

Subtle Gestures and Tonsorial Distractions: Javier Bardem as a Traveling Performer

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Since its origins, cinema has been multinational, but it nonetheless continues to be viewed and divided in national terms. What then of the skilled actor who performs outside of his or her original national context? The idea of transnationalism is often associated with the dispossessed and disenfranchised, referring to the movement of people who have little choice in their transnational status. However, an increasing number of people now have “the freedom, legally and economically, to move across borders and between cultures.”¹ These elite subjects, those with the financial and legal freedom to move across boundaries as they please, include the traveling actor. In *Transnational Connections*, Ulf Hannerz argues that those who *choose* to move across cultures exhibit a sense of cosmopolitanism within their transnationalism:

A person rooted in one culture thus enters another with its meanings and practices, or perhaps many of them serially, but usually temporarily. The esthetic [sic] attitude entails being positively oriented toward such experiences, but also striving toward achieving some degree of competence in handling other cultures as ongoing arrangements of life. One masters them to a degree, and at the same time surrenders to them, trying for the moment to abide by their rules. And at the same time this kind of competence entails a particular kind of mastery of one’s own culture, as one shows that one can establish a distance to it.²

This sense of a double-competence could be applied to migrating actors working in a different culture’s film industry: they have to fit into that particular system and understand the rules and requirements with regard to their performance, even as they convey a mastery in their own culture, as it often those who have achieved success at home who then go abroad.

This traversing of borders has many implications for actors and their performances. An actor’s experiences, cultural meanings, and associations from previous roles are utilized within their subsequent performances, traveling with them when they migrate and become transnational. As Philip Drake asserts, “every performance ... retains traces of earlier roles, histories that are re-mobilized in new textual and cultural contexts.”³ However, not all of the cultural meanings and associations will survive the journey; there are certain echoes and shadows that will not be audible or visible to the receiving culture. At the same time, language is something that can act as a barrier for actors; fluency, or otherwise, in a foreign tongue can limit the range of roles they are offered, and even the remnants of another language (i.e., an accent) can cause them to be pigeonholed as “other.” This article will consider the specific case of Javier Bardem, whose ability to convey complex psychological insight through subtle gestures and modes of behavior in his Spanish-language performances has been widely praised. Yet, despite his reputation for “registering psychological and dramatic

fullness through *non-verbal* [emphasis added] representation,”⁴ the construction of Bardem’s performances seems to undergo a change with the switch to English-language roles.

Bardem’s earliest English-language roles, in *Before Night Falls* (Julian Schnabel, 2000) and *The Dancer Upstairs* (John Malkovich, 2002), feature a fairly close translation of his original performance style. But as he moves into more mainstream English-language films, a transformation becomes perceptible, at least on the surface. Have Bardem’s subtle gestures, shorn of the accumulation of associations formed within the Spanish context, failed to translate to a different linguistic and cultural context? Or are the surface distractions—such as the outlandish hairstyles with which he is increasingly associated, as seen in the promotional images for *The Counselor* (Ridley Scott, 2013)—simply a sideshow to subtleties that Bardem still nonetheless enacts? In the following analysis, I will outline Bardem’s early performance style, referring to his most acclaimed performances in Spain, *Los lunes al sol* (*Mondays in the Sun*) (Fernando León de Aranoa, 2002) and *Mar adentro* (*The Sea Inside*) (Alejandro Amenábar, 2004), before exploring the transformations that occur as he begins to traverse cultural borders.

The Spanish Context

Having been at the vanguard of a new generation of Spanish performers in the 1990s, by the turn of the millennium Javier Bardem was firmly established as *the* Spanish leading man. He was not initially viewed as the accomplished actor that he would reveal himself to be; his early roles for Bigas Luna as the comic *macho ibérico* put him in danger of being typecast as someone who “played himself” (physically, Bardem was very much a “type”), although his performances in those films are more complex than they appear on the surface.⁵ From the outset, Javier Bardem’s family background has been part-and-parcel of how he is viewed within Spain, and how he is positioned within the genre he is most strongly associated with, *cine social*.⁶ There are other acting families in Spain, but the size of the Bardem dynasty sets it apart: his grandparents, mother, and siblings were / are actors, he is the nephew of the renowned director Juan Antonio Bardem, and various members of his extended family also have connections to Spanish stage and screen. Writing when Bardem won his Oscar in 2008, Elvira Lindo admitted to feeling envious of U.S. audiences who will discover him “without biographical details, only as an actor who through force of natural talent and conscientious work has put himself into a position that permits him to play those roles that everyone dreams of.”⁷ For Spanish audiences, Javier Bardem is inseparable from his family and the connotations that his name evokes; the Bardem name “conjures up ideas of impeccable liberal political credentials” and is “synonymous with left-wing politics.”⁸

Los lunes al sol marked Bardem’s return to Spanish cinema after a three-year absence from Spanish-language films and the film fits within these politicized associations. The narrative follows the fallout three years after mass redundancies caused by the closure of Spanish shipyards, and the struggle men face as they try to redefine what a man is when unemployed. Bardem plays Santa, a man notably older than the actor, who functions as the central axis for the group of men left untethered and adrift by their lack of work and lack of purpose. He skillfully conveys interior states through exterior glances, postures, and movements, and his sheer physical presence is an intrinsic part

of his performance in the film. His physical appearance is changed: he put on weight for the role because he felt that Santa needed to be more physically imposing than the other men due to his dominant function in the group⁹ and his hairline is taken back to make him look older. The film's *mise-en-scène* enhances his dominant presence, ensuring that he occupies most of the screen, and his body language expertly conveys the subtle distinctions of his character: he arches his spine slightly to emphasize his paunch, and his slow, shuffling walk suggests someone weighed down. Bardem's command of body language to reveal character is especially notable in the courtroom scene where Santa is told that the judgement for damaging public property is upheld and he will have to pay the fine (figure 1). He does not really speak in the scene, except to repeat certain phrases said either by his lawyer or the judge, which he mutters under his breath. He pulls at his trouser leg to straighten the material in a gesture that betrays both anxiety and irritation. Santa is more smartly dressed than usual and is putting himself in order, but the speed of the movement suggests an unconscious nervous tic and contained anger. Seated, Bardem moves first one arm and then the other at an angle to each side of his body, with his elbows sticking out, repeating this awkward movement several times in response to what is going on around him as if to prevent himself from sinking any further.



Figure 1: *Los Lunes al sol*

Much of the Spanish media coverage of *Los lunes al sol* emphasized the work that goes into a Bardem performance, with his director elaborating on the actor's process for creating a character¹⁰, and the *madrileño* actor explaining how he performed a northern accent (the first time he had performed an accent markedly different to his own, in the Spanish context).¹¹ The emphasis on these elements in the press coverage underlines his reputation for performative virtuosity but also marks the shift that had taken place in terms of how he was perceived at home. His performances are no longer seen as purely instinctive (not just "playing himself") but as the product of active creation, harnessing both emotion and intellect. The attention paid to Bardem's voice continued with his next Spanish-language role as Ramón Sampedro, a quadriplegic who campaigned for his right to die. Again, Bardem performs an accent other than his own, this time Galician. In *Un viaje mar adentro* (Oskar Santos, 2005), a behind-the-scenes documentary about Amenábar's film, Javier Bardem is shown

visiting a quadriplegic hospital and working with a physiotherapist as part of his preparation for the role. The result was that he understood how his physical position lying down, and his lack of movement, would impact other aspects of his performance, specifically the way in which the character speaks. The real Sampedro spoke quickly because his paralysis made his breathing slow. Close watching of the film reveals that Bardem always says his line rapidly as he exhales, and because of the amount of effort required to speak, his voice is “tired” and without many different cadences.

In those circumstances, attention switches to Bardem's face, frequently shown in close-up and aged decades by an impressively subtle make-up job. Denied the ability to express much emotion vocally, Ramón's feelings instead flit across Bardem's face with his eyes given particular emphasis among the weapons in his limited arsenal. The dichotomy between Bardem's physical bulk and the extreme vulnerability that he can transmit with his gaze has been present throughout his acting career. Peter Evans, in relation to *Jamón jamón*, speaks of how alongside Bardem's Picasso-like bull physicality there have always also been elements of vulnerability, fissures in the representation of powerful men.¹² But it is also important to observe the part played by the camera: Amenábar limits the physicality of the character by never showing the whole of Bardem in any one shot, fragmenting his body into different shots, or having the camera pan or track down or along his body. The actor's performance does not happen in isolation, it works in conjunction with decisions taken by other members of the filmmaking team, which may be pertinent to consider in relation to the more ostentatious elements of Bardem's recent English-language roles.

Translating Subtle Gestures

But first we need to look at Bardem's first steps into English-language films. To return to Hannerz's concept of the cosmopolitan, he writes that “Cosmopolitanism often has a narcissistic streak; the self is constructed in the space where cultures mirror one another.”¹³ In other words, individuals who traverse cultural borders try to maintain a certain stability of “self” across those differing cultures. But for the traveling actor this is easier said than done because the receiving culture can offer a wildly different interpretation of him/her, as Kwai-Cheung Lo observes in relation to Hong Kong actors: “the characterizations of Hong Kong actors in Hollywood films rely predominantly on many American presuppositions of what an ethnic Asian should be like, rather than on the specific symbolic values that these actors could offer.”¹⁴ Spanish actors are usually subject to a slide into “Latinity” in an American context, but what is striking in the case of Javier Bardem is that his initial forays into English-language films offered him the opportunity to construct himself or his characters in a similar space to those of his Spanish-language performances. Bardem's “liberal credentials” are manifested in his choices as an actor, specifically through his choice of characters who are socially repressed, ostracised, or marginalised; he often chooses to portray characters with strong moral compasses who are let down by “the system,” or characters who find that there is no place for them in their society. His roles as the persecuted gay poet Reinaldo Arenas in *Before Night Falls* and as the honest police detective Agustín Rejas in *The Dancer Upstairs* maintain that thread.¹⁵

Although Javier Bardem has been “called upon to perform as foreign—which will be the usual case in the first phase of the professional migration,”¹⁶ his early English-language films do not present him as a minority, because both *Before Night Falls* and

The Dancer Upstairs are set in “Hispanic” locations: Cuba and a non-specified Latin American country (actually Peru) respectively. Both films have international casts, something that often occurs when transnational actors are utilised in leading roles, as their configuration of cultural meanings can in turn reconfigure the meanings of those surrounding them.¹⁷ James Mottram argues that rather than it having a detrimental effect, an international cast speaking in English works for *The Dancer Upstairs* because it enhances the suggestion that the political dilemma is universal: “the film plays on the idea that the characters are speaking in a foreign tongue in a country that is no longer theirs.”¹⁸

However, actors performing in a language other than their native tongue may encounter particular challenges in the way they approach a performance. Bardem has stated in many interviews the difficulty he had in *Before Night Falls*, not just speaking in English but speaking English with a Cuban accent, saying of his first viewing of the film: “I look at myself, and I see a Spanish person who's trying to be understood by an English-speaking audience and is putting a lot of energy into that, instead of expressing himself freely and feeling comfortable.”¹⁹ He further elaborates on the issue of language on the DVD commentary track for *The Dancer Upstairs*: “What I found extremely difficult for me, and still find it, is that my whole life, my experience, which is something I have to work with as an actor, has been made in Spanish. So, so far I haven't loved or hate [sic] whatever you want to name it, in English. So those words are like a new experience for me...you have to put that experience in every word when you name it, when you mention those words they have a personal meaning to you.”²⁰ Instead he draws on his expertise at conveying character via physical behavior, starting with the physical side of the performance for English-language roles: “I need to see that there is a character to build. I pay attention to the physicality of it, to the body language, to try and create some kind of behavior that's not close to my own, so I can be surrounded by elements other than the language.”²¹



Figure 2: *The Dancer Upstairs*

As with *Los lunes al sol* and *Mar adentro*, Bardem's physical appearance was altered in a naturalistic manner in *Before Night Falls* and *The Dancer Upstairs* to fit the desired

characterizations: he lost a lot of weight to slim down his bulky frame as Arenas, and was subtly aged (mainly by way of his hair being greyed) for Detective Rejas. His body language for each character further embellishes these physical changes: for example, when walking in *Before Night Falls*, he often keeps his elbows tucked in close to his body and slightly flattens his shoulders, further reducing his frame but also indicating someone who is trying to be inconspicuous and who is withdrawing into himself as a defense from attack. It is a comportment that noticeably differs from Bardem's usually square-shouldered physicality. Although he acquits himself well with the verbiage in *The Dancer Upstairs*²², it is in Bardem's favor that Rejas is an introspective man and an observer; although unafraid to speak his mind to those in power, he also displays an awareness of when it is better to say nothing and simply watch. It is a film of glances, of looking, and things left unsaid— all of which suit the performance style of an actor capable of saying so much without opening his mouth. In the sequence where Rejas tracks down the wounded schoolgirl assassin, he is on his own and therefore his state of mind is communicated non-verbally through his body language: his hands are visibly shaking as he points his gun upon entering the house, and he jumps when his walkie-talkie splutters into life (giving away his location), with his panic manifested in the way he gets his hand caught in his jacket while trying to silence the device. In the aftermath of being shot at (and the wounded girl dying), he stands outside leaning against a wall, as if unsteady on his feet. His jacket now off and his shirt stained with both blood and sweat, his hands are still shaking as he uses the walkie-talkie to summon his team and he fumbles as he takes coins out of his pocket for the local children who guided him to the house. Putting the arial of the walkie-talkie to his lips, in what is performed by Bardem as an unconscious gesture (it speaks of the sense of security a child gets from sucking its thumb but also signals Rejas's distracted mental state), Rejas looks close to tears (figure 2); the detective is another of Javier Bardem's strong men who have their vulnerability revealed to the audience via the actor's subtle gestures of relatable humanity.

Seductive Surfaces and Tonsorial Distractions

In Bardem's more recent English-language films, his characteristic subtlety has become concealed behind a garish exterior. I will concentrate on his performances in *No Country for Old Men* (Joel and Ethan Coen, 2007) and *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* (Woody Allen, 2008). Although they were released within a year of each other, these two films offer clear distinctions in how Bardem is utilised and what happens to his performances as a result.²³ Hannerz contrasts “cosmopolitans” and “locals,” writing that, “...for most of these locals, the cosmopolitan is someone a little unusual, one of us and yet not quite one of us. Someone to be respected for his experiences, possibly, but equally possibly not somebody to be trusted as a matter of course.... [There] can be no cosmopolitans without locals.”²⁴ This “othering,” the wariness with which the outsider is regarded by the “local,” can be seen in relation to Bardem's characters in both of these films but manifested in different forms. For example, *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* offers an illustration of Perriam's contention that in the first stages of professional migration, “foreignness co-mingles revealingly with the honed down or very often switched codings of, in our case, a certain Spanishness. Spanishness becomes foreign to itself. As potent symbols of national cultural identity such migratory stars turn that identity inside out in a process that may both belittle it (through caricature and exoticization) and enhance it (through epitomization and glamorization).”²⁵ Woody Allen's film both belittles and enhances the Spanishness of

Javier Bardem (and Penélope Cruz) because despite the actors and their characters being “local” (setting aside the irony, whether intended or otherwise, of the film completely ignoring the issues of Catalan identity that Vicky is supposedly so enthralled by), the two of them are viewed through the eyes of the American tourists and so effectively become “other” in their own land.

As noted above, Javier Bardem's initial expansion of his career into English-language films allowed him to construct his performances in similar spaces to his Spanish-language ones, and he had managed to avoid performing the stereotypes usually offered to “Latin” actors. Although his first “Hollywood” production was *Collateral* (Michael Mann, 2004), in which he plays cartel boss Félix, Bardem avoided the pitfalls that such a role offered (namely the possibility of being typecast in the aftermath) because of the way he was used. He has a commanding presence in his one scene and had evidently been hired because of his skills as an actor rather than simply because his ethnicity matched the expectations of such a role.²⁶ The fact that it was a “quality” film also makes a difference. Another way in which Bardem's traveling career stands out is that his more mainstream English-language films have generally been made with directors who are considered “auteurs” or who have a certain cultural cachet (the Coen brothers, Michael Mann, Woody Allen, Milos Forman, Sam Mendes).²⁷ Aside from *Eat Pray Love* (Ryan Murphy, 2010), *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* is Bardem's only performance of the “Latin Lover,” a stereotype he successfully sent up and distanced himself from early in his career in *Boca a boca (Mouth to Mouth)* (Manuel Gómez Pereira, 1995). In Woody Allen's film, Juan Antonio represents Mediterranean seduction but not much else, giving Bardem very little to do other than to convey easy charm.

Perriam suggests that Bardem performs “as if playing a now grown-up and more refined version of Raúl”²⁸ from *Jamón jamón*, but it is hard to square the cultured and sophisticated Juan Antonio, who exists within the bubble of Allen's monied milieu, with the loud-mouthed and crude Raúl who is clearly marked as belonging to the working class. In the respective films, Bardem's scenes of propositioning women reveal clear distinctions in the types of masculinity being performed: in *Jamón jamón*, full of swagger (cocksure strut and grin), Raúl follows Silvia (Penélope Cruz) into the ladies' bathroom in a club and forcefully kisses her, which earns him a slap; in *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*, Juan Antonio approaches Vicky (Rebecca Hall) and Cristina (Scarlett Johansson) in a restaurant and with a mixture of insouciance and wry amusement suggests a threesome in Oviedo. He keeps his voice low and his body language open and neutral, while his eyes dance with amusement at the women's differing responses. Both are confident men, but Bardem performs modulations of that confidence; the seductive but unthreatening Juan Antonio is much closer to the Latin Lover expected in an American romcom. That is not to denigrate Bardem's performance (he does what is required of him), but to point out that the character as written gives him very little to do.

Although Jo Labanyi argues that “the visibility of markers of ethnic difference requires ethnicity to manifest itself through techniques of exhibition and spectacle,”²⁹ this is more obvious in relation to Cruz's María Elena than it is to Bardem's Juan Antonio. However, Bardem's habitually subtle characterisation through body language and modes of behaviour seems absent from his performance, which relies overly on natural charm and the “spectacular” sparks between him and Cruz when they improvise in Spanish. Miguel Fernández Labayen and Vicente Rodríguez Ortega posit that

Bardem's professional characterisation as a "Good Actor," while helping him "subvert the well-known notions of accented stardom and racial stereotyping,"³⁰ also allows him to evade certain levels of criticism. They note that while the Spanish press was critical of his performance in *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*, the American critics wrote that they could see him doing something beyond the stereotype. For example, they quote Manohla Dargis writing that Bardem "invests the cliché of the Latin lover with so much humor and feeling that he quickly vanquishes the stereotype."³¹

So what, then, happens when we take Javier Bardem entirely out of a Spanish or "Hispanicised" location as in the films discussed so far, and put him into a slice of pure Americana in the badlands of Texas? Bardem did not think he would ever get the opportunity to work with the Coens given the "Americanness" of their films and characters,³² but arguably his "non-Americanness" is precisely why he works so well in the part of Anton Chigurh in *No Country for Old Men*; his foreignness makes him unknowable in this landscape and therefore more frightening.³³ Reviews refer to Chigurh as somehow "alien": Christopher Sharrett picks up on the "othering" of Bardem when he points to "Chigurh as a 'foreign' element whose monstrous behaviour has no rhyme or reason— it flows merely from the pure bloodlust that is America, especially that of the Other within."³⁴ Although Bardem's vocal performance supports his alien characterisation— "with his Spanish accent flattened, his voice seems to come from a place not wholly human,"³⁵ Ian Nathan writes— far more is made of the use of disquieting silence. The three main characters (played by Bardem, Josh Brolin, and Tommy Lee Jones) never share the screen, which leaves them in isolation for much of the film; when Chigurh does interact with other people, the "metronomic exactness"³⁶ of the film throws into relief just how out of sync he is with the rest of the characters. He is an exaggerated version of Hannerz's cosmopolitan as "someone a little unusual, one of us and yet not quite one of us."³⁷



Figure 3: *No Country for Old Men*

The syncopated rhythms of Bardem's line delivery, particularly in the "What's the most you ever lost in a coin toss?" scene, are echoed in his uneven, stiff-legged walk and the slightly awkward comportment that he gives to Chigurh. He uses body movement economically and no action is superfluous; everything is done for a precise reason. For

example, after shooting Carson Wells (Woody Harrelson), his very deliberate and unrushed moving of the chair before answering the phone demonstrates Chigurh's belief that things will work out how he wants. He has correctly surmised who is ringing, hence his casual shooting of Wells who is no longer of use. He can take his time, but the movement is also based in a practical consideration: Wells' blood is spreading across the floor and the new position of the chair means that Chigurh can put his feet up onto the edge of the bed. This economy expands to his facial expressions and his "misuse" of emotion; his blankness makes him otherworldly and frightening as does his uncommenting absorption of pain, but the inappropriateness of his smile is scarier still. In the aforementioned scene with Carson Wells, Wells' unease with the situation becomes palpable when Chigurh smiles; the smile is mechanical, easily dropped, and never reaches Chigurh's eyes (figure 3). The lack of genuine emotion displayed by the character is another way in which he is marked as "other," but the "othering" is most obviously conveyed via his appearance, in terms of costume (a different style and cut of clothes but also significantly darker colors than the rest of the cast) and hair.

The hairstyle inflicted on Bardem was the most talked-about element of his performance in the film, and a recurring feature of interviews. Bardem has insisted that the hairstyle was integral to his characterisation of Chigurh and gives credit to the film's hairstylist, Paul LeBlanc: "When I saw myself in the mirror, I was shocked and said, 'Now I have 50% of the character.' That's how good a professional can be. He does half your work for you."³⁸ This again underlines the input of other people in the filmmaking process in the construction of a performance, but also raises the question of how much control Bardem has over the surface "othering" that is applied to him when he and his performances travel. On the other hand, this "othering" could be viewed as evidence of Bardem stretching himself as an actor, because those two instances where the accoutrements of performance arguably distract from the subtleties of his interpretation style—in *No Country for Old Men* and *The Counselor*—are also when he strays furthest from his established image and associations as a performer in Spain.³⁹

Although Javier Bardem utilizes slightly different methods in constructing his English-language performances, the same subtleties for which he gained his interpretative reputation can nonetheless be found underneath even the more garish surfaces he has enacted.⁴⁰ As he travels, Bardem arguably demonstrates that although subtle gestures can have more (or less) significance to an audience based on their cultural background, aspects of relatable humanity, or, in the case of Chigurh, *inhumanity* can still be located within his performances. The English-language stage of Javier Bardem's career illustrates the ways in which emotion manifests across different cultures, that "emotional expressions are not like words, which differ from culture to culture; they are closer to breathing, which is just part of human nature."⁴¹ In his discussion of the cosmopolitan, Hannerz argues that "as people move with their meanings, and as meanings find ways of traveling even when people stay put, territories cannot really contain cultures."⁴² In the multinational medium of cinema, actors and their performances of this cosmopolitan double-competence are a tangible expression of traveling meanings and common humanity.

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- ¹ S. Westwood and A. Phizacklea, *Trans-nationalism and the Politics of Belonging* (London & New York: Routledge, 2000), 2.
- ² Ulf Hannerz, *Transnational Connections* (London & New York: Routledge, 1996), 103.
- ³ Philip Drake, "Jim Carrey: the cultural politics of dumbing down," in *Film Stars: Hollywood and Beyond*, ed. Andrew Willis (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 2004), 77.
- ⁴ Chris Perriam, *Stars and Masculinities in Spanish Cinema: From Banderas to Bardem* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 102.
- ⁵ In *Jamón jamón* (1992) and *Huevos de oro* (*Goldenballs*) (1993).
- ⁶ Cinema that deals with social issues, or cinema with a social conscience.
- ⁷ Elvira Lindo, "Del jamonazo al oro de la estatuilla," *El País* (26th February 2008), page unknown. The translation is my own.
- ⁸ Jennifer Green, "It's a Bardem thing," *Screen International* (10th December 2004), 18.
- ⁹ Stated in an interview on the DVD.
- ¹⁰ Elsa Fernández-Santos and Rocío García, "Mi película habla de lo que está en la calle, en cada esquina, en cada bar," *El País* (30th September 2002), 39.
- ¹¹ Elsa Fernández-Santos, "Mi mayor preocupación es el respeto al personaje," *El País* (24th September 2002), 41.
- ¹² Peter W. Evans, *Jamón jamón*, (Barcelona: Ediciones Paidós, 2004), 77.
- ¹³ Hannerz, *Transnational Connections*, 103.
- ¹⁴ Kwai-Cheung Lo, "Double Negations: Hong Kong Cultural Identity in Hollywood's Transnational Representations," *Cultural Studies* 15 (3/4) (2001), 471.
- ¹⁵ In this context, it is significant that *Before Night Falls* came under fire from the Left in Spain. For further details, see Paul Julian Smith, "Blood of a Poet," *Sight & Sound* 11:6 (2001), 30-31.
- ¹⁶ Chris Perriam, "Two transnational Spanish stars: Antonio Banderas and Penélope Cruz," *Studies in Hispanic Cinemas* 2:1 (2005), 34.
- ¹⁷ On a practical level, in order to acquire funding, a certain number of recognizable names may be required. *The Dancer Upstairs* was delayed for several years because John Malkovich refused to cast a "big name" in the lead. See: Javier Angulo, 'Cuando John encontró Javi', *Cinemanía* (September 2002), 142.
- ¹⁸ James Mottram, "Easy on the megaphone," *Sight & Sound* 12:12 (2002), 17-18.
- ¹⁹ Kristen Hohenadel, "Why am I doing this absurd job?" *The Guardian* (21st March 2001), pages unknown.
- ²⁰ DVD commentary, *The Dancer Upstairs*.
- ²¹ John Malkovich, "Javier Bardem," *Interview* (May 2003), pages unknown.
- ²² The actor had concerns about his ability to deliver the erudite style of English in the script. See Angulo, "Cuando John encontró Javi," 141.
- ²³ But as already stated, *The Counselor* offers the most extreme example of this apparent trend.
- ²⁴ Hannerz, *Transnational Connections*, 110-111.
- ²⁵ Perriam, "Two transnational Spanish stars," 34.
- ²⁶ In the DVD commentary, Michael Mann stresses Bardem's dedication and effort even in a small role, observing that the actor spent two weeks learning to speak English with a Mexican (rather than a Spanish) accent even though he only had two days of filming— again, drawing attention to the *work* that goes into a Bardem performance.

²⁷ In *No Country for Old Men*, *Collateral*, *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*, *Goya's Ghosts* and *Skyfall* respectively.

²⁸ Chris Perriam, "Vicky Cristina Barcelona (Woody Allen, 2008): Penélope Cruz and Javier Bardem acting strangely," in *Spanish Cinema 1973-2010: Auteurism, politics, landscape and memory*, eds. Maria M. Delgado and Robin Fiddian (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 2013), 187.

²⁹ Jo Labanyi, "Ethnicity and Migration: Editor's Introduction," in *Constructing Identity in Contemporary Spain: Theoretical debates and cultural practice*, ed. Jo Labanyi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 19.

³⁰ Miguel Fernández Labayen and Vicente Rodríguez Ortega, "(Almost) Everybody Loves Javier Bardem... 'For He Is A Good Actor': Critical Reception in the Spanish and US Media," in *Transnational Stardom: International Celebrity in Film and Popular Culture*, eds Russell Meeuf and Raphael Raphael (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 167.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 179. Many of the reviews they cite compare his role in Allen's film to Chigurh in *No Country for Old Men*; the range that Bardem is capable of displaying is the prism through which the US critics seem to view Juan Antonio.

³² Isaac Hernández, "No he preparado ningún discurso porque no creo que vaya a ganar el Oscar, pero...", *El Mundo* (30th January 2008), 47.

³³ In the *Making of*, Joel Coen says that Chigurh is "the one character who is not meant to be a local."

³⁴ Christopher Sharrett, "Comic Dread in the Modern Frontier," *Cineaste* Summer (2008), 13.

³⁵ Ian Nathan, "No Country for Old Men," *Empire* (February 2008), 40.

³⁶ Geoffrey O'Brien, "Gone Tomorrow," *Film Comment* (November-December 2007), 29.

³⁷ Hannerz, *Transnational Connections*, 110.

³⁸ Mike Goodridge, "Awards People: Javier Bardem," *Screen International* (25 January 2008), 17.

³⁹ The level of violence in those two films also makes them stand out in Bardem's filmography. He is an ardent pacifist and is uncomfortable performing onscreen violence. See: Wise, "Javier Bardem is Anton Chigurh," *Empire* (November 2007), 136.

⁴⁰ In fact one could argue that these surface distractions are not dissimilar to the way that Bardem's physical appearance—in conjunction with his stereotypically-macho roles for Bigas Luna—initially disguised what were actually subtly-layered performances of masculinity in crisis.

⁴¹ Dylan Evans, *Emotion: A very short introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 6.

⁴² Hannerz, *Transnational Connections*, 8.