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Source: *Journal of Gender and Sexuality Studies / Revista de Estudios de Género y Sexualidades*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (2018), pp. 63-75

Published by: Michigan State University Press

Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.14321/jgendsexustud.44.2.0063

The Myth of Marisol in Twenty-First-Century Spanish Cultural Production

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Abstract

On September 2, 1976, less than a year after the death of dictator Francisco Franco, the then newly established liberal weekly magazine *Interviú* published what soon became, and would remain, its most famous cover. On it appeared a nude photo of an all grown-up Marisol, the adored child star of sentimental comedies during the Franco era. The photo was meant to signal the erotically-charged, liberating mood of Spain's transition to democracy. When the famous photo was used on the cover of the magazine's last issue, in January of 2018, the editors took the opportunity to remind readers of the controversial cover and what it stood for at the time. As a nostalgic historical referent, the I*nterviú* cover has had a role to play in recent Spanish popular cultural productions. This article takes issue with the magazine's all too-quick equation between newly acquired political freedom and the right to publish photos of famous women in the nude. More specifically, this essay examines the *Interviú* cover of the nude Marisol as a "sign event" of immediate and lasting proportions. Viewed from a gendered perspective, the cover's enduring cultural resonance reveals the persistence of sexist attitudes. The essay further argues Marisol's evolution in the public eye reveals unsettling continuities between the Franco era and what comes after.

On September 2, 1976, less than a year after the death of Francisco Franco, a nude photograph of the actress Pepa Flores, better known then and now as Marisol, appeared on the cover of the new magazine *Interviú*, with the caption "El bello camino hacia la democracia".[1] With this photo, Spain's childhood sweetheart was suddenly transformed (albeit without her permission) into an icon of sexual as well as national liberation. This magazine cover has been used over the years to allude to the rapid cultural, political, and ideological changes that took place shortly after Franco's death. Marisol's "metamorphosis" seemed to signify a definitive break with the values and aesthetics of the Franco regime, and to symbolically crystallize some of the new narratives of Spain's transition to democracy (the Transición Española, normally abbreviated to "transición")[2] and its celebration of a new sexual as well as political freedom commonly referred to as the *destape*.[3] In many twenty-first-century Spanish cultural products that reflect upon the *transición*, the publication of this magazine cover is referred to as a pivotal moment, representing the liberation of the Spanish people from political oppression and sexual repression.

In their seminal article "Semiotics and Art History: A Discussion of Context and Senders," Ball and Bryson argue that certain cultural and visual "signs" should be interpreted as events. The term "sign-event" designates particularly impactful images as cultural events that take place in historically and socially specific situations (208).[4]

> Sign-events occur in specific circumstances and according to a finite number of culturally valid conventional, yet not unalterable rules, which semiotics calls codes. The selection of those rules and their combination leads to specific interpretative behavior. That behavior is socially framed, and any semiotic view that is to be socially relevant will have to deal with this framing, precisely on the grounds of the fundamental polysemy of meaning and the subsequent possibility of dissemination. (208)

Recognizing the limits of their approach, the authors acknowledge the polysemy and dynamism of signs, the fluid relationship between text and context, and the social frames of interpretative behavior. Yet this concept is particularly apt for a discussion of this famous cover. In this article, I read Marisol's *Interviú* cover as such a sign-event with long repercussions. In the first part of my article, I explore Marisol's symbolic *Interviú* cover within the historical and social circumstances of its momentous publication. In the second, I examine how it has been reinterpreted and re-framed in recent popular culture by focusing on an episode of the hit television show *Cuéntame como pasó* (2002-2016), and on Manuel Palacio's made for television mini-series, *Marisol* (2009). Both tell coming-of-age stories (with Palacio's biopic telling Pepa Flores' own transformation). I intend to address the "discursive practices", "institutional arrangements", and "systems of value" --to borrow Culler's terms--, that reframe the original 1976 cover in the television episode and the biopic in order to assess what the myth of Marisol reveals about Spain's evolving relationship to the *transición* and the *destape*. Furthermore, I argue that contemporary framings of this sign-event expose obvious and not so transparent signs of patriarchal attitudes that, although most rigidly observed

during the Franco era, lived on through the transition period and persist to this day.

The Myth of Marisol Then

Born in Málaga in 1948 to a family of modest means, Josefa ("Pepa") Flores became one of the most celebrated Spanish child actresses of the 1960s. Producer and film director Manuel Goyanes discovered her in 1959 in a *Coros y Danzas de Málaga* competition. He was looking for a female version of the popular child star "Joselito," and after observing the precocious and charismatic *malagueñita* sing and dance, he went to Málaga and made a deal with Pepa's parents.[5] Pepa was renamed Marisol for publicity purposes, as Pepa Flores would have sounded too coarse, or too plebeian, for the enchanting girl she became on screen. The child moved into the Goyanes' house in Madrid at eleven years of age, and soon appeared in the film *Un rayo de luz* in 1960. She subsequently starred in eight full-feature films between the years of 1960-1965, many of them typical of what Paul Julian Smith calls the "orphan melodrama cycle" (*The Moderns* 63). The young actress' road to stardom coincided with Spain's rapid modernization of its consumer economy in the 1960s, and a whole industry dedicated to Marisol emerged, as books, posters, and magazines commercialized her image. *Triunfo*, a popular progressive magazine, declared 1960 "the year of Marisol" (Moix 281).

Marisol was seen then, as she is now, as the poster child of 1960s Francoist Spain. José Aguilar and Miguel Losada, insist that Marisol, like Joselito, were "niños mimados del régimen franquista" and characterize their films as escapist cinema. Aguilar emphasizes the fact that Marisol's agent maintained excellent relations with the dictatorship and that the young Marisol frequented El Palacio del Pardo to visit Franco's granddaughters, who adored her (Aguilar, *Marisol* 22).[6] Yet some scholars have noted that she also embodied some of the contradictions of a nation in transition. As a blue-eyed blonde singing traditional Andalusian music, Marisol represented a Spain that wanted to enter modernity while celebrating traditions that had long been seen as emblematic of a conservative Spain. Tatjana Pavlović notes these contradictions in her chapter on the child stars Joselito and Marisol in *A Companion to Spanish Cinema,* where she observes that these films espoused Francoist values, such as traditional family, class, and gender roles, yet they also revealed and reflected a nation transitioning "from autarky to modernity" (326).

By the late 1960s, Marisol's adolescent body could no longer hide the fact that she was no longer a child. Even as she starred in largely conservative films like *Las cuatro bodas de Marisol* (1967) and *Solo los dos* (1968), she was growing up quickly and it is logical to assume that the actress (though not the character) was attuned to the liberal changes that were taking place in much of Western Europe and the U.S.

When Marisol married Carlos Goyanes, the director and producer's son, the wedding was a spectacular media event, featured in all the popular tabloids and magazines, with a radiant Marisol as a happy bride. The myth of the child-like ingénue began to crumble three years later, when the couple separated.

It would crumble even more when, in the early 1970s, she fell in love with the then renowned flamenco dancer Antonio Gades, known for his anti-establishment sentiments. Under his tutelage, she shed her Franco lineage to join the Communist party. Flores married Gades in Havana in 1982, with Fidel Castro serving as the *padrino* of their wedding. This fairy tale was not to last either. The couple divorced in 1985, and Pepa Flores disappeared from the public eye.

Until then, however, Marisol played an important role in the media's staging of the *transición*. Her commodified profile of childhood innocence and spunk had been ubiquitous in many Francoist publications during the dictatorship. During the transition, the media capitalized on her fame by rebranding her into a liberal icon, one who embodied liberal ideals. In Mario Camus's *Los Días del pasado* (1984), one of the first films to broach the topic of the Civil War after Franco's death, she plays the part of a teacher who falls in love with an antifrancoist guerilla dissident. She also appeared in the PSOE-sponsored television series *Proceso a Mariana Pineda* in 1984 as Mariana, the symbolic historical figure who was executed in 1831 for her participation and allegiance to liberal causes. (The *transición* revived the historical figure as a symbol of a woman's struggle for liberty). She appeared in several other films that questioned the conservative and social mores of the dictatorship. In other films, however, her iconic image celebrated sexual rather than political liberation.[7] None of these films were commercially successful.

Yet even as her star image faded, as Pepa Flores she now occupied the gossip pages for her personal life rather than for her films. Her nude portrait on the cover of *Interviú*, which was, as mentioned earlier, printed without her approval, sold more than a million copies.[8] Her films were no longer box-office successes, but her risqué photographs and personal life were seen as symbolic of Spain's newly acquired freedom of expression. Although sexually explicit images were omnipresent in the media during the years following Franco's death, Pepa Flores' past as the image of Franco's morally upstanding, happy Spain, made her different from other muses of the *destape* such as Ana Belén, Susana Estrada, and María José Cantudo. Her symbolic power preceded the *destape*, and audiences who had seen her as a child icon would not be indifferent to her metamorphosis.[9]

In her book, *The Seduction of Modern Spain*, Aurora Morcilla explores how gendered and neobaroque somatic metaphors of the nation as a nurturing, vulnerable, and fertile woman were an integral part of the Francoist regime's propaganda and political apparatus.[10] She maintains that counter-reformation ideologies about gender and the body were essential to both the regime's political narrative and survival. Additionally, Morcilla points out that the female body became a "loci of historical meaning," both during the dictatorship and after Franco's death (88). It is thus not surprising that Marisol's body would prove to be an effective and updated symbolic metaphor for the rapid changes of the nation after the death of the Caudillo. Her transformation, symbolically encapsulated in her nude profile on *Interviú,* emerged as an important sign of the t*ransición*. Other such signs included the emergence of figure of the transvestite

and Susana Estrada's famous encounter with Tierno Galván.[11]

The Destape as the Revenge of the Repressed

As I have noted, during the late seventies and early eighties, nudity and non-conformist sexuality became the expression of long-suppressed desires as well as freedoms. Commenting on the *destape,* Jorge Marí says:

> A través de las declaraciones de muchos de sus protagonistas, incluyendo editores y productores afines, el propio destape se presenta y representa a sí mismo con frecuencia como una reacción explosiva a casi cuatro décadas de censura y represión por parte del estado franquista y la Iglesia Católica. Desde esta perspectiva, el destape se erige como un ímpetu de liberación, un esfuerzo por desatar aquella mordaza que el franquismo había querido dejar, explícitamente "atada y bien atada" sobre los cuerpos físicos y políticos de los españoles. (245)

The founders of *Interviú* openly prided themselves on their daring displays as well as opinions. Their first issue of May1976 opens with what would become their motto: "Nos atrevemos con todo" (Vidal). In addition to groundbreaking political investigative pieces, the publication was also one of the first to include images of topless women. The weekly magazine's founder, Antonio Asensio explains their formula:

> La fórmula de *Interviú* es la aventura de una revista que salió con la democracia y que quiso dar a los españoles lo que les había faltado durante mucho tiempo. Les faltaba sexo, les dimos sexo. Faltaba claridad en los temas, les dimos la libre expresión de los columnistas. Era un traje a la medida. Un cóctel, pero no molotov. (Antonio Asensio: Fundador de Grupo Zeta)

In José M. Ponce's *El destape*, published in 2004, Ramón de España describes *Interviú*'s overnight success by noting that while the weekly offered a "journalistic cocktail of sex and politics, it was the sex that attracted readers" Like so many others, España zeroes in on the cover of the nude Marisol, reminding readers that by then it was known that, influenced by her second husband, she had joined the communist party. It is easy to see why the combination of the star's previous fame, so close to Franco's Spain heart, with her radical political conversion, would prove irresistible to *Interviú*:

> La revista *Interviú* triunfó porque ofrecía un hábil cóctel periodístico a base de sexo y política (aunque lo que realmente le molaba a la gente era el sexo, que tal vez tuvo su punto álgido con las famosas fotos de una Marisol desnuda que, además, gracias a la benéfica influencia de su marido, Antonio Gades, pues resultaba que también era comunista). (9)

Viewed from a gendered perspective and with the benefit of second wave feminism, it is easy to see the persistence of patriarchal attitudes and the cult of machismo in the objectification of women endlessly reproduced in *Interviú*'s covers during these years. I wish to argue that, while liberal Spain shed the conservative Catholic morality that characterized Franco's regime, the freedom with which male magazine editors published photos of nude or semi-nude women (even without their permission) signaled a troubling continuity in the

treatment of women.[12] Needless to say, the target audience of these political weekly magazines was a heterosexual male. Nude women´s bodies, feminine sensuality, and eroticism, initially expressions of emancipation from an oppressive regime, soon became products used to sell magazines and films. According to Teresa Vilarós in *El mono del desencanto*, the sexual freedom of the *destape* channeled eroticism into a patriarchal economic power-system of subject and object (Vilarós 220-221).

The Return of Marisol

More than thirty years have passed since the release of Marisol's cover in *Interviú,* and the *destape* is now part of Spain's past. More complex analyses of the Spain's transition to democracy have appeared in the intervening decades. Sarah Wright notes that the generation that grew up with old films of the young Marisol and later saw her as the embodiment of the political and cultural changes of the *transición*, maintain an emotional attachment to the actress. In his 2012 *Las estrellas del destape y de la Transición*, José Aguilar claims to write for a whole generation of Spanish males when he writes about his fond memories of the famous cover: "El recuerdo de su excitante cuerpo mojado sobre la arena de unas playas fascinantes en Brasil siempre nos acompañará como un sueño inalcanzable en nuestros referentes eróticos. Contigo Pepa hicimos otra transición" (189).

In the twenty-first century, Marisol's 1976 *Interviú* cover continues to be framed by a retrospective, nostalgic, and voyeuristic male gaze. I propose that the continued fondness for the cover is a symptom of a larger phenomenon: a nostalgia for an era that for many middle-aged Spaniards continues to represent a time of unprecedented freedom and hope. Yet those who express such fond memories of the cover continue to be heterosexual males who appear to remain unaware of how women might have felt, or feel now, about the ease with which the new men of the *transición* continued to decide how women should be seen rather than heard.[13] I propose to examine the persistence of these androcentric attitudes by examining the "framing" of Marisol's famous cover in a recent episode of the popular television series *Cuéntame como pasó* (produced by Mighel Angel Bernarderdeau and written by Alberto Macías and Eduardo Padrón de Guevara), and Manuel Palacios' biopic *Marisol*.

The enormously popular series *Cuéntame como pasó*, in its twentieth season the longest-running television series in Spanish television history, tells the story of the fictional Alcántara family from the last years of the Franco regime to the beginning of the Spanish transition (although the final season of the series is meant to extend the time span to the early 1990s) . The family's story is narrated by one of the sons, Carlos (Ricardo Gómez) from an unidentified present time, and his voice-over narration casts the present action against Carlos' memories of childhood and adolescence. The series incorporates black and white historical footage, and the characters are seen to observe, participate, and interact with this history as they experience their own personal dramas. In her 2009 article on the series, Ana Corbalán notes that the show's sentimental tone has been criticized by Isabel Estrada and Paul Julian Smith for privileging the personal over

the political and airbrushing the political and social problems of those years. Corbalán herself has a more positive response to the show, arguing that many of the characters in *Cuéntame* are politically involved and highly critical of the dictatorship. In the same article, Corbalán explains the popularity of the series by pointing out that it allows spectators to reimagine themselves as living during those years through their identification with the plight of individual characters. As such, says this scholar, the series allows viewers to experience what Svetlana Boym calls "reflective nostalgia" (341).

The 2008 episode I wish to discuss, "Por un puñado de fotos", opens with a scene from Mingarro/Goyanes's 1962 musical *Tómbola*, in which a singing Marisol, with her hair in a high bun and wearing a flowy A-line swing dress, represents the carefree, jovial, innocent Marisol of her child star years. The scene serves the purpose of reminding the audience of this Franco-era Marisol, a young girl "every mother would want to adopt" (as the voiceover will soon confirm). In the next scene, Carlos' voiceover recounts September of 1976 as the month when his gloom (over his girlfriend's rejection) contrasted sharply with the erotically charged mood of Spain at the time, but notes that they had yet to experience the event that would leave them all breathless: the transformation of the angelic Marisol (shown at the beginning of the episode in *Tómbola*) into the nude Pepa Flores, a bombshell (una "mujer de bandera"):

> Mi aflicción contrastaba con un ambiente festivo de una España invadida por una tremenda ola de erotismo. Creíamos haberlo visto todo pero aún faltaba por llegar el aldabonazo que nos dejaría a todos bocabiertos. Marisol, aquella niña angelical que toda madre hubiera deseado se había convertido en Pepa Flores, una mujer de bandera, bellísima, proclamando en los quioscos que España ya no era lo que era.

Immediately after, the camera displays a shot of Antonio Alcántara (Imanol Arias), as Carlos' father, grinning from ear to ear with a copy of the *Interviú* issue Carlos has just mentioned. The episode presents a variety of perspectives on the magazine cover as characters are asked to reflect on it. Antonio sees it as positive evidence that times had changed. A woman at the hairdresser considers the nude photo artistic, while another woman says that the photo is an absolute disgrace.

In the episode, Antonio, with the help of his other son Toni, is planning to start his own political magazine entitled "Por supuesto." One of the scenes shows a meeting between Antonio, Toni, and his business partner. The three agree to use the "Marisol strategy" to sell their magazine: in other words, their magazine will feature images of nude women on on its cover, thus planning to reproduce the strategy that served *Interviú* and other magazines that followed so well. One of the men comments offhandedly in the meeting that "La letra con teta entra," a sexist version of the sadistic saying "la letra con sangre entra", to refer to the need for corporal punishment to instill good reading habits in young children.

The men's sexism is present throughout the episode, revealing a world where men are the principal agents and actors. When Toni asks Antonio what they should do if Mercedes, his

mother, finds out about the new marketing strategy, Antonio tells Toni that Mercedes shouldn't know or worry about these things, suggesting that his wife need not know about their plans. Elsewhere in the episode, Antonio helps his best friend keep his extra-marital affair a secret from his wife. When Toni's girlfriend tries to publish some illicit photographs she took of Santiago Carrillo in Madrid, Toni tries to stop her because he thinks they might be harmful for the Communist Party. By displaying seemingly banal family and social dynamics where female opinions, ideas, and actions are either ignored or suppressed, this episode of *Cuéntame* offers a retrospective twenty-first century critique of gender power dynamics that persisted during the *transición*. It illustrates how, using the words of art critic John Berger, in many spheres, *men acted* and *women appeared*. Yet this implicit critique of the *destape* is muted, particularly because it is superseded by Carlos' sentimental memory of his youth. The nostalgic tone, coupled with the vintage aesthetic of the show, create a palatable narrative more than a political one, so that sentimental longing upends the commentary on the gender imbalance shown in the various scenes I have just mentioned. In the episode, Marisol is a mirror in which men remember themselves at a younger age; her personhood never considered.

Although a previous episode (162: "Y llegó el destape") shows footage of interviews with prominent women such as writer Rosa Montero, actresses Susana Estrada and Victoria Vera, as well as politicians and public figures such as Celia Villalobos and Lidia Falcón, all reflecting upon the *destape* (often critically), I believe there is insufficient awareness of the negative repercussions of these years in today's Spain. "Y llegó el destape" also concludes with a nostalgic voiceover from Carlos, who, after seeing the film *La trastienda* (1975), the first film in Spanish history to show a completely nude woman's body, reflects upon the changes occurring in Spain while recalling the experience of seeing a real woman's body for the first time.[14] Carlos' musings are followed by Joan Manuel Serrat's sentimental "La mujer que yo quiero," while different images of women appear as the credits roll. As the powerful voiceover, Carlos, the heterosexual male, is the figure who controls how the story is told. And the Marisol cover continues to be framed by sexist attitudes.

There is no denying the series' investment in nostalgia. Svetlana Boym writes in *The Future of Nostalgia* that "Bursts of nostalgia often follow revolutions" (xvi). Boym argues that nostalgia is not a longing for home, but rather the "yearning for a different time—the time of our childhood, the slower rhythms of our dreams. In a broader sense, nostalgia is rebellion against the modern idea of time, the time of history and progress" (xv). *Cuéntame* is only one of the many media productios that evoke a longing for *destape* years. Others are *Temps de Silenci* (2001-2002) and RTVE's *Ochéntame otra vez* (2014-present). As seen in this episode, the nostalgia-filled atmosphere of the series tones down the implicit critique of sexism. Moreover, given that Carlos is the likeable voice and overseer of that nostalgia, many viewers are likely to identify with his tolerant view of the objectifying male gaze, just as *Interviú*'s readers, predominantly male and heterosexual, could tell themselves that

their pleasure in the nude photographs was a sign of the new freedom of expression.

Manuel Palacio's television mini-series *Marisol* (2009) also looks at the past through a nostalgic lens. The biopic is another coming-of-age narrative that takes place during the *transición*, but this time Marisol (both the child star and the woman she became) is the protagonist. The mini-series stars Ana Mena, Elsa Pinilla, and Teresa Hurtado, who play the roles of Marisol as a child, adolescent, and adult, respectively. *Marisol* tells a story of a young girl's exploitation by those men who became surrogate fathers the child actress and were entrusted with protecting her: producer Manuel Goyanes (Roberto Álvarez), his son Carlos Goyanes (Javier Rey), and director Luis Lucia (Blai Llopis). What stands out about this mini-series is not so much what it shows but what it leaves out of the story: the larger macro-political frame that contributed to Marisol's victimization is hardly considered.

The mini-series cannot altogether ignore the historical changes occurring in Spain during the 1960s and 70s, but the connection between these and Marisol's developing story is left unexplored. In one episode, a very young Marisol receives an invitation to the Palacio del Pardo, Franco's residence, but the visit is not enacted, leaving viewers to guess at what might have gone on during that visit. Similarly, the adult Marisol briefly worries about the legal consequences of both her separation from her first husband and the fact that she was committing adultery in a still Catholic Spain, but no further commentary is offered. Paul Julian Smith rightly faults the mini-series for depriving viewers of the historical context needed to understand the larger forces behind the young woman's exploitation (*Dramatized Societies* 28). Instead, it portrays the controlling, abusive producer and director as anomalous nasty, immoral men. Obviously intended to appeal to viewers' taste for nostalgia, the mini-series focuses strictly on the young Pepa Flores' personal drama, milking viewers' sympathy for all its worth.

The biopic ends before Marisol's famous cover, but it does depict the circumstances behind César Lucas' shots. According to those consulted for the biopic, Carlos Goyanes was the person responsible for setting up the photo-shoot with Lucas in 1970. Just as it refuses to look at the patriarchal attitudes that would tolerate or simply not notice the troubling circumstances of the young Marisol's years with the Goyanes's, so it fails to reflect on the cultural and political changes occurring in Spain at the time the photographs were taken. The photo-shoot is thus framed as a familial or private power dynamic rather than a political one. As shown in the biopic, the photographs include several frames of Carlos' gaze, as he observes Lucas taking photographs of Pepa, who seems comfortable in the shoot. Viewers are told that the photo-shoot was an attempt by Carlos and Marisol to become more independent from Carlos' father, although details of the release and reception of Marisol's nude photos are left out of the biopic.

The obscuring of political context in the mini-series could indeed be the director's way of wanting to focus on the more personal side of the Marisol myth. Yet the result is another example what Boym calls "restorative nostalgia"

(13). This is partly achieved through the film's use of Marisol's most emblematic films and her most popular songs (such as her 1968 hit "Tengo el corazón contento").[15] As is to be expected, the actresses who play Marisol at various stages are dressed in some of the star's most iconic outfits, a detail that will also evoke nostalgic memories in some viewers.

In *Cuéntame*, Marisol's *Interviú* cover is re framed by the persistent sexism of the three adult males depicted in the episode. Given that the famous magazine cover is never explicitly shown in Palacios' *Marisol*, one may well ask why the biopic is relevant to my discussion. In fact, in my reading of the biopic the cover is very much present, first through the enactment and discussion of the photoshoot, and then in the audience's anticipation of when and how Palacios would approach it. By stoking the audience's expectations (as the photoshoot does), Palacios encourages the kind of voyeuristic interest that the cover still provokes. Yet another important consideration in Palacios' coy treatment of the cover is that, unlike *Cuéntame*, which is clearly intended for both a male and female audience of various ages, by eschewing politics and focusing largely on what viewers already knew from gossip magazines, the biopic was much more likely to appeal to women viewers.But if the film was produced primarily with a woman viewer in mind, then its treatment of the actress as a victim without agency reflects a different kind of sexism; one no less problematic than that of *Cuéntame*, but one that is at odds with the *destape*'s celebration of women's sexual freedom. Yet again, this points to contradictory impulses in Palacio's *Marisol*.

Conclusion

As I have argued, the recent interest in the *transición* and the *destape* appears to be inseparable from the myth of Marisol. As a sign-event —or an event that encapsulated specific historical and political circumstances, the 1976 Marisol *Interviú* cover plays an important role in recalling and assessing the sexual and political practices and mores of these years.[16] As Spain is slowly removing or re-contextualizing some the monuments most representative of Franco's dictatorship, it may be time to revisit the androcentric prejudices that also characterized the years of the transition and persist well into the present.

Facing the same fate as so many printed journals and magazines that were once best-sellers, *Interviú* published its last issue in January 2018, once again with Marisol's emblematic nude portrait on the cover, this time in black and white. The issue includes essays from well-known Spanish writers expressing their admiration for *Interviú's* contribution to Spain's modernization process over its last forty-two years of distribution. What the issue does not do is include a critical insight on how women perceived, and perceive, *Interviú*'s sales strategy and the *destape*'s general laissez-faire attitude towards the objectification of women's bodies. The absence of this reflection is particularly noticeable given that this last issue appeared while the #metoo movement was gaining worldwide recognition. Yet it points to the reality that the gender dynamics of the *transición* have not been effectively evaluated, or questioned. Contemporary Spanish popular culture appears to side-

step the issue, but so do intellectual and academic discussions of these years.[17]

Notes

1 The photo used for the 1976 cover is actually from 1970. It was taken by César Lucas during a photo session for a record cover. According to various sources, Marisol's husband and producer Carlos Goyanes wanted the nude photos taken to show to a foreign produ+cer (see Cenizo).

2 This historical period, commonly referred to as the *transición*, spans the years between Franco's death (November 20, 1975) and the elections of Felipe González's Socialist party in 1982.

3 The "destape," or "the uncovering," refers to a phenomenon that occurred in Spain alongside the political transition to democracy in the 1970s. It began in the late 1960s, and came into full force with the death of Franco and the subsequent removal of censorship laws. As the people of Spain were beginning to experience political freedoms for the first time, nude and topless women began to appear in films, publicity, tabloids, and political magazines.

4 Ball and Bryson point out that their concept in indebted to Jonathan Culler's notion of "framing the sign". Culler favors the notion of framing over that of context. In the book by the same name, Culler explains that cultural signs are "constituted (framed) by various discursive practices, institutional arrangements, systems of value, and semiotic mechanisms." (175).

5 Joselito, known as "El pequeño ruiseñor" was Spain's child star of the 1950s and 60s. Also from humble Andalusian roots, he rose to fame after appearing on Bobby Delgané's popular show *Cabalgata Fin de Semana*. In 1956 he starred in *El pequeño ruiseñor*, and was an immediate success.

6 Rumors of sexual abuse and exploitation by Francoist dignitaries emerged decades later. It was only then that Marisol's childhood would be revealed to be unhappy and abusive (Wright 60).

7 Other films in which she starred during these years were *La corrupción de Chris Miller* (1972), *La chica del molino rojo* (1973), *El poder del deseo* (1975), *Bodas de sangre* (1980), *Carmen* (1983), *Proceso a Mariana Pineda* (1984), *Caso cerrado* (1985).

8 The photographer, César Lucas, faced legal charges of public scandal for the act of publishing the photo at the time. He would not be acquitted until 1981. Though Lucas and the Goyanes family never received permission to publish the portrait in *Interviú*, Pepa Flores never pressed charges.

9 This moment came to symbolize the new freedoms of the *transición*.

10 According to this scholar, these neobaroque somatic metaphors were rooted in counter-reformation ideology and the writings from the Bible about gender roles.

11 In February of 1978, actress Susana Estrada appeared in a photograph with one of her breasts exposed next to Enrique Tierno Galván, who would soon become Madrid's progressive Mayor.

12 During the *transición*, traditional masculine archetypes entered a state of flux and new archetypes appeared such as the intellectual "progre" as well as other queer gender identities (see Martínez Pérez 290).

13 For another similar commentary on the destape from another well-known male writer see: Umbral, Francisco "Los cuerpos y los siglos." *Interviú. Especial* 25 Aniversario, May 15, 2001.

14 In the voice over, Carlos explains that it would be years before Spaniards developed a more open attitude towards sex and nudity, but the Marisol 1976 cover haunted him for days and would be imprinted in his memory for the rest of his life: "estuve varios días como ido sin pensar en otra cosa que en esas curvas que ya para siempre quedarían grabadas en mi memoria." (*Cuéntame como pasó*, episode 166)

15 In the biopic, Marisol sings the songs on two occasions. First as the happy bride of Carlos Goyanes, and later as the disillusioned wife seeking a separation. Thus, the two versions of the song emphasize the disjunction between the actress's public persona as an energetic, effervescent beauty and her private life, which was in shambles.

16 A recent exhibition at Málaga's museum *La térmica*, entitled "Marisol, el resplandor de

un mito" (April 30-July 23, 2015) displays César Lucas's photographs of the actress. Included in the exhibit is the cover photograph from *Interviú*. The actress did not attent the exhibit. Nor did she appear for the tribute concert that the lead singer Javier Ojeda of the Malaga 80s pop band *Danza* Invisible organized in her honor in 2012. In recent years there have been efforts to rescue and vindicate the memory of Marisol and honor her as representative of Málaga. Clearly her memory lives on, but it seems that her deepest wish is to be left alone (See Ruiz).

17 Marta Sanz's novel, *Daniela Astor y la caja negra* (2013) is a rare exception. The novel devotes an entire chapter to the 1976 *Interviú* cover, but it approaches both the myth of Marisol and the Transición in very different terms. In the novel there is no longing for the years of the *destape*. Instead, through its young protagonists' desire to embody the apparent triumph of Marisol and other sexual icons of those years, Sanz exposes the fault lines within the supposed sexual freedom of the *transición*.

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