Madrid me mata: Killing the Husband in Alex de la Iglesia’s La comunidad and Pedro Almodóvar’s ¿Qué he hecho yo para merecer esto?

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Abstract
Shot some sixteen years apart, Pedro Almodóvar’s ¿Qué he hecho yo para merecer esto? (1984) and Alex de la Iglesia’s La comunidad (2000) share a number of interesting features. Besides the idiosyncrasies inherent in having the charismatic actor, Carmen Maura, playing the main role, both films offer a commentary on Madrid and the sexism inherent in late-20th century Spanish society. Although neither de la Iglesia’s nor Almodóvar’s film could be treated as simple allegories for one idea, both, nevertheless, invite some interesting associations, especially concerning women and the urban environment. In spite of their differences, this paper will show how the films’ protagonists, Gloria and Julia, embody and, at the same time, fight against Madrid. This city is, however, presented as a hostile, masculine domain these women need to recreate in order to inhabit it. The process of recreating the city is, therefore, for these women, one of identification, self-definition and self-creation. In ¿Qué he hecho yo ...? and La comunidad Carmen Maura represents Madrid and fights against a city that is personified by their husbands. Other than offering a commentary on urbanism and sexism, both films adopt the famous slogan, Madrid me mata, to suggest that Madrid kills, needs to be killed and gives life.