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Shifting modern identities in Madrid's recent urban planning, architecture and narrative

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Compared to some major urban centers in Spain that have successfully participated in the fierce competition over cultural capital since the 1980s (such as Barcelona, Seville, or Bilbao), Madrid seems not so much to look outward to the international community to sell its image but to more reflectively construct and critique life, on the periphery of what was previously the center of an extremely centralized state. The power to build and shape Madrid during the 1980s and 1990s often found inspiration in the more disposable and ephemeral forms of culture circulating in its immediate environment, just as cultural forms and cultural content drew directly from the desire to represent human reactions to this urban setting. The conservative Partido Popular has taken credit for the positive urban reforms of the Socialists and criticized them for the failures, while giving Madrid over to the car and abandoning the progressive social housing policies of earlier years, which were based on rational Modernist planning and the political possibility of the Modernist project. Much recent literature and film about Madrid focuses on the resulting ideological, political and economic shifts.

Keywords: modernity, architecture, urban planning, literature, film

Introduction

In Spain in 1977, a majority of Spanish citizens elected the center-right Unión Central Democrático (UCD) coalition. In 1982, in the *elecciones del cambio*, they voted to put into office the left-leaning Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE), the Socialist Party which held onto power until 1992. The Socialist-led urban planning project of the late 1970s and early 1980s in Madrid was rooted in the very Modernist belief that those with the power to shape urban space could promote social justice, and make all parts of the city accessible to all citizens. In the wake of the failure of this idealistic, politically progressive project, urban planners in Spain have turned to a more Postmodern urban design that is predicated on urban boosterism and selling place (Frampton, 1992; Pile and Thrift, 1995), with a strong focus on the construction of an urban image, instead of on real social problems and their solutions. As Malcolm Compitello outlines in some detail in his essay in this collection, most of Madrid's growth in the 1980s and 1990s takes place not in the central municipality but in the surrounding urban regions (Compitello, 2003). This is the direct result of subsequent municipal governments' decisions to allow for the construction of more highways in and around Madrid, as well as a very modest budget for public transportation, both of which make way for the steadily increasing use of the car. Not surprisingly, there has been a marked shift in much recent literature and film focused in and about Madrid, from the city center to the suburban periphery.

With the devolution of power to the autonomous regions and the consolidation of a new pattern of government after the approval of the 1978 Constitution by popular vote, Madrid gradually lost architectural projects and commissions. It is ironic that with less pressure to stand up to its reputation as a centrist state, Madrid's inhabitants were freer to look for a new identity under the Socialist government of the 1980s and early 1990s. Madrid's cultural life became vibrant in film, music, painting and graphic design, for example, consolidating what had been fermenting

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even before the death of the dictator Francisco Franco. After 1982, Madrid's municipal government was dominated by the PSOE and was in many ways aided by the counter-cultural movement, called the *movida*, in an effort to construct a micronationalist Madrilenian identity. The recently-elected Socialist government funneled large sums of money into underground magazines, such as *La Luna de Madrid* and *Madriz*, into the early work of Pedro Almodóvar, into theater, music, and all of the plastic arts, funding a youthful cultural project that took on the label "Postmodern". This was an incredible boom in cultural activity that was perhaps inevitable after such a long period of official and unofficial censorship. The tone of much of the cultural production of this time in Madrid is euphoric, almost giddy with intellectual, artistic, and sexual freedom. Truly exceptional and groundbreaking Spanish film, graphic design, fashion, photography as well as important contributions to philosophy and architecture were just beginning to catch the attention of the rest of Europe, and Madrid as a city sensed for the first time in many decades its cultural importance.

This new identity was particularly important in Madrid because, as had been the case in the capital since the beginning of the twentieth century, with such high numbers of immigrants and increasing mobility in Spanish society, it was becoming increasingly difficult to know what a "real" Madrilenian was. Madrid was the last of the 17 autonomous communities of the Spanish State to be formed, on March 1, 1983. This was a source of confusion to many inhabitants of the capital, since in the past they had belonged to the regional Castilla-La Mancha (previously called Castilla La Nueva). While it is doubtful that the PSOE and Mayor Enrique Tierno Galván fully understood the culture of the *movida*, it is clear that they supported it and fostered it through funding and exposure because it served to legitimize the cultural difference of the city of Madrid.

Madrid's unfinished modern project

On the city-wide level, architects made their contributions to this new cultural direction: exhibitions and frequent competitions were opportunities for collective and public reflection. But this was also a period of recession that was confronted by the Socialist municipal government's *Plan General de Ordenación Urbano de Madrid* (PGOUM) of 1985. The plan curbed the physical expansion of the city, providing incentives to fill in extensive inner-city areas, as yet undeveloped. Efforts were made to consolidate the outskirts without expanding them, reinforcing public services in the poorly served outer suburbs, particularly in the Southern region of Madrid. The consolidation of the peripheral regions and the quest for a new identity directed the most important projects of Madrid's architects not toward important renovations of the main historic districts (as happened in other Spanish cities), but toward "poor" architecture, in the sense of using modest materials and pragmatic solutions to reinforce the realistic tendency in Spanish Modernist architecture (Fernández, Alba and Gavira, 1986).

No discussion of Spanish architecture since 1950 is complete without a reference to Gabriel Ruiz Cabrero's *El moderno en España. Arquitectura 1948–2000*. It is here that he contends that there is such a thing as a particularly Spanish way of executing modern architecture, something that he calls "Spanish Modern". He takes the following hypothesis as his point of departure:

> An awareness of Spain's retarded scientific development, and the resulting frustration that dominated Spanish culture from the beginning of the twentieth century, generated an intense, passionate appetite for modernity. (Ruiz Cabrero, 2001, p 9).

The concept of modernity, which has been the motivating force behind European thought throughout the nineteenth century and, in the realm of architecture was linked with the concept of internationalism (Hitchcock and Johnson, 1966) in all of the dominant ideological approaches before the Second World War, came to be viewed critically both in Europe and in America in the light of the humanistic and humanitarian failure that the war represented. The exception was Spain, which had not been involved in either of the World Wars, and where Modernity retained all of its fascination, even among those who rejected it with a violence born of frustration. It was the Civil War of 1936–1939 that had interrupted the road to Modernity—a road that had to be continued without delay and without much time for self-criticism (Bohigas, 1998). "Perhaps that is why", emphasizes Ruiz Cabrero, "when international criticism of the 1980s began to pay close attention to contemporary Spanish architecture which had been relatively unknown until then, what it was really doing was discovering a chapter in international modern architecture itself" (Ruiz Cabrero, 2001, p 32). Spanish architecture of the 1980s and 1990s showed a faith in modernist principles and a desire to put them into practice, and these principles were, by then, not very common beyond Spain's borders, where Postmodernism and other styles flourished.

The years immediately following the death of Franco are called the *transición* and brought about radical changes for all of Madrid's citizens. Architectural changes were not quite as dramatic as political and social changes, however. The same architects in control before the *transición* were in control at its inception and for many years after. Ruiz Cabrero says that in the 1970s, there were two obvious types of architects—the very traditional, who interpreted the modern in a very orthodox way, and those who accepted the new stress on urban analysis as an enrichment of the modern—and as part and parcel of

the architectural project. These ideas were not mutually incompatible, but Madrid's architects could be divided into those who inclined primarily in one or the other direction. The technically inclined were associated with Alejandro de la Sota, who became symbolic of many who attended his classes at the School of Architecture, while examples of the second persuasion were masters such as Rafael Moneo and Sáenz de Oiza, the former a student of the latter (Fernández Alba, 1990).

In 1978, *Arquitectura bis* published a double issue devoted to the architecture of Madrid. It featured a series of buildings and two leading articles by Rafael Moneo and Antón Capitel, respectively, along with reflections on recent work by architects of Madrid. In Moneo's piece entitled "28 Architects without Tenure," he declared that there was a generation of young architects who

> Do not disdain culture, and try to use theoretical problems as one of the yardsticks against which to measure the practice of this new understanding of the profession.…The attention that Madrid's young architects pay to the outside world is reflected in their work, and could be said to be one of its most obvious characteristics. But it must also be admitted that alongside this attention is a prudence that suggests a belief in the ancient Delphic dictum 'nothing to excess.' This balance of forces makes it difficult to place the group within any of the tendencies currently unsettling the waters of architecture (quoted in Cabrero, p. 71).

Among the works featured, the Bankunión and Bankinter buildings were presented as two of the most important. The Bankunión was designed and built in 1977. When this building was completed, it became a monumental presence on Madrid's Paseo de la Castellana, and to the man in the street it stood for architecture at its most modern. This is what earned the building its nickname of "The Coffee Machine," (although this author has also heard it called "The Toaster.") The Madrid issue of *Arquitectura bis* closed with another landmark building, the Banco de Bilbao, which was Sáenz de Oiza's contribution to the Modern movement. It had the proportions of a small skyscraper in glass and metal and is still considered, along with his Torres Blancas, to be one of the best tower blocks in Madrid. In the 1980s, Spanish architecture began to receive notoriety for what some saw as a collective effort: consolidating the modern ideal. It was characterized by two main traits: a collective embracing of the fundamental principles of European rationalism at the start of the century, and an insistence on realism, emanating from a conscience comfortable with its own time, culture, and technique.

Madrid's new role as capital of a decentralizing state

In the years leading up to 1992, with the Socialists firmly entrenched as the political party of the time, the Spanish State focused on three extremely ambitious events: two of these, the Universal Exposition of Seville and the Barcelona Olympic Games, would be highly successful, dramatically remaking the international images of Barcelona and Seville and launching the careers of several Spanish architects and urban planners. But the third, the celebration of Madrid as Cultural Capital of Europe, met with only a very lukewarm reception. The only two events of architectural importance that took place in Madrid in the early nineties were the reopening of the Reina Sofia National Museum of Art (designed by Madrid's own highly influential academic Antonio Fernández Alba) and Rafael Moneo's Atocha train station renovation and his work on the museum for the Thyssen Bornemisza art collection. As a result, unlike Seville or Barcelona, Madrid was left with no tangible reminder of 1992. There would be no resounding improvement in its insufficient transportation infrastructures, no renovation or construction of riverfronts or airports. This does not mean that architects were inactive. Some built important works inside and outside of the city, while others worked on social housing. One of the most important of these is Saenz de Oiza's controversial housing estate on the M30 circular freeway, for which he won the competition using an exaggerated layout in late urban expressionist style, turning need into virtue in the construction of a massive ghetto where marginalized sectors of the population were rehoused. Rafael Moneo, winner of the Pritzker Prize in 1996, an award that is tantamount to a Nobel Prize in architecture, solved the urban chaos and complexity of Atocha by accumulating volumes and forms in different styles and turning complete disorder into eclectic variety. Probably the biggest and overall most successful of architectural projects have been the social housing blocks, very modern in scope and form, in the couth of Madrid, most notably in Vallecas and Carabachel.

But what do these buildings and urban projects mean to the citizens of Madrid? How do they figure in the formation of urban consciousness and how are they represented in the film and literature of the city? What do they mean, *culturally*? Compared to other major urban centers in Spain, that have since the 1980s successfully competed in the fierce competition over cultural capital (Barcelona, Seville, Bilbao), Madrid seems not so much to look outward to the international community to sell its image but to more reflectively construct and critique life on the periphery of what was previously the center of an extremely centralized state.

Reading Madrid's built environment

This paper proposes that one can read buildings and neighborhoods, as it were, as public objects caught in an urban cultural process and the flows of capital and shifting modern identities. Architecture and urban planning, as intellectual subjects, have been a dis-

tinguishing characteristic of much academic work in the past few decades. With a conceptual framework and an approach that embraces activities from patronage through to construction and use, one can potentially locate the process of the construction of cultural meaning within the entire spectrum of economics, politics, social and cultural practices. Cultural theory proposes, without reservation, that existing conceptions of architecture need to be replaced by broader and more inclusive types of readings that address issues such as gender, race, space, image formation, and the unequal distribution of resources and opportunities. Murray Fraser and Joe Kerr, for example, in their important essay "Beyond the Empire of the Signs" problematize the fact that cultural theory often seems to hold at its heart the belief that the priority and primacy of the theoretical proposition or concept is ultimately what matters, creating an illusory critical space (Fraser and Kerr, 2000). Their notion of "hybrid architecture" suggests that the design and construction of buildings and spaces form one of the key spheres in which rival cultural interpretations compete. Buildings are far too often regarded as singular objects, with fixed meanings, that are meant, implausibly, to "reflect" or "embody" certain ideals. Their notion of hybridization runs counter to this, however, and suggests that the possible meanings and experiences of architecture remain as diffuse as are our reactions to other forms of cultural production. Thus architecture and urban change are not just the physical endgames of patterns of economic accumulation and politicized activity, but are more of a mechanism for the infusion of differing and changing values and aspirations over time and in space. It is with this in mind that the texts analyzed below present readers with a variety of both individual and collective reactions to Madrid's urban environment.

Buildings cannot be understood as discrete objects, but can be more fully understood and appreciated through the reading of many different types of culture—urban culture that uses specific architecture sometimes as subject, object or backdrop. As Katherine Schonfield points out in "The Use of Fiction to Reinterpret Architectural and Urban Space," it is useful, as one looks at architecture and its role in the urbanization of consciousness, to question the supremacy of technical or expert pronouncements on the city and its architecture (Schonfield, 2000). First of all, apparently natural or objective characteristics of space and buildings can obfuscate the material conditions that created them. Secondly, fictions, particularly film and the novel, can be used in a number of ways to elucidate the unseen workings of architecture. David Harvey and Henri Lefebvre both emphasize that architecture, with its constructions and urban strategies, is accepted within society via a set of ideas and assumptions that conceals the fact that architecture is an economic product, and subject to economic interests. While spatial constructions may act ideologically in the specifically Marxist sense that they represent ideas and ideals that both serve the interests of the economic class in power and conceal the workings of that interest, this does not mean their form is under current ideological control. The imposed boundaries of the past may come back to haunt the present. In the urban context there is a volatile and active interchange between ideas, the structures that represent those ideas (culture) and the economic climate that prevails. With Lefebvre, this author contends that "it cannot be sufficiently emphasized that it is impossible to reduce Marxist thought to economism" (Social Space 72). Hence the importance of narrative, music, film and the other visual arts and their relationships to the economic and political effects on urban architecture. A wide variety of cultural forms evidence an untapped spatial and architectural understanding. This type of recognition is often capable of transgressing imposed categories of specialization, expertise, professional and politically restricted practices.

One masterfully developed narrator who demonstrates just this type of untapped spatial and architectural understanding is Cayetano Zenón, the protagonist of Ismael Grasa's *De Madrid al cielo* (Grasa, 1994). He has his own understanding of the political and social implications of the urbanization process under the Socialists. Spatially speaking, the novel revolves around the tension of centripetal impulses to stay close to one's history, home and tradition and the centrifugal forces of gentrification in Lavapies, the traditionally working-class neighborhood where Zenón was born. The main character and narrator's name itself brings this dialectic home. The most important church in Lavapies is the Church of San Millán y San Cayetano, on the Calle de Embajadores. Legend has it that Saint Cayetono founded a bank to help the poor and to offer an alternative to usurers. He was known for a game he played with parishioners, where he would bet prayers, rosaries or devotional candles on whether he would perform some service for them. He always did, and they always had to "pay" by saying the prayers. Cayetano is, therefore, named after the local patron saint of gamblers and the unemployed. His family name, Zenón, derives from the Greek word for *stranger*, however, which uproots and alienates the character from his home even as he walks the neighborhood streets that are more familiar to him than any friend or family member. This duality of opposites contained in the name of the narrator combined with the almost obsessive attention to place are very effective ways to portray life in the modern city and the fate of individuals caught in the shifts of capital.

De Madrid al cielo has an unusually strong sense of place that perfectly exemplifies a dominant theme in the literature of the late 1980s and 1990s, written in and about Madrid. Narrated in a poetic but ultimately realist style with more than occasional nods to the detective novel (arguably the most urban of literary genres), the text from its very first page communicates a certain pride in the neighborhood of Lavapies, its

people, and its values. In lieu of a dedication, the book begins with a reproduction of graffiti found on the door of number 11, Calle de Embajadores. At first glance it is indecipherable, but after close inspection it seems to be a poem with each line written by a different passer-by from the neighborhood who comments on the history and events in the lives of people in the neighborhood (where dances have been organized, who has a good-looking boyfriend, the fact that the painter Juan Gris was born there) and leaves their initials at the end of their particular inscription. The last line asks for protection from San Isidro, the patron saint of Madrid as well as of peasants and laborers and is followed with several lines of increasing numbers curiously divided into columns in the shape of buildings or organized as city blocks. This is a fitting dedication to a book that looks back with nostalgia at a time when the incredible creative capacity of local culture to create strong communities flourished, even in times of great economic need and political turmoil.

It is significant that while the action of the novel takes place in a variety of recognizable public spaces, no one building or landmark figures prominently, although street names and Zenón's walks through the city are chronicled in such detail that they could easily be recreated by any reader. For this narrator, a Madrid native, the major architectural achievements that occurred under the Socialists do not figure prominently at all. The one exception is the mention of the perennially unpopular Torres KIO in the Plaza de Castilla, a project funded by Kuwaiti capital that represents perfectly all that went wrong with Spain's rapid integration into capitalism. Interestingly, Zenón, when he mentions these leaning skyscrapers, mentions only that they were commented upon by a tourist from Baltimore, who called them the "torres borrachas," or "drunken towers" (Grasa, 1994, p 118).

Zenón and many of his friends born in Lavapies belong to the Communist Party, spent time in jail when they were young militants during the last years of the Franco regime, only stepped foot on a college campus as protestors, and are underemployed or working in factories. Zenón is known in his neighborhood for being a musician and was previously a happy, sociable person, but the reader meets him as he is being evicted from his apartment and many of his friends are becoming involved in the small-scale dealing of drugs, much of which would have been overlooked under the much more permissive Socialist municipal government. On the first page of the novel, Zenón expresses his own post-*movida* letdown when he says that

> Life is a peak that you arrive at quickly, and after a brief perfect moment you wake up one morning and discover that you're going downhill until you die. People confuse their own decline with the decline of the times, and say things about the good old days….There are periods that are not what they seem, and when you grow up you have to shake the dust of youth, arrogance and sincerity from your clothes. You did what you did, and if things got screwed up it's no use feeling sorry about it (7) [All translations mine].

The "deceptive times" that Zenón mentions here have a commonly-accepted and used name: the "*desencanto*" or "disappointment". *De Madrid al cielo* flies in the face of the economic miracle touted by the PSOE as Spain entered the European Community. While it is true that the standard of living increased for a majority of Spaniards in the 1980s, this book captures the experience of those working class people who were displaced, as new areas of Madrid became fashionable and the increased circulation of capital forced them to the periphery of the city, both literally and figuratively. Zenón is evicted and has to leave his apartment. After trying to remain in the neighborhood in the homes of friends and then in his car, he resigns himself to the fact that he must find a new place to call his own. The novel seems to hint at the possibility of a hopeful ending when Zenón, alone, decides to return to his music as a profession and source of pleasure—his only way of making a human connection with others. He even sees a positive side to his lack of social responsibility and possessions and asks himself: "Why feel bad if there is nothing and no-one in the world you really envy, if even the birds in the park have more responsibility than you do?" (p 135). After spending every last peseta he has on a beautiful guitar, he walks down the street and in a sudden and devastating act destroys it, smashing the instrument against a tree on the Calle de Santa Isabel, a highly symbolic act since on this street can be found the Filmoteca and National Film Archives, the Royal Conservatory of Music and the currently expanding Reina Sophia Museum of Contemporary Art, institutions whose renewed success under the support of the PSOE has drawn people to the Lavapies neighborhood and contributed to its prime importance as a site of cultural capital and gentrification. Since Zenón has no community left and his neighborhood is becoming unrecognizable, he loses his identity and capacity to express himself in any individual, creative or productive way.

Belén Gopegui's 1998 novel *La conquista del aire* is a story told by four different narrators about the lives of a group of formerly radical university students as they become established and accomplished members of the Spanish cultural, political and business establishment in Madrid in the 1990s. One character, Marta, asks herself at one point what it meant to call oneself a leftist in Spain in the 1990s:

> To not vote? Or to vote for a party that is unashamed of its Marxist roots? That her parents gave her a Lada instead of a Honda Civic? To shop in different stores, or maybe even the same stores where the conservatives shopped, but picking out more low-key styles? Putting on a guilty face when, instead of going some-

> where on the subway, you take a taxi? Among hers peers, being a part of the political left had become an aesthetic ritual (Gopegui, 1998, p 60).

It is precisely this aesthetitization and ritualization of resistance in its rapidly changing urban context of consumption that Gopegui explores so effectively.

A reader familiar with Madrid's urban history and geography can follow the lives of Carlos, Marta and Santiago as they gradually travel from the center of the city and begin to spend more time on the newly-extended Castellana, to the high-tech industrial areas and wealthy suburbs where they eventually end up living and working. Composed chiefly of interior monologues, the novel charts the material and psychological evolution of these characters as they move through time and space. The action, dialogue and monologues of the narrators are motivated by one central event: the loan of eight million pesetas by Carlos and Marta to their friend Carlos who calls himself "el empresario rojo" (the Red entrepeneur) and who has stopped working for a large multi-national company to start his own small electronics business. This loan limits the life chances of the main characters for a time and resentment over the loss of each individual's freedom results in the disintegration of three long-term friendships. At one point Carlos comes to the bitter conclusion: "Life is shitty…if this is friendship, if friendship depends on moving money from one account to another" (p 48).

The metaphorical space discussed in the novel becomes material in the film version, retitled *Las razones de mis amigos* and released in 2000, directed by Gerardo Herrero. Although the film is more superficial and is unable to develop the relationships between the characters as well as the novel, the power of the visual image better unites a local viewing audience. It is important to note that the experienced screenplay writer Ángeles González-Sinde was remarkably faithful to Gopegui's novel. Because of its relative superficiality and its existence as a visual medium, the film has the capacity to emphasize the differences between the economic situations of Marta, Carlos and Santiago in the first thirty seconds of the film, when they arrive at a pre-arranged get-together in an inexpensive restaurant that they have frequented since their student days. We learn that all three of the friends are well-off financially and enjoy varying degrees of professional success, although their positions are not entirely stable in the age of globalization when the workplace, and the worker's position in it, are constantly being redefined. Marta is the most comfortable with her middle-class status and arrives in a taxi. Santiago is the best at avoiding all semblance of economic stability and arrives by metro and Carlos gets to the restaurant, rumpled and windswept, on an inexpensive motorcycle, carrying a worn mailman's delivery bag. The film visually details the densely populated, tradition-laden but more recently countercultural neighborhood of Chueca where Santiago lives, for example, and contrasts it with the emptiness of the suburbs where he will ultimately settle with his new, wealthy girlfriend, the ex-wife of a prominent Spanish philosopher, who brings him a wealth of cultural capital to which he had previously only aspired. Santiago is initially presented against the backdrop of Retiro Park and the central neighborhoods of Lavapies and Malasaña with his previous girlfriend Sol, a musician and student who cannot imagine straying outside of these areas for leisure and entertainment. In fact, her very name is a symbolic reference to the Puerta del Sol, the exact geographical center and heart of Madrid. Carlos's workplace is in the suburbs of Madrid, in a brand-new and pristine, ultramodern environment that symbolizes the new economic order of globalization and flexibility in its postmodern design that houses employees with no contracts and benefits who work in the computer industry for companies whose mergers result in constant name changes and relocations. He lives in the central neighborhood of Antonio Martín with his wife and child, until his marriage falls apart from the strain of the threat of financial risk, whereupon he moves to the suburbs. Marta and her husband are seen looking for a house in the newly gentrified neighborhood of El Pozo, outside of the center of town, as they think about raising a family.

La conquista del aire is made up of a mixture of the poetic and the mundane, the abstract and the material. The careful reader never forgets that its stated purpose is to study the effects that capital has on the individual and on the individual's relationship to his or her environment, here the city of Madrid. Metaphorically speaking, all of the characters are pushed away from each other and out of the city center with unstoppable centrifugal force by capital. Although every character in the film and in the novel is clearly aware that money—what it symbolizes in its presence or absence, what it enables one to do or prohibits one from doing—guides their every action, they are unable to communicate with each other to alter this course of action that destroys their sense of companionship that had served as an important community and support system in the past. The film ends with a reunion of sorts in an outside café at the foot of the Torre Picasso, one of the most prominent and recognizable of the modern office buildings of the Castellana, symbol of Madrid's yuppie nightlife and a newer center of capital, far from the historic heart of the city (Azorín and Gea, 1990). Carlos is finally able to return the money that he has borrowed from his friends, who remain friends in name only. The last shot of the film shows them walking in three separate directions, dwarfed by tall glass office buildings that are classic examples of Modern architecture, with no historical or cultural references, no ornamentation that would identify them as products of any particular time or place. One possible reason for the change in the title of the film from that of the novel is that it reflects

more faithfully the film's focus on the material changes in the lives of the three friends and the individual—usually selfish—decisions that they make in the absence of the money, of which they feel they have been unjustly deprived. The novel explores the commonalities of the lives of the characters and does not imply the fragmentation of the film's title but more of a philosophical given: that it is money that has seeped into and conquered every single aspect of modern life, down to the very air that we breathe. The film effectively demonstrates the ways in which capital determines the subjectivities of the citizens of 1990s Madrid, while the novel is better at linking the everyday experience of city life to wider, more global economic practices that shape one's subjectivity, with more recourse to space in metaphorical terms.

This trend toward the representation of people's movement through space and time, from center to periphery, in real and metaphorical levels, in recent fiction and film written in and about Madrid in the 1980s and 1990s, is omnipresent. Other notable films concerned with individual experience, and the collective successes and failures of urban cultural resistance in Madrid, are Carlos Saura's *Deprisa, deprisa* (Saura, 1981), Pedro Almodóvar's *¡¡¿Qué he hecho yo para merecer esto?!!* (Almodóvar, 1984), Fernando León de Aranoa's *Barrio* (León de Aranoa, 1998), Miguel Luis Albaladejo's *La primera noche de mi vida* (Albaladejo, 1998) and its sequel *El cielo abierto* (Albaladejo, 2001). Successful novels that form part of this tendency are José Ángel Mañas's *Historias del Kronen* (Mañas, 1994); *Mensaka* (Mañas, 1995) and *Ciudad rayada* (Mañas, 1998), Elvira Lindo's *El otro barrio* (Lindo, 1998) and Clara Sánchez's *Últimas noticias del paraíso* (Sánchez, 2000), just to name a few.

Conclusions

As David Harvey points out in his *The Condition of Postmodernity*, "since money and commodities are entirely bound up within the circulation of capital, it follows that cultural forms are firmly rooted in the daily circulation processes of capital" (Harvey, 1990, p 299). Harvey's point in the above quotation is not that "culture" is entirely *reducible* to the circulation of capital or commodities, but rather that it cannot be *separated* from it, precisely because it is through production that the idea of culture circulates. The handful of texts analyzed here are part of a much wider geography of cultural resistance in Madrid that demonstrates how what gets called culture is part and parcel of systems of social reproduction, at both the local level and the global scale. Culture is organized and inherently tied to space and place. There is no culture in the world, only differing arrays of power that organize society in certain ways. What is more, "the idea of culture itself," as geographers such as Don Mitchell have recently pointed out, "has become one of the most important tools of power at a time of global restructuring" (Mitchell, 2000, p 21). This is precisely why it is so important to look at cultural resistance and understanding—to look at how culture is organized, activated and contested in an ongoing process. Henri Lefebvre, in his essay "The Production of Social Space", has argued that a "revolution that does not produce a new space has not realized its full potential: indeed it has failed in that it has not changed life itself" (Lefebvre, 1991, p 54). This fact is well understood by the authors and filmmaker mentioned here, artists contending on all manner of cultural fronts who find it necessary to deal precisely with these spatial and urban tensions.

What image will Madrid have in mind as it continues to change and develop? How will it be contested? That remains to be seen, but any attempt to try to understand the relationship between capital, urban space and the many different types of representations of people's experiences of the city has to be informed by the very ideological and material nature of both. In the past three decades, Modernist attempts at architecture and urban planning in Madrid sought, with mixed success, to provide answers to questions about the city's road from dictatorship to democracy and the viability of a rational, progressive civil society. The conservative Partido Popular takes credit for the successes of the PSOE's urban policies and condemns them for their failures (Villoaria, 1996). What will happen now that the modernist utopian and progressive impulses (however flawed they may have been) are in doubt is presently, as we have seen, one of the most dominant concerns of Spanish culture in general and of Madrid in particular, as it defines its own brand of Modernity and negotiates a new cultural identity for itself, in what used to be the center of an increasingly decentralized state.

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