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CULTURAL MEMORY AND MEDIA: SPANISH REPUBLICANS AND THE

SPANISH CIVIL WAR

by

Stuart Cameron

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

History

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ABSTRACT

Cultural Memory and Media: Spanish Republicans and the Spanish Civil War

by

Stuart Cameron, Master of Arts

Utah State University, 2021

Major Professor: Dr. Tammy Proctor
Department: History

The 2007 *Ley de la Memoria Histórica* or Law of Historical Memory set off a boom in the popularity and research of the historical memory of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and subsequent dictatorship of Francisco Franco (1939-1975). This memory boom specifically focused on the recovery, preservation, and diffusion of the memories of the defeated Spanish Republicans and to find the bodies of the victims of the Francoist repression. Integral to this process, Spaniards used commemorative practices, namely the production of literature, graphic narratives, and interviews, to tell the stories of these individuals and their descendants. In these works, the authors display the importance of producing narratives, as they allow those telling their stories a sense of closure and healing, as well fostering an intergenerational memory between those that lived during the war and dictatorship and younger generations of Spaniards. In this project, through the lens of functional cultural memory, I examine how Spaniards used these forms of media to display their messages of the importance of sharing experiences of the past and the sense of closure this brings for those who were silenced during Franco's regime.

However, before discussing the use and production of cultural devices and tools, I also aim to introduce the reader to the Spanish Civil War (and Franco's dictatorship) and the underlying field of memory studies, discussing and portraying the complexities present in both. Similarly, I examine the factors that worked to erase and silence the Republican memory of the war. Namely I discuss the efforts of erasure enacted during Franco's regime and the period following the dictator's death known as the Transition to Democracy.

The examination of all of these factors reveals the interplay between history, politics, and memory within Spain since the early twentieth century to the present day.

(102 pages)

PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Cultural Memory and Media: Spanish Republicans and the Spanish Civil War

Stuart Cameron

This project examines the interplay between memory, history, and politics relating to Spanish Republican memories of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and the following authoritarian dictatorship of Francisco Franco (1939-1975). In my analysis of this relationship, I focus on the years around the passage of the Law of Historical Memory in 2007; I explore how Spaniards used several forms of media, namely books, graphic narratives, and interviews, to relay their messages regarding the recovery, preservation, and passage of the memories of the defeated Republicans. The authors in each medium, despite telling different stories, both real and fictional, portrayed the act of recovering memory with a sense of closure and healing for those telling the stories. Similarly, they all emphasize the importance of creating an intergenerational memory, with older Spaniards, namely the former Spanish Republicans and those that lived during the war and dictatorship, passing their memories along to younger generations for posterity's sake.

Before this, however, this project also introduces the reader to the Spanish Civil War as an event, as well as giving an overview of memory studies, showing how both are complex subjects and how their scholars discuss them.

Similarly, I also discuss the forces that worked against the Republican memory, namely the harsh repression of this group enacted during Franco's dictatorship and the silencing tactics and agreements of the post-Franco democracy.

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Stuart Cameron

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Introduction

George Orwell, in his memoir about the Spanish Civil War, *Homage to Catalonia*, vividly remembers this snapshot of his first impressions of the conflict:

I mention this Italian militiaman because he has stuck vividly in my memory. With his shabby uniform and fierce pathetic face he typifies for me the special atmosphere of that time. He is bound up with all my memories of that period of the war — the red flags in Barcelona, the gaunt trains full of shabby soldiers creeping to the front, the grey war-stricken towns farther up the line, the muddy, ice-cold trenches in the mountains.¹

Like other individual memories of the conflict, this provides more than a mere description; it captures the way memory evokes emotion, physical sensation, and intellectual engagement.

The war over the memory of the war began immediately in 1939. The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), although often overshadowed by the Second World War in 1939, was significant in both Spanish and European history during the tumultuous geopolitical events of the twentieth century. The Spanish Civil War was a domestic and international battle featuring complex sets of alliances, support/aid, and political influence within Spain and throughout the world during the 1930s.² It resulted in the long dictatorship of Francisco Franco (1939-1975), and it created a nation where the preliminary battles for memory were fought over whose war narratives had value. For much of this period, the nationalist victors' stories held a prominent position in this conflict. Then, with Spain's return to a democratic form of government in the 1970s, Spanish society underwent a period of complete silence regarding its horrific past; the so-called Pact of Silence focused on "progress" and the nation's future rather than on its bloody past. Finally, in

¹ George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* (Orlando: Harvest, 1980), 4.

² Stanley Payne, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-2.

the early 2000s, the defeated Spanish Republican memories of the civil war and dictatorship emerged from the shadows of repression and oblivion. This thesis examines the interplay between memory, politics, and history.

Part of the reason for the recovery of lost narratives was a long push for the government to recognize the Republican memory by family and friends of those killed and buried in mass graves during the war and dictatorship. As the bodies emerged, so did the stories of war. These processes came to a head in 2007 with a new Spanish law, the *Ley de la Memoria Histórica* (Law of Historical Memory). The overall goal of this law was to:

...recognize and expand rights in favor of those who suffered persecution or violence, for political, ideological reasons, or religious belief, during the Civil War and the Dictatorship, promote their moral reparation and the recovery of their memory, personal and family, and adopt complementary measures aimed at eliminating elements of division between citizens, all in order to promote cohesion and solidarity among the various generations of Spaniards around the principles, values and constitutional freedoms.^{3*}

In other words, the law aimed to give those who suffered under Franco's dictatorship the chance to speak about their experiences and to recover and preserve their memories for future generations of Spaniards. While that was the law's primary goal, it also had many other objectives, including recognizing and condemning the Spanish government's crimes under Franco's regime and removing Francoist symbology from public spaces in Spain. In addition, this legislation established the *Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica* (Documentary Center of Historical Memory) in Salamanca, which made archives previously forbidden to the public now available. Part of restoring faith in the nation,

³ "Ley De Memoria Histórica," *Ley de la Memoria Histórica (Ley 52/2007 de 26 de diciembre) - Ley de Memoria Histórica (Ministerio de Justicia)*, accessed February 17, 2021, <https://leymemoria.mjusticia.gob.es/cs/Satellite/LeyMemoria/es/memoria-historica-522007>.

* This and all subsequent translations mine, except when noted.

then, was the push to ensure the preservation of documents relating to the war and dictatorship. Lastly, the law promised governmental aid in the location, identification, and recovery of the bodies of the victims of Francoist executions buried in mass graves across Spain.⁴ Indeed, this law was a watershed moment in Spanish history as it set out to right the wrongs committed in Spain's past to help the nation recover and progress.

While studying this law is essential in understanding the historical memory of the Spanish Civil War, it does not address how Spaniards themselves produced, recovered, and spread the memories of the defeated Republicans prior to and after 2007. In other words, my thesis explores the main question of how ordinary Spaniards, particularly former Spanish Republicans and their descendants, became active agents in the processes of memory creation, recovery, and dissemination of their memories. Given the long-time lag of over 70 years between the war itself and the legislation of 2007, the issue of generation is also key to understanding how memory passes from old to young. I focus my argument and analysis on the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War when a refugee crisis ensued as Republican supporters had to abandon their homes in Spain as a result of the fall of the Second Spanish Republic and the rise of Franco's authoritarian regime.⁵ These refugees and exiles, along with their descendants, proved integral in the formation of memory of the Spanish Civil War because of their vivid accounts of the experience of war, flight, exile, and (often) later return to their homes. In the 2000s, especially after

⁴ "Ley De Memoria Histórica."

⁵ Peter Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 72-76. I define a refugee as anyone displaced by the conflict and forced to flee elsewhere, be it to another part of Spain or outside of the nation.

2007, their narratives and fictionalized accounts became popular topics of discussion in Spanish cultural narratives.

This project examines Spanish Republicans (i.e., those who supported the Spanish Republic and fought against Franco and the nationalist forces) who survived the war, exile, and the return to Spain and investigates how and why this group pushed for public, collective memory to emerge. In this search, I discovered that Spaniards actively used the tools of literature, graphic narratives, and interviews as commemorative practices to recover and preserve their memories of the past traumas of the war and regime. Certainly, there are other forms of media, such as news, but these three mediums offer deeper emotional representations and impacts of the process of recovering memory. Furthermore, Spaniards used these tools to create a fuller picture of the Spanish Civil War for those who did not experience these events, reveal the traumas experienced by the defeated, and encourage sense of closure and healing for those involved.

My argument relies on the theory of functional cultural memory, which is a collective (group) memory focused on commemorative practices and symbolism that are accessible for future generations to use.⁶ This approach hones in on the role of the media and cultural devices in changing the predominant national memory and silence surrounding the war and how memory passes down generations from parents and grandparents to their children. I specifically focus on the years leading up to and following the 2007 *Ley de la Memoria Histórica*. A key component is the theme of

⁶ Marek Tamm, "Beyond History and Memory: New Perspectives in Memory Studies," *History Compass* 11, no. 6 (2013): 462, accessed February 17, 2021, doi:10.1111/hic3.12050.

passing memory down from elders to younger generations of Spaniards.⁷ This theme is crucial, because it is the vehicle for the message of preserving the past for future generations, the importance of relaying past trauma to others, and the sense of catharsis or healing that breaking the imposed silences brings to those who suffered during the periods of the war and dictatorship.

My argument relies on a variety of sources, both primary and secondary. In terms of primary sources, I focus on three cultural tools that Spaniards used during the 2000s. The first is traditional literature (novels) dating from before 2007. These works serve as the foundation as they provide some of the earliest noticeable examples of the theme of the passage of memory from the old to the young. Certainly, there are works published before 2000 discussing the war and the dictatorship, however, they did not receive the recognition that those published during the 2000s received. One example is the writing of Spanish poet Arturo Barea, such as the *La forja de un rebelde (The Forging of a Rebel)*, published (in Spanish) in 1951, and originally printed in Britain (where Barea fled to from Spain). This trilogy was not published in Spain until 1977, long after Barea's death in 1957.⁸ On the other hand, Javier Cercas' *Soldados de Salamina* and Ángeles Caso's *Un largo silencio*, published after 2000 in Spain, received immediate attention with both receiving awards either domestic or international.⁹ The second medium is the graphic

⁷ Paloma Aguilar and Clara Ramírez-Barat, "Generational Dynamics in Spain: Memory Transmission of a Turbulent past," *Memory Studies* 12, no. 2 (2016): accessed March 3, 2021, doi:10.1177/1750698016673237; Jo Labanyi, "The Languages of Silence: Historical Memory, Generational Transmission and Witnessing in Contemporary Spain," *Journal of Romance Studies* 9, no. 3 (2009): accessed March 3, 2021, doi:10.3167/jrs.2009.090303.

⁸ José Ignacio Gracia Noriega, "Arturo Barea: Vida Y Obra," Arturo Barea: Vida Y Obra, accessed March 04, 2021, <https://www.revistadelibros.com/articulos/arturo-barea-vida-y-obra>; William Chislett, "Análisis: La Voz De Arturo Barea Revive En Los Archivos De RNE," El País, February 27, 2018, accessed March 04, 2021, https://elpais.com/cultura/2018/02/26/actualidad/1519666221_405732.html.

⁹ Michelle Pauli, "Spanish Tale Wins Foreign Fiction Prize," *The Guardian*, April 23, 2004, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2004/apr/23/news.awardsandprizes>; "Un Largo

narrative/memoir, which, in turn, built off of the foundations laid by the earlier books. These sources, however, add a visual and emotional element to the narratives of Spanish Republican refugees by allowing someone to both see and read the stories of these individuals. Finally, Spaniards' oral testimony in the form of video interviews is most important since it allows former Republicans to actively recount their stories in their own voices. This is essential as it not only allows these individuals a sense of closure by telling their stories, but also represents a form of equalizing the historical narrative, since the nationalists had told their own stories for decades.

Many scholars have examined the war itself and the way in which memory has functioned in Spain since 1939. My first chapter provides an historiographical overview of this scholarship, focusing particularly on key works on the war.¹⁰ For example, I shall explore how the Spanish Civil War was a highly divisive, fractured, and internationally relevant battleground of the early 20th century. I also introduce the theoretical framework on which I rely, namely functional cultural memory, and its connections to other theories within the umbrella of memory studies.¹¹ Chapter 1 also shall serve to introduce the reader to the Spanish Civil War itself and to memory theory, in general.

Chapter 2 identifies the factors that stood in opposition to the formation of the Republican memory of the conflict, specifically investigating the methods and reasoning

Silencio - Ángeles Caso: Planeta De Libros," PlanetadeLibros, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://www.planetadelibros.com/libro-un-largo-silencio/8681>.

¹⁰ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: The Modern Library, 2001); Ronald Fraser, *Blood of Spain: An Oral History of the Spanish Civil War* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1979); Peter Carroll, *From Guernica to Human Rights: Essays on the Spanish Civil War* (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2015).

¹¹ Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Stefan Berger, "On the Role of Myths and History in the Construction of National Identity in Modern Europe," *European History Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (2009): 490-502, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265691409105063>; Marek Tamm, "Beyond History and Memory: New Perspectives in Memory Studies," *History Compass* 11, no. 6 (2013): 458-73, <https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12050>.

of those who aimed to either repress, erase, or forget the Republican memory of the war or even the entire war itself. This chapter provides the back story of Francisco Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975), when memory was most heavily censored. Franco's regime took action to simultaneously create an "official" nationalist memory of the war and to erase, or at least heavily repress, the memories of the defeated Republicans, by any means necessary. Chapter 2 also explores the transformations of the post-Franco years, often called the Transition to Democracy. This time "officially" lasted from 1975 to 1978, but I argue it continued until 2007, due to the presence of Francoist symbols in Spanish society and the lack of government recognition of the regime's crimes.

The *Pacto del Olvido*, or the official collaboration between both sides of the Spanish government to entirely silence the past and its memories, speaks to the transitional nature of this period in Spanish history. Lastly, I argue that despite the attempts made to destroy or inhibit the Republican memories of the Spanish Civil War, the forces of silence nevertheless failed in their endeavors, and the narrative of the defeated lived on and began countering these forces with greater vigor.

In the final chapter, I delve into my primary sources in order to explain more modern attempts to recover the Republican memory of the Spanish Civil War. Specifically, Spanish Republicans, their descendants, and other Spaniards used and created a number of forms of testimony in order to commemorate Republican history and to pass along these memories from older generations down to younger Spaniards. This chapter explores each form of memory in turn: novels, graphic accounts, and oral testimonies. I argue that each form built off of the foundations laid by earlier efforts, but

all three kinds of memory documents provided a different way for families to interact with the memory of the war.

The Spanish Civil War's historical memory is not just a subject to be studied as an arbitrary or inert concept. Instead, historical memory is a living and changing thing made by people and should be treated as such. For the longest time, Republican memory was denied a voice in Spanish society and the narrative of the nation's past. However, these survivors, their descendants, and other Spaniards use the mediums of novels, graphic narratives, and testimonies to finally tell their stories and pass along their memories to younger Spaniards and future generations. My hope is that examining the creation of these memory artifacts shall bring some clarity to the continuous and complex battle over the historical memory of the Spanish Civil War raging in Spain to this day.

However, as the former Spanish Republican, Enrique Aguado Marco noted in an interview with the Spanish Civil War Historical Memory Project, “La memoria histórica es un perro riada,” or translates roughly to “Historical memory is a difficult thing.”^{12*} In a similar fashion, the historian Stanley Payne described the Spanish Civil War as, “... a conflict that was as complex as the French Revolution.”¹³ These statements perfectly portray the importance of introducing the underlying concepts and events present in this project. Thus, before discussing the commemorative practices of former Spanish Republicans and other Spaniards, or the forces that worked in opposition to these

¹² Enrique Aguado Marco, "Testimony of Enrique Aguado Marco, Interview with Scott Boehm and Miriam Duarte; May 29, June 3, and June 8, 2009," interview by Scott Boehm and Miriam Duarte, Spanish Civil War Memory Project, 2009, video 9, accessed October 28, 2020, <https://library.ucsd.edu/speccoll/scwmemory/catalog/eng-bb2629061c.html>.

* The literal translation of this is Historical memory is a flood [or current] dog. However, Marco is likely speaking using the more colloquial meanings of these words with perro meaning “difficult” and riada being an idiom for saying a bad or difficult thing.

¹³ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, xv.

processes (i.e., the nationalist memory and the Pact of Silence), it is necessary introduce both the Spanish Civil War and memory studies and identify the complexities present within both fields of study.

Chapter 1: The Spanish Civil War and Memory

Robert Jordan, the protagonist in Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, perfectly captures both the motivations for the Spanish Civil War and for the importance of historical memory:

I have fought for what I believed in for a year now. If we win here we will win everywhere. The world is a fine place and worth the fighting for and I hate very much to leave it. And you had a lot of luck, he told himself, to have had such a good life. You've had just as good a life as grandfather's though not as long. You've had as good a life as any one because of these last days. You do not want to complain when you have been so lucky. I wish there was some way to pass on what I've learned, though.¹⁴

Here Jordan expresses a variety of his ideas, including his reason for coming to fight in Spain (his beliefs), his reflection on his life and its worth, and importantly, a wish to pass on his story and experiences on to others. This shows the importance of historical memory as Jordan, accepting his fate, wants others to know his motivations and what he learned during the war. Much like the Second World War for the countries involved, the Spanish Civil War was a watershed moment in modern Spanish history. This major trauma had a significant influence on Spaniards' memory and continues to affect politics, memory, and families in Spain and abroad. Thus, in order to understand the context of the conflict and the development of historical memory, this chapter provides a basic sense of the major events, players/ideologies that defined this conflict, and the war's repercussions on Spain and its historical memory. I shall also examine some common themes within the scholarship, namely internal conflict present in both sides in the Spanish Civil War's historical discussions and the broader field of memory studies.

Española contra española (Spaniard Against Spaniard)

¹⁴ Ernest Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (New York: Scribner, 2019), 466-67.

The Spanish Civil War did not occur spontaneously, but, rather, was the culmination of many earlier events and factors. By 1936, Spain had undergone massive and divisive changes. One such change included going from one of the largest and most powerful empires in the world to a small nation-state with few colonial holdings (namely part of present-day Morocco and Spanish Guinea) after the Spanish American War in 1898, where Spain ceded the last of its overseas colonies to the United States.¹⁵ In another significant change, in 1923 Spain endured the military dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, which lasted until his resignation in 1930. Shortly after the end of the Rivera dictatorship, the monarchy in Spain dissolved entirely in 1931 with Alfonso XIII's abdication, which ushered in a republic for the second time in Spanish history.¹⁶ The fledgling republic faced significant challenges in establishing its institutional authority and legitimacy. During this Second Spanish Republic, the new government flipped between “conservative” and “liberal” leadership until 1936 when the Popular Front, a loose coalition of left-leaning groups and parties (e.g., Communists, Socialists, Anarchists), won the elections that year by a small margin and gained a majority in the government. Their victory effectively alienated the conservative parties in Spain (traditionalists, Catholics, the military, Fascists, and monarchists).¹⁷ One extremely dissatisfied group was the Spanish military, a predominantly conservative-leaning institution. The Popular Front was especially unpopular among the military’s upper echelons (generals, officers, etc.) such as General Emilio Mola and General Francisco

¹⁵ Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), 38-39.

¹⁶ Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War*, 24-25, 52-53; Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 11. The short-lived First Republic was not much of a model; it lasted less than two years from 1873-1874.

¹⁷ Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War*, 26-29.

Franco.¹⁸ All these factors worked together and built tension within Spanish society until it exploded into civil war.

The war officially began on July 17, 1936, when the elite Spanish Legion rose in the colony of Morocco attempting a *coup d'état*. The Spanish Army and several other conservative factions and military garrisons across Spain also rebelled against the elected government of the Second Spanish Republic the following day. The coup failed, with the rebels only seizing control of Morocco and approximately one-third of Spain, mainly consisting of territory in northern Spain and the cities of Seville and Cadiz in the South. Republicans maintained control over the majority of Spain and held the advantage over the rebels in terms of territory and economic power at the beginning of the war.¹⁹ The division of the country into two broad factions set up dangerous conditions for conflict. Thus, the failed coup ultimately locked Spain into a brutal and costly three-year civil war that pitted Spaniards against Spaniards.

The war divided Spain into two “sides”: Nationalists and Republicans. The nationalist forces consisted of a number of disparate groups: the military, the Falange (fascists), monarchists (called either Carlists or Alfonsists), and the Catholic Church/Spanish Catholics. This side proved to be popular among rural populations and other groups that supported “traditional Spanish values.”²⁰ On the other hand, the Republicans' alliance consisted of Communists, Socialists, Anarchists, Basques, and Catalonians. Popular among mostly urban populations who supported the Popular Front

¹⁸ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 65-68.

¹⁹ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 66-81, 120.

²⁰ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 64, 119-126; Ronald Fraser, *Blood of Spain: An Oral History of the Spanish Civil War* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1979), 106.

government, Republicans embraced notions of autonomy and progress.²¹ However, it should not be assumed that these factions worked together with absolute cohesion against the enemy; rather, in many instances, episodes of infighting occurred within both sides, and factions battled for control.²² Consequently, the Spanish Civil War was fought by two “sides,” each made up of multiple smaller factions that battled in cooperation against their enemies or against each other for greater control in their respective “side.”

Moreover, this conflict was more than just a domestic struggle pitting Spaniard against Spaniard. Instead, the war garnered international attention, with both sides accepting aid from foreign powers. The Nationalists obtained support from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, including tanks, guns, aircraft, troops, and other military supplies.²³ At the start, German and Italian planes brought Francisco Franco’s elite Spanish Legion to Spain from Morocco, bypassing the Republican blockade.²⁴ The Republicans, on the other hand, received little to no official support from other nations, with the majority of support in the forms of arms and supplies coming from Mexico and the Soviet Union. The major democracies and future Allied Powers (Britain, USA, and France) instead practiced policies of non-intervention. The main premise behind these policies included the fear that intervention in Spain would expand the Spanish Civil War into a greater European/international conflict. However, other factors played into the Republic's lack of support, including anti-Communist sentiment in Britain, political division in France, and isolationism in the United States.²⁵ Yet, the Republicans received

²¹ "Spanish Civil War," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed January 12, 2021, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/spanish-civil-war>; Fraser, *Blood of Spain*, 106.

²² Fraser, *Blood of Spain*, 346, 511-512.

²³ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 131-148.

²⁴ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 82-83.

²⁵ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 131-148.

“unofficial” volunteers in the International Brigades, including the Abraham Lincoln and George Washington Brigades made up of Americans and volunteers from 50 other nations.²⁶ Therefore, the Spanish Civil War, while fought domestically in Spain, was also an international conflict with many other nations involved in a proxy war either through material or direct aid.

During the war itself, both sides were fairly evenly matched early on and achieved major victories. For example, the Republicans successfully defended Madrid in 1937 from a nationalist attack aiming to take the city.²⁷ On the other hand, the Nationalists conquered the Basque country, thus toppling a Republican stronghold in the north of Spain.²⁸ Yet as the war continued, the nationalists steadily gained the upper hand over the Republicans. This was largely due to a great deal of support they received from their allies, Germany and Italy, while the Republicans received little to no support from the world's other democracies.²⁹ While both sides experienced infighting between the various factions within them, the Republican “side” experienced severe internal strife, eventually degenerating into full-scale internecine violence. This infighting led the already strained Republican forces to thin out even further.³⁰ Finally, after three years of hard fighting, the Nationalists conquered Madrid in early 1939. Franco installed himself as Caudillo, the equivalent to the Fuhrer in Nazi Germany or the Duce in Fascist Italy, ushering in a

²⁶ "Serving in Spain - the International Brigades," The Australian National University Archives, accessed January 12, 2021, <http://archives.anu.edu.au/exhibitions/australia-spanish-civil-war-activism-reaction/serving-spain-international-brigades>; "Spanish Civil War," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

²⁷ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 90-91.

²⁸ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 190-191.

²⁹ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 131-148, 234-235.

³⁰ Fraser, *Blood of Spain*, 346.

nearly forty-year-long dictatorship and a period of great repression, that I shall discuss in detail in Chapter 2.³¹

Scholarship on the Spanish Civil War

A brief overview of the historiography demonstrates that the war was far more complicated than just a fight between two ideologies, left and right (Communist and Fascist). Ronald Fraser's *Blood of Spain: An Oral History of the Spanish Civil War*, Peter Carroll's *From Guernica to Human Rights: Essays on the Spanish Civil War*, and Stanley Payne's *The Spanish Civil War* discuss the conflict in general and provide a sampling of historiographical approaches to the subject.³²

Of the three works, Stanley Payne's *The Spanish Civil War* is the most "traditional," with his work mirroring that of Hugh Thomas' foundational, *The Spanish Civil War*, especially in the structure and methodology.³³ However, unlike Thomas' book, Payne states, "The present book does not offer an exhaustive description of the war, but tries to clarify the key issues, discussing the most salient themes within an analytical and comparative framework, while incorporating the results of the most recent research."³⁴ Payne argues that a primary focus of his work is the understanding of the war's origins and how that affected the "nature" of the conflict.³⁵ Throughout the book, Payne offers various arguments regarding the character of the conflict and its causes. For example, he argues that the war originated due to internal strife and divisions within Spain but was also influenced by the international and "cross-national" politics of the

³¹ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 122, 229, 244.

³² Note: I will be focusing on the English-language historiography of the war and will deal with the work of Spanish scholars at a later stage.

³³ See Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: The Modern Library, 2001).

³⁴ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, xv.

³⁵ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, xv.

time.³⁶ Similarly, he also argues that the Spanish Civil War was unique compared to other “revolutionary/counter-revolutionary” conflicts of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and the two World Wars that preceded and followed the war.³⁷ For example, Payne points out that the other civil wars of the time, often set off by communist revolutions, were often more “two sided,” while the Spanish Civil War saw “semi-pluralism” (i.e. division) among the combatants. More importantly, Payne illuminates the complexities of the war by depicting the divisions and internal conflicts among the parties constituting the Popular Front.³⁸ Therefore, Payne’s work serves as an important foundation for a study of the Spanish Civil War.

Unlike Payne’s more traditional history of the Spanish Civil War, Ronald Fraser’s *Blood of Spain: An Oral History of the Spanish Civil War* offers a differing interpretation of the conflict. Fraser’s distinctiveness lies in his sources, namely his use of interviews to present an oral history of the war. In his foreword, Fraser states the purpose for employing this approach to the study of the war, “...within the general and even detailed knowledge, one area has remained unarticulated: the subjective, a spectrum of the lived experiences of people who participated in the events.”³⁹ In other words, he sets out to provide a history of the war from the perspective of those who lived and fought during the conflict. Not only is the use of interviews unique, but Fraser’s portrayal of the multiple organizations/ideologies within the broader “sides” of the war (Republican and Nationalist) and the divisions and conflicts between them is also significant. For example,

³⁶ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 231-232.

³⁷ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 231-243.

³⁸ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 216-230.

³⁹ Fraser, *Blood of Spain*, 29.

within the Nationalist front, he depicts the sense of betrayal felt by the Carlists (monarchists) at the end of the war, who perceived Franco's "forced" unification of this group with others such as the Falange (fascists) as betraying their "cause," to recreate a monarchy in Spain.⁴⁰ Similarly, he also exposed the deep divisions among the organizations that made up the Popular Front (Republicans). He shows this with multiple accounts of infighting among the numerous groups on the left, such as the POUM (Trotskyist Communist Party), the CNT (anarcho-syndicalists), and the PSUC (Catalonian Communist Party influenced by the Soviet Union) and thus the creation of "... two civil wars within the civil war."⁴¹ This is important since Fraser, much like Payne, illustrates the complex political conflicts within the two "sides" fighting the war. The interactions of multiple groups within each camp is key to understanding the war, its outcomes, and the later historical memory that emerged.

Along with oral testimonies, Fraser uses his sources to build a chronological narrative of the conflict from the outbreak to the war's climax. He frames his work through a day by day, month by month, or season by season basis, with multiple sources from each "side" of the war in each section. However, this methodology also presents a drawback for his overall narrative. Reviewers, such as Payne, see the work as overly complex, and they point out a lack of cohesion between the multiple perspectives throughout the book.⁴² Yet, despite this weakness, Fraser's work is a useful addition to

⁴⁰ Fraser, *Blood of Spain*, 511-512.

⁴¹ Fraser, *Blood of Spain*, 346.

⁴² Stanley G. Payne, *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 60, no. 1 (Duke University Press, 1980): 137, accessed February 8, 2020, doi:10.2307/2513924.

studying the memory of the Spanish Civil War since he offers more individually and chronologically-based outlooks of the war than can be found in Payne's work.

Unlike the previous two authors, Peter Carroll discusses the war through the point of view of American volunteers who fought for the Republicans in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.⁴³ Combining the source material types and methods of both Payne and Fraser, he uses interviews with veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and "traditional" written sources, such as the works and correspondences of authors including Ernest Hemingway, to provide evidence for his argument.⁴⁴ Throughout his work, Carroll investigates the divisions in American society and the Abraham Lincoln Brigade during and after the war. According to Carroll, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade was not solely a communist group but rather consisted of both non-Communists and Communists (about 70%) unified under the premise of combatting Fascism.⁴⁵ Carroll also describes the divide among Americans in their attitudes towards the Spanish Republic, Franco's government, and the American volunteers, especially in later generations. For instance, President Ronald Reagan even stated that the volunteers "fought for the wrong side."⁴⁶ Also, Carroll decries the overall poor treatment of American veterans of the Spanish Civil War by the US government since these individuals, both men and women, were viewed with suspicion, lost their rights to travel, and were mistreated if they went on to serve in the American Army during the Second World War.⁴⁷

⁴³ Peter Carroll, *From Guernica to Human Rights: Essays on the Spanish Civil War* (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2015), ix-x, 1-2.

⁴⁴ Carroll, *From Guernica to Human Rights*, ix-xi.

⁴⁵ Carroll, *From Guernica to Human Rights*, 43.

⁴⁶ Carroll, *From Guernica to Human Rights*, 2.

⁴⁷ Carroll, *From Guernica to Human Rights*, 10, 116, 123.

There are several drawbacks to his work. For example, Stacey Guill, in her review of the work, says that Carroll's book is heavily repetitive, lacks cohesion between the chapters, and is unclear in the overall goal of the book.⁴⁸ I am inclined to agree with Guill's review regarding the heavy repetition and lack of interconnection between the chapters. This makes it difficult to read the book. However, Carroll's work does show the American views of the Spanish Civil War, thus giving an "outside" perspective of the conflict not present in the previous two books.

In each case, the authors introduce distinct sets of historical actors and agents through which perceptions of the conflict are framed. Importantly, each of the authors aims to dispel or lessen common misconceptions about the Spanish Civil War, especially the notion that it was simply a war between the ideologies of Fascism and Communism. Of the three, Fraser best shows the divisions within the Spanish Civil War, because he depicts the internal disputes and outright conflict that plagued both sides.⁴⁹ Carroll's work also touches on the divisions created by the war.⁵⁰ Lastly, much like Fraser, Payne portrays the divisions between organizations and groups participating in the war. However, Payne describes the Nationalist front as a unified entity overall and focused mainly on the "civil wars" between groups within the Popular Front government.⁵¹ All three authors make it clear that there is no single history of the war itself, and as time passed, the narrative of conflict emerged through the memories of participants.

Memory Theories and Historical Memory

⁴⁸ Stacey Guill, Review of *From Guernica to Human Rights: Essays on the Spanish Civil War*, by Peter N. Carroll, *The Hemingway Review* 35, no. 1 (2015): 118-121, doi:10.1353/hem.2015.0027.

⁴⁹ Fraser, *Blood of Spain*, 346, 511-512.

⁵⁰ Carroll, *From Guernica to Human Rights*, 43.

⁵¹ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 216-230.

Historical memory, a topic most often associated with Holocaust studies and the two world wars in European history, represents a significant turn away from the Spanish Civil War's more general histories. Authors may discuss the memory or lack thereof regarding the war, but they do not always provide theoretical context or discussions on memory formation. In other words, the reasons why Spaniards who participated in the war and future generations born after it chose to remember (or forget) the conflict and what influenced these decisions is important as they determine the survival of not only the memories of those who lived the events, but the commemoration of these individuals (and those lost) in history. Thus, before discussing the historical memory of the Spanish Civil War, it is necessary to introduce the historiography of memory theories and how they relate to history.⁵²

Geoffrey Cubitt's *History and Memory* examines the various connections and parallels between the field of history and the subject of memory. Cubitt examines the "memory turn" in history or, in other words, the emergence of memory as a significant focus for historians.⁵³ For Cubitt, memory offers historians a new subject of study and a new methodological and organizational approach to frame their works.⁵⁴ Beyond the relationship between history and memory, Cubitt introduces two specific types of memory, individual and social (collective).⁵⁵

⁵² Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Stefan Berger, "On the Role of Myths and History in the Construction of National Identity in Modern Europe," *European History Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (2009): 490-502, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265691409105063>; Marek Tamm, "Beyond History and Memory: New Perspectives in Memory Studies," *History Compass* 11, no. 6 (2013): 458-73, <https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12050>; Lucy Bond, Stef Craps, and Pieter Vermeulen, eds, *Memory Unbound: Tracing the Dynamics of Memory Studies* (New York: Berghahn, 2018); Barbara A. Misztal, *Theories Of Social Remembering* (Berkshire: McGraw-Hill Education, 2003); Alison Winter, *Memory: Fragments of a Modern History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

⁵³ Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 1-2.

⁵⁴ Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 2.

⁵⁵ Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 66-111, 118-171.

Cubitt defines individual memory as memory focusing on the self or ingrained with a sense of self-awareness.⁵⁶ On the other hand, he defines collective memory as individual or societal consciousness regarding a group or “common” past or legacy.⁵⁷ More importantly, he depicts the messiness between these two types of memory and how one interacts with the other (i.e., individual to collective and vice versa).⁵⁸ He argues that societal/collective memory is made up of many individual memories within a society, while the societal memory often influences these individual memories themselves in their remembrance of certain events.⁵⁹ Cubitt also analyses the various concepts and problems that arise in the use of memory in studying the past. One question that he identifies is the possible use of memory to obtain justice for past crimes. Cubitt states, “One of the problems with the equation of justice and memory lies in the fact that memory is, in practice, always selective.”⁶⁰ In other words, Cubitt thinks that the main issue with using memory to establish a sense of justice for past crimes is that memory is subjective rather than objective. However, he describes the potential problems in the application, transmission, and transformations between these two types of memory. He also examines the potential use of cultural tools in the expression and study of memory, both individual and collective. Thus, cultural devices, such as writing, performance, and commemoration, aid in communicating memory from the individual to the collective.⁶¹

Cubitt’s work influences my own research since he explores the connections among individual and collective memory and history and depicts the slippage between

⁵⁶ Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 66-70.

⁵⁷ Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 119, 199-200.

⁵⁸ Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 119-124.

⁵⁹ Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 119-125.

⁶⁰ Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 56.

⁶¹ Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 141-154.

these two types of memory and their various applications in historical scholarship. His work is also useful because he establishes how cultural devices aid in the study of memory, thus providing a theoretical background for the types of sources necessary for understanding an individual's memory or that of an entire society/group. Lastly, his book introduces the key theorists and their contributions in the field of memory, such as Maurice Halbwachs and his foundational work in the study of collective memory, and Marianne Hirsch and her work in the formation of post-memory theory.⁶²

In a similar fashion to Cubitt, Stefan Berger's article, "On the Role of Myths and History in the Construction of National Identity in Modern Europe," examines the connections and parallels between history and memory while placing another factor, myth, into the conversation. Berger's article examines the connections and similarities between history, memory, and myth in constructing national and personal identities. Berger argues, "Debunking myths became the foremost characteristic of good 'scientific' history... Yet, any neat delineation of history and myth was fraught with problems. Even the self-consciously professional writing of history contributed to the construction of myths which came to underpin assumptions of national character and national identity."⁶³ Thus, despite the attempts of "scientific" history to separate history from myth, historians unknowingly or knowingly help to construct "national" myths and identities through their writing. Like Cubitt, Berger also examines two types of memory and their relation to history (and myth), individual and collective. He says that while individual memory is different from history, collective memory "... is thus, like history, always contested, and

⁶² Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 123, 158-161.

⁶³ Berger, "On the Role of Myths and History," 490-91.

the result of attempts to give meaning to the past through interpretation.”⁶⁴ He then ties this to myth, stating that collective memories, such as that examined by Halbwachs and Pierre Nora, are built upon senses of “nostalgia” of the past.⁶⁵ Therefore, Berger establishes the connection between history, memory, and myth by portraying the relationships between historical writing and collective memory and the nostalgic basis of collective memory.

Like Cubitt's, Berger's scholarship establishes the usefulness of fiction and myth (i.e., the power of the story) in the study of collective memory and history of a nation. I rely heavily on works of fiction in graphic narratives and panel comics to analyze how Spanish Republicans used these forms of media to express their memories of the Spanish Civil War to a broader audience. Thus, understanding the workings of nostalgia, myth, and history is key to understanding cultural devices within historical memory.

Following a different path than Cubitt and Berger, Marek Tamm examines both criticisms and benefits of memory studies as well as the development of memory studies in history and how it became institutionalized within the field.⁶⁶ While Tamm does discuss collective memory like the previous two authors, he also introduces a new category of memory, cultural memory. Tamm defines the “cultural turn” in memory studies through his historiography of the works of Jan and Aleida Assmann and Astrid Erll.⁶⁷ He states, “The cultural approach to the study of memory departs from a simple premise: shared memories of the past are not accidentally produced by social groups but a

⁶⁴ Berger, “On the Role of Myths and History,” 492.

⁶⁵ Berger, “On the Role of Myths and History,” 492.

⁶⁶ Tamm, “Beyond History and Memory,” 458-460.

⁶⁷ Tamm, “Beyond History and Memory,” 461-62.

consequence of cultural mediation, primarily of textualization and visualization.”⁶⁸ While collective memory also uses cultural processes, mainly oral tradition, in its circulation, for Tamm, “Cultural memory’, on the other hand, is communicated with the help of material means, it is temporally unlimited and signs and symbols are employed for handing it on.”⁶⁹ Tamm then goes on to argue that cultural memory is divided into two types, “functional” and “storage” memory, with the first focusing on commemorative practices and the second focusing on “material representations” such as books and images.⁷⁰ In other words, functional cultural memory concentrates on how individuals and societies actively commemorate and remember the past, while storage memory centers more on preserving memory through writing and other “permanent” practices. At the end of his article, Tamm opens up a call for historians to write works for “...a new kind of history writing in the age of presentism.”⁷¹

Tamm’s article is essential for my own project because he explores functional cultural memory, an approach that I utilize in my analysis of the historical memory of the Spanish Civil War. This theory is important since the main question I hope to answer is how Spanish Republicans used media tools to disseminate their memories of the Spanish Civil War and combat the pact of forgetting (the official agreement between the “left” and “right” in Spain to not discuss the war or subsequent dictatorship)⁷² following the Franco Dictatorship. In other words, in a similar fashion to Berger, Tamm establishes the

⁶⁸ Tamm, “Beyond History and Memory,” 461.

⁶⁹ Tamm, “Beyond History and Memory,” 462.

⁷⁰ Tamm, “Beyond History and Memory,” 462.

⁷¹ Tamm, “Beyond History and Memory,” 466.

⁷² see Madeleine Davis, “Is Spain Recovering Its Memory? Breaking the Pacto Del Olvido,” *Human Rights Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005): 859, <https://doi.org/10.1353/hrq.2005.0034>.

importance of media in the communication of memory between individuals and the overarching societies around them.

In response to Tamm's call at the end of his work for a new history writing, Lucy Bond, Stef Craps, and Pieter Vermeulen, in their anthology, *Memory Unbound: Tracing the Dynamics of Memory Studies*, provide a set of works written for the "new kind of history" that Tamm mentions in his conclusion. In terms of structure, this work is similar to another foundational anthology in memory studies, John Gillis' *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, with multiple essays discussing different themes within memory studies.⁷³ Like Gillis' work, Bond et al. provide authors the space to discuss the many faces of memory and its relation to history. Unlike Gillis' book, which focuses on memory concerning national identity and commemorative practices and controversies, Bond and her colleagues focus on four different topics: transcultural, transgenerational, transmedial, and transdisciplinary.⁷⁴ The sections most similar to the previous readings are the pieces written on transcultural and transgenerational memory. For example, in transcultural memory, Aleida Assmann's essay, "Transnational Memory and Construction of History through Mass Media," mirrors the previous authors' works. This is because she discusses the role of media in the formation, commemoration, and circulation of collective and cultural memory through a transnational framework.⁷⁵

⁷³ John R. Gillis, *Commemorations: the Politics of National Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 1-20.

⁷⁴ Gillis, *Commemorations*, 1-20; Lucy Bond, Stef Craps, and Pieter Vermeulen, eds., *Memory Unbound: Tracing the Dynamics of Memory Studies* (New York: Berghahn, 2017), 3-22.

⁷⁵ Aleida Assmann, "Transnational Memory and Construction of History through Mass Media," in *Memory Unbound: Tracing the Dynamics of Memory Studies*, ed. Lucy Bond, Stef Craps, and Pieter Vermeulen (New York: Berghahn, 2017), 65-80.

Therefore, this volume is influential for my argument as the authors show how scholars have written about memory (historiography) and how historians have applied memory to a myriad of other topics and themes. This is significant since these authors show more than just the historiography of memory theories but provide examples of how historians work with these theories and apply them to their studies of various topics within the overarching field of history.

In addition to the historical studies of memory, other social science disciplines explore this subject as well. For example, Barbara Misztal's work *Theories of Social Remembering* constitutes a foundational study of memory within the field of sociology; Misztal set the stage for many other authors analyzed here. Misztal's work aims to examine the significant theories within the overarching subject of memory by analyzing the origins, connections, and problems between collective and individual memory.⁷⁶ One of the critical issues that Misztal scrutinizes is the question of passage of time and its effect on individual and collective memory. She writes, "The content of memory is subject to time as it changes with every new identity and every new present, so memory and temporality cannot be detached from each other."⁷⁷ She continues, "...collective memory allows people to have a certain social identification, both on an individual and a societal level. On the other, following the old sociological assertion that the present influences the past, it can be said that the reconstruction of the past always depends on present day identities and contexts."⁷⁸ In other words, Misztal identifies the dependence of historical memory, both individual and collective, on time--with memory changing

⁷⁶ Misztal, *Theories Of Social Remembering*, 1-3.

⁷⁷ Misztal, *Theories Of Social Remembering*, 14.

⁷⁸ Misztal, *Theories Of Social Remembering*, 14.

through the passages of time and from person to person. Similarly, she shows how historical memory is influenced by the context of the present, with individuals and groups viewing the past through their own perspective in the present-day.

Much like Cubitt and the other authors, she depicts the dynamic and everchanging nature of memory. She states, “Memory has many forms and operates on many different levels, and the things that we remember are of many different kinds and are remembered for many different reasons.”⁷⁹ She also discusses potential problems with the application of memory to other aspects in society. For example, Misztal considers the challenges of applying memory to justice. She states that the subjective nature of memory makes it challenging to establish the truth regarding the wrongdoings of the past.⁸⁰ Misztal, like the other scholars upon whose work I draw, defines memory and its dynamic nature while also providing a set of definitions that guide how I will define memory and its nature in my work.

One other field that examines the subject of memory is psychology. Alison Winter’s book *Memory: Fragments of a Modern History* takes a different tack:

Psychological experts claim that memories are capricious, error-prone, and partial—that they should be made the foundations for such important decisions, if at all, only after careful scrutiny. In the modern era an extraordinary array of sciences has arisen to satisfy this scrutiny... *Memory* examines the history of these sciences during the twentieth century. It focuses on experiments that explored the nature of autobiographical memories and on controversies over their reliability.⁸¹

For Winter, the history of memory is a psychological phenomenon. One issue that she examines is the battle between “false memory” versus “true memory” and their relation

⁷⁹ Misztal, *Theories Of Social Remembering*, 9.

⁸⁰ Misztal, *Theories Of Social Remembering*, 145-154.

⁸¹ Winter, *Memory*, 1.

to justice and truth.⁸² More importantly, she also examines the history of how scientists and psychologists have understood trauma derived from war and conflict.⁸³ For example, she states, “During World War II, soldiers throughout Europe struggled to recover from terrible battlefield traumas. In many cases their worst injuries seemed to be not wounds or broken bones but experiences so terrible that their minds could not accept them as ordinary memories.”⁸⁴ Winter also examines the phenomena of “flashbulb memory,” which she defines as a memory that is photographic in nature where a traumatic event, such as the assassination of JFK, is etched in both the consciousness of individuals and society as a whole.⁸⁵ She defines this unique type of memory, as long-term memory that imprints within the consciousness of individuals that the memory does not fade in the same way that “normal” long term memory does. In short, Winter provides a scientific background to memory and its formation.

Despite writing from the perspectives of different disciplines, all the selected works discuss the problems with the theories they examine and the application of memory to other concepts such as justice or truth.⁸⁶ Therefore, the commonalities between these selected works serve to represent the frequent topics and questions discussed by writers in multiple fields regarding the subject of memory. Filling in the theoretical gaps regarding memory that are sometimes left open by general histories of the Spanish Civil War, these authors serve as relevant models for my study. In each case,

⁸² Winter, *Memory*, 179-186, 225-255.

⁸³ Winter, *Memory*, 53-73.

⁸⁴ Winter, *Memory*, 53.

⁸⁵ Winter, *Memory*, 157.

⁸⁶ Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 56; Berger, “On the Role of Myths and History,” 490-91; Tamm, “Beyond History and Memory,” 461-62; Bond, Craps, and Vermeulen, *Memory Unbound*, 3-22; Misztal, *Theories Of Social Remembering*, 145-154; Winter, *Memory*, 179-186, 225-255.

they explore the dynamic and messy nature of memory and its application. The most important works for my research are those of Tamm and Bond et al., whose theories of cultural memory and cultural history offer guidelines on how I construct my argument. Similarly, Misztal's work is highly influential since her definitions regarding memory guide how I explain memory as a concept and practice in my thesis. However, this does not exclude the other works examined in this essay, as each serves the purpose of guiding through the dynamics of memory theory and its connections to history and other fields and helps me to situate myself within the discipline of history and within memory studies.⁸⁷

Conclusion

Past scholarship has demonstrated that the Spanish Civil War played an integral role in Spanish, European, and international history through the contrasting periods of cohesion and fracture within the two "sides," and the international involvement or attention that the conflict garnered among the major players in the approaching Second World War. Along with this historiographical foundation, memory theory helps tease out some of these complexities in the aftermath of the conflict. For example, these two fields lay the foundation for my study of the formation, recovery, and passage of the Republican memory of the war through the creation of cultural tools and media, especially after the passage of the Law of Historical Memory in 2007.

⁸⁷ Another relevant topic that this brings up is the discourse between memory theory and postmodernism as many scholars equate memory as the only way to properly interpret history. For example, see Kerwin Lee Klein, "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse," *Representations* 69 (Winter 2000): 127-150.

Chapter 2: A Nation Forgetting its Past?

Wars and tragedies are often some of the most memorable for individuals, groups, and even entire nations. This begs the question of how such a divisive conflict such as the Spanish Civil War is remembered? The predominant memory of the war, like the old adage says, was written by the victor. The Nationalists articulated the only acceptable public memory surrounding the war during the forty-year long dictatorship of Francisco Franco starting in 1939 and lasting till 1975. This coincided with an erasure of the Republican memory from the public domain. However, after Franco's death in 1975, Spain began its transition to democracy.⁸⁸ This transition did not foster a reemergence of the Republican memory of the conflict, rather it fostered the *Pacto del Olvido* (Pact of Forgetting), where Spaniards participated in a willing amnesia regarding both their nations and their own pasts. These two factors represent the primary challenges that the recovery and representation of the Republican memory faced. Despite these challenges, however, the Republican memory nevertheless survived and started to receive official recognition during the 2000s with the 2007 Law of Historical Memory.

In this chapter, I analyze how the Spanish Civil War was both remembered and forgotten by Spaniards. The chapter provides a historiographical overview of the formation of both Republican and Nationalist memory of the conflict and traces the rationale behind the collective amnesia and silence around the war during the Franco era (1939-1975) and during the early stages of the transition to democracy (1978-2007). Specifically, I will examine how Franco's government erased and repressed the Republican memory and how the nationalist memory became dominant until the end of

⁸⁸ Stanley Payne, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 250-51.

the dictatorship. In line with other recent scholars, I postulate that despite the *Pacto del Olvido*, Republican memory was recovered after 2007 and through the platforms of media and cultural devices, such as graphic narratives and testimonies, with common themes of passing memory from the old to the young. To understand the processes of recovering historical memory, it is important to identify the forces working against them and their effects on Spanish society.

The Franco Dictatorship

The dictatorship of Francisco Franco began when the war officially ended on April 1, 1939. Franco labeled himself as *Caudillo* of Spain, and his rule lasted until his death in 1975.⁸⁹ During this time, Franco and his nationalist colleagues set out to form the memory of the conflict from their own perspective and in their own image. For example, they aimed to depict their war as a “Crusade” or a “just” war against an “anti-Spanish” foe. They were able to control historical memory through a variety of measures, including the construction of monuments, commemorative events (parades, memorials, etc.), propaganda films, and other projects (e.g., publishing school textbooks) aiming to glorify the nationalist cause and those that died fighting for it during the conflict.

At the same time, Franco's government aimed to erase, or at least repress, the memories and perspectives of those who had fought for or supported the Republican cause during the war. The nationalists used many processes in their attempts to achieve this goal of erasure. For example, one such method was the purposeful confiscation of Republican documents in Spanish archives in order to identify “deviant” individuals and

⁸⁹ Military dictator: see "Caudillo," Oxford Reference, accessed September 24, 2020, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095555787>; Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 244.

organizations within Spain. Similarly, the victorious powers commonly imprisoned former Spanish Republicans and subjected them to torture, forced labor, or execution.

Yet, outside of Spain, Republican memory survived through the writings and testimonies of foreign participants, refugees, and exiles who lived out of the reach of Franco and his enforcers. For example, Spanish refugees in France were able to create cultural works, such as comics/graphic narratives, portraying their memories of the civil war and the cruel treatment under the French in concentration camps.⁹⁰ Thus, during the Franco era, the authoritarian regime both formed the “official” nationalist memories of the war and also repressed the Republican memory of the war to the extent that it was able, given external publications.

One of the most important scholars on this topic, Paloma Aguilar, argues that much like any other totalitarian or authoritarian regime, the Nationalists under Francisco Franco aimed to control the memory of the war to maintain their legitimacy.⁹¹ At the same time they sought to delegitimize the elected government against which they rebelled.⁹² In her book *Memory and Amnesia: The Roles of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy*, Aguilar presents an in-depth portrait of these memories and the processes behind their formation. She pinpoints one of the early themes and narratives of the Nationalist memory, namely the concept of a justified war (or rebellion) based on the grounds of protecting Spain from the “*Rojas (reds)*” of the Popular Front government. For example, Aguilar shows how the nationalists, influenced by the Spanish Catholic

⁹⁰ Josep Bartolí and Narcís Molins I Fàbrega, *Campos De Concentración, 1939-194...* (Mexico: D.F., 1944).

⁹¹ Paloma Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia: The Role of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy* (New York: Berghahn, 2002), 30.

⁹² Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 46-7.

Church, portrayed their rebellion against the Second Spanish Republic as a “crusade” against “anti-Spanish” and “atheist” forces. This language demonstrates the influence of the Church on the memory and ideology after the end of the war as the nationalists, especially Franco, portrayed themselves as the protectors of religion and other traditional values in Spain.⁹³ Yet, Aguilar states that there was no single “official” memory of the war throughout the dictatorship, but instead several stories arose each replacing one another in turn.⁹⁴ However, a constant theme in the “official” memories throughout the dictatorship, included the regime’s use of media to propagate their narratives. Government propagandists relied on newsreels/films, textbooks, and monuments commemorating the dead, merely retooling the message through successive memory regimens.⁹⁵ In short, the nationalist memories of the war, although variable, all centered around ideas (myths) of a “just” and “necessary” war against the traitorous Republican government.

At the same time that the nationalist memories of the war percolated through Spanish society, Franco’s regime actively repressed the memories of the defeated Republicans and their supporters within Spain. This occurred under the veil of “reconciliation” between the two sides that fought in the war. According to Aguilar, real reconciliation would have undermined the legitimacy of the regime.⁹⁶ Franco’s officials attempted to rid themselves of any narratives and memories that contradicted their own. As stated earlier, the nationalists wanted to delegitimize the government of the Second

⁹³ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 39, 61

⁹⁴ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 31-33.

⁹⁵ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 49-88.

⁹⁶ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 33.

Republic.⁹⁷ One way that the regime endeavored to complete this task was to blame the Second Republic for its own downfall, "...given that it proposed to abandon national sovereignty by placing it in foreign hands, more specifically, Soviet hands."⁹⁸ The regime claimed that the previous government had not only sold-out Spain to foreign powers but also failed to maintain any sense of control in Spain. The nationalists alleged that the Republican government allowed for widespread violence across Spain and the degradation of traditional Spanish (especially Catholic) values and interests. On a similar note, the nationalists aimed to marginalize the supporters of the Republic, especially soldiers and volunteers that fought for the Republic during the war, "...all those that fought against the Nationalist side were portrayed as being cruel and inhumane in battle; they murdered ruthlessly, destroyed national heritage (especially religious heritage) and they committed all kinds of outrages wherever they retained political control."⁹⁹ In other words, the nationalist regime attempted to marginalize and delegitimize the government of the Second Republic and its supporters by portraying them as a barbaric enemy of the traditional values and institutions of Spain.

Franco's regime did not solely focus on delegitimization and marginalization, rather it also actively persecuted and erased the Republican narratives of the conflict. This process was not a singular event, but a sequence of different actions enacted over many years by the new government to achieve their goals of erasure. One way that they undertook this process was through the control of Spanish archives. For example, what later became in 2007, the *Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica* (Documentary

⁹⁷ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 33, 46-7

⁹⁸ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 46.

⁹⁹ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 46.

Center of Historical Memory; located in Salamanca, Spain), collected enemy propaganda and documents to facilitate counter-propaganda and gather information about potential “enemies” of the state and give them to the regime.¹⁰⁰ In other words, this institution actively collected and hid the information of the “enemies” of the Nationalists and created files for the government to identify and persecute subversive individuals or organizations within Spain. Similarly, later on in the dictatorship, much of the documentation housed in these archives was destroyed, thus creating a huge gap in the documentation of the Republican perspective of the conflict.¹⁰¹

Another way in which Franco and the nationalists intended to erase the Republican memory was the dismissal of tragic and violent events perpetrated against the Republicans. While the nationalists built their own monuments and commemorative sites for their dead (often portrayed as victims of the brutality of the Republicans), they also actively forbade or ignored requests for Republicans to do the same. In other words, while the regime was able to simultaneously commemorate their dead and demonize the Republicans, the defeated had no way within the country to tell of the horrors that they faced at the hands of the nationalists or to commemorate those they lost during the war. One of the most famous sites of violence is the Basque town of Guernica (also spelled Gernika). In Spring 1937, German and Italian aircraft supporting Franco’s forces leveled the town with a death toll ranging from a few hundred to over a thousand killed out of a

¹⁰⁰ The Spanish Civil War project is an international archival effort housed at the University of California-San Diego that aims to collect and store testimonies from the conflict. "Historia," Centro Documental De La Memoria Histórica | Ministerio De Cultura Y Deporte, accessed October 05, 2020, <https://www.culturaydeporte.gob.es/cultura/areas/archivos/mc/archivos/cdmh/presentacion/historia.html>.

¹⁰¹ "About the Project," Spanish Civil War Memory Project, accessed October 07, 2020, <https://library.ucsd.edu/speccoll/scwmemory/about-eng.html>.

population of between five and seven thousand.¹⁰² Famously documented by Pablo Picasso in his 1937 painting for the Paris Exhibition, the bombing was justified as an action against a “military/strategic” target.¹⁰³ Yet, the town had little to no military defenses or strategic importance. Rather, the bombing represented an attempt to terrorize Basque supporters of the Republic through the destruction of a town that symbolized Basque autonomy and traditions.¹⁰⁴

This outright massacre of a civilian population received no official recognition from the Spanish government during the Franco era. To the extent that Franco’s government dealt with the massacre, officials placed the blame for the event solely on the German and Italian pilots who directly participated.¹⁰⁵ In other words, the Franco regime used this event to distance itself from both the atrocities committed during the war, but also from its former fascist allies. It was not until 1977-78 that the Spanish government officially investigated and recognized the bombing.^{106*} Thus, as illustrated in the Guernica case, the nationalist regime of Francisco Franco attempted to erase the memory of the Spanish Republicans from Spanish society by instituting a willful ignorance of the atrocities committed and their losses during the war.

Yet another form of persecution enacted by Franco and the nationalists was the imprisonment, execution, and torture of many of the defeated side or anyone suspected of

¹⁰² Xabier Irujo, *Gernika, 1937: The Market Day Massacre* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2015), 69-82, 101-119.

¹⁰³ Irujo, *Gernika*, 130, 88-93.

¹⁰⁴ Irujo, *Gernika*, 1-2, 69-82, 88-93.

¹⁰⁵ Irujo, *Gernika*, 120-125.

¹⁰⁶ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 200-204.

* After travelling around Britain, Scandinavia, and the US during the late 1930s and early 1940s the painting later moved to the Museum of Modern Art in New York where it remained until relocating to Spain in 1981. See "A Journey Through the Exhibition Guernica," Picasso: Love & War 1935-1945, accessed May 12, 2021, https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/picasso/education/ed_JTE_ITG.html.

sympathizing with them or the previous government. Many Spaniards, whether they left and later returned or remained in Spain, faced imprisonment as political prisoners of the new nationalist regime. The exact number of political prisoners taken during the war and dictatorship is unknown. Between the period of the war (1936-39) and the early 1940s, historians estimate that between 200,000 and half a million (500,000) Spaniards were imprisoned or held in concentration camps across Spain.¹⁰⁷ Of these, tens of thousands of prisoners were sentenced to death and executed.¹⁰⁸ Many of the others faced the prospects of torture, abuse, malnourishment, neglect, and forced labor. Franco forced Republican prisoners not only to rebuild the war-torn nation, but also to build monuments to the nationalists' victory. Meanwhile, the Republicans in Spain were denied any chance to establish their own monuments or commemorate their dead in any way.¹⁰⁹

The most notable of these projects was the *Valle de los Caídos* (Valley of the Fallen) located on the outskirts of Madrid. The monument, a giant Catholic basilica, represents a burial ground for “all” the Spaniards who died during the war.¹¹⁰ Yet, this monument, much like others across Spain, ignored the Republican dead and their families' attempts at commemoration. Instead, the monument aimed to follow the notion of a “Crusade” with “heroic” nationalists fighting and dying against the “barbaric” and

¹⁰⁷ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 246-47; Giles Tremlett, *Ghosts of Spain: Travels Through Spain and Its Silent Past* (New York: Walker & Company, 2006), 66; Javier Rodrigo, "Exploitation, Fascist Violence and Social Cleansing: A Study of Franco's Concentration Camps from a Comparative Perspective," *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d'histoire* 19, no. 4 (August 23, 2012): 533, accessed October 14, 2020, doi:10.1080/13507486.2012.697871.

¹⁰⁸ Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, 246-47; Tremlett, *Ghosts of Spain*, 66; Rodrigo, "Exploitation, Fascist Violence and Social Cleansing, 553-555.

¹⁰⁹ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 73-76; Andrea Hepworth, "Site of Memory and Dismemory: The Valley of the Fallen in Spain," *Journal of Genocide Research* 16, no. 4 (2014): 467, doi:10.1080/14623528.2014.975948.

¹¹⁰ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 74-85. Note: This monument later served as Franco's tomb from his death in 1975 until the removal of his body in 2019.

“brutal” Republicans.¹¹¹ This edifice does not just serve to disregard and dehumanize the Republicans and their historical memory; for many Spanish Republicans during the dictatorship the monument served as a place of suffering, built off the backs of political prisoners.¹¹² According to Andrea Hepworth, for many of these prisoners the chance of working on the monument offered them a chance to escape the overcrowded, disease ridden, and underfed prisons. Yet many of these forced laborers at the monument died due to injuries and dangerous working conditions.¹¹³ After Franco’s death, the monument was classified as a “reconciliatory” site with the dead from both sides being buried there, yet keeping with the nationalist imagery and victory.¹¹⁴

While Franco’s persecutions and punishments took many forms, they also affected a varied population of Spaniards. The violence against Republican sympathizers in the early years of Franco’s regime was not restricted on the basis of gender or age, with men, women, and children facing persecution at the hands of the nationalists. As with other twentieth-century conflicts, women endured particular punishment for so-called “horizontal collaboration.” Women and children, in particular, faced the prospect of public shaming in their communities, as the men were either imprisoned, dead, or in exile. Republican women, often labeled as *rojas* (reds), like men who supported the Republicans, were imprisoned in concentration camps to “re-educate” them and make them “ideal” Spanish women, or “good “Catholic mothers.”¹¹⁵ Women also encountered punitive actions outside of prisons, with public attacks carried out by the nationalists in

¹¹¹ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 74-85

¹¹² Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 76-85; Hepworth, "Site of Memory and Dismemory," 467-68.

¹¹³ Hepworth, "Site of Memory and Dismemory," 468.

¹¹⁴ Hepworth, "Site of Memory and Dismemory," 471-74.

¹¹⁵ Aurora G. Morcillo, *Memory and Cultural History of the Spanish Civil War: Realms of Oblivion* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 407-422.

order to humiliate and “purify” them. For instance nationalists and their supporters seized women suspected of being “*rojas*” (reds), shaved their heads, and abused them physically and-or sexually.¹¹⁶ This action was meant to “bestialize” women considered traitorous and take away not only their feminine qualities but their human qualities as well.¹¹⁷ These women, known as *pelonas* (shaved or bald heads), faced mockery and further cruel treatment in their communities due to the stigma placed around them as impure, unfeminine, and inhuman deviants.¹¹⁸

As with the targeting of women, many children of Spanish Republicans or supporters also faced persecution during the dictatorship. Giles Tremlett explains that children experienced mockery and abuse at the hands of the nationalist victors, ranging from marginalization to outright kidnapping and placement in “good traditional” families, fascist Falange organizations, or Catholic orphanages.¹¹⁹ For example, two mothers interviewed by Tremlett, detailed that their children were taken away from them under the guise of having them baptized, never to see them again.¹²⁰ Similarly, Carlos Giménez’s graphic narrative/comic series *Paracuellos* portrays the plight of orphaned children like himself, who found themselves under the “care” of Catholic and fascist orphanages attempting to indoctrinate them. In one comic, Giménez portrays an orphaned boy named Elias, asking for more milk to drink, only to be forced by the headmistress to

¹¹⁶ Morcillo, *Memory and Cultural History*, 422-30.

¹¹⁷ Morcillo, *Memory and Cultural History*, 423-30.

¹¹⁸ Morcillo, *Memory and Cultural History*, 423-30.

¹¹⁹ Tremlett, *Ghosts of Spain*, 66-7.

¹²⁰ Tremlett, *Ghosts of Spain*, 67.

drink until he vomits.¹²¹ The persecution of Spanish Republicans, therefore, was carried out both institutionally and publicly, creating a heavy atmosphere of repression and fear.

However, despite the persecution and efforts at erasure, the Republican memory of the war did survive the challenges set against it during the dictatorship. The main reason for this can be found in the large numbers of Spanish Republicans that fled from Spain during and after the war. While around a half-million people died during the conflict, another half-million Spaniards fled for locations around the world, with most ending up in France, Britain, the USSR, and Latin America.¹²² By far, the majority of Spanish Republicans left the nation through Spain's border with France, yet for many, they did not see an end to the hardships. France housed many of these refugees in concentration camps (many opening in 1939), such as Argeles-sur-Mer, to live in harsh conditions with little to no support or care from the French. Enrique Casanas, an internee at Argeles, remembered that he was, "...kept there for 11 months only leaving with a work company."¹²³ The conditions in these camps and their cruel treatment by the French guards led survivors of the camps to create media (such as comics or illustrations) that compared the French guards to the Nationalists in Spain.¹²⁴

On the other hand, according to Francie Cate-Arries, Spaniards in France were able to do something that their compatriots in Spain could not: create spaces for

¹²¹ Carlos Giménez, *Paracuellos*, trans. Sonya Jones (San Diego, CA: EuroComics, an Imprint of IDW Publishing, 2016), 18-19.

¹²² Peter Gatrell, *Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford University Press, 2015), 73-75.

¹²³ Enrique Casañas, "Testimony of Enrique Casañas, Interview with Omar Pimienta and Marcella Navarro; July 8, 2009.," interview by Omar Pimienta and Marcella Navarro, Spanish Civil War Memory Project, Video 1, accessed November 18, 2020, <https://library.ucsd.edu/speccoll/scwmemory/catalog/eng-bb88066425.html>.

Note: Any translations from the interviews done by the Spanish Civil War Memory Project are only rough translations or paraphrased due to the difficult or inaudible language in these interviews.

¹²⁴ Francie Cate-Arries, *Spanish Culture behind Barbed-Wire: Memory and Representation of the French Concentration Camps, 1939-1945* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell Univ. Press, 2004), 53-81.

commemorating the dead. Cate-Arries writes: “Deprived of the privilege of consecrating the place of their war dead on the actual battlegrounds or cemeteries of Spanish territory, the exiles claim as theirs the alien terrain of their captivity in France. The camps, then, are inscribed in the history of Spanish exile as the first terrain of collective memory, the commemorative grounds for national regeneration.”¹²⁵ Thus, while the Republican memory of the war only existed in private within Spain, outside of its borders Republican refugees and exiles were able to speak more freely about their experiences and those they lost.

Why did so few former Republican supporters within Spain tell their stories of the war and the horrors they faced at the hands of the Nationalists? Enrique Aguado Marco, a man who served as a Republican soldier during the war and who fled to France at the war's end, in an interview with members of the Spanish Civil War Memory Project simply answered, “Fear... a fear that continues to today.”¹²⁶ Similarly, Carmen Chicano, a woman who grew up during the war and whose family fought for the Republicans and who suffered persecution at the hands of the Nationalists, gave a similar answer. When asked if she and others felt fear of being out in the streets she answered with a simple “Yes.”¹²⁷ She then went on to discuss the silencing effect of life in Spain where people kept quiet to distance themselves from their pasts, but that by doing so they would “... always continue to lose.”¹²⁸ These two testimonies, while not representative of all

¹²⁵ Cate-Arries, *Spanish Culture behind Barbed-Wire*, 52.

¹²⁶ Enrique Aguado Marco, "Testimony of Enrique Aguado Marco," video 8.

¹²⁷ Carmen Chicano, "Testimony of Carmen Chicano, Interview with Jessica Cordova and Jodi Eisenberg; July 4, 2009," interview by Jessica Cordova and Jodi Eisenberg, Spanish Civil War Memory Project, 2009, video 2, accessed October 28, 2020, <https://library.ucsd.edu/speccoll/scwmemory/catalog/eng-bb05813957.html>

¹²⁸ Chicano, "Testimony of Carmen Chicano," video 2.

Spanish Republicans, show a common fear of speaking out in public about the Republican perspective of the war during the years of the dictatorship (1939-1975).

The Transition to Democracy 1975-2007

Francisco Franco died on 20 November 1975 from natural causes.¹²⁹ After his four decades in power, Franco's death set off a chain of events which eventually led Spain to a more democratic future (specifically a constitutional monarchy) when Spanish citizens drafted and approved a new constitution in 1978.¹³⁰ While it may be easy to assume that this transition would allow for the emergence of the long silenced and repressed memories of the Spanish Republicans and their descendants, quite the opposite happened. A further erasure ensued, not only of Republican memories, but of Nationalists as well. In a policy known as the *Pacto del Olvido* (Pact of Oblivion or Forgetting), Spain attempted to put the war and the sequential dictatorship behind it and look towards the future.¹³¹

After the end of the dictatorship in 1975 and the transition to democracy in 1978, Aguilar describes a sense of "collective guilt" over the failure of the Second Spanish Republic, and she argues that the new government wanted to prevent another civil war at all costs.¹³² One way that the Spanish government attempted to avoid this was through creating mechanisms of reconciliation and compensation for those that suffered during the war and under the dictatorship.¹³³ This officially came in the form of the 1977

¹²⁹ Tremlett, *Ghosts of Spain*, 74.

¹³⁰ Tremlett, *Ghosts of Spain*, 74-86

¹³¹ The pact was a political agreement between both "sides" in the government and accepted by most Spaniards. This pact was enforced both legally, namely through the amnesty law, as well as culturally. See Davis, "Is Spain Recovering Its Memory? Breaking the Pacto Del Olvido," 862-866.

¹³² Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 150.

¹³³ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 191.

Amnesty Law, which aimed to grant amnesty to political prisoners, exiles, and perpetrators of crimes during the war and dictatorship to allow for a peaceful transition to democracy.¹³⁴ This, in turn, allowed for the Republican testimonies to challenge the “official” memory of the conflict by revealing the abuses and crimes enacted by the nationalists during both the war and the dictatorship.¹³⁵ However, this law also made it so none could be tried for their crimes in the period from 1936-1976, making the process of bringing war criminals to justice practically impossible in Spain.¹³⁶ Thus, the 1977 Amnesty Law formed a significant backbone of the Pact of Forgetting since this law promoted a sense of “forgive and forget” within Spanish society when it came to the country’s past. Crimes against humanity thus remained hidden.

Despite the attempts at silencing and forgetting the past, neither the Republican nor the Nationalist memory of the Spanish Civil War faded, nor did it remain fully suppressed. Rather, many Spaniards pushed for the public recovery of the past and its horrors. One sign of this pushback took was the responses of Republican descendants to the exhumations of mass graves of Republicans killed by the Nationalists during the war and its aftermath.¹³⁷ Giles Tremlett argues that the descendants of Republicans who had been executed and placed in mass graves often wanted to rebury their relatives and finally be able to tell their families’ stories. On the other hand, many other Spaniards, often those descended from the supporters of Franco, viewed the exhumations as a form of “treason,” breaking the “pact of silence” [that] “...had been the cornerstone of the swift, dramatic

¹³⁴ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 198.

¹³⁵ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 200.

¹³⁶ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 191-200.

¹³⁷ Tremlett, *Ghosts of Spain*, 9-16.

and successful transition to democracy of which Spaniards were, justly, so proud.”¹³⁸ In other words, those opposed to the exhumation and reburial believed that this action would reopen painful wounds from the past and undermine the historical amnesia that allowed for Spain’s transition from dictatorship to democracy. Tremlett shows that despite the attempts to put the past behind them, Spaniards on both sides of the political spectrum could not let the horrors of the past slip into oblivion.

It should also be noted that not all Spanish Republicans were in favor of fighting against the Pact of Forgetting and rather wished to put the past behind them. Like those living during the dictatorship, many Spaniards (on both sides), feared bringing up the crimes of the war and dictatorship. However, instead of dreading the chance of disappearing, most Spaniards feared the potential political upheaval, retribution, or another coup d’état or civil war that these discussions would cause in Spanish society. Rather, such as the former Republican and leader of the Communist Party during the Transition Santiago Carrillo, believed that the silence was necessary for Spain to successfully form a new democracy.¹³⁹ Yet, this does not deny that fact that many other Spaniards also wanted to address the past crimes and pushed for the government to assist in recovery of historical memory and disappeared family members and friends.

It was not until 2007, however, that the pushback against the *Pacto del Olvido* finally gained official support from the Spanish government under Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero and the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist

¹³⁸ Tremlett, *Ghosts of Spain*, 23-25

¹³⁹ Omar Encarnación, "Forgetting, in Order to Move On," *The New York Times*, January 22, 2014, accessed May 14, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/01/06/turning-away-from-painful-chapters/forgetting-in-order-to-move-on>)

Workers Party) or PSOE. During that year, the Spanish Congress of Deputies approved the *Ley de la Memoria Histórica* (Historical Memory Law), establishing an official process for the recovery of the historical memories of the Spanish Civil War and the Franco dictatorship. The law itself proposes:

...to recognize and expand rights in favor of those who suffered persecution or violence, for political, ideological reasons, or religious belief, during the Civil War and the Dictatorship, promote their moral reparation and the recovery of their personal memory and family, and adopt complementary measures aimed at eliminating elements of division between citizens, all in order to promote cohesion and solidarity among the various generations of Spaniards around constitutional principles, values and freedoms.¹⁴⁰

In other words, the law aims both to continue the spirit of reconciliation within Spain while simultaneously giving those who suffered because of the war and subsequent authoritarian regime a chance to tell their stories in order to receive the right to free speech that had long been forbidden to them. Similarly, the law also promotes the preservation of documents (e.g., the establishment of archives), an official declaration of the illegitimacy of Franco's government, reparations for victims and families, recognition of the Republican war dead, and other policies intended to aid the victims and their families. Therefore, the year 2007 and the *Ley de la Memoria Histórica* itself represent a critical turning in the development of memory recovery from the Spanish Civil War, as it represents the beginning of official efforts.

Yet, while critical for the process of recovering memory, this law did little for those seeking justice for the crimes of the past. The main reason for this is that the 1977 Amnesty Law remained in place and continues to exist today. The amnesty legislation

¹⁴⁰ "Ley De La Memoria Histórica (Ley 52/2007 de 26 de diciembre)," Ministerio de Justicia, accessed November 02, 2020, <https://leymemoria.mjusticia.gob.es/cs/Satellite/LeyMemoria/es/memoria-historica-522007#exposicion>.

makes it impossible for anyone to be prosecuted for war crimes or crimes against humanity committed during the Spanish Civil War and the Franco dictatorship.¹⁴¹ Certainly the 2007 law has facilitated a growth in the study of the Republican memory of the war, through the opening up of primary source documents in archives and the new push for those that experienced these events to share their stories, but it does not allow for restitution for victims. The Republican memory of the Spanish Civil War has faced multiple challenges over the last eighty years ranging from heavy repression to outright oblivion, so it is in scholarship that the process of recovering these memories becomes crucial to creating a authoritative space where all memories can be discussed equally.

Scholarship on the Memory of the Spanish Civil War

Scholars interested in studying the Spanish Republicans focus mainly on the traumatic experiences and accounts of the Pro-republic refugees, exiles, and those who attempted to aid or support these individuals. In *Homage to the Spanish Exiles: Voices from the Spanish Civil War*, Nancy Macdonald recounts both the traumatic experiences of Spanish republicans fleeing from the war and Franco's regime, along with the accounts of individuals, Macdonald included, who aided these refugees.¹⁴² The majority of Macdonald's work focuses on the formation of aid societies and organizations, such as the Spanish Refugee Aid (SRA), which aimed to provide relief to refugees through monetary and physical aid.¹⁴³ Macdonald's work sets a precedent for the study of memory of the Spanish Civil War, due to her examination of first-hand accounts of

¹⁴¹ Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, 191-200.

¹⁴² Nancy Macdonald, *Homage to the Spanish Exiles: Voices from the Spanish Civil War* (New York, NY: Insight Books, 1987), 44-84.

¹⁴³ See Macdonald, *Homage to the Spanish Exiles*, 15, 89-289.

refugee trauma to explain the formation of memory. This work also shows that memory of the Spanish Civil War was not limited to those who experienced the conflict directly, but was also forged among those who aimed to support those fleeing from the war.

Like Macdonald, Francie Cate-Arries also focuses her analysis on the testimonies and written accounts or documents of Spanish Republican refugees. More specifically, Cate-Arries concentrates on the written and material artifacts of the refugees interned in French camps and those who were able to leave or escape the camps.¹⁴⁴ Unlike Macdonald, however, Cate-Arries studies the accounts of the refugees themselves, rather than those of the individuals or organizations who provided aid to the refugees. For example, Cate-Arries examines the formation of memory among Spanish refugees through her analysis of Narcís Molins i Fàbrega's and Josep Bartolí's, *Campos de concentración, 1939-194...*¹⁴⁵ The work, similar to a graphic narrative, which is both written and illustrated, portrays the cruel treatment of Spaniards in the French camps and compares the French to the nationalist forces in Spain. Cate-Arries argues that the concentration camps were not just places of suffering, but also represented construction sites of a new national memory, memorials, and commemorations.¹⁴⁶ Thus, Cate-Arries' work is integral in the study of the ordeal that Spanish refugees experienced and the formation of memory because she shows the importance of traumatic sites on the construction of these groups' sense of "nation."

Another author, Sharif Gemie, focuses on the accounts of the Spanish refugees themselves. More specifically, Gemie examines the song "The Ballad of Bourg-

¹⁴⁴ Cate-Arries, *Spanish Culture behind Barbed-Wire*, 13-18.

¹⁴⁵ Cate-Arries, *Spanish Culture behind Barbed-Wire*, 53-81.

¹⁴⁶ Cate-Arries, *Spanish Culture behind Barbed-Wire*, 13-18

Madame,” written by Republican refugees who fled Catalonia for France during the *Retirada* (Retreat or Withdrawal) in the final year of the war (1939).¹⁴⁷ Gemie explains his purpose stating, “This paper explores some of the themes suggested by the canción¹⁴⁸ and the experience of the refugees who crossed the Pyrenees in 1939. It examines in particular the factors that encouraged some provisional sense of group identity among them.”¹⁴⁹ In the first section, Gemie also provides an interesting historiography regarding the writing of refugee memoirs and other texts.¹⁵⁰ This section outlines the history of Spanish Republican refugee accounts as well as tracks a change in attitudes towards these individuals. For example, Gemie maintains that since the 1930s refugees of the *Retirada* had been largely ignored in official circles. However, he notes a change in the early 2000s, writing, “One small indication of this shift was the special issue of the *El País* colour supplement... which was devoted almost entirely to the experience of republican refugees across the world.”¹⁵¹ Therefore, Sharif Gemie’s work places value on Spaniards’ writing and development of consciousness regarding the war and the trauma it caused, seeing a shift in the official memory prior to legislation.

One of the most recent books regarding the role of trauma in the formation of the Republican memory of the Spanish Civil War is Sebastiaan Faber’s *Memory Battles of the Spanish Civil War: History, Fiction, Photography*.¹⁵² This work investigates the

¹⁴⁷ Sharif Gemie, “The Ballad of Bourg-Madame: Memory, Exile, and the Spanish Republican Refugees of the Retirada of 1939,” *International Review of Social History* 51, no. 1 (2006): 3-5, accessed November 16, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0020859005002300>.

¹⁴⁸ Song or ballad.

¹⁴⁹ Gemie, “The Ballad of Bourg-Madame,” 3,

¹⁵⁰ Gemie, “The Ballad of Bourg-Madame,” 12-21.

¹⁵¹ Gemie, “The Ballad of Bourg-Madame,” 18.

¹⁵² Sebastiaan Faber, *Memory Battles of the Spanish Civil War: History, Fiction, Photography* (Nashville, Tenn: Vanderbilt University Press, 2018).

formation of memory in general, including sections about media (photography, literature, etc.). Faber's scholarship, like the works of the previous authors, also addresses the roles of witnesses and how their accounts of violence impacted the memory of the war.¹⁵³ Faber discusses the shift in Spanish memory of the war when the traumatic accounts of those who witnessed or fled the war began to surface.¹⁵⁴ He argues, "Most of the hundreds of media productions around the so-called recovery of historical memory place witnesses—specifically, the aging victims of Francoist repression and their immediate family members—front and center, giving them ample space to tell their story."¹⁵⁵ In this case, Faber shows that the production of media surrounding the conflict allowed survivors of the war and the dictatorship to finally disseminate their stories to the public. Faber's work, a model for my own, places the creation of testimonies regarding the trauma of the war into the greater historiographical and cultural context in Spanish history and society.

Following a similar trend, Juan Carlos Pérez García examines the portrayal of the Spanish Civil War through the medium of the graphic narrative/panel comic.¹⁵⁶ Although much of the article concentrates on autobiographical graphic narratives produced by those who lived and fought during the war, García also investigates works of post-memory (i.e., memory of an event through the perspectives of those who did not directly experience the event).¹⁵⁷ One such work is Francisco Sarmiento's and Miguel

¹⁵³ Faber, *Memory Battles*, 57-73.

¹⁵⁴ Faber, *Memory Battles*, 62-65.

¹⁵⁵ Faber, *Memory Battles*, 62.

¹⁵⁶ Juan Carlos Pérez García, "The Representation of Traumatic Memory in Spanish Comics: Remembering the Civil War and Francoism in Panels," *European Comic Art* 11, no. 2 (2018): 55, accessed November 18, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.3167/eca.2018.110204>.

¹⁵⁷ García, "The Representation of Traumatic Memory in Spanish Comics," 58-63.

Gallardo's *Un Largo Silencio* (2012), in which Miguel Gallardo illustrates the testimonial of his father's (Sarmiento's) life, from his childhood before the war to his return from exile afterward.¹⁵⁸ García depicts how the descendants of those who experienced the war interpreted the memories of their parents who chose to remain silent about the event until later in their lives.¹⁵⁹ This is highly important to my own understanding of the use of graphic narratives since Garcia provides a foundation for the study of memory in this format.

Another significant recent study depicts the transition from memory to post-memory of Catalanian writers in the 1970s.¹⁶⁰ According to author Joaquim Espinós Felipe, despite the movement of literature towards post-modernism during the time, the Catalanian authors of the 1970s could not forget their nation's past.¹⁶¹ Felipe uses the works of Montserrat Roig and Josep Piera in order to interpret the memory of the war and post-war dictatorship.¹⁶² In both instances, Felipe examines how the authors aimed to counteract the collective forgetting of the war and the nation's fascist past. For example, Felipe states, "In the prologue to *Els catalans als camps nazis*, Montserrat Roig rebels against the ignorance of the recent past in which those born after 1939 were forced to remain, and she identifies with those who suffered directly from those events."¹⁶³ Thus, Felipe's argument clearly depicts how memory of the war transitioned into post-memory

¹⁵⁸ García, "The Representation of Traumatic Memory in Spanish Comics," 63-75.

¹⁵⁹ García, "The Representation of Traumatic Memory in Spanish Comics," 64-67.

¹⁶⁰ Joaquim Espinós Felipe, "A Generation without Memory? The Spanish Civil War as Seen by the Catalan Generation of the 1970s," *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 95, no. 8 (2018): 843, 855-856, accessed November 18, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.3828/bhs.2018.49>.

¹⁶¹ Felipe, "A Generation without Memory," 848.

¹⁶² Felipe, "A Generation without Memory," 849-852, 852-855.

¹⁶³ Felipe, "A Generation without Memory," 850.

as the trauma of the war was remembered by the generations following those who fought and fled during the war.

Beyond Trauma

Outside of the subfield of Spanish Civil War studies, other scholars have used the example of Spain as context for broader historical themes of the twentieth century. In *Making of the Modern Refugee* (2015), Peter Gatrell, "... proposes a distinct approach to the subject by bringing the causes and the consequences of global population displacement within a single frame."¹⁶⁴ In other words, Gatrell aims to examine the movement of refugees as a transnational phenomenon rather than just a local one. For example, in his description of the refugees of the Spanish Civil War, Gatrell depicts how the movement of this refugee population was a global occurrence. Not only did refugees find themselves in the hands of foreign nations and aid organizations around the world (Soviet Union, Great Britain, France, Mexico, and other nations), but many of their testimonies shared the language of endurance in the face of exile and hostility.¹⁶⁵ Spanish memoirs prove important to Gatrell's explanation of the refugee identity. Like Cate-
Arries, Gatrell uses Narcís Molins i Fàbrega's and Josep Bartolí's work to highlight the traumatic experience of the Spanish Republican refugees. He states that Spaniards, such as Josep Bartoli, portrayed the French guards as large and grotesque figures guarding over skeletal prisoners to represent their brutal and hypocritical treatment at the hands of a fellow democracy.¹⁶⁶ In his conclusion, Gatrell states, "To focus exclusively on particular kinds of 'plot,' such as concentrating on victimization and deprivation is to

¹⁶⁴ Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee*, 13.

¹⁶⁵ Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee*, 73-75.

¹⁶⁶ Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee*, 73-74.

miss important features of refugee resourcefulness. Another way of putting this is to say that there needs to be a history of refugee activism, whether it be petitioning, hustling, self-defense or other forms of expression.”¹⁶⁷ Thus, Gatrell pleads for agency and voice for refugees, calling for a focus on topics other than suffering, regarding the notion of shared experiences.

In *Unsettled: Refugee Camps and the Making of Multicultural Britain* (2018), Jordanna Bailkin answers Gatrell’s call for a transnational study of refugees. Bailkin studies refugees in one national concept through a wide lens, discussing their movements and flows between nations, regions, or locations through the lens of multiple refugee populations interned in camps built in Great Britain in the twentieth century (1914-1980s).¹⁶⁸ While not exclusively concentrating on Spanish refugees, she does discuss the Basque child refugees fleeing from the war. Like Gatrell, Bailkin argues that refugee memoirs, “...often overlook other kinds of experiences and make them invisible.”¹⁶⁹ In other words, she argues that refugees in these camps created, or at least attempted to, a sense of a normal or even positive experience. Bailkin explains her purpose, “Instead of trafficking solely in images of misery, I open up more varied experiences that reveal camps—with all their complex cultures and demographics—as spaces of possibility as well as confinement.”¹⁷⁰ Bailkin shows that not all refugee experiences were the same, but rather that the specific historical context of each case of refugee internment is important to understanding its meaning and legacy.

¹⁶⁷ Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee*, 296.

¹⁶⁸ Jordanna Bailkin, *Unsettled: Refugee Camps and the Making of Multicultural Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 1-15.

¹⁶⁹ Bailkin, *Unsettled*, 9.

¹⁷⁰ Bailkin, *Unsettled*, 9.

Bailkin, like Gatrell, is interested in seeing refugees not only as victims but as historical actors. In some instances, Bailkin shows how refugees experienced suffering in their internments but also actively sought to create comfortable spaces. In her chapter describing feeding and cooking practices, Bailkin depicts how the Basque children adopted British cuisine instead of Basque food to create a sense of normalcy after their experiences with rationing in Spain.¹⁷¹ In the same chapter, Bailkin describes how other refugee populations, such as the Poles in the 1940s and the Vietnamese in the 1980s, struggled with the food in camps due to attempts to maintain national identity or the highly politicized and cultural nature of food practices.¹⁷² Bailkin argues that in the formation of identity and memory, refugees in different locations experienced various contexts for internment that were not exclusively events of suffering or trauma, but, rather, varied in the circumstances that shaped, reinforced, or deconstructed (i.e., erased) identity and memory.

My own study of the memory of the Spanish Civil War draws a great deal of inspiration and information from such scholarship. In considering how memory is made, many scholars have noted that media can be a powerful form of memory recovery. Much like Bailkin and Gatrell, I discuss how Republican refugees, exiles, and their descendants actively interacted with the production of historical memory. However, unlike these two authors, I focus on the production of these sources after a long period of silence rather than during the refugee or exile experience itself. Specifically, I focus on the functional cultural memory of the Spanish Republicans who either returned to Spain or remained in

¹⁷¹ Bailkin, *Unsettled*, 73-74.

¹⁷² Bailkin, *Unsettled*, 74-76, 83-85.

exile, and that of their descendants, in order to investigate their use of cultural tools to actively commemorate and recover their memories of the Spanish Civil War, finally letting their voices be heard after generations of silence and repression. This, in turn, allows for a greater understanding behind the passage of memory from generation to generation, with parents or grandparents telling their stories to both their children and others in the younger generations.

Can a Nation Forget its Past?

In the case of Spain, the answer to this question is a definite no. While certain leaders certainly attempted to erase, or at least ignore, the traumatic events of the Spanish Civil War and the authoritarian dictatorship of Franco through a variety of means, these events remain important to many in Spain. At first this forgetting focused solely on the memory of the defeated Republicans and their supporters during the dictatorship through harsh oppression, execution, fear, and the destruction of sources. After the death of Franco, this forgetting evolved into a complete attempt at amnesia about the war and dictatorship in the name of “progress.” Yet, these attempts did not go unopposed, with Spaniards, both inside and outside of Spain, fighting to keep or recover memories and preserve them for future generations.

During the dictatorship, this fight was enacted mostly by refugees and exiles outside of Spain who created a variety of testimonies and media sources to document their experiences during the war and their often-cruel treatment at the hands of others outside of Spain. Inside Spain, the Republican memory survived mostly in private circles, not leaving people’s homes to enter into the public sphere due to the atmosphere of fear surrounding them. After the death of Franco, Republican memories of the war, along with

the nationalist memories, were threatened with oblivion through the Pact of Forgetting and the associated legislation (1977 Amnesty Law), which aimed to produce a willing amnesia of the nation's past for the good of "progress" in Spain. In the end, however, the Republican memory persevered both in Spain and internationally, with Spanish Republicans finally receiving the official recognition denied to them since the end of the war in 1936 through the 2007 Historical Memory Law. Thus, despite the many attempts to do so, Spain's brutal past has not released its grip on Spaniards and the historical memories of these events appear to be here to stay. Following two periods of intense struggle for survival, Spaniards produced a variety of cultural tools, including testimonies, graphic narratives, and works of fiction, to promote the passage of history from the elder generations to younger audiences. This, in turn, serves as a powerful catalyst for the recovery of memory and a shift in the overall narrative of the war, finally placing the past in a place of importance and worthy of discourse within Spanish society.

Chapter 3: Living Culture, Living Memory

Spaniards could not possibly put traumatic events like the Spanish Civil War and the Franco Dictatorship behind them. Former Spanish Republicans and their descendants clung on to their memories and the memories of their friends and families who lived during these terrible events. In a personal memoir about his father's role in the Spanish Civil War, Miguel Gallardo, writes:

My father was a hero. Not one of those that appear in movies. Not a cheap novel like the ones he kept in the second drawer of his desk, in the office. His job has been to survive. Survive to fall in love with my mother. For me and my brother to be here. Survive to make friends, to read, to laugh... for all this, my father had to become a shadow, and shadows have no voice. Now I present to you a small voice, which is mine.¹⁷³

Memories, such as the one above, survived the immense pressures of Franco's regime and the subsequent government of the transition period, both of which aimed to downplay, repress, or ignore individual memories. However, with the passage in 2007 of the Law of Historical Memory, Spain extended recognition to the Republican memories of the war and their efforts to recover their relative's bodies.¹⁷⁴ Yet, questions remain about how these memories survived the forces set against them and what mechanisms helped survivors and their families enter states of recovery and recognition? This chapter examines how Spaniards resisted the forces of oblivion that worked to destroy their memories.

By drawing from oral/visual testimonies, graphic narratives, and more traditional novels created by or about Spanish Republicans and the refugee/exile experience, I

¹⁷³ Francisco Gallardo Sarmiento and Miguel Gallardo, *Un largo silencio* (Bilbao: Astiberri, 2012), 6.

¹⁷⁴ "Ley de La Memoria Histórica (Ley 52/2007 de 26 de diciembre)," Ministerio de Justicia, accessed January 27, 2021, <https://ley memoria.mjusticia.gob.es/cs/Satellite/LeyMemoria/es/memoria-historica-522007#exposicion>.

demonstrate that their creators were active participants in shaping, recovering, and interpreting the Republican memory within Spanish society. These authors made a public case for the importance of preserving the Republican memory and highlighted the common themes of elders passing along their memories to younger generations of Spaniards. Through this premise, every one of the authors relays the message of commemorating the traumatic past and those that lived it for posterity. They accomplished this by creating functional cultural objects that appealed to audiences of all ages, specifically fiction, graphic narratives, and oral histories. They are all representative of commemorative processes in which individuals broadcast and integrate individual memories into a broader collective Republican memory. In doing so, these individuals, in turn, show us how ordinary Spaniards fostered the growth of collective and cultural memory through the commemoration of the past and individual stories relating traumatic experiences. The importance of this process is not only to reshape the memory of the war in favor of the defeated, but rather to make the narratives of both sides available to the public creating a more well-rounded picture of the conflict and its consequences.

Methodology

Before diving into the main argument of this chapter, it is necessary to discuss my methodology, namely how and why I chose novels, graphic narratives, and audio-visual testimonies as my source base. Starting with novels, I chose this medium as it serves as a representation of “traditional” literature as well as being one of the earliest popular and widely recognized channels that authors used to discuss the Spanish Civil War and the idea of historical memory. I specifically chose Javier Cercas’ *Soldados de Salamina* and Ángeles Caso’s *Un largo silencio* due to the recognition that both received. These works

of fiction received positive recognition during the early 2000s, with both receiving literary awards, *Un largo silencio* receiving the *Premio de novela Fernando Lara* (Fernando Lara Novel Award) in 2000 and *Soldados de Salamina* receiving the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize in 2004.¹⁷⁵ My choice of s as the second cultural medium largely came from their popularity in the same period, known as the “Golden Age of Spanish comics,” of illustrated works discussing memory and the war during the 2000s (especially around 2007) and the Law of Historical Memory in 2007.¹⁷⁶ In other words, I chose this medium as Spanish authors clearly favored graphic narratives in the creation of narratives about the civil war and the memories surrounding it. While I initially considered using films as primary sources, I decided to go in the direction of video interviews instead because these oral histories provide another aspect of the interplay between memory and narrative, the stories of those that lived during through the war and its aftermath. To put it another way, I chose videos interviews, while more popular among scholars than the public, as they represent the foundations for many of the stories that authors of novels and graphic narratives either retold or drew influence from.

The Beginnings: Literature and Historical Memory

Of the three forms of cultural tools I examine, works of fiction (novels) are the most challenging manifestations of the theme of passing memory from the old to the young as they lack the visual aspect making it more difficult to read emotions. Ángeles

¹⁷⁵ Michelle Pauli, "Spanish Tale Wins Foreign Fiction Prize," *The Guardian*, April 23, 2004, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2004/apr/23/news.awardsandprizes>; "Un Largo Silencio - Ángeles Caso: Planeta De Libros," PlanetaDeLibros, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://www.planetadelibros.com/libro-un-largo-silencio/8681>; Castilla, "Ángeles Caso Gana El Premio Fernando Lara Con Una Novela De Posguerra."

¹⁷⁶ David Richter and Collin McKinney, *Spanish Graphic Narratives: Recent Developments in Sequential Art* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 15.

Caso's *Un largo silencio* and Javier Cercas' *Soldados de Salamina*, both published before 2007, serve as two excellent examples of fiction relating to the subject of Spanish Republican refugees and their memories of the Spanish Civil War. Spanish literature during the 2000s represents the early stages in a process of recovery of Spanish Republican narratives. Sometimes fiction can be a "safe" form for telling difficult histories.¹⁷⁷ Spanish literature, represented through the works of Caso and Cercas, pioneered the capture of generational memory and trauma while also setting the stage for other cultural tools and media produced after the enactment of the Law of Historical Memory in 2007.

A brief look at the secondary scholarship on the subject of literature in connection to memory theory and those relating specifically to the Spanish Civil War show the importance of the medium in historical memory production. For example, Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney analyze literature in historical memory in three parts: mediums of remembrance; objects of remembrance; and mediums for observing memory production.¹⁷⁸ In their first category, literature aids in collective memory production since it helps people remember the past through narratives.¹⁷⁹ Novels are essential to historical memory since they help remind people of the past through storytelling. For category two, literature serves as a "bridge between generations" since it produces discussion between people across time. In other words, literature helps to aid the passage of memory between

¹⁷⁷ Ernest Hemingway's book, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, is a perfect example of this. In this work Hemingway uses fiction to portray the horrors and political conflict experienced by both Spaniards and international volunteers during the Spanish Civil War. Ernest Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (New York: Scribner, 2019).

¹⁷⁸ Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney, "Literature and the Production of Cultural Memory: Introduction," *European Journal of English Studies* 10, no. 2 (2006): 112-13, accessed January 27, 2021, doi:10.1080/13825570600753394.

¹⁷⁹ Erll and Rigney, "Literature and the Production of Cultural Memory," 112.

generations of people by creating discourse surrounding the narratives and topics of the works.¹⁸⁰ Lastly, Erll and Rigney explain, “By imaginatively representing acts of recollection, literature makes remembrance observable. As such, it not only helps produce collective memory, in the ways we have been describing but also cultural knowledge about how memory works for individuals and groups.”¹⁸¹ The authors argue that novels represent one of the processes used in the formation of historical memory, making the practices discernable to researchers. Thus, Erll and Rigney’s brief introduction uncovers many potential roles for novels and other works of fiction, such as film, in the study of historical memory.

Other scholars focus specifically on fiction and memory of the Spanish Civil War itself. In an important 2009 article, José González argues that “To narrate means to remember, to bring into the present the memory of those on the losing side of history.”¹⁸² This shows the importance of literature in helping people narrate and remember their pasts or recover the memories of those of the past. González split the history of the memory of the war into three phases: the “time of silence” that existed during Franco’s dictatorship; the “time of forgetfulness” that occurred during the transition to democracy; and the “time of memory” that began during the 1990s and continues to the present day.¹⁸³ During this last period, González states that Spaniards broke away from the previous periods’ silencing effects and created a sense of public remembrance of the traumatic pasts of the past generations.¹⁸⁴ Key to this rupture of the silence was the 75th

¹⁸⁰ Erll and Rigney, “Literature and the Production of Cultural Memory,” 112-13.

¹⁸¹ Erll and Rigney, “Literature and the Production of Cultural Memory,” 113.

¹⁸² José M. González, “Spanish Literature and the Recovery of Historical Memory,” *European Review* 17, no. 1 (2009): 177, accessed January 27, 2021, doi:10.1017/s1062798709000647.

¹⁸³ González, “Spanish Literature and the Recovery of Historical Memory,” 177-178.

¹⁸⁴ González, “Spanish Literature and the Recovery of Historical Memory,” 178.

anniversary of the founding of the Second Republic and the military coup that began the Spanish Civil War, which "...led to one of the greatest flowerings of culture and literature in our history."¹⁸⁵ González explains how victims of the past's cruelties used literature to narrate the history of their points of view.¹⁸⁶ In other words, he states that Republicans whose stories had long been forbidden used fictional works to promulgate their narratives of the Spanish Civil War. However, González does not attribute this recovery solely to literature, arguing that fiction worked in tandem with other processes, such as the location of mass graves and the exhumation of bodies, that developed during the 1990s.¹⁸⁷ Thus, González shows the interaction of Spanish literature with unfolding historical processes, in order to highlight the public recovery of Republican memories of the Spanish Civil War.

The first selected work, Javier Cercas' *Soldados de Salamina*, a novel initially published in 2001, clearly illustrates the theme of passing memory from the old to the young and the importance of actively creating narratives. This theme is important as it represents the survival of not just the historical memory of the individuals interviewed, but the individuals themselves. In other words, recording and transmitting an individual's memory allows them to live on even after death. Cercas blends historical fact with fiction to reflect on past events and how the war was remembered. The story follows an author in his search for the truth of what happened during a massacre of Nationalist prisoners, including one of the founders of the fascist party, by Republicans before they fled to France.

¹⁸⁵ González, "Spanish Literature and the Recovery of Historical Memory," 178.

¹⁸⁶ González, "Spanish Literature and the Recovery of Historical Memory," 182-183.

¹⁸⁷ González, "Spanish Literature and the Recovery of Historical Memory," 178-180.

For the first two sections, Cercas, who is himself a character in the novel, primarily focused on the nationalist story of the Spanish Civil War. Specifically, he focused on the biography of one of the co-founders of the Spanish Falange (fascist party), Rafael Sánchez Mazas, and his escape from a Republican execution squad during the final months of the Spanish Civil War.¹⁸⁸ He interviewed former nationalists, including Mazas's son, to discover what happened to Mazas during and after his escape from the Republicans, including how his life had been spared by a Republican soldier.¹⁸⁹ However, in the third section of the story, Cercas learns the importance of literature in the construction of memories of the past. Talking with Roberto Bolaño, a Chilean writer that Cercas interviewed after finishing his book in the story, Cercas perfectly portrays the interplay between narratives and memory; Bolaño states, “‘Writing novels does not need imagination,’ Bolaño said. ‘Just memory. Novels are written by combining memories.’”¹⁹⁰ This statement, like González's argument, shows that the activity of creating coherent narratives is essential to the reclamation of historical memory since stories are the products of the past. Cercas mixes fact, memory, and imagination in order to invoke the war's impact.

Also, Cercas realized that his research lacked an important element, the Republican side of the event. He writes: “‘... What I do not have is a republican version of what happened there and without it the book is lame. When Bolaño told me his story I thought that maybe you had also been to the Collell when shooting and that you could

¹⁸⁸ Javier Cercas, *Soldados de Salamina* (Barcelona: Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial, 2015), 17-140)

¹⁸⁹ Cercas, *Soldados de Salamina*, 25.

¹⁹⁰ Cercas, *Soldados de Salamina*, 151.

give me your version of events.”¹⁹¹ Thus, the author sought out a former Republican soldier called Miralles, living in exile in France, who was present in during the attempted execution of Mazas. Miralles, although initially reluctant, told Cercas his side of the story, but did not say whether or not he was the soldier that let Mazas escape.¹⁹² During his interaction with Miralles, Cercas also raises the question of generational memory, as Sebastiaan Faber explains, “... Soldados' over- arching themes is the idea that the dead live on as long as we continue telling and hearing their stories - even if those stories are more faithful to the conventions of plot and narrative than to historical.”¹⁹³ This passage from old to young takes the form of Miralles narrating his story of the events of the end of the war, including Mazas’ attempted execution, to the “young” Cercas to preserve his memory of the war and those of his friends lost during the conflict. According to Cercas,

“... he remembers because, even though they died sixty years ago, they are still not dead, precisely because he remembers them. Or maybe it is not he who remembers them, but they who cling to him so that he is not completely dead. But when Miralles dies, I thought, his friends will also die completely, because there will be no one to remember them so that they do not die.”¹⁹⁴

Cercas continues, “...as long as I tell his story Miralles would somehow continue to live and they [his friends] would continue to live too, as long as I talked about them...”¹⁹⁵

Cercas understood the importance in preserving these memories in order to prevent the disappearance of Miralles and his friends from history. Javier Cercas’ work serves as a warning about the perils of losing the memories of those who witnessed the events of the

¹⁹¹ Cercas, *Soldados de Salamina*, 175.

¹⁹² Cercas, *Soldados de Salamina*, 143-208.

¹⁹³ Sebastiaan Faber, "Revis(it)ing the Past: Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation in Post-Franco Spain, a Review-Article (Second Part)," *Revista Hispánica Moderna*, (2006): 148, accessed May 11, 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30203817>.

¹⁹⁴ Cercas, *Soldados de Salamina*, 200.

¹⁹⁵ Cercas, *Soldados de Salamina*, 207.

Spanish Civil War and never told their stories. The danger in this lies with the fact that once these people pass away, not only their memories disappear, but they themselves, and the memories of others that they held fade away into oblivion as well.

Ángeles Caso's novel, *Un largo silencio* (2000), explores the theme of intergenerational memory more subtly than Cercas' does. Caso tells the story of the women of the Republican Vega family, a mother, her daughters, and granddaughters, during their return to Spain following the end of the war, the death of the father, and the imprisonment of one of the daughters' husbands. The novel focuses on their survival in the new Spain surrounding them.¹⁹⁶ For example, they returned to their home only to find it occupied by another family and their belongings nowhere to be found, leaving them with nothing.¹⁹⁷ Throughout the story, Caso also shows how the women attempted to deal with the new society, working to integrate themselves into a world that is prejudiced against them because of their past political leanings.¹⁹⁸ For instance, the story ends with the youngest of the women, Merceditas, sent to a Catholic school to escape the prejudice that her family faced under the Nationalist regime.¹⁹⁹ While the story itself follows the silencing of memory, Caso interrogates the mechanisms of memory. Several scholars have noted that Caso's narrative exposes the silencing of memory, while also helping recover the memories of Republican women and the hardships they faced.²⁰⁰ While not as

¹⁹⁶ Ángeles Caso, *Un largo silencio* (Barcelona: Planeta, 2012).

¹⁹⁷ Caso, *Un largo silencio*, 49-68.

¹⁹⁸ Caso, *Un largo silencio*, 183-206.

¹⁹⁹ Caso, *Un largo silencio*, 207-216.

²⁰⁰ Rocío González Naranjo, "Memoria Y Homenaje: "Un Largo Silencio" De Ángeles Caso," *Los Ojos De Hipatia*, June 21, 2018, accessed April 20, 2021, <https://losojosdehipatia.com.es/cultura/libros/memoria-y-homenaje-un-largo-silencio-de-angeles-caso/>; Amelia Castilla, "Ángeles Caso Gana El Premio Fernando Lara Con Una Novela De Posguerra," *El País*, September 15, 2000, accessed April 20, 2021, https://elpais.com/diario/2000/09/16/cultura/969055205_850215.html.

overt as in Cercas' work, the passage of memory still plays a central role and helps younger audiences understand how historical memory shapes society.

In some ways, fiction led the way for a much broader production of historical memory in the wake of the 2007 Law of Historical Memory. This legislation served as a watershed moment in Spanish history, allowing for an explosion of new cultural projects and media works. These included graphic narratives/comics and oral testimonies focused on forming and reviving the Spanish Republican memories of the conflict and subsequent decades of repression. Building on the thematic and theoretical foundations laid by the pre-2007 literary works, new authors and chroniclers aimed to record memories transmitted from older generations to younger Spaniards. Graphic narratives and memoirs as well as oral histories in Spain built on local memory and also reflected a global interest in graphic representations of historical violence and generational memory.²⁰¹

Graphic Narratives: Memories Made Visual

By far, one of the most well-known graphic narratives relating to the historical memory of a traumatic event is Art Spiegelman's *Maus*. In this two-volume work, Spiegelman tells the story of his father, a Holocaust survivor, and his life before, during, and after the Second World War through illustrations portraying people as humanized animals (Jews as mice, Germans as cats, Poles as pigs, etc.).²⁰² Like some of the Spanish graphic narratives, Spiegelman reflects on the generational impact of his father's life on his own emotional development and understanding of the past. For instance, one of the

²⁰¹ Some examples of this include Tian Veasna, *Year of the Rabbit* (USA: Drawn & Quarterly, 2020) (Cambodian Genocide); Marjane Sa trapi, *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* (Pantheon, 2004) (Iranian Revolution); Thi Bui, *The Best We Could Do: An Illustrated Memoir* (New York: Abrams Comicarts, 2018) (Vietnamese Migration).

²⁰² See Art Spiegelman, *Maus* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 2010).

most poignant parts of the story looks at the family dynamic surrounding his parents' loss of their first son in the Holocaust and their different ways of coping with grief and pain.

After the explosion of recovery efforts after 2007, Spaniards, following the example of Spiegelman, often used the medium of the graphic narrative or comic strip to produce, portray, and pass along their memories of their own trauma during the Spanish Civil War and the subsequent dictatorship of Francisco Franco or their time as refugees or exiles.²⁰³ Like the earlier novels, these graphic narratives include the overarching theme of intergenerational memory. In several cases, these works were published before 2007, but later re-published or reprinted after that year.

A brief look into the secondary literature surrounding graphic narratives shows their important roles in the processes behind the creation, recovery, and passage of historical memory between generations. For example, David Richter and Collin McKinney discuss the long-standing history of Spanish comics and graphic narratives, dating as far back as the early 1800s and developing over time.²⁰⁴ Over this long period, the audiences for these works flipped between younger and older readers due to the changes in the content and themes within the works, with most considered as adult reading in the present day.²⁰⁵ Although growing in popularity generally, Richter and McKinney argue that "... it is in 2007 that graphic literature would truly find new life in Spain."²⁰⁶ Their work demonstrates that this "new life" rose from the two disparate events that year. The first is the *Premio Nacional del Cómic* (National Comic Award),

²⁰³ An example of this includes Antonio Altarriba, *El arte de volar* (Barcelona, Spain: Norma Editorial, 2016).

²⁰⁴ Richter and McKinney, *Spanish Graphic Narratives*, 5-12.

²⁰⁵ Richter and McKinney, *Spanish Graphic Narratives*, 7-9, 11-12.

²⁰⁶ Richter and McKinney, *Spanish Graphic Narratives*, 16-17.

founded by the Ministry of Culture, giving the medium a sense of legitimacy as a cultural and literary tool. The other watershed event was the passage of the Law of Historical Memory that opened the topics of the Spanish Civil War's memories and the subsequent dictatorship to authors and placed this medium in the broader trends of memory production and recovery.²⁰⁷ In other words, the graphic narrative became a useful tool for remembering the war and dictatorship. Finally, the authors argue that graphic narratives have proven popular ways to interrogate ideas of memory transmission more generally in Spain.

Similarly, Jordan Tronsgard examines the importance of graphic narratives in the production of “post-memory” regarding the Spanish Civil War and the Franco Dictatorship.²⁰⁸ In defining the significance of the medium as a whole, Tronsgard states, “Comics constitute the intersection between image and word, allowing articulation and silence in the same visual space.”²⁰⁹ In other words, comics hold a special place in constructing narratives since they are both written and visual, allowing the reader to experience the story in multiple ways. Tronsgard also notes that graphic narratives written by those who did not live during the war, “... highlight and embrace the fact that those who are producing cultural works of historical memory did not live the national traumas themselves; their approach is characterized by the obligation to (re)construct and (re)present them by means of an imaginative act mediated by previous narratives and not personal experience.”²¹⁰ He also states, “While it is true that all memory is processed as a

²⁰⁷ Richter and McKinney, *Spanish Graphic Narratives*, 17.

²⁰⁸ Jordan Tronsgard, "Drawing the Past: The Graphic Novel as Postmemory in Spain," *Romance Notes* 57, no. 2 (2017): 268, accessed February 2, 2021, doi:10.1353/rmc.2017.0023.

²⁰⁹ Tronsgard, "Drawing the Past," 267.

²¹⁰ Tronsgard, "Drawing the Past," 268-269.

narrative construct, postmemory embraces the creative and imaginative nature of the task as a necessary part of inheriting the legacy of trauma, which flows from generation to generation.”²¹¹ In other words, he shows that not only is narrative important to all memory, but especially important to generational memory as it allows for the traumas of the past to be expressed to subsequent age groups. What is significant about Tronsgard's argument is that generational memory transmission is key in the construction of narratives about the past, especially in cases of trauma. Even though the writers of works of post-memory did not live during the events themselves, they create the narratives with the influence of past traumas at the forefront of their works. Therefore, graphic narratives are essential mediums that the descendants of Spanish Republicans and others actively use to give meaning to Spain's past.

As the secondary literature demonstrates, graphic narratives are central to the post-2007 move toward a public history of memory in Spain. I shall discuss three selected graphic narratives starting with Miguel Gallardo and Francisco Sarmiento's *Un largo silencio* (not to be confused with Ángeles Caso's novel of the same name), originally published in 1997, but republished in 2011 under a new publisher, Astiberri. The reason for this later re-publishing, according to García, was that the book "...went unnoticed in the year of its original publication, pointing perhaps to a certain lack of adequate sensitivity in public awareness (the debate on historical memory would not be fully reopened until the early 2000s) and a lack of medium/market for a graphic narrative in Spain at the time.”²¹² García, thus, implies that this novel was published before its

²¹¹ Tronsgard, "Drawing the Past," 277.

²¹² García, "The Representation of Traumatic Memory in Spanish Comics," 67.

time, only to later resurface when the topics it illustrates became popular subjects of discussion among Spaniards. Like Spiegelman with *Maus*, Gallardo illustrates the story of his father, Francisco Sarmiento, focusing on his life before, during, and after the Spanish Civil War.²¹³ However, the story itself is told in fragments, describing the many traumatic events Francisco experienced in his life. One such episode included his imprisonment in the French internment camp Argelès-sur-Mer after he fled Spain at the end of the war.²¹⁴ Scholar Juan Carlos Pérez García best describes the presence of this type of memory, writing: “There is the notion of generational memory that aspires to be shared, with the intertwining of the voices of the father (writing) and the son (drawings and book concept) in a joint work of generational transmission.”²¹⁵ García shows how the process of creating a memory narrative both preserves the Republican memory of the war between different generations of Spaniards; the work also presents a sense of connection between these two generations through the shared voices of father and son in this graphic narrative.

Returning to the example of the French internment camp, Francisco writes about the terrible conditions in the camp, “That's when I started to get the lice. We slept on top of straw and, as I got up in the morning, I noticed my whole body itching a lot, I took off my shirt and watched the lice run. The food was very bad, they gave us a piece of cheese and some bread for the whole day.”²¹⁶ This anecdote evokes the sensory violence of camp on a daily basis, giving an immediacy to the account. Recovering these memories,

²¹³ Francisco Gallardo Sarmiento and Miguel Gallardo, *Un largo silencio* (Bilbao: Astiberri, 2012).

²¹⁴ Sarmiento and Gallardo, *Un largo silencio*, 45-50.

²¹⁵ García, “The Representation of Traumatic Memory in Spanish Comics,” 66.

²¹⁶ Sarmiento and Gallardo, *Un largo silencio*, 47.

thus, are important as they provide in depth discussions about the daily lives of those who suffered in or out of Spain after the end of the war. Gallardo illustrated multiple scenes and objects from the narrative, including a scene of men sleeping on a beach in tents. These men, along with the tents and their other surroundings, look disheveled, grim, and convey a feeling of sadness.²¹⁷ The illustrations, much like the narration, are important to the process of recovering memory and reveal the sadness that many Spaniards must have felt after the fall of the Second Republic in 1939. Thus, this kind of memory is important since it clearly shows both the day-to-day suffering that many Spanish Republican refugees experienced, but also that these memories represent the emotions that they felt alongside these experiences.

At the beginning of the piece, Gallardo writes, “This is the story my father told me over and over again, made of pieces and remnants, of pieces that don't fit, but which I know is true, and so I'm going to try to tell it, giving my father a voice. A voice that tells a part of the story that is increasingly forgotten, but which those who lived it will never forget it.”²¹⁸ Gallardo hoped to preserve the stories his father told him and to prevent his memories from slipping into oblivion. Thus, Gallardo and Sarmiento’s graphic narrative uses memory to illustrate the “part of the story that is increasingly forgotten,” or in other words the narrative that was often left out of the discussions of the memory of the Spanish Civil War. Gallardo points out that, “those who lived it will never forget it.”²¹⁹ Recovering the memories of people like Gallardo's father brings a sense of closure since their memories will not be forgotten, even after they themselves pass on.

²¹⁷ Sarmiento and Gallardo, *Un largo silencio*, 46.

²¹⁸ Sarmiento and Gallardo, *Un largo silencio*, 7.

²¹⁹ Sarmiento and Gallardo, *Un largo silencio*, 7.

Indeed, while some graphic narratives, such as Gallardo and Sarmiento's, base their narratives on factual accounts and events, fictionalized stories of the Republican memories of the Spanish Civil War exist as well. A good example of this is Paco Roca's *Los surcos del azar* (Twists of Fate), published in 2013. Roca's narrative is split into two parts, the first being set in the past during the events of the end of the Spanish Civil War and subsequent post-war years; the second, much like in Javier Cercas' novel, follows a fictionalized version of the author and his interview with a Spanish Republican exile in France, Miguel Ruiz.²²⁰ However, while the account is fictional, Roca interviewed many former Republicans and used their stories as inspiration for this work. Pérez García explains this mix of methods, noting, "However, the breaking of the autobiographical pact of truth, which involves the author interviewing a fictitious protagonist, does not mean that Roca is lying to us, since he did interview several real Republicans."²²¹ Roca fills in rich detail that engages the reader's imagination by describing how these Spaniards named their vehicles after battles fought during the Spanish Civil War, such as Guadalajara, with Miguel saying, "They were the cities where the republicans had fought Franco."²²²

Like Gallardo and Sarmiento, Roca focuses his narrative on intergenerational storytelling. For example, Roca learned that Miguel, after he fled Spain, joined the French in Africa, and later joined the *La Nueve* division, a free French unit made up mostly of exiled Spaniards, famously known as the first "French" force to re-enter

²²⁰ Paco Roca, *Los surcos del azar* (Bilbao: Astiberri Ediciones, 2013).

²²¹ García, "The Representation of Traumatic Memory in Spanish Comics," 73.

²²² Roca, *Los surcos del azar*, 150-153.

Paris.²²³ Yet Miguel is a hero that no one, not even his neighbor who lived near him for his entire life, knew about.²²⁴ In the end however, the importance of the passage of memory is evident when Miguel, after receiving a parting gift from Paco, said, “Thank you for the gift. And for having made me get back a part of my life that I dared not remember.”²²⁵ The notion of public witness is significant here; recording Miguel’s memory was not only crucial for Paco but Miguel himself. Thus, Paco Roca’s graphic narrative *Los surcos del azar* is important in demonstrating a sense of healing or closure, both for the interviewee and for those hearing the stories.

The final work I analyze is Carlos Giménez’s work *Paracuellos*²²⁶, originally published in six volumes with the first two issued between the 1970s and 1980s and the last four between the 1990s and early 2000s; however, the entire collection of six volumes was not published together as one graphic narrative *Todo Paracuellos* until 2007.²²⁷ The reason for this later full publication, according to García, was that early on publishers stopped printing the comics due to their serious and “depressing” content matter. However, with the memory boom following the Law of Historical Memory, the content of these graphic narratives became highly relevant to the renewed discussions about Spain’s horrific past.²²⁸ Giménez’s work, a collection of short stories in comic form, are part autobiographical and part fictional accounts of his own life and that of

²²³ Roca, *Los surcos del azar*, 92-285; García, “The Representation of Traumatic Memory in Spanish Comics,” 71.

²²⁴ Roca, *Los surcos del azar*, 20.

²²⁵ Roca, *Los surcos del azar*, 320.

²²⁶ Note: For references I shall be using the 2016 English translation.

²²⁷ Ana Merino and Brittany Tullis, “The Sequential Art of Memory: The Testimonial Struggle of Comics in Spain,” *Hispanic Issues On Line*, (2012): 212-214, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://hdl.handle.net/11299/184372>.

²²⁸ García, “The Representation of Traumatic Memory in Spanish Comics,” 59.

other orphans, most of whom spent time housed in multiple homes/facilities run by the Spanish Falange de las JONS (the Spanish fascist Party), the Church, or other nationalist institutions/groups.²²⁹

In the first “chapters,” Giménez describes his time at Paracuellos de Jarama, a Falange-sponsored orphanage. Giménez relates in one story how the orphans received gifts, labeled “Gifts from the United States for the Children of Spain,” the night before Three Kings Day (January 6) but, “The next morning, the 6th of January we all got in line... and one by one we handed back the presents.” The following panels show the children sadly talking about their toys and the short times they had to play with them.²³⁰ The author gives no explanation as to why the gifts were taken away. However, as Three Kings Day is typically a day of family celebrations, it could be inferred that the author is showing that these children have no families, and therefore do not get to partake in the celebrations of this holiday.²³¹ Different from the other sources, which provide the voices of adults, this provides the voices of another group who suffered due to the war and dictatorship, children. These voices are an important addition to the understanding of the historical memory of the Spanish Civil War for several reasons. Firstly, the stories of the orphaned children of Spanish Republicans show that the war affected everyone in Spanish society, including the young, giving a more diverse portrait of the trauma inflicted by the conflict. Similarly, these narratives show that the repression employed by Franco’s regime and its enforcers targeted any and everyone regardless of age.

²²⁹ Carlos Giménez, *Paracuellos*, trans. Sonya Jones (San Diego, CA: EuroComics, an Imprint of IDW Publishing, 2016).

²³⁰ Giménez, *Paracuellos*, 20-21.

²³¹ "Three Kings Day," Smithsonian Institution, accessed February 24, 2021, <https://www.si.edu/newsdesk/snapshot/three-kings-day>.

Similar to the previous two authors, Giménez also is interested in generational questions. According to Merino and Tullis:

He records his memories, along with those of his peers, within its frames. In anticipation of this graphic narrative record, he compiles an extensive audio archive composed of the conversations between himself and others who lived within the confines of the “Hogares de Auxilio Social” ... he explains, various types of documentation (belonging to him and others) help with the reconstruction of the past explored in his work ... In a natural, intuitive way, Giménez manages to create a space of encounter in which memory flows in anecdotal form among former residents of homes like “Paracuellos.”²³²

In other words, much like Roca, Giménez used the medium of the graphic narrative to preserve and proliferate the memories of Spanish Republicans or, in this case, the children they left behind after the end of the Spanish Civil War. Likewise, his work also created a discourse between those who lived in the homes and between Spaniards born after these events. In other words, he creates a relatable story that younger Spaniards in the present day may relate to more than the stories describing the experiences of adults. Giménez’s work, thus, shows the importance behind recovery efforts since he shows that no one was safe from the Francoist repression, with even children falling victim to the harsh punishments for being tied to the former Republic. This, in turn, fills in the gaps of the historical narrative of the Spanish Civil War, since he introduces the testimonies of those who grew up with the repercussions of the war and allows these voices to tell their stories to the rest of Spanish society.

All three works together show the importance of the graphic narrative to the processes surrounding the Republican memories following 2007 since they all tell the stories of a group of people who could not speak about their experiences until seventy

²³² Merino and Tullis, “The Sequential Art of Memory,” 215-216.

years later.²³³ Certainly, there were cases where graphic narratives discussing these memories were published before 2007. However, in many cases these works received little to no attention at the time of publication, only to later receive recognition and popularity after the memory boom started in 2007. In short, Spanish graphic narratives portray the traumatic past to both present the emotional nature of these events, as well as to preserve the narratives of those who suffered under these harrowing circumstances. Similarly, the authors of these works also opened up the processes of intergenerational memory through the dissemination of their works. This is because with the spread of popular cultural media, especially with the “Golden Age of the Spanish comic,” younger generations of Spaniards finally learned of the traumatic past that many of their elders experienced and allowed them to openly discuss their own opinions about how the past should be treated.

Testimonies: Combatting Oblivion

Graphic narratives and other literature emerged as important narratives in the last few decades only because of the availability of oral testimonies. Testimonies, especially the audio-visual interviews with former Spanish Republicans, served an essential role in the construction and dissemination of memory. For example, the video interviews conducted between 2007 and 2010 by researchers at the University of California, San Diego, with former Spanish Republicans and their descendants allowed these individuals, in their voices, to express their thoughts and stories. These records are publicly available

²³³ There are some graphic narratives, such as Denis Lapière and Eduard Torrents' *El convoy*, that discuss women's perspectives of the war and aftermath, however most authors focus on male perspectives; see Carmen Moreno-Nuño, "The Spanish Civil War in Comic Books: A Surge in Popularity—and Quality," *The Volunteer*, December 31, 2018, accessed March 10, 2021, <https://albavolunteer.org/2018/12/the-spanish-civil-war-in-comic-books/>.

for researchers and family members, and access to them is not tied to the Spanish government. Therefore, oral testimonies performed integral roles as they allowed Spaniards whose voices were silenced to preserve and disseminate their memories.

Oral testimonies served another critical role in terms of replacing or filling in the gaps in the historical records in Spanish archives. In a sense, oral testimony allows for restoration of much that was lost. As discussed in the previous chapter, the deliberate destruction or sequestering of documents by personnel in Spanish archives during the dictatorship and the transition to democracy led to significant gaps in the historical record. According to Emily Behzadi, the Department of Press and Publicity destroyed nearly 72 tons of published works from their archives during the dictatorship.²³⁴ Similarly, during the transition to democracy, “In an attempt to efface memory, the regime purged its records, including police, judicial and military papers, in the 1960s and 1970s.”²³⁵ Of the few documents and collections that remained, archives then restricted access, allowing few people to view them.²³⁶ In response to the destruction or restriction of documents, oral testimonies (i.e., interviews) conducted after 2007 served to fill in some of the gaps. The Spanish Civil War Historical Memory Project states, “Given that the archives of the Francoist repression were, in many cases, physically destroyed, these voices are the only source that we have to reconstruct certain episodes of the Civil War and the dictatorship and, therefore, the only way that we have to document the magnitude

²³⁴ Emily Behzadi, “Spain for the Spaniards”: An Examination of the Plunder & Polemic Restitution of the Salamanca Papers,” *George Mason Journal of International Commercial Law* 11, no. 1 (2020): 7, accessed February 8, 2021, <https://heinonline-org.dist.lib.usu.edu/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/gmjintcol1&i=5>.

²³⁵ Meirian Jump, “The Role of Archives in the Movement for the Recovery of Historical Memory in Spain. La Rioja: A Regional Case Study,” *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 33, no. 2 (2012): 152, accessed February 8, 2021, doi:10.1080/00379816.2012.722415.

²³⁶ Zahira Arañuete-Toribio, “Confronting a History of War Loss in a Spanish Family Archive,” *History and Anthropology* 28, no. 2 (2017): 215, accessed February 8, 2021, doi:10.1080/02757206.2017.1279157.

and the brutality of the Francoist repression.”²³⁷ In other words, the oral histories of the defeated Spanish Republicans counteract the destruction of documents by the regime and post-Franco government, thus providing explicit stories of the regime's repression and crimes.

The testimony of Carmen Chicano, briefly presented in the previous chapter, serves as a perfect example of Spanish Republicans actively calling for the passage and preservation of their memory for younger generations of Spaniards. As stated previously, Chicano was a young woman at the time of the Spanish Civil War, and her family, whose members fought for or supported the Republican government, were displaced from their homes and attempted to flee to France but returned to Vélez-Málaga in Southern Spain. During this time, she lost many of her family members, including her uncle and brothers, to the nationalist executions of former Republicans.²³⁸ After being asked whether she passed along her memories to her children and grandchildren, Chicano responded, “Of course! I told it to them... and they ask me a lot.”²³⁹ Chicano passed along her memories to younger Spaniards in two ways, the first by telling her children and grandchildren, and the second being through the interview. However, while both represent a form of preservation, they are not the same. The first Chicano herself implies is more private in form, with families only discussing the memories amongst themselves. Doing a public interview was harder, Chicano says, because she feared imprisonment, execution, or “disappearing” (being secretly taken away, killed, and buried in an unmarked grave) by

²³⁷ “Spanish Civil War Memory Project,” (University of California, San Diego), accessed February 9, 2021, <https://library.ucsd.edu/speccoll/scwmemory/>.

²³⁸ Chicano, “Testimony of Carmen Chicano,” video 1.

²³⁹ Chicano, “Testimony of Carmen Chicano,” video 2.

the regime if these memories were told and spread to the public, citing the case of her “disappeared” siblings as an example.²⁴⁰ Yet, for Chicano, being interviewed was worth the danger. For her, the most important thing was to remember the suffering that the war and post-war caused many Spaniards, including her brothers. She also wanted to preserve the legacy of those that did not come home.²⁴¹ It should be also noted that throughout the interview before answering many of the questions, especially those focused more on both the trauma that she and her family faced, Chicano often took a long time to answer and held a blank expression and stare, as if looking far away. This, in turn, portrays the deep emotional and traumatic connection that Chicano linked to her memories of the war and dictatorship, her face showing an expression, akin to the “thousand-yard stare” or other signs of trauma.²⁴² Chicano's interview itself also preserves not only her memory for future generations, but her testimony also sustains for a broader public the memories of those lost during the harsh repression of the dictatorship.

The testimony of José “Pepe” Hormigo González, like that of Carmen Chicano, serves as a wonderful example of a former Spanish Republican actively discussing his experiences. Hormigo González, born in 1932 in Seville, was a young boy during the war. His family fled its home to elsewhere in Spain, only to have the father, a supporter of the Republic, imprisoned after the war's conclusion.²⁴³ In terms of the Law of

²⁴⁰ Chicano, "Testimony of Carmen Chicano," video 2.

²⁴¹ Chicano, "Testimony of Carmen Chicano," video 3.

²⁴² See Walter Patrick Wade, "Witness to the Thousand-Yard Stare: Civilian Imagination of Service Members' Mental Injuries in Wartime," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (2019): doi:10.1080/02773945.2019.1575461.

²⁴³ José “Pepe” Hormigo González, "Testimony of José “Pepe” Hormigo González, Interview with Viviana MacManus and Jodi Eisenberg; July 2 and 3, 2008," interview by Viviana MacManus and Jodi Eisenberg, Spanish Civil War Memory Project, 2008, video 1-2, accessed February 10, 2021, <https://library.ucsd.edu/speccoll/scwmemory/catalog/eng-bb8328908j.html>.

Historical Memory, González says that the law has done some but not enough stating that, "... I have given it a name but not a title."²⁴⁴ In other words, he says the law is one guarding historical memory only in name, not yet in force. In turn, this shows the wish of many Republicans for the government to enforce the Law of Historical Memory actively. For example, González argues that the government needs to enforce the removal of Francoist symbols, as there are many symbols and monuments created during the dictatorship that survived in Seville.²⁴⁵ However, on the other hand, his testimony still affirms the importance of the legislation in fostering a sense of passage of memory to younger Spaniards since the law. He tells the interviewer: "... at least it helps to recognize the forty years of suffering of many creatures [people]."²⁴⁶ Gonzalez's testimony establishes that the law has helped Spaniards to identify the suffering that their elders underwent during the past, even if there is still much work to be done.

Lastly, Enrique Aguado Marco's testimony, like the other two interviews, reveals the importance of actively passing along the Republican memory from the older generations to younger Spaniards. Marco, born in 1913, fought for the Republicans but later fled Spain for France, where he was imprisoned in an internment camp. Marco remained in France in exile until the early 1970s, when he finally returned to Spain.²⁴⁷ Marco explained in his interview, "See... historical memory is a difficult thing, no more, no less." He then goes on to say that this is because the government intervened, controlling the memories of "thousands and thousands of people within the territory of

²⁴⁴ Hormigo González, "Testimony of José "Pepe" Homigo González," video 8.

²⁴⁵ Hormigo González, "Testimony of José "Pepe" Homigo González," video 8.

²⁴⁶ Hormigo González, "Testimony of José "Pepe" Homigo González," video 8.

²⁴⁷ Marco, "Testimony of Enrique Aguado Marco," video 1-video 8.

Spain,” making it so, “... they remembered nothing at all.”²⁴⁸ Marco continued by pointing out the predicament for people like him in Spain that arose from the intervention of the government in the memories of the past. Much like González, Marco did not think that the Law of Historical Memory accomplished its goals. He says that it is one thing to make a law, but the government must enforce it for it to be effective. In the case of the Law of Historical Memory, he sees it as a failure since while it promised to get rid of the traces of Francoism, former Francoists remain in the Spanish government.²⁴⁹ In his opinion, these laws should not just be written for those who lived during an event, but for the children as well, and he alludes that children have the right to know.²⁵⁰ Recounting the experiences of the past is not the same as gaining justice for past wrongs.

While not representative of the entire population of former Spanish Republicans, these three interviews showed how the 2007 law opened up the possibility of common discussions regarding experiences and memories of the war. All three pointed out that younger generations of Spaniards should learn about the past. Yet, these interviews also showed that it is important to understand that not all former Spanish Republicans have the same opinions about nor experiences of the war and its aftermath. For example, the testimony of Enrique Marco, a man who fought during the war and who was later interned in France, is different from that of Carlos Giménez, a child forced to live in Falangist orphanages and institutions after the end of the war. Similarly, the priorities of Carmen Chicano for the recovery of memory are not the same of those expressed by either Hormigo González or Marco. Chicano expressed her hopes that this law would aid

²⁴⁸ Marco, "Testimony of Enrique Aguado Marco," video 9.

²⁴⁹ Marco, "Testimony of Enrique Aguado Marco," video 9.

²⁵⁰ Marco, "Testimony of Enrique Aguado Marco," video 9.

her in finding her disappeared family members and keep their memories alive. On the other hand, the other two interviewees articulated their disappointment in the Law of Historical Memory, but nonetheless said that the preservation of the Republican memory is important so that future generations of Spaniards may have a fuller picture of the conflict and its consequences.

Commemorative Creations

While the selected novels and graphic narratives were created for entertainment and the interviews likely produced for scholarly research, cultural tools and media also served an important role in the process of recovering and disseminating the Republican memory of the Spanish Civil War and subsequent dictatorship. Namely, they allowed Spaniards to do what in many cases their government could not accomplish (even with the push of the Law of Historical Memory); that is creating effective and popular means for commemorating the past, recovering the memories of those who lived during those periods, and spreading the messages of preservation and discussion among the public. These mediums granted authors the ability to create narratives conserving and portraying the stories of the long silenced Spanish Republicans to both popular and scholarly audiences within Spain (and internationally) and opening spaces for discussion among younger generations of Spaniards to question the past. Lastly, these works and interviews also greatly benefitted from the timing of their publications, with most being published after (or close to in the case of the novels), with the memory boom fomented by the 2007 Law of Historical Memory and bolstering the movement to recover and spread the Republican memories of the Spanish Civil War and subsequent dictatorship of Francisco Franco.

Conclusion: The End or Only the Beginning?

Literature, graphic narratives, and oral testimonies, while important, are only parts of the processes behind the ongoing creation, recovery, and dissemination of the Republican memories of the Spanish Civil War and dictatorship of Francisco Franco. While these works are now preserved for the public, the fight for truth telling and reconciliation continues. For example, the Spanish Civil War Memory Project describes the interviews they are conducting "... as an open process rather than as a closed product."²⁵¹ This statement perfectly explains why the production, recovery, and broadcasting of the Republican memory is important. Throughout the entire process of recovery, it must be understood that the memories belonged to living people who all underwent severe trauma during and after the Spanish Civil War. Some forms of media, such as literature, graphic narratives, and testimony, are objects that assist survivors, witnesses, and descendants of Republicans in piecing together their stories. To understand the memories of these people is to fill in a large gap in the narrative that for nearly three quarters of a century excluded their voices, thus giving a fuller and more well-rounded picture of the Spanish Civil War and following dictatorship. In the end, the active work of Spanish Republicans, their descendants, and other Spaniards began the processes pushing for the recovery and preservation of the Republican narrative of the Spanish Civil War, combatting the repressive and destructive practices of the Franco Dictatorship and the Pact of Forgetting to this day.

... or the Beginning of the End?

²⁵¹ "Spanish Civil War Memory Project."

It has been over a decade since the introduction of the *Ley de la Memoria Histórica* in 2007. Following the passage of this piece of legislation, families of former combatants and refugees mounted a significant counter-offensive by Republican-aligned Spaniards against the long-standing Nationalist narrative and its accompanying forces of silence. Yet, the battle over the historical memory of the Spanish Civil War is far from over. A progressive Socialist government oversaw the production and passage of the memory law, but that coalition lost the majority in 2011. At that time, Spain once again came under the control of the conservative Partido Popular (Popular Party) or PP in 2011. The PP opposed the law and fought its initiatives, so it was unsurprising that the new government began to undermine the project for recovery of the Republican memory and dead. While not revoking the law entirely, the new government defunded the projects geared towards restoring Republican memory and recovering the bodies of those disappeared during the war and dictatorship.²⁵² This represented a devastating blow for advocates of openness, as it symbolized the loss of governmental recognition and support that former Republicans received with the Law of Historical Memory. Similarly, this significantly decreased the efforts to recover bodies and narratives that condemned the regime's crimes. Specifically, the new government cut all funding towards future exhumations and denied the existence of the over 2000 remaining identified mass graves located across Spain.²⁵³ This does not mean that the Republican memory once again receded into the shadows within Spanish society. Instead, Spaniards continue to this day

²⁵² Ara güete-Toribio, "Confronting a History of War Loss in a Spanish Family Archive," 212.

²⁵³ Jorge Marco, "Francoist Crimes: Denial and Invisibility, 1936–2016," *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, no. 1 (2017): 160, accessed February 22, 2021, doi:10.1177/0022009416678811.

to fight for the right to gain information, recover their loved ones' bodies, and disseminate the memories of the defeated Republicans.²⁵⁴

For example, Republicans and their descendants achieved another victory in 2019, with the removal of Francisco Franco's body from the Valley of the Fallen monument, which had been built by political prisoners and other forced laborers during Franco's regime.²⁵⁵ This event represents a victory for the Spanish Republican memory for several reasons; the first being the symbolism of exhuming the body of the dictator, one of only two named graves at the site (the other being that of José Antonio Primo de Rivera, the founder of the Falange). This separated Franco from the unmarked mass grave of countless victims of the regime, many of whom were disinterred from elsewhere and then reinterred at the monument without the consent of their families.²⁵⁶ Similarly, Anabel Díez points out, "Franco is the only one among the more than 33,000 people whose bodies lie in the Valley of the Fallen who was not a victim of the Civil War."²⁵⁷ Franco's removal, therefore, exemplifies a recognition of the victims buried there and those forced to build it, by detaching one of the last, and greatest, symbols of the dictatorship and the suffering it caused. Secondly, the removal of Franco's body opened up discussions about remodeling the tomb, once a symbol of repression and the dictator's lasting power, into a museum that truly commemorates those that died during the war and dictatorship.²⁵⁸ The

²⁵⁴ Aragüete-Toribio, "Confronting a History of War Loss in a Spanish Family Archive," 212-214.

²⁵⁵ Carlos Cué, "Franco's Exhumation to Take Place on Thursday," *El País*, October 21, 2019, accessed February 22, 2021, https://english.elpais.com/elpais/2019/10/21/inenglish/1571643949_049586.html.

²⁵⁶ Hepworth, "Site of Memory and Dismemory," 470-71; Cué, "Franco's Exhumation to Take Place on Thursday."

²⁵⁷ Anabel Díez, "Spanish Congress Approves Exhumation of Franco's Remains," *El País*, September 13, 2018, accessed March 5, 2021, https://english.elpais.com/elpais/2018/09/13/inenglish/1536852062_932166.html?id_externo_rsoc=FB_CM_EN.

²⁵⁸ Díez, "Spanish Congress Approves Exhumation of Franco's Remains,"; Cué, "Franco's Exhumation to Take Place on Thursday."

significance of this proposal, even before the removal of the dictator's remains, would produce a sense of reconciliation in Spain, since this monument would foster as Andrea Hepworth writes, "... the democratization of memory," both sides being equally represented and discussed in a space of authority.²⁵⁹ In other words, the possible creation of a museum at the dictator's former burial site would serve to create a sense of equality between the memories of both sides, providing a place where both can be represented and discussed. The removal of Francisco Franco's body from the *Valle de los Caídos*, therefore, is a significant victory for the Republican memory since this action has both acknowledged the monument's grim past and opened up possibilities for equal representation in the future.

But the question still stands of where Spain is heading with its dialogues over historical memory? While I cannot say for sure, I am hopeful that Spain will one day fully embrace their past and, like Germany with its history of Nazi violence and genocide, encourage open discussion and education about the Spanish Civil War and the crimes of Franco's regime. But I am unsure how long it will take for this to happen, with Spain focused on other pressing concerns, including a global pandemic and the Catalan separatist movements. It is also still unclear whether the historical memory project I have examined shall survive in the future against the many forces pushing against it, such as the far-right VOX party and alt-right groups. In many cases, the former Spanish Republicans, much like the Second World War veterans, are now all likely in their nineties or even over 100 years old and do not have much longer to pass along their stories.

²⁵⁹ Hepworth, "Site of Memory and Dismemory," 479.

Yet the 2007 Law of Historical Memory, despite the setbacks in recent years, has laid the foundations for discussion of the past in Spain. It is important to note that in 2018, the Spanish Socialist Workers Party or PSOE, the party that originally designed and passed the Law of Historical Memory back in 2007, regained some power in the Spanish government with the election of Pedro Sánchez as Prime Minister.²⁶⁰ This may lead to progress towards reinstating the funding stripped away by the PP during the previous government. However, I think it will likely fall to both historians and ordinary Spaniards to make sure the narratives of the defeated Republicans stand the tests of time and gain equal recognition in Spanish society.

Domestically, ordinary Spaniards must continue to push for governmental support in the retrieval of both bodies and memories of the defeated Republicans. Spaniards must continue to tell the stories of their families who lived, fought, grew up, and suffered during the Spanish Civil War and the subsequent dictatorship. This would not only help to preserve and publicize the stories of those who can no longer tell their own tales, but also may inspire others to speak up about their pasts and encourage younger Spaniards to study the past and learn about the other side of the historical narrative. On that note, many Spaniards agree that the Francoist dictatorship and the Civil War must be included in school textbooks, allowing younger generations to understand the horrors of the past.²⁶¹

²⁶⁰ Miquel Alberola, "Pedro Sánchez Becomes the New Prime Minister of Spain," *El País*, June 1, 2018, accessed March 6, 2021, https://english.elpais.com/elpais/2018/06/01/inenglish/1527854951_473768.html.

²⁶¹ Natalia Junquera, "The Enduring Myths around Spain's Historical Memory Law," *El País*, June 1, 2019, accessed March 6, 2021, https://english.elpais.com/elpais/2019/06/28/inenglish/1561732798_239871.html.

On the international level, projects, such as the Spanish Civil War Memory Project, must continue to record and study the Republican memory of the Spanish Civil War and Francoist dictatorship. This, in turn, will help to preserve the historical memory of the defeated side, not only for future use and recognition by Spaniards, but place it on an international level, making it available for anyone to study and discuss. Yet, these projects need to be further expanded and designed for easier access and greater advertising to the public. For example, the Spanish Civil War Memory Project's recordings lack transcripts, making the interviews accessible only to those who speak Spanish. Similarly, the UN and other international organizations must continue to press Spain to repeal or redesign the 1977 Amnesty Law and open up access to archives and restricted materials regarding the war and the crimes of the dictatorship. With this, many Spaniards would finally receive what they have been calling for, justice for the victims of the past and the ability to find their loved ones.²⁶² Thus, the presence of international support for the processes of recovering the Republican memory will serve a crucial role in the progress towards the goal of equal representation as it aids in the preservation and pushes for change within Spain itself.

While the 2007 Law of Historical Memory laid the official foundations for recovering and spreading the Republican memory of the Spanish Civil War and subsequent authoritarian regime, there is still a great deal of work that must be done before this memory is placed on equal ground with the nationalist memory. But, with time and support, both national and international, the memory of the defeated and the

²⁶² Natalia Junquera, "Spain Stonewalls on Franco-era Abuses," *El País*, October 8, 2013, accessed March 6, 2021, https://english.elpais.com/elpais/2013/10/08/inenglish/1381233605_231882.html.

victims of repression will take their place in Spaniards' discussions about their nation's past.

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