ABSTRACT

This dissertation presents a study of the works of novelist Lourdes Ortiz (born in 1943) within the context of postmodern trends in post-Franco Spain, focusing in particular on the relationship between feminism and historical skepticism in Ortiz’s narrative.

In chapter one we first review the literature written in postwar Spain, noting that literature either echoed the univocal perspective of the Franco regime or reflected non-conformity through its discourse of dissent. We foreground this literary panorama against that of post-Franco Spain, in which for the first time in Spanish literary history, female writers are receiving recognition as a group. There follows a description of Ortiz’s literary trajectory written between 1976 and 1986. In chapter two we examine three of Ortiz’s novels which focus on marginal or “decentered” characters. The protagonists of Luz de la Memoria (1976), En días como estos (1981), and Arcángeles (1986) battle with contradictions that prevent them from achieving authenticity, their undeclared voices struggling to emerge from a barrage of predominant voices that have come to represent an alleged status quo. In the next chapter on Urraca (1982), we observe that myths reinforcing the concept of unity are juxtaposed with alternative myths and perspectives. In chapter four we explore Urraca as a clear example of historiographic metafiction, a subgenre that inquires into the nature of narrative representation. In the following chapter we examine Picadura Mortal (1979), a novela negra in which parody is used as a vehicle to underline and undermine conventional genres and myths.

In chapter six we establish that during the Franco era the concept of unity was fostered, while in post-Franco the notion of multiplicity is cultivated by society and is
reflected in literature. Lourdes Ortiz’s *oeuvre* illustrates the progressive intersection of the postmodern preoccupation with the status of objective knowledge and feminism’s(s’) dissent from patriarchal culture; both tendencies derive from an identical impulse: a rejection of the equivalence between power and knowledge.