When attempting to approach the effects of the Spanish Civil War on Spanish women, there has been a tendency to explore the way in which the dictatorship shaped gender roles and models of femininity during its nearly four decades of rule. Therefore, the most obvious themes that come to mind are related to the shaping of Spanish womanhood according to the precepts of Sección Femenina and its strategies in the nationalization of women,¹ which led to the establishment of a gender model aimed at shaping the role of women as perpetuators of National Catholicism. However, one of the issues that seems to have been missed, or at least disregarded until recently in the study of Francoist womanhood, is connected to the politics of exclusion exercised by the regime from the very first moment of the July 1936 coup and rigidly applied throughout the dictatorship, especially at times of instability, such as the first postwar (1940s) and the late Franco period (tardofranquismo).²

¹ In the Spanish context, Ángela Cenarro defines the nationalization of women as the imposition of traditional gender roles for the benefit and resurgence of the Francoist state. In this way, women’s roles as mothers and wives were revalued and resignified as duties that would contribute to the construction of the new state. Ángela Cenarro, *La sonrisa de Falange: Auxilio Social en la guerra civil y la posguerra* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2006), 91.

² Although the works of Giuliana Di Febo (*Resistencia y movimiento de mujeres en España, 1936–1976* (Barcelona: Icaria, 1979)) and Shirley Mangini (*Recuerdos de la resistencia. La voz de las mujeres de la guerra civil española* (Barcelona: Península, 1997)) are pioneering in this respect, there is still a need to further explore women’s experiences of repression and strategies of resistance. In the last decade, a number of essential contributions have appeared, such as Mónica Moreno Seco, “Las mujeres de la república y la guerra civil desde la perspectiva democrática actual,” *PASADO Y MEMORIA. REVISTA DE HISTORIA CONTEMPORÁNEA* 6 (2007): 73–93; Claudia Cabrero, “Espacios femeninos de lucha. Rebeldías cotidianas y otras formas de resistencia de las mujeres durante el primer franquismo,” *HISTORIA DEL PRESENTE* 4 (2004): 31–45. and Mercedes Yusta, “Rebelión individual, compromiso familiar, acción colectiva. Las mujeres en la resistencia al franquismo durante los años cuarenta,” *HISTORIA DEL PRESENTE* 4 (2004): 63–92.
Apart from the nationalization of women to become part of the state project—what Aurora G. Morcillo called “True Catholic Womanhood”—the regime also enforced a number of measures that would determine the exclusion of dissident women from such sociopolitical projects. Within this politics of exclusion, the conjunction of morality and politics would be crucial as women’s political agency would be judged morally and would lead to their demonization and marginalization in a clear exercise of what Sofía Rodríguez López explores under the heading of “state gender violence” in this same volume. An essential tool in this strategic dislocation of dissident women would be exercised by means of public punishment in all its varieties, from physical punishment in the form of head shaving, torture, and public humiliation, to social punishment by means of the active exclusion of these women from Spanish society in terms of restricted access to the labor market and their forced dependence on the charity and assistance of the regime, mainly through Auxilio Social. In fact, the social control exercised by the Franco regime was primarily based on two strategies: repression and charity. The first was aimed at the physical annihilation of dissidence; the second had as its primary objective the construction of a conforming society dependent on the state.

Accordingly, the aim of this chapter is to examine the repressive strategies of the Spanish dictatorship against women. It is my contention that the Francoist regime of violence and exclusion of the vanquished was inherent. This work will analyze the meaning and purpose of the nationalization and repression of women in the Francoist state, especially at times of instability, by offering a socio-historical overview of the different methods of repression against women. Furthermore, it will also focus on their relevance in the present day by means of the exploration of the chapter’s central issue in two short films: Pelonas and A golpe de tacón in order to illustrate the importance of remembering these marginal/subaltern experiences of exclusion. In this sense, what I aim to explore is how dissident/excluded women coped with the punitive politics of the regime and in which ways they rebelled against it in order to maintain a sense of identity that the dictatorship wanted to erase and which has survived, strongly, to this day. The reasons for this are twofold. First of all, the Francoist

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3 See chapter 10 by Sofía Rodríguez López, in this volume.
4 See Ángela Cenarro, La sonrisa de la Falange, XIV.
5 Dir. by Laly Zambrano and Ramón de Fontecha (RdeF Producciones Audiovisuales, 2003).
6 Dir. by Amanda Castro (Por Tantas Cosas Producción Audiovisual, 2007).