However, the complications with Puleo's argument stem from the dissociation of violence with the female gender, through “those aspects that were devalued as feminine”, and could trivialise the complexities relating to the presence of women in other activities which involve violence, such as female soldiers or wrestlers (see Simon 2001; Channon and Matthews 2015).

Echoes of these themes are found in the cinematographic depiction of the *torera*. Independently of the films' country of production, the presence of women in the bullring is almost anecdotal, and is often ridiculed. In general, the roles reflect the parodic tone of an activity considered to be for men, which is considered an exceptional event, relating to a one-off example. Until the 1970s, a woman who took part in bullfighting in films does not progress any further.

There is no evidence of distribution in Spain of the Mexican documentary *Mujeres que torear* (Ignacio Rangel, 1940), dedicated to the success of Conchita Cintrón and Juanita Cruz in American bullrings. However, Cintrón arrives on Spanish screens with two fiction films: *Seda, sangre y sol*, directed in 1941 by Fernando Rivero, premieres in Spain in 1947, whilst Raphael J.

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<sup>105</sup> Italics in original.

<sup>106</sup> Women in bullfighting activities appear even in the *taurokathapsia* (bull-leaping, taurine acrobatics), as displayed on the Heraclion frescos (1700-1400 B.C.), and their presence in numerous documents proves a historical endurance, in spite of the secondary position to which history has relegated them.

Sevilla's 1942 film *Maravilla del toreo* is exhibited in 1945, following a number of cuts imposed by Francoist censorship.

The lead character in the first film is the film star Gloria Marín (doubled by Conchita Cintrón in the bullfighting scenes) in the role of bullfighter Rosario who, once married to bullfighting companion José (Jorge Negrete), abandons the profession. Unfortunately, José is seriously injured and Rosario accepts the economic assistance she needs, offered secretly by an old friend, Rodrigo, and José's rival. The second film, starring Conchita Cintrón herself, is a loose adaptation of the life of the bullfighter. Both films focus on outlining the social boundaries of the two characters. Throughout the films, the protagonists are repeatedly presented as a unique phenomenon. Even the films' posters seem to highlight the space granted to women in the bullring: *Seda, sangre y sol* places Jorge Negrete to the fore, whilst *Maravilla del toreo*, places the figure of Cintrón performing almost facing away from the lens, dressed in a country style with trousers and a jacket (women did not usually wear the *traje de luces*), hiding her face.

In *Seda, sangre y sol*, the limits in the *torera's* career proceed from her gender: "If she had been born a man instead of a woman, she would have [fought] all the bulls". Her manager regrets her retirement, but remarks that the woman is leaving the profession to "take the place where she belongs: in the home. I admire the woman that left the glory of the bullring, for the glory of feeling loved". Neither the woman regrets her choice. Once she is married, her only concern is to protect her honour as a faithful wife. When she hears of the rumours about her unfaithfulness with Rodrigo, she directly confronts her former *cuadrilla*, accusing his companions of being "un-man-like" ("*poco hombres*") by partaking in gossip. The *torera* is neither granted the honour of a heroic death nor the recovery of her home. The ending of the story grants this honour to the 'third man', Rodrigo, who dies in the bullring infirmary, reconciling the couple by joining their hands as he expels his last breath.

Conchita Cintrón's heroic virtues are not recognised either. Her character Rosita is treated as an unexplainable phenomenon. In *Maravilla del toreo*, Rosita's vocation to bullfighting is persistently accompanied by expressions of astonishment. Her challenge to paternal authority in order to perform as a bullfighter, additionally, is only overcome through the entrustment to a friend of

her father, the bullfighter Pepe Morera (the matador Pepe Ortiz), who accompanies the young woman in her journey towards success. The *torera* triumphs in the bullrings, but she cannot enjoy a proper social life. Pepe Morera, in addition to taking on the responsibility for her career, controls her private life so that the woman does not forfeit her honour. Thus, whereas the protagonist of the former film is not afforded a heroic death, and her sacrifice for her family is limited to the acceptance of financial support from a bullfighter, Conchita Cintrón is not given any romantic relationship – either permitted or illicit – in order to maintain her purity. The transgressions in this melodrama are reserved for Morera's wife. The matador, indeed, loses everything for his bullfighting *protégé*.

During the 1940s, *Fiesta* (Richard Thorpe, 1947) is also exhibited in Spain. In the film, Esther Williams plays in the role of María, a young woman who, out of love for her brother, replaces him during a bullfight. However, the production does not make a significant impact, and even *Primer Plano*, usually an enthusiast of films about bullfighting, goes no further than the publication of few photos of the actresses<sup>107</sup>. An even worse fate occurs much later to a Mexican film starring a *torera*, the North American *novillera* Jean Brand. *Un toro me llama* (1968)<sup>108</sup> is not even able to find a distributor in the city in which is set (Mexico City). The failed production contains some feminist nuances: the woman is always portrayed in a positive light, and her success in the bullring is linked to her own merits, in spite of the obstacles placed by the sexist professional environment. However, the lack of cinematic technique and the inexperience of the director convert the film into a series of disconnected scenes.

In general, films about women bullfighters represent the protagonist as a social exception, through narrative structures similar to other cinematic genres. Cynthia Lucia, for example, observes that lawyer films in which the plot is built around a female lawyer, often enact a subtle misogyny in positioning a male character into a central space for the final resolution of the conflict, castrating

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<sup>107</sup> Between 1945 and 1947, few short columns about Esther Williams and Conchita Cintrón are published. The review of *Seda, sangre y sol* focuses more to Jorge Negrete's performance and songs, and comments that "there are few other things to say" (Gómez Tello 1947: 22).

<sup>108</sup> The producer was a novice, and the director was a journalist with no previous experience in film industry. (García Riera 1994: 177).

women's power and restoring men's superiority (Lucia 1997: 164). Indeed, *Maravilla del toreo* and *Seda, sangre y sol* give a special role to the matador.

Analogous dynamics can be found in more films with taurine sequences, in which women are ridiculed or enter the arenas by a coincidental accident. *Fiesta* treats the event as a random act of fraternal love; the now animal rights activist Brigitte Bardot is shown as bullfighting clumsily in a local *tienta* in *Les bijoutiers du clair de lune* (Roger Vadim, 1958); 'La India María'<sup>109</sup> includes a (comic) bullfight in her character of female mayor of a rural town (*La presidenta municipal*, Fernando Cortés, 1975).

The women who bullfight, when not in intentional comical scenes such as Lucille Ball in *Lucy Goes to Mexico* (Jerry Thorpe, 1958), an episode from the TV series *The Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour* (1957-1960), are only portrayed in extremely short sequences of *tientas*, such as the protagonist of *La hermana San Sulpicio* (Luis Lucia, 1952), daughter of a bull-breeder. In it, actress Carmen Sevilla is the first Spanish actress to be depicted in a bullfighting activity, given that in the previous version of the film in 1934, directed by Florián Rey, Imperio Argentina can only demonstrate her social identity through a conversation about bullfighting, in her role of *aficionada*. The lack of visual references to women in bullfighting is also reflected in amateur films and home-videos. For example, a study of the domestic film archive of Juan Belmonte highlights how, in the reel dedicated to the farm chores, there are few scenes recording the participation of female family members – more active than the video reflects – visually favouring the male members (Caramella and Cannon 2016).

Hollywood cinema has predominantly depicted women in meta-corridos with sexual references, such as in the previously mentioned case of Rita Hayworth in *Blood and Sand* (1941), who 'bullfights' Tyrone Power in a game of seduction, or Bo Derek in the more recent *Bolero* (John Derek, 1984), in which the female bullfighter's performances become more explicit in the erotic scenes with Andrea Occhipinti. In Portuguese cinema, the absolute absence of visual references of *toreras* is even more extreme with the reality of female *cavaleiras*, active in the country's bullrings throughout history. Spanish cinema, due to the

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<sup>109</sup> A comical character based on indigenous Mexican women created by actress María Elena Velasco, and successfully protagonist of numerous popular films.

long period of prohibition, discovers the woman bullfighter with the arrival of the democratic regime. However, once females are allowed to bullfight, it offers some of the most successful and remarkable films on women in the bullrings. Spanish cinema is the only one to tackle discourses about the reformulation of national identity through films with *toreras*, either symbolic or literal. Through the character of five women bullfighters in five different films, bullfighting becomes a further Spanish theme to be revised and revolutionised by popular cinema.

#### 4.4.2 A *torera* for each decade: from ‘Antoñita Linares’ to Penélope Cruz

The most original perspective in post-Franco *cine taurino* has its roots in the Spanish singularity on the treatment of women bullfighters. Spain, indeed, is the only taurine nation with an extended prohibition on women performing in the arena (the so-called *toreo femenino*<sup>110</sup>). Tauromachy in Spain has been impenetrable to discourses on gender equality, and has defended the ban of women from the bullrings as a sign of authenticity for the art of fighting bulls. Cultural productions, including cinema, have perpetuated representations of the bullfighter as a sacerdotal masculine figure, who celebrates a special rite, acting, in his own way, *in persona Christi*.

As the motherland of bullfighting, Spain has always claimed its primacy, either for its bullrings’ prestige, for its bullfighters, or for bulls’ lineage. The arguments on the alleged ‘masculine purity’ of bullfighting have included the defence of the exclusive masculine presence in its arenas, reinforcing the meanings of the bullfight as a “drama about masculinity” (Pink 1998: 124). However, in the 1970s Spain faces major social changes, and tauromachy finds itself ambiguously positioned. Women enter a new professional environment and “bullfighting culture is obliged to accommodate ‘non-traditional’ gender models” (Ibid.: 126).

Political power resists cultural pressures; nevertheless Ángela Hernández achieves in 1974 the abolition of Article 49/C of the Regulations of Bullfighting, opening up for women the possibility to perform as *toreras* on foot. Even though Hernández is helped in her battle by lawyer José Briones, the woman’s

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<sup>110</sup> See Boado and Cebolla (1976).

perseverance must be recognised, being an orphan from a humble social milieu, fighting the cause for three years. Actually, Ángela Hernández started her legal battle in 1971, when Spain was still under Franco, claiming the unconstitutionality of Article 49/C according to the 1961 Law of Political, Professional, and Labour Rights of Women. In those years, the struggle of Hernández gains national and international media coverage<sup>111</sup>.

The personal victory of this feminine version of Juan Gallardo assumes the value of a fight for democracy, in a society in which the ethics promoted by Francoism have become obsolete. The *torera* expresses a feminist consciousness, affirming the public values of her personal crusade: “I was not asking to be allowed to bullfight only for myself; I was defending the right of any woman to do any sort of job. I was fighting against discrimination” (Feiner 1995: 180).

The political significance of Hernández’s action is soon turned into a documentary. After exploring bullfighting and class with *52 domingos* (1966), director Llorenç Soler focuses on the life of the woman in *Torera* (1975), due to “the unusual case of a woman in a professional environment characterised by its *machismo*” (Soler 2002: 64). Soler films Hernández in her daily and professional life, and scrutinises through interviews, both of the woman and some closest colleagues, her history of self-improvement. The double fight of women in the world of bullfighting has just started, against the bulls and against the veto they suffer by matadors, who feel the attractiveness of women in the bullring as a threat: “A woman [in the bullring] has a special appeal. She secures a sell-out”, admits bullfighter ‘Curro de Camas’. Hernández also recognises she can use her charisma in her favour. Notwithstanding, she remembers the scars which cover her body, underlining the truthfulness of her professional commitment. She is not only a blonde and slender young woman who is playing a bullfighter; fighting bulls is regardless of gender.

The *torera* did not have a political background, or an opportunity to complete her education; nevertheless, she is aware of the political magnitude of her action: “It was unjust to impede a woman from pursuing a professional career

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<sup>111</sup> See, for instance, the issues of the magazine *El Ruedo* published between 1971 and 1974. Internationally, Ángela Hernández was the protagonist of several reportages, both in the press and in the TV, including U.S magazine *People* (‘It is Angelita’s first fight, and the bull almost wins’ 1974, *online*).

simply because of her gender [...]. This [the end of the ban] is a big step for Spanish women, as well as for European women". Unfortunately *Torera* (1975) does not achieve a satisfactory distribution: even Soler recognises that his hurry to shoot the documentary, which implied an incomplete pre-production, did not have the expected results. His intention to build a political discourse on feminism through the exemplary case of Hernández is not fulfilled and, until recent times, Soler has used this production as a case study of a 'failed attempt of documentary production' in his classes on cinema (Ibid.: 65).

Fictional films have also turned their attention to women bullfighters. Through fiction, the *torera* is turned into an iconic image of the 'new Spain', as a symbol of women's empowerment. Between cult and popular films, this character contributes to the forging of new portraits of national identity: *El monosabio* (Ray Rivas, 1977), *Matador* (Pedro Almodóvar, 1986), *Jamón, jamón* (Bigas Luna, 1992), *Hable con ella* (Pedro Almodóvar, 2002), and *Blancanieves* (Pablo Berger, 2012) all present a specific model of *torera*, literal or symbolic. Antonia Camón Dueñas 'Antoñita Linares', co-protagonist in *El monosabio*, is the first Spanish professional *torera* who acts in a national production as a star of the arenas. Similarly to 'El Cordóbes' or 'Palomo Linares', she plays the role of herself, and her character is built on her own star persona. The film is shot two years after the abolition of Article 49/C, too soon to have a professional *matadora* (*torera* on foot) in the film<sup>112</sup>: 'Antoñita Linares', a popular *rejoneadora*, is cast as a representative for women in the bullrings in the 1970s.

Following *El monosabio*, Assumpta Serna and Penélope Cruz, lead characters in, respectively, *Matador* and *Jamón, jamón*, perform allegoric corridas linked to sex and death. Although both productions were not taurine films, they made history for the sophisticated intertextual use of tauromachy. Through their acting, the women embody the profound changes which took place in the decades of the 1980s and the 1990s in which "the imagery associated with muscularity and perfect bodies became ubiquitous in Spanish visual media" (Fouz-Hernández and Martínez-Expósito 2007: 67). Women

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<sup>112</sup> The training of a matador-to-be takes several years to be completed by the *alternativa*, and includes a minimum number of *novilladas* before the bullfighter can legally fight bulls aged five years.

return to perform in ‘real’ bullrings in 2002: once again, Pedro Almodóvar associates the role of the bullfighter with a female character in *Hable con ella*. Thirty years after the abolition of Article 49/C, the role of Lydia, a professional *matadora*, is not only plausible, but is also an expression of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Spain, a nation which has seen its identity transformed. Finally, the 2010s bring, together with a dramatic economic crisis and a bitter awaking in modern Spain, a touch of cinematic nostalgia. *Blancanieves*, a silent film with a retro-style set in the Spain of the 1920s, links the last – for now – *torera* of Spanish cinema to a discouraging fight for equality.

*El monosabio*, released during the *Transición*, is indeed an example of the cultural transition between the ‘old times’ and the modern world in which women have started their travel towards equal rights. Ray Rivas, a young north-American biologist interested in animal psychology and turned into a filmmaker by chance (Tolentino 2014: 6), was helped with the script by veterans Pedro Beltrán and José Luis Borau. The film depicts a conventional representation of the *mundillo taurino* as a social metaphor for the whole nation: however, this time the main character is not a young proletarian who wants to move forward into the social space. Implicit discourses about social injustice are built around a middle-aged employee of Madrid bullring, who dreams a future as a manager for his young neighbour, a boy who seems to have the qualities needed to be a matador.

A bittersweet comedy, the film follows the aspirations of *monosabio*<sup>113</sup> Juanito (José Luis López Vázquez), father of three daughters and former failed *banderillero*, and his attempt to launch the career of the young *novillero* Rafa. To pay for his debut, he steals the money his wife needs to pay for the illegal abortion needed by her eldest child (abortion would only become legal in Spain in 1985). The man does not know the girl is pregnant by Rafa. During the *novillada* in which Rafa performs, Juanito’s disillusionment progressively increases: the audience is more interested in the performance of *rejoneadora* ‘Antoñita Linares’, the real protagonist of the *fiesta*. In addition to that, Juanito discovers Rafa has made his daughter pregnant. Ultimately, the man must face

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<sup>113</sup> *Monosabio* is an employee of the bullring, who helps the *picador* in the arena. Traditionally dressed in a red and blue uniform, he has been known as a *monosabio* (wise monkey) since the end of 19<sup>th</sup> Century, when a circus started to dress their monkeys with a similar outfit.

reality: the boy, who will never be a *torero*, speedily marries his daughter, and abandons any ambitions to become a matador. During the baby's baptism, Juanito starts dreaming again upon noticing that his grandson "looks like a *torero*".

The film, originally conceived by Rivas to be shot in Mexico or Colombia, was shaped into Spanish contemporary reality through a series of specific elements. Rivas' initial inspiration was to adapt the North American rhetoric on social equality ("Every citizen can be President") to the bullfighting world, dismantling the myth (Harguindey 1977, *online*). The contributions of Beltrán and Borau alter the *Yankee* illusion into a Spanish *desencanto* (disenchantment), with added nuances related to the nation (Martínez de Mingo 1997: 151). Central to the film is the theme of the professional aspirations of Juanito, who is no longer able to deal with a world in which competition now includes women.

Indeed, the opposing characters of Juanito and Antoñita, who are both working in bullfighting, are the image of a new nation. Juanito, who has failed as a *banderillero*, has adapted his personal ambitions to a working class job in tauromachy, and is forced to beg Antoñita to arrange Rafa's debut. The *torera* reminds Juanito he must accept some compromises, because she is "the real star". Antoñita is conscious of her position, is demanding and assertive, and assumes 'masculine' attitudes even in intimate moments. She enjoys herself in a sexual encounter with Juanito, using him as a way to relieve stress. Their sexual encounter assumes a desecrating tone, profaning one of the most spiritual moments of the bullfighter: the ritual of the dressing, which is usually followed by the prayers in front of a portable altar with sacred images. Antoñita does not pray; instead, she demands sex from Juanito, promising extra help for Rafa. Notwithstanding, during the *fiesta*, she deliberately performs with Rafa's bull, giving Juanito a defiant glance and claiming: "The crowd was asking for it, man!". Indeed, spectators are changed: they are snubbing Rafa, they want to see the *torera*.

Antoñita, in practice, is acting like any man of this professional field, jealously defending her primacy in every way. Juanito, despite his complaints, is forced to obey Antoñita's orders. The 'feminine side' of the *torera* is only shown when Juanito attacks Rafa. Showing maternal instincts, the woman defends the

boy with her body, separating it from Juanito's physical attack. *El monosabio* depicts the masculine disorientation, in a nation in which men are no longer the only ones in command. Women like Antoñita have not only entered in professions 'naturally' destined for men, but are also sexually liberated. Juanito is constantly questioned by women: Antoñita, his wife, his sister-in-law, his daughters. Even his efforts to build Rafa's career are sarcastically undervalued by Rafa's mother, unhappy with what he is doing with her son, transformed, in her opinion, into a lazy man. "Why aren't you leaving my son in peace and focusing instead on your daughters? They can now (bullfight)!", complains the woman.

Rivas's film is certainly the first one which moves the once hegemonic discourse on bullfighting as a sign for social mobility as applied to the female gender. Moreover, the role of the *torera*, becomes even more interesting in its connotative meanings, due to the intentional choice of adapting the character to her own persona, up to the point of using her real name in the film (Heredero 2008: 112). Antoñita is the first Spanish *torera*-actor with a renewed 'dialectic of actor and role', and Rafa is moulded on the true life of *novillero* Curro Fajardo, interpreter of the character (Ibid.). Even though the film is narrated through the tone of a grotesque tale, references to reality are rooted in existing personages. In a moment in which Spanish cinema is experiencing a period of both joy (for the experience of freedom in contents and styles) and pain (the dramatic decrease of spectators of national productions), *El monosabio* "captures an interest out of the ordinary" (Torres 1992: 82).

*Matador* and *Jamón, jamón* are, instead, extremely symbolic in their portrayal of the *matadora*, and the bull is present through its visual absence. Though in both films there are no scenes of bullrings and proper bullfights, they profoundly depict the allegorical universe of tauromachy. *Matador* is even considered to be one of the films that have better reflected the essence of bullfight (Vidal 1988: 166).

Both films also portray novelties and contradictions of contemporary Spain; they convey discourses on national identity through gender revision in symbolic corridas, but their sophisticated use of bullfighting specificities makes the textual analysis often complicated. Some studies have attempted to analyse bullfighting elements, and especially about *Matador*, the extrapolation of the *tercios* of the

meta-corrída has been strikingly revealed. Leora Lev (1995) and Mark Allinson (2001: 27-30), for instance, offer a detailed interpretation of the metaphoric bullfight between the main characters, the ex-matador and bullfighting teacher Diego (Nacho Martínez) and the lawyer María (Assumpta Serna), both obsessed with death and sex up to the point of becoming killers for sexual pleasure.

Surrounded by other peculiar personages, they meet each other during a police investigation into several murders, which leads María to defend Diego's bullfighting student Ángel (Antonio Banderas) from police charges. The virginal boy, castrated by a dominating ultra-catholic mother, is obsessed with his neighbour Eva (Eva Cobo), Diego's girlfriend. Death allows Diego to meet María, and death and desire allow the couple to explore erotic pleasure through a figurative bullfight which, as the real *corrída*, ends with death. As noticed by Allinson, the fable of the two lovers becomes an extended metaphor for the *corrída* itself, and focusing on the flux in power relations between the sexes, the film contributes to the reassessment of gender, and its relationship to national identity (2001: 28-9).

The film is built on dichotomies between genders, as well as between the 'old Spain' and the new one. In accordance to the theme of a fashion show in which Eva is modelling, "*España dividida*" (Spain divided), most of the film's characters have an antagonist. In addition to masculinity and femininity, *Matador* questions motherhood through the opposing characters of Ángel and Eva's mothers, and love relationships, contrasting Eva's submission to Diego to María's assertiveness. The meta-corrída performed by Diego and María is used as a "spectacle for gender revision" (Lev 1995); however, some nuances show more than a "fantastic abolition of sexual difference in a graphic code of contagion or reversibility" (Smith 2000: 70).

The visual signs of the bullfight and symbolic parallelisms are often easily recognisable, such as in the sequence in which Diego explains to his students how to kill correctly a bull with the sword, and María is simultaneously shown in the act of killing one of her occasional lovers 'thrusting' him with her hairpin, putting the technique into practice (Allinson 2001: 28). Later on, María is dressed with a cape similar to a torero's *capote*, reproducing the first *tercio* of a *corrída*. In general, there are moments in which the woman and the man are

alternatively the bull or the matador (Vidal 1988: 166), but the alleged “gender identity slippage” (Lev 1995: 83) includes allusions to other bullfighting symbols in need of further analysis, which can add an allure of female empowerment. María, in fact, seems to be the protagonist of the *alternativa* ceremony<sup>114</sup>, becoming a professional *matadora* at the end of the film, overcoming her own *maestro* in the final scene.

The *alternativa* is suggested through María’s insistence on receiving Diego’s *capote*. The matador shows an initial resistance both to give her his equipment, and her hairpin, María’s personal sword, because he thinks “he deserves it”. Only before the final scene María receives the two desired objects. The repeated insistence of María on having Diego’s *capote*, and Diego’s sentence about his rights to keep María’s hairpin, seem to confirm the role of the woman as a disciple, whose biggest desire is to become like her master.

The finale, as mentioned above, is the celebration of María’s professional maturity. The couple organises a last meta-corrida, performed as a sexual encounter which ends with their death. The connection the corrido has with Eros and Thanatos is made literal, and the orgasm as a ‘little death’ is reached with the real death of the performers (Allinson 2001: 30). However, though the death of the couple is not visible onscreen, Diego is visually associated with the hairpin (presumably thrust like a bull), whilst María puts a gun in her mouth, dying from a symbolic goring, represented by the introduction of the weapon into her body, and the following sound of the gunshot. María, like ‘Manolete’, dies when thrusting the bull, penetrated by an allegoric horn.

If throughout the film the aesthetics are borrowed from classic *españoladas* such as *Blood and Sand* (1941) and *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman* (1951), Almodóvar sets the last scene in a “Francoist-kitsch representation of a classic taurine post-card” (Yarza 1999: 71), situating bullfighting within the *bouleversement* of folkloric Spanish culture, conjugated both with a modern appropriation of Francoist aesthetics and foreign ‘orientalisms’ (Holguín 2006: 24). Rooted in the sophisticated language of George Bataille and José María de Cossío (Vidal 1988: 171; Holguín 2006: 242), director Pedro Almodóvar and

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<sup>114</sup> The *alternativa* is the corrido in which a *novillero* becomes a matador, bullfighting for the first time a bull aged five years. Before the fight, the *novillero* receives the sword and the *muleta* by his matador-godfather (*padrino*), giving him his *capote*. At the end of the bullfight, the newly born matador receives the *capote* back from his *padrino*.

scriptwriter Jesús Ferrero leave a refined example in the use of a cryptic vocabulary which essentially belongs to taurine Spanish culture, incorporated in a debate around the nation throughout the 1980s: “The paradox of Almodóvar’s cinema is that it appears simultaneously ‘Hispanic’ and totally ‘impure’, intricately mixing the Familiar with the Other. The characteristics of national identity are generally linked to a history, a language, a cultural tradition, a landscape, picturesqueness” (Murcia 2007: 273).

Almodóvar’s representation of Spanishness is full of complexities and paradoxes. As with *Matador*, in his other 1980s films (for instance, *Laberinto de pasiones*, 1982; *Entre tinieblas*, 1983; and *¿Qué he hecho yo para merecer esto?*, 1984), the director offers his personal view on human relations, depicted with his creative talent (Puigdomènech 2007: 58), using the dynamic of distancing, detouring, and deconstruction of topics linked to the idea of Spain, reformulated with twists of meanings and values of traditional melodrama (D’Lugo 2005: 102). Though Almodóvar’s cinematographic language undoubtedly has an original and personal touch, the ‘internationalisation’ of Spanish cinema as a procedure to paint national identity is common in the 1980s and 1990s. Saura, in *Carmen* (1983), addresses “Spanish identity via European texts”, approaching the clichéd myth of the Spanish seductress “to ‘rescue’ it from the *españolada* – a process we can only understand in the context of anti-Franco cultural activities in the last decades of the dictatorship” (Faulkner 2015: 218). Similarly, Bigas Luna “stands with one foot firmly planted on Spanish soil and the other strongly positioned in the United States”, incorporating “elements from a broader arena” (Stock 1998: 183).

The ‘American approach’ of the Catalan filmmaker is not only a matter of aesthetic influence. In *Jamón, jamón*, visual signs of cultural globalisation are inserted with a twofold purpose. On the one hand, the juxtaposition of Spanish elements (ham, *paella*, the bulls) to global brands (the ring of the Coca-Cola tin can, the Mercedes logo) reinforces the focus “on the transformation of traditional Spain by a new commercial and consumeristic logic in which people as well as objects are part of the intricate social economy” (D’Lugo 1997: 64). On the other hand, the film “engages in a self-confessed conscious effort to scrutinise ‘Spanishness’ from the perspective of a foreigner and to explore it with the earnestness of an ‘outsider’” (Fouz-Hernández and Martínez-Espósito

2007: 16). The result is therefore a sort of cinematic *paella*, in which excessiveness of colours, food, sensuality, and Spanish folklore is amplified and intensified, exaggerating the clichés to vindicate them, but at the same time to contest national identity through the use of actors' bodies (Ibid.).

*Jamón, jamón*, set in a Castilian rural village, challenges ideas on traditional masculinities and femininities and disrupts gender distinctions. The two main characters, Silvia (Penélope Cruz) and Raúl (Javier Bardem), are also involved in a sexual meta-corrida. However, differently from *Matador*, the identification of the masculine and feminine roles through the *tercios* has been almost ignored by research. The scholars' main focus on the film, the first of Bigas Luna's 'Iberian trilogy' alongside *Huevos de oro* (1993) and *La teta y la luna* (1994), has been mainly oriented towards issues of masculinities, and the female characters have been predominantly portrayed in their phenomenon of empowerment as part of the progressive weakening of the *macho ibérico*. *Jamón, jamón* is indeed a journey around "the lost *macho*" (Fouz-Hernández 2013: 46); however, the intertextual use of tauromachy is only partially associated with masculine characters.

The film plot is centred on a fatal attraction between Silvia and Raúl. The girl is pregnant with her boyfriend Juan Luis (Jordi Mollà), who does not have the courage to tell his mother Conchita (Stefania Sandrelli), owner of a male underwear factory in which Silvia works as a seamstress. Conchita hires the hyper-masculine Raúl, whose sexual favours are also satisfying her desires, to seduce Silvia and to break up the engagement. Raúl is successful, but they also fall in love with each other. To keep Silvia with him, he confronts Juan Luis, killing him in a memorable hammed-up mortal battle. Through the opposed masculinities of Raúl and Juan Luis, Bigas Luna offers an allegory of the 'old Spain' and the new one, and the emblematic image of the fighting bull is placed to underline their different virilities (Ibid.).

The repetitive presence of the Osborne bull silhouette, in fact, accompanies the progressive loss of masculine securities. Long shots and close ups of the tottering testicle of the black iron bull, conceived as an advertising campaign for a brandy, and now both a distinctive landmark of the Spanish landscape and a symbol of national identity (Caballero 2009: 90), separate and introduce sequences around Raúl's and Juan Luis's potency. Raúl is introduced at the

beginning of the film through an analogy between his genitals and the testicle of the iron bull; later on, Juan Luis responds to Silvia's offence ("You have no balls!") by scaling the iron structure of the bull and breaking its gigantic testicle.

The traditional association between bullfighting and masculine virility, as well as the traditional psycho-sexual representation of bullfighting as a sign of masculine assertion, have been extensively detailed by research. As with Pedro Almodóvar, Bigas Luna's filmography is of notable interest to scholars, and *Jamón, jamón* counts several analyses of these specific analogies (see, for instance, Berthier 2001; Evans 2004; Fouz-Hernández 2013: 46-61). In general, all converge in placing the film as an exemplary production which reflects the tendency of 1990s Spanish cinema to "the assault on traditional notions of masculinity" (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas 1998: 140).

Nevertheless, the lost primacy of the Iberian *macho* is consequently linked to female empowerment through the "assumption of narrative agency conventionally associated with male characters" (Ibid.: 126). In fact, in Bigas Luna's film taurine symbols are also applied to Silvia. Differently from Raúl, the woman performs an entire *corrida*, always assuming masculine roles, whether as a bull-man in the first *tercio*, or as a man-bullfighter in the other two, but acting a feminine version of the ritual which is traditionally considered an act of "revindication of masculine pride" (Pitt-Rivers [1984] 2002: 84). This original variation on the theme and the alteration of a used, and even abused narrative formula, is produced through refined visual insertions in the sequences of Raúl and Silvia's relationship. Silvia's performance also starts like the bull, but throughout the *corrida* she is the one who is vindicating the role of the torero.

In the first psycho-sexual *tercio*, the 'masculine' role of the bull is performed by Silvia when Raúl attempts to get into Silvia's house. At the end of the scene, the man-bullfighter leaves her courtyard mimicking a pass with an invisible *capote* and saying "olé" to Silvia. Later on, when Silvia is dreaming of Raúl, she first imagines the man as a *banderillero*, and only secondly has a similar vision of herself, holding two hams like they were *banderillas*. This juxtaposition starts the swap in the roles of the *corrida*: Raúl is later shot as a sacrificed animal, with his lifeless body hanged like a ham, whilst Silvia, in a symbolic castrating gesture, cuts the horn of a bull with her sewing machine.

The third *tercio* occurs in a sequence in which Silvia is walking home wearing a short red dress (the *muleta*), and is approached by Raúl riding a motorbike. The girl declines an invitation to a ride and walks away, swishing and waving her dress, whilst Raúl circles her, like a bull in the arena circling the *muleta*, and creating a sort of *toreo en redondo*, this special moment in which the bull and the bullfighter are harmoniously united, as a symbol of infinity. Soon afterwards they have their first sexual encounter: Raúl's submission to Silvia is completed. The man will kill Juan Luis, ending his parable *apuntillado* by Conchita (her hand mimics the gesture of stabbing his nape), receiving a shameful (metaphorical) death.

Similar to Almodóvar's *Matador*, bullfighting in *Jamón, jamón* is a visual sign of national identity, questioned through gender representations. In both productions, stereotypical clichés of Spain are questioned through the treatment and the development of the characters via a meta-corrida. The dominance and the virility of the matador are removed from the male character and applied to women. However, Bigas Luna also questions sexual identity, shooting the hyper-masculine Javier Bardem, in the scenes related to tauromachy, in a quasi-perpetual feminine symbolism, opposed to a specular perpetual masculinity of Penélope Cruz.

As pointed out by Fouz-Hernández, through *Jamón, jamón* “[the director] plays on the inherent ambiguity of the bullfighter, phallic and penetrator on the one hand, but, on the other, immensely vulnerable in the face of possibly being penetrated by the bull's horns” (2013: 53). Indeed, the film challenges traditional visions of sexual identity while challenging the vision of bullfighting as a ‘masculine drama’. The depiction of Silvia as a bull in her ‘masculine’ *tercio* seems to call María Jesús Buxó i Rey's analysis of the psycho-sexual meanings of the corrida, in which she claims a perpetual masculinity both of the bull and the torero, who swings between a heterosexual and a homosexual identity (Buxó i Rey 2003).

As human sexuality, the corrida is not an anthropologically defined ritual, and is open to further reflections:

There are so many symbolic vehicles and allegoric interweaving that confusion ensues, inhibiting a simple interpretation. The increasing ambiguity and the inconsistencies in the rite's messages open the doors to a stereotype which reflects the diverse forms of seeing,

thinking, and feeling how men are socially and aesthetically depicted in their various expressions of gender. There is no end to this open system of symbols (Ibid.: 53).

Representations of gender identities through tauromachy have undoubtedly developed from the hegemonic patriarchal vision of well-defined gender roles toward more complex intertwined perceptions of post-modern Spain. Nevertheless, though women have assumed the role of the *matadora* in successful films, there is still not a 'cinematic equality' in the *toreras* depictions. Both Almodóvar's and Bigas Luna's *toreras* are not socially victorious or symbolic bullfighting superheroines. Though María in *Matador* is a successful lawyer, she faces death to reach her peculiar happiness. Similarly, Silvia exerts her seductive power on weaker Juan Luis and Raúl, but her survival does not taste of victory.

#### **4.4.3 Lydia and Carmen, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century *toreras***

In 2002, Pedro Almodóvar returns to tauromachy, creating the character of Lydia in *Hable con ella*. The film, winner of that year's Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay, is mainly centred on the life and the loneliness of the two main male characters, Benigno (Javier Cámara) and Marco (Dario Grandinetti), who meet in a hospital in which dancer Alicia (Leonor Watling) and bullfighter Lydia (Rosario Flores) are recovering in a coma. Despite Almodóvar's reputation for making films 'about women', *Hable con ella* is mainly focused on manhood (Caparrós Lera 2004: 155), exploring the range of the emotions of the two men involved in the care of two inanimate feminine bodies. Benigno is a professional nurse at the hospital, particularly devoted to patient Alicia; Marco faces Lydia's coma – with all the uncertainties related to her recovery – provoked by a going early in their relationship.

The specular and opposed personalities of the four characters build a film in which traditional genre and narrative conventions are both celebrated and rejected, "one which is at the same time 'genreless' and rich with conventions from many genres" (Hughes 2015: 9). Indeed, through formal homages to silent surreal films and classic melodrama, the film examines gender roles and places, and uses tauromachy to break some of the prejudices or myths firmly rooted in it (Conteris 2004: 7). Gender roles appear mixed or reversed, by

comparing Lydia's profession as a *matadora* with Benigno's traditionally feminine occupation, nursing. Gender reversals and fluidities are also visible in other details, such as the androgynous body of Lydia; the sensitivity of Marco, who cannot hold back tears when watching ballet performances; the uncontrollable fear of snakes of Lydia, who fights and kills brave bulls but cannot stay in a house with a small reptile. These details of their identity are not a coincidence in the narrative (D'Lugo 2006: 108).

Contradictions and controversies around gender conventions correspond to disputes over problematic issues in the narrative. Like *Matador* (1986), this film includes a rape. However, whilst in the 1986 film, inexperienced Ángel was unable to complete his criminal intention, in *Hable con ella* Benigno justifies his abuse of Alicia's comatose body as a sign of his unconditional love. The delicacy in the treatment of Benigno's reasons and pains has been criticised as a soft apology for the abuse of women (Caparrós Lera 2004: 156).

On the other hand, the role of Lydia, built on her androgynous body and its physical ability, breaks the last taboo for women in tauromachy, presenting a *matadora*, a profession for women which can be taken for granted in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Spain. The *torera's* name is also indicative, being the word *lidia* a synonym for fight (in the *corrida*). The woman is not a beginner, nor is she struggling to get contracts to bullfight: she is introduced in the film through a TV interview, conducted before a solo performance in which she is going to fight six bulls. These special *corridas* are usually performed only by skilful *toreros*, and Lydia starts her interview by confirming that two or six bulls do not make any difference to her.

However, despite her celebrity, the female interviewer reminds her that "there is too much machismo in bullfighting". Writer and journalist Marco, who is following the TV show from his house, is attracted by this *matadora*, who fights not only against bulls, but also against petulant rhetoric around her work, oriented towards polemics and gossip about her love life, with the aim of capturing audience figures. Insinuations about the real nature of her relationship with her colleague 'Niño de Valencia' provoke Lydia to abandon the studio. Though Lydia's first scene ends with a commonplace analogy between the ways in which she shared with 'Niño de Valencia' the bullfighting in the arena and sex in the bed, the sexual meanings of the *corridas* are not the only focus in

the film to elaborate discourses on gender. The woman embodies the twofold version of the archetype of Juan Gallardo in *Sangre y arena*, both in an 'orientalist' vision as a female Rudolph Valentino or Tyrone Power, and as a (Spanish) example of her struggle in her attempt at social mobility.

Lydia's parabola in *Hable con ella* is like that of the protagonist of Blasco Ibáñez's novel, on the rise and fall of a matador who tries to move from one specific social space to another. This time, however, the social space relates to her gender, and the struggle is not only linked to class. Though Lydia is also moving from a lower class to a higher (she is the daughter of a *banderillero*), her fight includes her claim to be accepted as a professional who fights bulls, irrespective of her gender. Notwithstanding, even the female interviewer shows no empathy with her professional situation, using gender as an excuse to chronicle her sex life. Sexuality and eroticism surround Lydia's character throughout the film but, as in Blasco Ibáñez's novel, are not shown through explicit sexual scenes, in contrast to their usual abundancy in Almodóvar films (Conteris 2004: 4).

Seduction and sexual reminiscences are, in Marco and Lydia's love story, depicted through bullfighting. Like many Hollywood films, the editing of bullfight *pases* are alternated with close ups of the object of seduction, but this time, the seducer is a woman. Lydia's performance is a series of shots in slow motion. The sequence brings together the components of the love triangle: Lydia as Juan Gallardo, Marco as Carmen and 'Niño de la Palma' as Doña Sol.

In fact, while Marco is enchanted by the seductive allure of Lydia's bullfight, 'Niño de la Palma' is made aware by her manager that she is bullfighting for him: "She is dedicating it to you. She'd let the bull rip her apart just so that you could see it". The chiasmus produced by the camera is accompanied by a Portuguese *fado*, which adds romanticism and a "feminine side of the all-male world of Spanish bullfighting" (Acevedo-Muñoz 2007: 242). The words of the song reinforce her *amour fou* for him: "I promise with my life to be only yours and to love you as a fool". The sequence ends with a dissolve from a close up of Lydia's chest while she leaves the arena, to a slow tilt of a picture of 'Manolete' lying in a hospital bed, probably injured by a bull. A few months later, Lydia is gored in the bullring of Córdoba, hometown of the famous and unfortunate matador, in love with Lupe Sino, his 'real' Doña Sol.

Between the first meeting of Lydia and Marco and Lydia's goring, they have begun a romantic relationship. According to the classic formulas of *cine taurino*, the death of this female version of Juan Gallardo, occurring in the hospital weeks after her accident in the arena, could seem a striking finale. Nevertheless, the disclosure in the hospital of her secret romance with 'Niño de Valencia' makes sense of the delayed death.

Lydia actually dies for a mortal sin: like the protagonist of *Sangre y arena*, her pride condemned her to death. As soon as her betrayal is discovered – 'Niño de Valencia' confesses to Marco their secret affair – the inanimate body of the *matadora* loses the last breath of life (Conteris 2004: 6-7). Moral(ist) discourses surround *Hable con ella*: 'victims' Marco and Alicia survive, guilty Lydia and Benigno are destined to a tragic end. In addition to that, despite the fluid treatment of gender, including "the cultural modernization in which traditional professions are seen as mobile" (D'Lugo 2006: 109), the woman bullfighter experiences equality only in her tragic destiny; in her profession Lydia does still suffer injustices in the development of her career.

On the one hand, Lydia's character is part of the wave of female representation in contemporary Spanish culture, in which "certain myths, particularly those pertaining to work and sexuality, provide an acute perspective of this modification" (Feenstra 2011: 65). Undoubtedly, the role embodied by Rosario Flores shows a woman both comfortable in practising a once traditional masculine trade, and sexually liberated. On the other hand, as a bullfighter punished by a divine bull, she is not offered the chance to confess her sin. The goring which leaves Lydia in a coma is not, as in *Sangre y arena*, the grand finale of the total descent into hell of a greedy matador: she is punished as soon as she assumes Gallardo's personality, being gored just before her planned confession to Marco.

An analogous dynamic of feminine adaptation of another classic Spanish archetype of the cinematic matador, the chaste priest, can be found in the most recent feature to portray a *torera* as a main character: *Blancanieves* (2012). If in *Hable con ella* the intertextual references relate both to the Hollywood and the Spanish roots of *Sangre y arena* by using tauromachy as a vehicle for both sexual and social meanings, the black and white silent film, directed by Pablo Berger, links the myth of Snow White to the Christ-like figure of *La passion de*

*Jeanne d'Arc* (Carl Theodor Dreyer, 1927), and to the formal and aesthetic heritage of Spanish silent films. Berger also builds a discourse on national identity through gender representation, and through a *matadora*, Carmen, who fights both animals and society. However, Carmen-Blancanieves's performance is conveyed via a special purity of body and soul, a vocational calling which includes abstinence, sacrifice, and a taurine Way of the Cross, in order to reinstate the Spanish kingdom of her father, king of bullfighters Antonio Villalta.

The year 2012 marked the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first publication of the brothers Grimm's fairytale *Snow White*, and three filmic adaptations were released: the two Hollywood productions *Mirror Mirror* (Tarsem Singh) and *Snow White and the Huntsman* (Rupert Sanders); and the ten Goyas-winning *Blancanieves*. Apart from Singh's version, produced for a specific family audience, Sanders's and Berger's films were adaptations of the original gothic story, both depicting Snow White as a princess-warrior, a heroine of a lost kingdom. The two films empowered the character through a diminishing/absence of the role of her saviour, Prince Charming.

While Sanders puts the huntsman by the side of the North American Snow White, as a companion for war and love, Berger instead deletes the character of the prince altogether, only preserving some elements in a particularly devoted dwarf. The two productions are remarkably similar in their 'nationalisation' of the tale through literal and non-literal intertextual references. Sanders' film alludes to classic narratives proceeding from Hollywood, such as the focus on the kingdom as the destined place to maintain peace in the world, showing parallelisms with nationalist rhetoric of Hollywood war films (Matelski and Lynch Street 2003). Furthermore, the American Snow White, played by Kristen Stewart after her global success in the *Twilight* saga (2008-2012), is portrayed as "both feminine and masculine" transmitting "a semi-androgynous sense of engendered gender" (Hockley 2015: 34). Stewart is the redeemer-soldier of more than a personal conflict with her stepmother, saving humanity from the woman's Dark Army.

The Spanish Snow White embodies a different Christ-like figure. Her androgyny does not relate to sexual continence linked to wartime as in Sanders' film, nor can it be associated with Almodóvar's gender fluidity in *Hable con ella*. The protagonist Carmen (Macarena García), abandoned by her father on the

day of her birth, is not trying to save the world, but only to save herself from the world. Berger's imagery for Carmen visually refers to the martyr Joanne of Arc, as embodied by Maria Falconetti in Dreyer's drama (Reyre 2013, *online*); her purity and chastity are unconditional and, like the Maid of Orleans, she is completely immune to sensual or sexual impulses.

The cinematography of *Blancanieves* is inspired by German Expressionism and classic silent Hollywood cinema; however, the visual world originates in popular Spanish culture, and is sublimated and aestheticized. Indeed, bullfighting, flamenco and Andalusian locations work in it as explicit frames for an *españolada*, but transcending superficiality (Galindo Pérez 2014: 252).

Carmen, the princess who has lost her place in the kingdom because of an evil stepmother, is the daughter of the king of *toreros*, Antonio Villalta (Daniel Giménez Cacho); the stepmother Encarna (Maribel Verdú) is the matador's nurse, whom she met in hospital after the goring which left him quadriplegic; the dwarves are travelling *enanitos toreros*, who become Carmen's family after finding her alone and forgotten. Aesthetically, the characters reference in particular the paintings of Julio Romero de Torres (1874-1930), "the artist of the gypsy soul and the Andalusian copla" (Litvak, 1998: 117), often used as intertexts. For instance, the big portrait of Antonio Villalta which stands in the *cortijo*-castle of the matador, a reproduction of Romero de Torres's portrait of Rafael González 'Machaquito', creates a visual link with the famous *torero* overshadowed by the artistic revolution of Juan Belmonte. The five women of the film (Carmen as a child and as a young woman, her mother, grandmother, and stepmother) are also all linked to the artist's iconography (Jiménez 2013: 93).

Carmen's odyssey to recover her place in the kingdom of Seville is a journey through tauromachy, an allegory for her specific social mobility. Having lost her memory, she does not remember she is the daughter of Villalta but, through her daily life with the dwarves, who perform in comic bullfighting, she discovers her natural talent for the bullfight. The young woman starts, therefore, from the lowest position in the bullfighting social order, as a personage in the show (precisely, Snow White), ending as the main attraction of a bullfight in the most important bullring in 'the world': the '*Colosa'* bullring of Seville. It is in this

scenario where Carmen, at the end of the *corrida*, is poisoned by the apple offered by Encarna.

The chosen location for the climax is not a fantasy of Seville, invented by Pablo Berger's, nor an exaggerated reproduction of the historic Sevillian arena La Real Maestranza. Among the numerous visual references for *Blancanieves*, which led the director to spend almost eight years on preparation and pre-production, the choice of the visual reference of the once existing Monumental Bullring instead of La Real Maestranza adds a powerful emphasis to social discourses on the nature of Villalta and Carmen's royalty, as kings of the (common) people <sup>115</sup>.

Social discourses refer to the whole cast of the film: as well as Carmen and the dwarves, Encarna also undergoes her personal battle to alter her position on the social ladder. The clash between the women, the one predestined to rule the world, the other (originally) to serve the king, find in their masculine counterparts a different reality. Men are not as sanctioned as women: moral rules and divine interventions are differently applied to masculine characters. Even the manager who succeeds in his aim of exploiting Carmen through a misleading contract is pardoned by fate; and when the young *torera* falls into her enchanted sleep, she is quickly transformed by him into 'sleeping Blancanieves', the biggest attraction of his brand new Freak Show. The fury of God is only directed towards Antonio Villalta and the female characters, and mainly incarnated by the bull.

Indeed, Berger's symbolic use of the brave animal is reminiscent of the classic silent Spanish *cine taurino*, and the performances of the *toreros*, Antonio and Carmen, assume the characteristic signs of the celebration of a religious ritual of sacrifice, but applied to themselves, with a sacramental reward or punishment. The alpha and omega of the film are embodied by two bulls: Lucifer, which injured Villalta at the beginning of the film causing his tetraplegia, and Satanás, whose life is pardoned by Blancanieves. Later on Satanás kills the stepmother. Both *corridas* are performed in the 'Colosal', the cathedral of

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<sup>115</sup> As seen in Chapter Two, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 'Joselito el Gallo' built a second bullring in Seville, to facilitate the attendance of working class *aficionados* at the *corridas*. The arena La Real Maestranza, owned by a noble guild, was (and still is) one of the most expensive bullrings in the world. The dream of Joselito failed: the Monumental was only active three years (1918-1921), and was definitively closed for alleged unresolved structural problems (Díaz Pérez 2012: 62-3).

bullfighting. Though the evil names of the bull can lead to divergent interpretations, the role of the bulls is undoubtedly linked to traditional(ist) popular Catholicism, in which the Devil was seen as a divine messenger, sent to Earth to tempt humankind, to prove its genuine faith. The bull's name is probably a further homage to Dreyer, presumably referencing *Blade af Satans bog* (1920), a film in which God casts Satan to test human souls.

The bulls are acting against human beings but, in fact, they are re-establishing justice, though with specific dynamics. The punishment of Antonio Villalta at the beginning of the film is prefiguring, as a biblical retrospective prophecy, his subsequent mortal sin: egoism. Once paralysed and widowed, Villalta abandons Carmen, and marries Encarna driven by his personal needs. The murder of Encarna, conversely, takes place in the *corral* of the bullring, in which she tries to find a way to escape her destiny: unlike Antonio, who actually fights the bull, Encarna is portrayed as a coward. God's interference in the world, in the main events of life, is left to the bulls to act out. The maintenance of minor details of social order is left to humans, capable in trivial matters.

The world of *Blancanieves* is a cruel portrait of the littleness of humankind: the audience of the arenas, as in *Sangre y arena*, rejoices when the dwarves are hit by the bulls ("This is what the people want", admits one of them); the greediness of Carmen's manager outweighs any signs of compassion; and even one of the dwarves is driven by the capital sin of envy, when he diabolically exchanges the young *novillo* destined for Carmen with an adult bull, reserved for a more skilled matador. Finally, there is no Prince for the Spanish Snow White: Carmen is destined to be slave of her manager even in her perennial sleep. The lack of redemption in the film, and the tragic ends for all the female characters - Carmen, her mother, her grandmother and her stepmother - depict a gothic reality for Spain, as a place in which men can be rescued even when they do not deserve salvation, whilst women, innocent or guilty, are always penalized.

The date of the two most important corridas in Seville, both occurring on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April, adds a further nuance of hopelessness to the symbolic world of Pablo Berger. On the afternoon of 21<sup>st</sup> April 1914, Juan Belmonte performed in Sevilla for the first time with 'Joselito el Gallo', changing the world (of taumachy), through an unforgettable bullfight of famous Miura bulls ('Toros y

toreros' 1914: 11-2). In the history of contemporary bullfighting, 21<sup>st</sup> April corresponds to a revolution; instead, in Berger's film, the date is an allegory for change, but there is no revolution for Carmen. The female Belmonte is able to remove her father 'Machaquito' from the Olympus of matadors, but fails in redeeming herself.

The partial feminine revolution does not only include *Blancanieves*: though the role of the *torera* was certainly a vehicle for actress Macarena García to find celebrity, creating the first outstanding gender reversal in stardom and taumachy, the texts of Spanish *cine taurino* associated with the *matadora*, usually end in tragedy. While the first cinematic *torera* of democracy, 'Antoñita Linares', is unique in her professional and cinematic success, there is a *non sequitur* of death and despair. Women bullfighters in cinema have achieved, like *toreras* in the real world, a noticeable popularity; here, as in other professions, they are showing that their talent is not a random coincidence, dissonant from some sort of gender predestination. However, the film genre does not show further variations on the theme: the 'female' *cine taurino* still does not include triumphalism for women.

Even the symbolic use of the bull as a totemic figure does not show substantial cultural changes. Although bull's blood is avoided by the cameras, its objectification is still the hegemonic dynamics in films. Nevertheless, the new century has introduced profound cultural changes, and despite filmmakers using strategic *omissis* of visual violence, animal welfare is provoking controversies. Both *Hable con ella* and *Blancanieves* have been the target of campaigns to boycott their screening and distribution, as films with scenes of real bullfights, and also of formal complaints by animal rights associations to the authorities (Caparrós Lera 2004: 156; Pérez 2014, *online*). As far as Almodóvar's film is concerned, there are no records of trials or rulings related to animal abuses; on the other hand, the production company of *Blancanieves* is still awaiting judgement on alleged abuses of the law which governs public celebrations of bullfighting. The cultural shift to animal welfare seems limited to the other side of the camera; nevertheless, if films are still using animals for 'human' narrative purposes, other audiovisual productions show some openings for a wider debate.

#### 4.5 The documentary and its cultural connections with fiction

The four decades of Spanish cinema after Franco leave a cinematic genre and subgenre with its most fundamental elements in question. However, bullfighting is still unquestionably an aesthetic and formal ingredient used to represent Spanish identity. In addition to fiction, documentaries and other audiovisual productions provide (including outside Spain) new perspectives.

As previously mentioned, any trans-historical development concerning the concept of animal suffering is surprisingly almost entirely absent. The documentary, in general, continues to dominate in its ethnographic approach, focused on aspects of popular culture. Perspective remains relatively neutral in terms of bullfighting, neither promoting the heroic values associated with bullfighters or overly reflecting on the suffering and death of the animal killed during a public spectacle.

Amongst the few documentaries openly in defence of animals, *Animal* (Ángel Mora, 2007) and, more recently, *Santa Fiesta* (Miguel Ángel Rolland, 2016) stand out. Both productions have been critically acclaimed in film festivals (such as Sitges 2007 and Documenta Madrid 2016); with the use of striking editing, they condemn cruelty inflicted on animals; they relate the maintenance of traditions which include the mistreatment of animals during religious festivals, with the Catholic Church which supports such events.

*Animal* focuses exclusively on bullfighting and offers short interviews with a range of public figures (writers, musicians, philosophers) and politicians (particularly those belonging to the Spanish animal rights party PACMA), alternating with very shocking images of bullfighting spectacles without any added commentary. The discourse of animal rights reaches a level of condemnation void of any consideration for the typology of the bullfight, to the extent of insinuating on various occasions, through the words of some of the interviewees (such as the writer Rosa Montero who, curiously, is the devoted daughter of a *banderillero*), intrinsic connections between the violence exercised by bullfighters towards the animals with alleged acts of domestic violence.

Almost prophetically, Mora positions his camera on a long panoramic shot of the almost empty Monumental bullring in Barcelona, and on a much more

animated anti-bullfighting demonstration outside. The portrayal of the most visibly disturbing details, such as the spilling of blood from a poorly thrust bull, which in *El momento de la verdad* (1965) symbolically strengthened an anti-Francoist social(ist) critique, are freed from any allegory to humans; the focus is firmly pointing to the animal's intrinsic dignity. The documentary inevitably raises the question about who is, *de facto*, the real 'animal', and visually seeks, using the words of the interviewees, to place the spectator in the animal's position.

The more recent *Santa Fiesta* includes a wider montage of animal festivals in Spain. The images, shot clandestinely, show the destiny in store for, amongst others, goats, ducks, horses, and bulls, with persistent visual links to the religious celebrations connected to these '*fiestas*'. Rolland's documentary focuses more considerably on the sacrifice or use of the animal in relation to religious feasts than Mora's production (hence the title). Financed through crowdfunding and supported by animal rights organisations, the film denounces the abuse of some 60,000 animals each year in Spain with an effective display of images of religious processions, statues of Christs and Saints, and the active role of the individual citizen in animal cruelty.

Thus far, there is no evidence relating to other documentaries with similar perspectives for other countries with bullfighting traditions; however, there are numerous small, self-financed films produced by active anti-bullfighting organisations, and more generally those against any popular celebration which involves the use of animals<sup>116</sup>. In spite of a lack of non-Spanish references in the field of documentaries, in Latin America there can be found some interesting cultural connections with animated films. The feature-film *The Book of Life* (Jorge R. Gutiérrez, 2014) and the Colombian short film *Salú* (Camilo Ayala, 2016) offer interesting reflections on bullfighting, and try to avoid Disney's traditional theme of domesticating wild nature (Whitley 2008). Both productions reflect on the contradictions of the human being who, on the one hand, feels a sense of belonging to taurine cultural traditions, yet on the other participates in the bull's suffering.

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<sup>116</sup> These films are omitted from this study, as are those reserved for *aficionados*.

The animated feature-length film by Gutiérrez, which relates the story of two young men in love with the same girl, presents the internal struggle experienced by Manolo, a descendent of a matador. The boy feels the responsibility to honour his family, but his true vocation is music. On the day of his debut in the bullring, Manolo sings to 'his' bull (portrayed as a non-domesticated bull called *Asesino*) *The Apology Song*, a text dedicated to all the bulls which had to die in the bullring, seeking forgiveness. Manolo apologises for “two centuries of agony” and, though he admits that both “were bred to fight”, he claims (“I sing the truth”) that only the bull has “suffered great injustice”.

However, whilst animal suffering is a persistent theme throughout the film, the profession of his antagonist, the soldier Joaquín (also a family tradition), is never linked to its consequences. When Joaquín returns to his town after years of apprentice and profession, he wears his uniform adorned with medals, a plausible symbol of honours earned in battle. In the text, there are no references about the connections that his profession has with (human) death. Gutiérrez indeed, has inserted “bulls and anything related to bullfighting in the film [to depict his] personal and stylized take on this controversial sport” (Gutiérrez 2014: 113); on the contrary, he designed Joaquín “like a classic superhero and an American football star. He is like a living trophy, covered in medals [...] Women love him, men want to be him. [He is] strong, rich, funny, brave, and super macho” (Ibid.: 46-7).

A further production which turns into a personal debate on tauromachy is *Salú*, an animated and stop-motion short film which is currently competing in film festivals. The author and director Camilo Ayala, in fact, has sought to insert himself in the story, portraying the role of the child attending a bullfight, as a symbolic element of innocence and hope, not dissimilar to neorealist allegories. The bull, as in Gutiérrez's film, is neither injured nor killed in the bullring. During the bullfight, the chromatic effect produced by the *picador's* wine in the bull's mouth – initially interpreted as the animal's blood – reveals a happy ending for the animal and the spectating family. The bull Baco (Bacchus), as the god of wine and the grape harvest, becomes part of the human family as a vehicle of happiness and as a symbolic toast to life (*salú* is the contracted form of *salud* – cheers). The 'pro-bull's life' plot is accompanied by an astonishing precision in the animation of the *cuadrilla*, represented with meticulousness in the execution

of the *tercios*. It is striking that a text which advocates for the bull's survival, can display an accurate and esthetical depiction of a bullfight.

Camilo Ayala, contacted by the author of this thesis in October 2016, confirms the apparent contradictions within the film text as a reflection of his need to share with spectators his fascination with bullfighting, a culture he feels he belongs to, mixed with a deep uneasiness with the death of the bull in the ring. The change of sensitivity and tolerance towards the crudest parts of the bullfight by the *aficionados* does not only affect Ayala; there are increasing debates about the possibility of adapting bullfighting rules to the renewed preferences of the audience, which is less tolerable of lancing or stabbing than in the past<sup>117</sup>.

In addition to animal welfare, documentaries also explore gender issues. *I skuggan av solen* (Susanna Edwards, 1996), a co-production between Sweden, Finland, and France, focuses on the bullfighter Cristina Sánchez, who became the first Spanish female bullfighter in the democratic era with her *alternativa* in 1996. Conversely, Kathryn Klassen's documentary *Out in the Shadow into the Sun* (2001), of Canadian origins, is dedicated to the exploration of Spanish and Latin-American *toreras* "within the macho ranks of bullfighting" (Waugh 2006: 445). Klassen, a lesbian filmmaker involved in queer cinema, avoiding references to her sexual orientation in the development of the production because of the sexist and traditionalist environment that she faced, presents an original exploration of the contemporary bullfighting world, in which the presence of women in the arenas could culturally represent its "queerification"<sup>118</sup> (Ibid.).

The more recent *She is the Matador* (Gemma Cubero and Celeste Carrasco, 2008), is a socially oriented film which exemplifies, through the career of the Spaniard Mari Paz Vega and the Italian Eva Bianchini 'Eva Florencia', the difficulties which women encounter in their profession. The U.S.-Spanish co-production explores their double difficulty in this peculiar and masculine world: the risk of fighting bulls and the complications of being treated fairly by the

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<sup>117</sup> During the years of research for this thesis, I have monitored and frequently participated in debates between bullfighting supporters, both personally and on social media, in Spain, Portugal, and Mexico. In general, I have been able to observe willingness in terms of the renewing of bullfighting spectacles, focused on a greater protection of the bull.

<sup>118</sup> Queer is intended as a non-normative sexual/gender identity.

*mundillo*. In contrast to Soler's *Torera* (1975), the women who direct these three documentaries achieve international distribution for their productions, competing in several film festivals. In 1997, *I skuggan av solen* won the Guldbagge Award (the Swedish Oscar) for the best documentary. Whereas gender issues are successfully and creatively treated in fiction films directed by males, documentaries see female filmmakers involved in questioning dominant anthropo-sexual theories connected to bullfighting, in particular relating to equality.

These themes are very current issues: Cristina Sánchez, who rejects the feminine declension of the word *torero* as a distinctive sign of genders equality<sup>119</sup>, retired in 1999 following a polemic press conference in which she denounced the vetoes of her male colleagues (Pérez 1999: 90). Mari Paz Vega, after twenty years as a *matadora*, has managed to find her place in Latin America, performing very little in her homeland. Conversely, 'Eva Florencia' has not even managed to become a *matadora*, retiring as a *novillera* with the same motivation as Cristina Sánchez (Florencia 2016, *online*). In addition to the difficulty linked to her gender, it is worth noting her nationality which, similarly as with the ostracism of Latin-American or Portuguese bullfighters in Spanish bullrings, continues being an ulterior obstacle to this day. In the case of 'Eva Florencia', her double 'exotic' aspects (female and Italian) have not permitted her to find the necessary support<sup>120</sup>.

In terms of ethnographic documentaries, there is a trans-historical continuity with the cultural legacy left by Ernest Hemingway; the San Fermín *encierros* in Pamplona continue to be of great interest. From the United States production *Running with the Bulls* (Bill Marpet, 1978) to the British *The Runner* (Esteban Uyarra, 2002), the fascination with running with fighting bulls also remains as a visual homage to Spain in numerous fiction films. From Hollywood, in *City*

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<sup>119</sup> Sánchez has expressed on numerous occasions that, in her opinion, the term *torero* is to be considered neuter, and therefore applied both to male and female bullfighters. She considers the (grammatically correct) declension *torera* a term historically connected with disdainful meanings. The Madrid bullfighter argues that, in the bullring, she has "balls" (*cojones*), associating bravery with the male anatomy (Pink 1997: 52).

<sup>120</sup> In spite of success in the bullring, foreign bullfighters continue to encounter difficulties in obtaining the same treatment as their Spanish counterparts. One of the most recent cases involves the Mexican bullfighter Joselito Adame who, in spite of being a leading figure, did not perform in Madrid in 2016 because he did not receive offers which his level might warrant. The rejection of Adame to bullfight in Madrid has been a controversial topic in specialist Spanish press, even with ironic comments about his arrogant pretensions (de los Reyes 2016, *online*).

*Slickers* (Ron Underwood, 1991) to Bollywood, as with *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* (Zoya Akhtar, 2011), there are numerous examples of scenes in which the protagonists take part in the experience of running with fighting bulls once they set foot in Spain. In the case of Joshua Jackson, the lead character in *Americano* (Kevin Noland, 2005), the fictional experience of the film, focused on a young American's adventures in Spain, sees him transformed into an almost professional bull-runner: the actor has run with bulls in Pamplona at least four times (Getlen 2015, *online*). The most cinematographic aspect of the *Sanfermines* as a *costumbrista* element is also found in cartoons: most recently, in *Family Guy* (Season 14, Episode 8 *Brokeback Swanson*, 2015), *The Simpsons* (Season 25, Episode 546 *You Don't Have to Live Like a Referee*, 2014), and in Disney's short production *Al rojo vivo* (David Wasson, 2015), in which Mickey Mouse appears as a runner.

Alongside the documentaries on Pamplona, similar anthropological perspectives can be found in productions dedicated to the figure of the bullfighter. Through a similar 'neutral' approach to bullfighting (though anthropocentric), these films focus on the physical perils and consequences of the dangerous profession. The Dutch *Romance de valentía* (Sonia Herman Dolz, 1993), dedicated to Enrique Ponce, and the North-American *Matador* (Stephen Higgins and Nina Gilden, 2008), about David Fandila 'El Fandi', are both productions which have enjoyed positive public reviews in film festivals (the first won the Golden Hugo in the Chicago Film Festival in 1994; the second participated in the SXSW Film Festival in 2008).

The Tribeca Film Festival has recently hosted the North-American production *Gored* (Ido Mizrahy, 2015), which focuses on, as the title suggests, gorings and injuries suffered by one of the most unfortunate bullfighters in contemporary tauromachy, Antonio Barrera. The camera follows the life of the man who daily faces the possibility of death, and who even admits "having lost respect for death". With its unusual use of music (preferring to accompany images with electronic music rather than the more traditional flamenco), and with indicative scenes of gorings and the death of the bull, the documentary symbolically mixes the blood of the bullfighter with that of the bull.

It is interesting to note how filmmakers who explore Spanish bullfighting and bullfighters are rarely Spanish themselves, except for Teo Escamilla (*Tú solo*,

1984). When it is the case, they are either filmmakers based abroad or have been funded by foreign producers. It would seem that the ethnographic documentaries about Spain must resort to exploiting the interest of foreign producers in order to source funding. In contrast to fiction, the documentary as a form of anthropological and social reflection does not find fertile ground in Spain.

With regard to Portugal and Peru, a similar dynamic can be observed: the visual depictions of traditional taurine *fiestas* are able to find financing outside the countries' borders. *Taking the Face: the Portuguese Bullfight* (Matthew Bishop and Juliusz Kossakowski, 2008), focusing on the variety of Portuguese taurine traditions, is a British production, whilst Elie Gardner and Oscar Durand, directors of *Yawar fiesta: la visita de un dios alado* (2015), a documentary on the unique Peruvian bullfight which includes the active presence of a condor, are supported by the Turkey-based production company IntiMedia. Both productions stand out for highlighting questions on the cultural identity of populations which, through specific taurine rituals as part of their traditions, attempt to maintain cohesion in spite of globalisation.

Both films include in their texts references to problematic disagreements with animal welfare's activists. In Portugal, regarding the town of Barrancos, the only one to continue killing bulls in its local festival, it is noted how within a few years the 'invasion' of protestors from abroad has become a security issue, questioning the methods by which community groups confront changes, developments, and alterations to their traditions. As also highlighted by the Portuguese sociologist Luis Capucha, the media and animal rights activists harassment of Barrancos has provoked, in reality, a hardened response of the population in defence of their *fiesta*, blocking for the moment any less-traumatic transformational process (Capucha 2002; 2003).

Gardner and Durand also introduce the cultural challenges represented by the right of an indigenous Peruvian community to uphold their customs, and the more complex intricacies between animal rights activists' protests and colonial issues. The traditional *Yawar fiesta* (*fiesta* of blood) is effectively a complex ritual which, in addition to relating man with animal, encompasses symbols related to the indigenous rebellion against the culture imposed by the colonising Spanish. In this ritual, the animal sacred to the natives – the condor – is tied to

the bull, a god-like animal for Iberian cultures, and with the spilling of the bull's blood following the condor's pecks, the Andean community undertakes a symbolic revenge upon the invaders. Indeed, as highlighted by the French researcher Antoinette Molinié (2003), this fusion of Andean and Spanish elements incorporates not only social and religious elements, but also political aspects. The documentary maintains a neutral perspective, giving a voice to the natives who defend their right to celebrate their customs, yet without censoring the particular accounts of a *fiesta* which includes animal suffering.

The Andean *fiesta* as a ritual of popular, indigenous re-appropriation against the Spanish *corrida* imposed by the colonisers is not a theme exclusively approached in documentaries. A notable precursor is *Yawar fiesta* (Luis Figueroa, 1979), filmic adaptation of José María Arguedas' novel of the same name, published in 1941 and considered one of the main examples of indigenous literature. In both the novel and the film, the vindication of celebrating a bullfight according to Andean traditions becomes an expression of political rebellion against Spanish colonisers who wish to impose 'more civilised' customs (Rama 1975: 12).

Debates on bullfighting as part of the cultural expression of a community, and as a sign of social peace are also found in the cinema of nations whose taurine traditions are little known. In some Slavonic areas, *koridas* or *bikijatas* (bull wrestling) are still celebrated. In these peculiar *fiestas*, two bulls face each other and there is no human participation. The Bosnian *korida* has taken on specific political meanings of ethnic reconciliation, particularly following the war in the former Yugoslavia (1991-1999) in which different ethnic and religious communities fought each other. It is therefore extremely interesting to highlight a newly awakened interest in these celebrations as a unifying element between Serbians and Croatians, Muslims and Christians.

The recent documentary *Korida* (2016)<sup>121</sup>, directed by Croatian Siniša Vidović and produced by Austrian production company Golden Girls FilmProduktion, is subtitled with the very indicative description: *Three Nations, Two Bulls, One Fight*. In fact, the camera follows the life of people involved in a

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<sup>121</sup> At the time of writing, the documentary has not been released. The textual analysis of *Korida* has been possible thanks to the production company Golden Girls who provided me a private screening ahead of the official premiere.

local *korida*, who proceed from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, in their struggle to maintain the celebration of their *fiesta* despite it being banned by the Authorities. Indeed, *koridas* are a sort of cultural refuge for rural communities who have endured the war; a common tradition which facilitates cohesion between ethnic groups (Celjanovici 2013, *online*).

The film presents how, through a common passion for raising bulls or organising bullfights, the inter-ethnic and inter-religious community has found a way to overcome their differences. In addition to that, the film highlights the role of bull-breeder Renata PranjkoVIC, known as 'the bullfight queen' (Sito-Sucic 2014, *online*), underlining her professional achievements in the traditional masculine world of the *koridas*.

In these particular *fiestas*, celebrated in rural areas between April and October, no bull is injured or killed (although at the end of its life, as with the bull in the Spanish *corrida*, it ends in the butchery), and the celebration finishes when one of the animals stops charging and flees the battle. *Korida*, although self-promoted as a bloodless *fiesta*, is not exempt from controversy. A previous fiction film produced in Croatia, *Sonja i bik* (Vlatka Vorkapić, 2012), in the form of a romantic comedy, pits the animal rights activist Sonja against the young Ante, son of the organisers of bullfights in a Dalmatian town.

In these times of cultural globalisation, perhaps the Austrian documentary *Korida* on Serbian bullfighting, with its inclusion of the principal themes of contemporary Spanish taurine cinema – gender, tradition and animal welfare politics – could provide an exemplary way to close this study, as a symbol of the place of tauromachy themes in the more global debate on the relationship between humans and animals, and its cinematic portrayal.

## CONCLUSIONS

In concluding this journey around the representation of tauromachy in Spanish films, with an eye both to its history and its place in the history of world cinema, it is now possible to share some reflections on the claims and the limits of an investigation with such a vast range.

Firstly, this study has attempted to reveal how bullfighting, as represented in films, shares a strong emphasis on questions linked to identity and the main cultural theories which have approached the symbolic universe of tauromachy. In addition to that, the analysis of the filmic texts confirms a general accordance to hegemonic discourses of the main cultural currents of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: ethnic-nationalist in the first decades of the Century; socio-political during Francoism, post-modernist in contemporary times.

The perspectivist approach towards other national cinemas has, on the one hand, allowed affinities and common narrative formulas to emerge; on the other hand, it has been helpful in emphasising Spanish distinctions and peculiarities. The inclusion of other themes, such as gender issues, stardom, and animal welfare, has added – though partially - some fresh perspectives to the study of a film genre and subgenre which still has several gaps to fill.

Secondly, the quantitative approach in the textual analysis of the filmic *corpus* seeks to strengthen the primacy of the texts over pre-determined theories and critical studies of film history. Indeed, the analysis has not only disclosed formulas and hegemonic discourses, but has also highlighted interesting and original connections with, and divergences from, the sources.

Furthermore, the applied methodology has disclosed a richness and variety in contents and themes which tend to overcome the many generalisations which have accompanied the cinematic genre (not all films about bullfighting are *españoladas*). Moreover, this thesis aims to open new fields of investigation into the connections between culture and power in cultural productions strongly related to 'national themes'.

Finally, the listing and the cataloguing of the films of *cine taurino*, and the function of the latter as a genre, subgenre or theme, highlights the importance of the filmic *corpus* itself as a relevant part of Spanish film history which has

involved filmmakers of popular cinema as well as cineastes *engagés*. Taurine themes, as we have seen, have been a notable element in the narratives not only of fiction films, documentaries and cartoons, but also of the so-called 'other cinemas': the newsreel, the amateur film and the home video.

Although this research has addressed the challenge of proposing an initial academic investigation into the cultural history of taurine cinema, filling a gap in Spanish film history, it is necessary to highlight the limits of such complex and vast studies. The search for the 'big picture' always brings with it the risk of relevant *omissis*. For this reason, this thesis should be considered a starting point for further investigations and systematisations. Various areas of research are already *in fieri*, and other are *in nuce*: elements and aspects which have found little space in this work, such as amateur films and newsreel, are part of a further project of research and publication.

This survey of the genesis, the evolution and the revolution of bullfighting images in films also aims to prompt the broadening of research to include other national cinemas – only briefly introduced here – as well as case studies on filmmakers who have been particularly productive in this genre (for instance, José Buchs and Rafael Gil), as well as on some films which have used tauromachy in a particularly distinctive way, as in the case of Antoni Ribas' *El primer torero porno* with its political connotations for Catalan and Spanish identity.

A further limitation in the scope of this thesis is the exclusion of another 'other cinema' which is of extreme interest for academia, not only for its own specific cultural impact, but also for its non-marginal place in the film market: pornography. Some short porn films of the 1920s analysed in the archives show interesting cultural affinities with mainstream cinema, in portraying elements linked to national identity, and paraphrasing, with the specificities of sexual language, cultural discourses related to Spanishness.

Because this thesis has been limited to mainstream cinema, and also for logistical and theoretical reasons, porn cinema has been excluded from the comparative analyses of genre and nation. The latter is a specialised field of research, which requires specific methodologies and competences; however, I hope that my study could be inspirational for specialists in this field.

This last reflection, therefore, opens up discussion of this thesis, in the hope of receiving comments, suggestions, confirmations and confutations, and of playing a worthwhile part in the academic debate on Spanish cinema and film genre, and of contributing to a renewed interest in the – very – Spanish theme of bullfighting in films.

## GLOSSARY

*Aficionado/s*: someone who is enthusiastic about bullfighting. See also *taurino/s*.

*Alternativa*: the corrida in which a *novillero* becomes a matador.

*Antitaurino*: someone who is against bullfighting.

*Banderilla*: see *corrida*.

*Banderillero*: see *corrida*.

*Bandolero*: Spanish bandit.

*Becerro/a*: young fighting bull or cow.

*Brindis*: the dedication of the death of the bull to a distinguished person, as a sign of friendship, love or admiration. Often the *brindis* is offered to the public.

*Campino/s*: Portuguese *vaquero*.

*Capote*: see *corrida*.

*Cavaleiro*: Portuguese *rejoneador*.

*Coleta*: ponytail, symbol of the matador.

*Copla*: Spanish folk song.

*Corrida*: a bullfight in which six fighting bulls aged four-five years are killed by three matadors. Each fight (*lidia*) lasts twenty minutes approximately and is divided in three parts (*tercios*). The first one is the *tercio de varas*, from the name of the lance used by a *picador* on horseback. In this *tercio*, the bullfighter uses the large yellow and pink cape, the *capote*. After the second *tercio*, acted by the *banderilleros*, who transfixes the back of the bull with sharp sticks (*banderillas*), comes the *tercio de muleta y muerte* (the third of the death). The matador tires the animal with the red cape (*muleta*) and finishes it off with his sword (*estoque*), giving it an *estocada* (thrust). This latter is called *el momento de la verdad* (the moment of truth).

*Costumbrismo*: artistic representation of (Spanish) everyday life and customs.

*Cuadrilla*: a matador's team.

*Divisa*: ribbon with the colours of *ganadería* attached to the bull with a harpoon before entering the bullring.

*Encierro*: running with bulls (i.e. Pamplona).

*Españolada*: a stereotyped and exaggerated representation of Spain in literature, music or fine arts, both in national and foreign productions.

*Esportáneo*: amateur or aspiring bullfighter who during a *corrida* jumps in the arena to bullfight.

*Estocada*: see *corrida*.

*Estoque*: see *corrida*.

*Ganadería*: fighting bull farm.

*Lidia*: see *corrida*.

*Maletilla/s*: aspiring bullfighter.

*Mayoral*: chief of the *vaqueros* (cowboys).

*Muleta*: see *corrida*.

*Matador*: bullfighter of bulls aged four-five years.

*Novillero*: bullfighter of bulls aged less than five years.

*Novillo*: young bull.

*Paseílllo*: parade of bullfighters across the arena before the start of the bullfight.

*Picador*: see *corrida*.

*Plaza de tienta*: the *ganadería*'s testing ring.

*Plaza de toros*: bullring.

*Rejoneador*: horseback bullfighter.

*Taurino/s: aficionado/s.*

*Tercio/s: see corrida.*

*Tienta: a test of bravery (bravura) of fighting bulls and cows.*

*Toreo cómico (or toreo bufo): comic bullfighting.*

*Torerillo/s: see maletilla.*

*Torero: bullfighter (including matadors, banderilleros, picadores, rejoneadores, etc.).*

*Toro bravo: fighting bull.*

*Tourada: Portuguese corrida.*

*Traje de luces: bullfighting outfit.*

*Vaquero: cowboy.*

*Vaquilla: fighting cow.*

*Zarzuela: Spanish operetta.*

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*Les yeux qui fascinent* (Louis Feuillade, 1916).

*Leyenda de feria* (Juan de Orduña, 1945).

*Los amores de un torero* (Juan Andreu Moragas, 1927).

*Los amores de un torero* (José Díaz Morales, 1945).

*Los apuros de un torero* (Anonymous, 1939).

*Los arlequines de seda y oro* (Ricardo de Baños, 1919).

*Los chicos* (Marco Ferreri, 1959).

*Los clarines del miedo* (Antonio Román, 1958).

*Los desafíos* (Claudio Guerín, José Luis Egea, and Víctor Erice, 1969).

*Los duendes de Andalucía* (Ana Mariscal, 1966).

*Los golfos* (Carlos Saura, 1959).

*Los mártires del arroyo* (Enrique Santos, 1924).

*Los olvidados* (Luis Buñuel, 1950).

*Los siete niños de Écija* (José María Codina, 1911).

*Lucy Goes to Mexico* (Jerry Thorpe, 1958), Episode 1 Season 2 of *The Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour* [TV].

*Magda* (Alberto Marro y Ricardo de Baños, 1913).

*Manolete* [fragment] (Abel Gance, 1944).

*Manolete* (Menno Meyjes, 2008).

*Maravilla del toreo* (Raphael J. Sevilla, 1942).

*Marcelino pan y vino* (Ladislao Vajda, 1955).

*María Antonia la Caramba* (Arturo Ruiz Castillo, 1950).

*Matador* (Pedro Almodóvar, 1986).

*Matador* (Stephen Higgins and Nina Gilden, 2008).

*Matador Magoo* (Pete Burness, 1957).

*Matador on the Road* (Alexis Morante, 2012).

*Max toréador* (Max Linder, 1913).

*Me quiero casar* (Julián Soler, 1967).

*Mexican Joyride* (Arthur Davis, 1947).

*Mi tío Jacinto* (Ladislao Vajda, 1956).

*Mickey's Rival* (Wilfred Jackson, 1936).

*Militona, o la tragedia de un torero* (Henry Vorins, 1922).

*Mirror Mirror* (Tarsem Singh, 2012).

*Mucho Mouse* (Hanna & Barbera, 1957).

*Mud and Sand* (Gilbert Pratt, 1922).

*Mujeres que torear* (Ignacio Rangel, 1940).

*Nadie hablará de nosotras cuando hayamos muerto* (Agustín Díaz Yanes, 1995).

*Ni sangre ni arena* (Alejandro Galindo, 1941).

*NODO-Noticiarios y documentales* (1943-1981).

*Nuevo en esta plaza* (Pedro Lazaga, 1966).

*Oro, sangre y sol* (Rafael Trujillo, 1925).

*Os toiros de Mary Foster* (Henrique Campos, 1972).

*Out in the Shadow into the Sun* (Kathryn Klassen, 2001).

*Pan, amor y Andalucía* (Javier Setó, 1958).

*Pandora and the Flying Dutchman* (Albert Lewin, 1951).

*Paquirri* (Salvador Calvo, 2009) [TV].

*Pasodoble* (José Luis García Sánchez, 1988).

*Pedrucho* (Henry Vorins, 1923).

*Pepe-Hillo* (José Buchs, 1928).

*Picador Porky* (Tex Avery, 1937).

*Pobres niños* (Henry Vorins, 1923).

*Quinito sangre torera* (J. Pérez Arroyo, 1947).

*Raza* (José Luis Sáenz de Heredia, 1942).

*Roma città aperta* (Roberto Rossellini, 1945).

*Romance de valentía* (Sonia Herman Dolz, 1993).

*Rosario la cortijera* (José Buchs, 1923).

*Rosario la cortijera* (León Artola, 1935).

*Running with the Bulls* (Bill Marpet, 1978).

*Salú* (Camilo Ayala, 2016).

*Salvatore Giuliano* (Francesco Rosi, 1962).

*Sang et lumières* (Georges Rouquier, 1953).

*Sangre en el ruedo* (Rafael Gil, 1968).

*Sangre y arena* (Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, 1917).

*Sangre y arena* (Javier Elorrieta, 1989).

*Santa* (Luis G. Peredo, 1918).

*Santa* (Antonio Moreno, 1932).

*Santa* (Norman Foster, 1943).

*Santa* (Emilio Gómez Muriel, 1969).

*Santa Fiesta* (Miguel Ángel Rolland, 2016).

*Seda, sangre y sol* (Fernando Rivero, 1941).

*Señor Droopy* (Tex Avery, 1949).

*She is the Matador* (Gemma Cubero and Celeste Carrasco, 2008).

*Snow White and the Huntsman* (Rupert Sanders, 2012).

*Sobrenatural* (Juan Figueroa, 2017).

*Sol e toiros* (Jose Buchs, 1949).

*Soleil et ombre* (Jeanne Roques 'Musidora', 1922).

*Solos los dos* (Luis Lucia, 1968).

*Sonja i bik* (Vlatka Vorkapić, 2012).

*Suspiros de España (y Portugal)* (José Luis García Sánchez, 1995).

*Take a bow* (1994) Madonna [music video], directed by Michael Hausmann.

*Taking the Face: the Portuguese Bullfight* (Matthew Bishop and Juliusz Kossakowski, 2008).

*Tarde de toros* (Carlos Rigalt, 1939).

*Tarde de toros* (Ladislao Vajda, 1956).

*That Lady* (Terence Young, 1955).

*The Book of Life* (Jorge R. Gutiérrez, 2014).

*The Brave one* (Irving Rapper, 1956).

*The Color Purple* (Steven Spielberg, 1985).

*The Devil is a Woman* (Josef von Sternberg, 1935).

*The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (Rex Ingram, 1921).

*The Hollywood Matador* (Alex Lovy, 1942).

*The Kid from Spain* (Leo McCarey, 1932).

*The Loves of Carmen* (Raoul Walsh, 1927).

*The Magnificent Matador* (Budd Boetticher, 1955).

*The Runner* (Esteban Uyarra, 2002).

*The Sheik* (George Melford, 1921).

*The Spaniard* (Raoul Walsh, 1925).

*The Terrible Toreador* (Walt Disney, 1929).

*The Timid Toreador* (Robert Clampett and Norman McCabe, 1940).

*Tiger Love* (George Melford, 1924).

*Toreadorable* (Seymour Kneitel, 1953).

*Torera* (Llorenç Soler, 1975).

*Torerillos 61* (Basilio Martín Patino, 1962).

*Torero* (Carlos Velo, 1956).

*Toreros para la historia* (Fernando Achúcarro, 1989) [TV].

*Toro* (Alberto Esteban, 2017) [TV].

*Toro Bravo* (Vittorio Cottafavi, 1960).

*Toros, amor y gloria* (Raúl de Anda, 1944).

*Toros en Valencia* (NO-DO, 1951).

*Toros y toreros* (Christian Anwander and Alberto Reig, 1948).

*Torrente 5* (Santiago Segura, 2014).

*Total Recall* (Paul Verhoeven, 1990).

*Tourada à Antigua Portuguesa* (Anonymous, 1932).

*Tranvía a la malvarrosa* (José Luis García Sánchez, 1997).

*Tú solo* (Teo Escamilla, 1984).

*Twilight saga* (Catherine Hardwicke et al, 2008-2012).

*Uma grande tourada à corda nas Doze Ribeiras – Ilha Terceira dos Açores* (António Luís Lourenço da Costa, 1929).

*Un caballero andaluz* (Luis Lucia, 1954).

*Un caballero famoso* (José Buchs, 1942).

*Un día de toros* (Juan Pallejá, 1934).

*Un torero para la historia* (José María Zabalza, 1974).

*Un toro me llama* (Miguel Ángel Mendoza, 1968).

*Valiente* (Luis Marquina, 1964).

*Victòria* (Antoni Ribas, 1983).

*Victòria 2* (Antoni Ribas, 1983).

*Victòria 3* (Antoni Ribas, 1984).

*Viridiana* (Luis Buñuel, 1961).

*Volver a empezar* (José Luis Garci, 1983).

*Yawar fiesta* (Luis Figueroa, 1979).

*Yawar fiesta: la visita de un dios alado* (Elie Gardner and Oscar Durand, 2015).

*Yo he visto a la muerte* (José María Forqué, 1967).

*You'll see* (1995) Madonna [music video], directed by Michael Hausmann.

*You Don't Have to Live Like a Referee* (2014) Episode 546, Season 25 of *The Simpsons* [TV].

*Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* (Zoya Akhtar, 2011).

## EXTENDED FILMOGRAPHY\*

\*This filmography lists only films with contents and themes linked to bullfighting, and includes the titles which have not been quoted in the thesis.

### LOCATION:

**C = Fimoteca de Andalucía (Cordoba)**

**B = Fimoteca Catalana (Barcelona)**

**M = Fimoteca Española (Madrid)**

**CM = Cineteca Mexicana (Mexico City)**

**L = Cinemateca Portuguesa (Lisbon)**

**PC/O = Personal copy /Other**

**U/L = Unknown/Lost**

**UNAM = Fimoteca UNAM (Mexico City)**

**V = Fimoteca Valenciana (Valencia)**

Year	Spain (incl. co-productions)	World Cinema
1896		<i>Arrivée des toradors</i> (Alexandre Promio, FR) Lumière Spanish Catalogue no. 259 - <b>M</b>
		<i>Corrida de touros em Campo Pequeno</i> (Henry Short, UK) – <b>U/L</b>
		<i>Bullfight</i> (Anonymous, U.S.A.) Edison Mexican Catalogue - <b>UNAM</b>
1898	<i>Corrida de toros a la Plaça Vella de Saragossa</i> (Eduardo Jimeno) – <b>B</b>	<i>Espagne: école de tauromachie</i> (Anonymous, FR) Lumière Spanish Catalogue no. 861 - <b>M</b> .
		<i>Espagne: course de taureaux</i> (Anonymous, FR) Lumière Spanish Catalogue no. 434-435 - <b>M</b>
		<i>Bull fight no.1</i> (Anonymous, U.S.A.) Edison Mexican Catalogue - <b>UNAM</b>
1902		<i>Fêtes du couronnement de S. M. Alphonse XIII. Course royale de taureaux</i> (Antonio Escobar, FR). Gaumont catalogue - <b>M</b>
1903		<i>Course de taureaux aux arènes de Barcelone</i> (Segundo de Chomón, FR). Pathé Frères catalogue – <b>U/L</b>
		<i>The Great Bullfight</i> (Anonymous,

		U.S.A.) Edison Mexican Catalogue - <b>UNAM</b>
1905		<i>La malagueña et le torero</i> (Alice Guy Blaché, FR) - <b>V</b>
1906		<i>Course de taureaux à Nîmes</i> (Alice Guy Blaché, FR) – <b>U/L</b>
1908	<i>Corrida de toros con Ricardo Torres Bombita</i> (Fructuoso Gelabert). <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>Corrida de toros con asistencia de los reyes</i> (Ricardo de Baños) <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>Tragedia torera</i> (Narciso Cuyás) – <b>U/L</b>	
1910	<i>La lucha por la divisa</i> (José María Codina) - <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>Benítez quiere ser torero</i> (Ángel García Cardona) - <b>V</b>	
1911	<i>La historia del toro de lidia</i> (Enrique Blanco) - <b>U/L</b>	
1912	<i>La barrera número 13</i> (José María Codina) – <b>V</b> (fragment)	
1913	<i>Magda</i> (Alberto Marro y Ricardo de Baños) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>Max toréador</i> (Max Linder, FR) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Toros de Villalón para Luis Frey Castro, José Gómez 'Joselito' y José Garote Hernández 'Limeño'</i> (Anonymous) - <b>C</b>	
1914	<i>Corrida de toros en Valencia con Gallo, Paco Madrid, Flores, Belmonte</i> (Anonymous) - <b>V</b>	<i>Les fiancées de Seville</i> (Louis Feuillade, FR) - <b>U/L</b>
	<i>6 toros por Gallito 6</i> (Anonymous) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>Despedida de Bombita</i> (Enrique Blanco) - <b>C</b>	
1915	<i>Clarita y Peladilla van a los toros</i> (Benito Perojo) - <b>M</b>	<i>Carmen</i> (Cecil B. DeMille, U.S.A.) - <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>La novillada cómica</i> (Anonymous) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>Charlie Chaplin's Burlesque of Carmen</i> (Charles Chaplin, U.S.A) <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>La otra Carmen</i> (José de Togores) <b>U/L</b>	<i>Carmen</i> (Raoul Walsh, U.S.A.) – <b>U/L</b>
1916		<i>Les yeux qui fascinent</i> (Louis Feuillade, FR) - <b>PC/O</b>
1917	<i>Sangre y arena</i> (Vicente Blasco Ibáñez) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>Florentino Ballesteros</i> (Antonio de Padua Tramullas) - <b>C</b>	
	<i>El toro fenómeno</i> (Fernando	

	Marco) – <b>U/L</b>	
1918	<i>La España trágica</i> (Rafael Salvador) – <b>M</b> (fragment)	<i>Carmen</i> (Ernest Lubitsch, DE) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Santa</i> (Luis G. Peredo, MEX) – <b>UNAM</b>
1919	<i>Los arlequines de seda y oro</i> (Ricardo de Baños) - <b>V</b>	
1920	<i>Cogida y muerte de “Gallito”, o la tragedia de Talavera</i> (Fructuoso Gelabert and Rafael Salvador) – <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>Joselito, o la vida y muerte de un matador</i> (José Gaspar) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>La vida de Joselito y su muerte</i> (Anonymous) – <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>La muerte de Joselito</i> (Juan Oliver, 1920) – <b>U/L</b>	
1921	<i>Corazón de España, o el triunfo de Granero</i> (Rafael Salvador) - <b>U/L</b>	
1922	<i>Militona, o la tragedia de un torero</i> (Henry Vorins) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>Soleil et ombre</i> (Jeanne Roques ‘Musidora’ – FR) – <b>V</b>
	<i>Gloria que mata</i> (Rafael Salvador) - <b>V</b>	<i>Blood and Sand</i> (Fred Niblo, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Mud and Sand</i> (Gilbert Pratt, U.S.A.) - <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Puss in Boots</i> (Walt Disney, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
1923	<i>Rosario la cortijera</i> (José Buchs) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>Flor de España</i> (Helena Cortesina) - <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>Pedrucho</i> (Henry Vorins) - <b>U/L</b>	
1924	<i>Corrida de toros en Castelló</i> (Joan Andreu Moragas) - <b>V</b>	<i>La terre des taureaux</i> (Jeanne Roques ‘Musidora’, FR) – <b>M</b>
	<i>Los mártires del arroyo</i> (Enrique Santos) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>Bull and Sand</i> (Del Lord, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Bandolero</i> (Tom Terriss, U.S.A.) – <b>U/L</b>
1925	<i>Currito de la Cruz</i> (Alejandro Pérez Lugín) - <b>V</b>	<i>The Spaniard</i> (Raoul Walsh, U.S.A.)- <b>U/L</b>
	<i>El niño de las monjas</i> (José Calvache ‘Walken’) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>Oro, sangre y sol</i> (Rafael Trujillo, MEX) – <b>U/L</b>
	<i>En las entrañas de Madrid</i> (Rafael Salvador) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>Alice, the toreador</i> (Walt Disney, U.S.A.) – <b>V</b>
	<i>La medalla del torero</i> (José Buchs) – <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>La hija del corregidor</i> (José Buchs) – <b>M</b>	

1926	<i>Frivolinas</i> (Arturo Carballo) - <b>V</b>	<i>Carmen</i> (Jacques Feyder, FR) – <b>M</b>
	<i>El patio de los naranjos</i> (Guillermo Hernández Mir) - <b>C</b>	
	<i>La malcasada</i> (Francisco Gómez Hidalgo) - <b>M</b>	
1927	<i>El capote de paseo</i> (Carlos de Arpe) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>The Loves of Carmen</i> Raoul Walsh, U.S.A.) – <b>U/L</b>
	<i>Los amores de un torero</i> (Juan Andreu Moragas) <b>U/L</b>	<i>El relicario</i> (Miguel Contreras Torres, MEX) – <b>M</b> (fragment)
		<i>El tren fantasma</i> (Gabriel García Moreno, MEX) - <b>CM</b>
1928	<i>¡Viva Madrid, que es mi pueblo!</i> (Fernando Delgado) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>Pepe-Hillo</i> (José Buchs) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>Fiesta Goyesca en Antequera</i> (José García Berdoy) - <b>C</b>	
	<i>La Sierra de Aracena</i> (Carlos Emilio Nazarí) - <b>C</b>	
1929	<i>El suceso de anoche</i> (León Artola) - <b>M</b>	<i>The Terrible Toreador</i> (Walt Disney, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>El Charlot español torero</i> (José 'Calvache' Walken) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>Uma grande tourada à corda nas Doze Ribeiras – Ilha Terceira dos Açores</i> (António Luís Lourenço da Costa, PT) - <b>L</b>
	<i>Fútbol, amor y toros</i> (Florián Rey) – <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>Exposició Universal de Barcelona – Plaça de toros Les Arenes – Solsona i Roca</i> (Amateur) - <b>B</b>	
1930	<i>El embrujo de Sevilla</i> (Benito Perojo) – <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>La bodega</i> (Benito Perojo) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>Sevilla. Corrida de toros</i> (Amateur) - <b>B</b>	
1931		<i>A Severa</i> (José Leitão de Barros, PT) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>¡Qué viva México!</i> (Sergei Eisenstein – U.S.A.-MEX) - <b>CM</b>
1932	<i>El sabor de la gloria</i> (Fernando Roldán) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>Le picador</i> (Lucien Jaquelux, FR) – <b>U/L</b>
	<i>Viatge a Andalusia – Ramón Coll Inglada</i> (Amateur) - <b>B</b>	<i>Campinos do Ribatejo</i> (António Luís Lopes, PT) – <b>U/L</b>
	<i>Toros (Rafael 'El Gallo') – Andreu de Klein</i> (Amateur) - <b>B</b>	<i>Santa</i> (Antonio Moreno, MEX) - <b>CM</b>
		<i>Tourada à Antigua Portuguesa</i> (Anonymous, PT-UK) - <b>L</b>
		<i>The Kid from Spain</i> (Leo McCarey, U.S.A.) – <b>PC</b>

		<i>Mano a mano</i> (Arcady Boytler, MEX) – <b>UNAM</b>
1933	<i>El relicario</i> (Ricardo de Baños) - <b>M</b>	<i>I Eats My Spinach</i> (Dave Fleisher, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Del prado a la arena</i> (Juan Belmonte) - <b>U/L</b>	<i>Carmen</i> (Lotte Reiniger, DE) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Cursa de braus a la Monumental – Calonge i Forés</i> (Amateur) - <b>B</b>	
1934	<i>El niño de las coles</i> (José Gaspar) – <b>L/U</b>	<i>Gado Bravo</i> (António Lopes Ribeiro, PT) – <b>L</b>
	<i>Un día de toros</i> (Juan Pallejá) – <b>L/U</b>	
1935	<i>Rosario la cortijera</i> (León Artola) - <b>V</b>	<i>The Devil is a Woman</i> (Josef von Sternberg, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>El niño de las monjas</i> (José Buchs) - <b>M</b>	<i>Más allá de la muerte</i> (Ramón Peón, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
	<i>El gato montés</i> (Rosario Pi) - <b>C</b>	
1936	<i>Currito de la Cruz</i> (Fernando Delgado) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>¡Ora, Ponciano!</i> (Gabriel Soria, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
		<i>Mickey's Rival</i> (Wilfred Jackson, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>El calvario de una esposa</i> (Juan Orol, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
1937	<i>España al día: Toros – Charlotada</i> (Laya Films-Film Popular) - <b>B</b>	<i>Picador Porky</i> (Tex Avery, U.S.A) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Así es mi tierra</i> (Arcady Boytler, MEX) - <b>CM</b>
1938	<i>Carmen, la de Triana</i> (Florián Rey) - <b>V</b>	<i>Bulldozing the Bull</i> (Dave Fleisher, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>El torero herido</i> (Ricardo de Baños) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>Ferdinand, the Bull</i> (Walt Disney, U.S.A.) - <b>PC/O.</b>
	<i>Amanecer sobre España</i> (Louis Franck) - <b>M</b>	<i>Juan sin miedo</i> (Juan José Segura, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
		<i>Un domingo de la tarde</i> (Rafael E. Portas, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
		<i>Allá en el rancho chico</i> (René Cardona, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
		<i>Tourada em casa dos Borges de Sousa</i> (Amateur, PT) - <b>L</b>
1939	<i>Tarde de toros</i> (Carlos Rigalt) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>Mujeres y toros</i> (Juan José Segura, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
	<i>Los apuros de un torero</i> (Anonymous) – <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>La Corrida de la Victoria</i> (Rafael Gil) – <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>La Marquesona</i> (Eusebio Fernández Ardavín) - <b>C</b>	
1940	<i>The Bull-fight</i> - P.J. Smith, Isaac	<i>Mujeres que torear</i> (Ignacio Rangel,

	<i>y Paco</i> (Amateur) - <b>B</b>	MEX) – <b>U/L</b>
		<i>Cantinflas torero</i> (Fernando A. Rivero, MEX) - <b>CM</b>
		<i>The Timid Toreador</i> (Robert Clampett and Norman McCabe, USA) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Time in the Sun</i> (Marie Seton and Paul Burnford, U.S.A.) - <b>UNAM</b>
1941	<i>Civilón en la Sierra Morena</i> (Escobar) - <b>M</b>	<i>Blood and Sand</i> (Rouben Mamoulian, U.S.A.) - <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Ni sangre ni arena</i> (Alejandro Galindo, MEX) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Seda, sangre y sol</i> (Fernando Rivero, MEX) - <b>V</b>
		<i>Dos mexicanos en Sevilla</i> (Carlos Orellana) - <b>UNAM</b>
1942	<i>Un caballero famoso</i> (José Buchs) - <b>V</b>	<i>The Hollywood Matador</i> (Alex Lovy, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Maravilla del toreo</i> (Raphael J. Sevilla, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
		<i>Póvoa do Varzim</i> (Leitão de Barros, PT) - <b>L</b>
1943	<i>La maja del capote</i> (Fernando Delgado) - <b>M</b>	<i>Santa</i> (Norman Foster, MEX) - <b>CM</b>
		<i>Palillo Vargas Heredia</i> (Carlos Vejar Jr., MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
	<i>Ídolos</i> (Florián Rey) – <b>C</b>	
1944	<i>Manolete</i> (Abel Gance) – <b>M</b> (fragment)	<i>El niño de las monjas</i> (Julio Villareal, MEX) – <b>U/L</b>
		<i>Toros, amor y gloria</i> (Raúl de Anda, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
		<i>Arlequines de oro</i> (Alfonso Patiño Gómez, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
1945	<i>Leyenda de feria</i> (Juan de Orduña) - <b>M</b>	<i>Los amores de un torero</i> (José Díaz Morales, MEX) - <b>M</b>
	<i>Garabatos Manolete</i> (Enrique Diban) - <b>M</b>	<i>Manolete monstruo</i> (Alberto Santander, MEX) - <b>M</b>
	<i>Plaça de toros de Las Arenas</i> (Manolete, Arruza, Pepín Martín Vázquez) – Manuel Oller Costa (Amateur) - <b>B</b>	<i>The Bullfighters</i> (Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy) (Mal St. Clair, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
1946	<i>El traje de luces</i> (Edgar Neville) - <b>M</b>	<i>Um homem do Ribatejo</i> (Henrique Campos, PT) - <b>L</b>
	<i>El centauro</i> (Antonio Guzmán Merino) – <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>La beneficencia y su festejo</i> (NO-DO) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>Toros a la Monumental</i> – Familiares Gorina Bayés	

	(Amateur) - <b>B</b>	
	<i>Lluvia en el ruedo</i> (Augusto Butler) - <b>V</b>	
1947	<i>Quinito sangre torera</i> (J. Pérez Arroyo) - <b>M</b>	<i>Fiesta</i> (Richard Thorpe, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Mexican Joyride</i> (Arthur Davis, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
1948	<i>Toros y toreros</i> (Christian Anwander y Alberto Reig) - <b>M</b>	<i>Jalisco canta en Sevilla</i> (Fernando de Fuentes, MEX) - <b>CM</b>
	<i>¡Olé torero!</i> (Benito Perojo) - <b>C</b>	<i>El precio de la gloria</i> (Jaime Salvador, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
	<i>La fiesta sigue</i> (Enrique Gómez) - <b>M</b>	<i>The Loves of Carmen</i> (Charles Vidor, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Brindis a Manolete</i> (Florián Rey) - <b>C</b>	<i>Fifa e arena</i> (Mario Mattioli, ITA) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Campo bravo</i> (Pedro Lazaga) – <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>El toreo y sus glorias</i> (NO-DO) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>Rodeo – Tossa de Mar</i> (Ava Gardner) - <i>Andreu de Klein</i> (Amateur) - <b>B</b>	
	<i>Manolete. Su penúltima corrida en Barcelona pocos días antes de su muerte</i> – <i>Andreu de Klein</i> (Amateur) - <b>B</b>	
1949	<i>Currito de la Cruz</i> (Luis Lucia) – <b>C</b>	<i>Sol e toiros</i> (Jose Buchs, 1949) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Recuerdo a Manolete</i> (José H. Gan) - <b>M</b>	<i>Señor Droopy</i> (Tex Avery, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>El torero</i> (Marc Degastine) - <b>M</b>	<i>Sangre torera</i> (Joaquín Pardavé, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
	<i>Aprendiz de torero</i> (Marc Degastine) - <b>M</b>	<i>Una dama torera</i> (Miguel Morayta, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
		<i>Audácias e touros</i> (F. Sousa Nieves, PT) - <b>L</b>
		<i>Ribatejo</i> (Henrique Campos, PT) - <b>L</b>
1950	<i>María Antonia la Caramba</i> (Arturo Ruiz Castillo) - <b>M</b>	<i>Los olvidados</i> (Luis Buñuel, MEX) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>El último caballo</i> (Edgar Neville) - <b>V</b>	<i>Moita em festa</i> (F. Sousa Nieves, PT) - <b>L</b>
	<i>El sueño de Andalucía</i> (Luis Lucia) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>La mujer, el torero y el toro</i> (Fernando Butragueño) - <b>M</b>	
1951	<i>Toros en Valencia</i> (NO-DO) - <b>M</b>	<i>Pandora and the Flying Dutchman</i> (Albert Lewin, UK) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Tercio de quites</i> (Emilio Gómez Muriel) - <b>C</b>	<i>The Bullfighter and the Lady</i> (Budd Boetticher, U.S.A) - <b>PC/O</b>

		<i>La course de taureaux</i> (Pierre Braunberger, FR) - <b>UNAM</b>
1952	<i>Duende y misterio del flamenco</i> (Edgar Neville) - <b>V</b>	<i>Sangre en el ruedo</i> (Miguel Contreras Torres, MEX) - <b>UNAM</b>
	<i>La mujer, el torero y el toro</i> (Fernando Butragueño, 1950) – <b>U/L</b>	<i>Um dia na póvoa do Varzim</i> (Gentil Marques, PT) - <b>L</b>
	<i>El sueño de Andalucía</i> (Luis Lucia) - <b>V</b>	<i>Portugal, Umberkantes Land am Meer</i> (Alfred Ehrhardt, DE) - <b>L</b>
	<i>La hermana San Sulpicio</i> (Luis Lucia) - <b>V</b>	
1953	<i>Noches andaluzas</i> (M. Cloche and R. Blanco) - <b>M</b>	<i>Sang et lumières</i> (Georges Rouquier, FR) – <b>U/L</b>
	<i>Fuego en la sangre</i> (Ignacio F. Iquino) - <b>M</b>	<i>Toreadorable</i> (Seymour Kneitel, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Bully for Bugs</i> (Chuck Jones, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>For Whom the Bulls Toil</i> (Jack Kinney, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Despedida de Manoel Dos Santos</i> (Amateur, PT) – <b>L</b>
		<i>La carrosse d'or</i> (Jean Renoir, FR) – <b>PC/O</b>
1954	<i>Un caballero andaluz</i> (Luis Lucia) – <b>PC/O</b>	<i>Châteaux en Espagne</i> (René Wheeler, FR) – <b>M</b>
	<i>Brindis al cielo</i> (José Buchs) - <b>M</b>	<i>Camelia</i> (Roberto Gavaldón, MEX) – <b>CM</b>
	<i>Amor y toros</i> (Felipe Fernansuar) - <b>M</b>	
1955		<i>The Magnificent Matador</i> (Budd Boetticher, U.S.A) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Bull Fright</i> (Seymour Kneitel, U.S.A) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Espinho: praia da Saudade</i> (Ricardo Malheiro, PT) – <b>L</b>
		<i>Zapatillas verdes</i> (René Cardona, MEX) – <b>PC/O</b>
1956	<i>Mi tío Jacinto</i> (Ladislao Vajda) – <b>PC/O</b>	<i>Torero</i> (Carlos Velo, MEX) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Dos novias para un torero</i> (Antonio Román) - <b>M</b>	<i>The Brave one</i> (Irving Rapper, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Tarde de toros</i> (Ladislao Vajda) – <b>C</b>	<i>El gato sin botas</i> (Fernando Cortés, MEX) – <b>CM</b>
	<i>Escuela de periodismo</i> (Jesús Pascual, 1956) - <b>M</b>	<i>Around the World in 80 Days</i> (Michael Anderson, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>La gata</i> (Margarita Alexandre and Rafael María Torrecilla) - <b>M</b>	
1957	<i>El último cuplé</i> (Juan de Orduña) – <b>V</b>	<i>Matador Magoo</i> (Pete Burness, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>

		<i>Mucho Mouse</i> (Hanna & Barbera, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>The Sun also Rises</i> (Henry King, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
1958	<i>El niño de las monjas</i> (Ignacio F. Iquino) - <b>V</b>	<i>Les bijoutiers du claire de lune</i> (Roger Vadim, FR) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Pan, amor y Andalucía</i> (Javier Setó) - <b>V</b>	<i>Sangue toureiro</i> (Augusto Fraga, PT) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>La tirana</i> (Juan de Orduña) - <b>V</b>	<i>La femme et le pantin</i> (Julien Duvivier, FR) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>La novia de Juan Lucero</i> (Santos Alcocer) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>Los clarines del miedo</i> (Antonio Román) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>Otros tiempos</i> (Carlos Fernández Cuenca) - <b>V</b>	
1959	<i>Carmen la de Ronda</i> (Tulio Demicheli) – <b>PC/O</b>	<i>La fièvre monte à El Pao</i> (Luis Buñuel, FR-MEX) – <b>CM</b>
	<i>El Litri y su sombra</i> (Rafael Gil) – <b>PC/O</b>	<i>El toro negro</i> (Benito Alarzaki, MEX) – <b>CM</b>
	<i>El traje de oro</i> (Julio Coll) - <b>M</b>	<i>Acapulqueña</i> (Ramón Pereda, MEX) – <b>CM</b>
	<i>Los golfos</i> (Carlos Saura) – <b>PC/O</b>	<i>Tommy the Toreador</i> (John Paddy Carstairs, UK) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Los chicos</i> (Marco Ferreri) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>El ambrientito de Cuenca (La ironía del dinero)</i> (Edgar Neville) - <b>V</b>	
1960		<i>Toro Bravo</i> (Vittorio Cottafavi, ITA) – <b>M</b>
		<i>Pepe</i> (George Sydney, U.S.A.-MEX) – <b>UNAM</b>
1961	<i>A las cinco de la tarde</i> (Juan Antonio Bardem) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>Cursa de toros a Sant Feliu de Guíxols – Josep Roig Trinxant (Amateur)</i> - <b>B</b>	
1962	<i>El balcón de la luna</i> (Luis Saslavsky, 1962) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>Aprendiendo a morir</i> (Pedro Lazaga) – <b>PC/O</b>	
	<i>Torerillos 61</i> (Basilio Martín Patino) – <b>V</b>	
	<i>El toro, vida y muerte</i> (Jaime, Camino) - <b>B</b>	
	<i>La alternativa</i> (José María Nuñez) - <b>M</b>	
1963	<i>La becerrada</i> (José María Forqué) - <b>C</b>	

	<i>Chantaje a un torero</i> (Rafael Gil) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>Los elegidos</i> (Tulio Demicheli) - <b>M</b>	
1964	<i>El espontáneo</i> (Jordi Grau) - <b>PC/O</b>	<i>El Padrecito</i> (Miguel M. Delgado, MEX) - <b>CM</b>
	<i>Valiente</i> (Luis Marquina) - <b>V</b>	<i>México de mi corazón (Dos mexicanas en México)</i> (Miguel M. Delgado, MEX) - <b>CM</b>
1965	<i>Currito de la Cruz</i> (Rafael Gil) - <b>C</b>	<i>Bully for Pink</i> (Hawley Pratt, U.S.A.) - <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Cabriola</i> (Mel Ferrer) - <b>M</b>	<i>A última pega</i> (Costantino Esteves) - <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>El momento de la verdad</i> (Francesco Rosi) - <b>C</b>	
	<i>Puente de coplas</i> (Santos Alcocer) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>La corrida</i> (Pedro Lazaga) - <b>M</b>	
1966	<i>Fray torero</i> (José Luis Sáenz de Heredia) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>Nuevo en esta plaza</i> (Pedro Lazaga) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>Jugando a morir</i> (José H. Gan) - <b>U/L</b>	
	<i>52 Domingos</i> (Llorenç Soler) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>Juguetes Rotos</i> (Manuel Summers) - <b>V</b>	
	<i>De barro y oro</i> (Joaquín Bollo Muro) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>Los duendes de Andalucía</i> (Ana Mariscal) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>Clarines y campanas</i> (Ramón Torrado) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>Una señora estupenda</i> (Eugenio Martín) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>En Andalucía nació el amor</i> (Enrique López Eguiluz) - <b>M</b>	
1967	<i>Yo he visto a la muerte</i> (José María Forqué) - <b>PC/O</b>	<i>Me quiero casar</i> (Julián Soler, MEX) - <b>CM</b>
	<i>Las cicatrices</i> (Pedro Lazaga) - <b>V</b>	<i>The Bobo</i> (Robert Parrish, UK) - <b>PC/O</b>
1968	<i>Solos los dos</i> (Luis Lucia) - <b>PC/O</b>	<i>Un toro me llama</i> (Miguel Ángel Mendoza, MEX) - <b>CM</b>
	<i>Sangre en el ruedo</i> (Rafael Gil) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>El paseíllo</i> (Ana Mariscal) - <b>M</b>	
	<i>Homenatge a Salvador Dalí</i> (Josep Roig Trinxant) - <b>B</b>	
1969	<i>Los desafíos</i> (Claudio Guerín,	<i>Santa</i> (Emilio Gómez Muriel - MEX)

	José Luis Egea, and Víctor Erice) – <b>U/L</b>	- <b>UNAM</b>
	<i>Vista, suerte y al toro</i> (Adriano del Valle – NO-DO) - <b>M</b>	<i>La vie, l'amour, la mort</i> (Claude Lelouch, FR) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Españolear</i> (Jaime Jesús Beleájar) - <b>M</b>	
1970	<i>El relicario</i> (Rafael Gil) - <b>C</b>	
	<i>Bienvenidos a España</i> (Francisco Summers) - <b>M</b>	
1972	<i>Antología taurina</i> (NO-DO) - <b>M</b>	<i>Os toiros de Mary Foster</i> (Henrique Campos, PT) – <b>L</b>
		<i>Arruza</i> (Budd Boetticher, U.S.A) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>El caballo torero</i> (Alfredo Zacarías, MEX) – <b>UNAM</b>
1973	<i>Casa Flora</i> (Ramón Fernández, 1973) - <b>M</b>	
1974	<i>Un torero para la historia</i> (José María Zabalza) – <b>U/L</b>	
1975	<i>La trastienda</i> (Jordi Grau) – <b>PC/O</b>	<i>La presidenta municipal</i> (Fernando Cortés, MEX) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Torera</i> (Llorenç Soler) - <b>B</b>	<i>Karate Bullfighter</i> (Kazuhiko Yamaguchi, JP) – <b>PC/O</b>
1976	<i>Carmen</i> (Julio Diamante) – <b>V</b>	
1977	<i>El monosabio</i> (Ray Rivas) – <b>PC/O</b>	
1978		<i>Running with the Bulls</i> (Bill Marpet, U.S.A.) – <b>U/L</b>
1979		<i>Yawar fiesta</i> (Luis Figueroa, PE) – <b>PC/O</b>
1980		<i>Herbie Goes Bananas</i> (Vincent J. McEveety, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
1983	<i>Carmen</i> (Carlos Saura) – <b>PC/O</b>	<i>Zelig</i> (Woody Allen, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
1984	<i>Tú solo</i> (Teo Escamilla) - <b>V</b>	<i>Carmen</i> (Francesco Rosi, ITA) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Cadafal</i> (Joan Ramón Anguera) - <b>B</b>	<i>Bolero</i> (John Derek, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Under the Volcano</i> (John Huston, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
1985	<i>La vaquilla</i> (Luis García Berlanga) – <b>PC/O</b>	
	<i>El primer torero porno</i> (Antoni Ribas) - <b>B</b>	
1986	<i>Matador</i> (Pedro Almodovar) – <b>PC/O</b>	
1988	<i>Pasodoble</i> (José Luis García Sánchez) - <b>V</b>	
1989	<i>Sangre y arena</i> (Javier Elorrieta) - <b>PC/O</b>	

1992	<i>Jamón, jamón</i> (Bigas Luna) – <b>PC/O</b>	
1993		<i>Romance de valentía</i> (Sonia Herman Dolz, NL) – <b>PC/O</b>
1994	<i>Justino, un asesino de la tercera edad</i> (Luis Guridi and Santiago Aguilar) - <b>V</b>	
1995	<i>Suspiros de España (y Portugal)</i> (José Luis García Sánchez) – <b>PC/O</b>	
	<i>Belmonte</i> (Juan Sebastián Bollaín) – <b>PC/O</b>	
	<i>Nadie hablará de nosotras cuando hayamos muerto</i> (Agustín Díaz Yanes) – <b>PC/O</b>	
1998		<i>Sergey Eyzenshteyn Meksikanskaya fantasiya</i> (Oleg Kovalov, RUS) – <b>CM</b>
2001		<i>Out in the Shadow into the Sun</i> (Kathryn Klassen, CAN) – <b>PC/O</b>
2002	<i>Hable con ella</i> (Pedro Almodóvar) – <b>PC/O</b>	<i>The Runner</i> (Esteban Uyarra, UK) – <b>PC/O</b>
2003	<i>Carmen</i> (Vicente Aranda) – <b>PC/O</b>	
		<i>Carnage</i> (Delphine Gleize, FR) – <b>PC/O</b>
2006		<i>I skuggan av solen</i> (Susanna Edwards, SWE) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>The matador</i> (Richard Shepard, U.S.A.) <b>PC/O</b>
2007	<i>Animal</i> (Ángel Mora) – <b>PC/O</b>	
2008	<i>El brau blau</i> (Daniel V. Villamediana) – <b>PC/O</b>	<i>Manolete</i> (Menno Meyjes, UK-USA) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>She is the Matador</i> (Gemma Cubero and Celeste Carrasco, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Matador</i> (Stephen Higgins and Nina Gilden, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Taking the Face: the Portuguese Bullfight</i> (Matthew Bishop and Juliusz Kossakowski, UK) – <b>PC/O</b>
2011	<i>El torero de los Andes</i> (Ignasi Rodríguez) – <b>PC/O</b>	
2012	<i>La soledad del triunfo</i> (Álvaro de Armiñán) – <b>PC/O</b>	<i>Sonja i bik</i> (Vlatka Vorkapić, HR) – <b>PC/O</b>
	<i>Matador on the Road</i> (Alexis Morante) – <b>PC/O</b>	
	<i>Blancanieves</i> (Pablo Berger) – <b>PC/O</b>	
2014		<i>The Book of Life</i> (Jorge R. Gutiérrez,

		MEX) – <b>PC/O</b>
2015		<i>Al rojo vivo</i> (Dave Wasson, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Gored</i> (Ido Mizrahy, U.S.A.) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Yawar fiesta: la visita de un dios alado</i> (Elie Gardner and Oscar Durand, TR) – <b>PC/O</b>
2016	<i>Santa Fiesta</i> (Miguel Ángel Rolland) – <b>PC/O</b>	<i>Salú</i> (Camilo Ayala, COL) – <b>PC/O</b>
		<i>Korida</i> (Siniša Vidović, AT ) – <b>PC/O</b>
2017	<i>Sobrenatural</i> (Juan Figueroa) – <b>PC/O</b>	