

MAKING MONUMENTS FROM MASS GRAVES:

PRODUCTION, USES AND MEANING (SPAIN, 1936-2020)

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AUTHENTICITY STATEMENT

I solemnly declare that I prepared the thesis I am presenting independently and without undue assistance, that I have referenced all sources and aids used, and that in each individual case I have identified the passages in the thesis, in including maps and figures, that are quoted from other works literally or referred to in any other way; that this thesis has not been presented to any other faculty or university for examination; that it has not yet been published, apart possibly from partial publication approved by the chairperson of the doctoral committee after consultation with the supervising professor, and that I will not undertake any such publication before completing the doctorate. I am aware of the provisions in Sect. 20 and 21 of the doctoral regulations.

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INTRODUCTION

Et in Hispania Ego

Night falls. There is a group of idyllic looking shepherds. They are standing at the edge of a road, where the soil is compacted. The trees are crowned with leaves, and some are yellowing. It could be late summer, the cool evening air condensing the day's humidity into a vast cloudscape. Even though it is getting dark, these people are standing around and looking carefully at a stone structure with very specific characteristics. It is not accidentally placed in the middle of the landscape. It is not a large boulder. The ashlars are expertly carved. This type of form gives this stone an importance despite its location in a space with which it has no apparent connection. No one would make the effort to carve the ashlars, transport them and build a structure unless there was a specific purpose. As observers, therefore, the shepherds assume that such a construction in such an environment has some kind of meaning in their society. The stone offers them information in this specific place. The two shepherds on the left are reading an inscription. The two on the right have already read it and are commenting on it. They have gloomy faces and the young man that the woman is leaning on shows some surprise or disbelief. This leads us to think that the information provided by the inscription has substantially altered the way he perceives his reality. Something has shocked him. What is written under the finger of the kneeling shepherd is: "ET IN ARCADIA EGO." Although doubts have arisen due to the vagueness of the wording and the possibilities of mistranslating the Latin from our current perspective, Erwin Panofsky clarifies

that the concept cannot be read in any other way. Death is present even in Arcadia.¹ Death has insinuated itself onto the shepherds' bucolic reality. Nevertheless, death is not explicitly represented in the painting.

This doubt about the meaning of the inscription may have arisen because nowadays we have a distant relationship to Latin culture, unlike at other times in history. The interesting thing about this bucolic scene is that the presence of death is not made explicit in the shape of the structure in any way, but the form acquires meaning in the environment. It is not just an ordinary stone structure. It invites us to stop and consider its message. An unequivocal message that challenges the reader. The surprise and drama stem from the fact that Arcadia was an ideal country described by Publius Vergilius Maro, Virgil. However, the goodness of its inhabitants and the marvellous nature expressed in *Bucolica X 4-6* is an imaginary because it is a country that never existed. As Panofsky observes, Virgil omitted the descriptions of Arcadia by Publius Ovidius Naso, Ovid, who described it more crudely in the *Fasti II*: Arcadia was a place where there would be no civilization at all, rather it was inhabited by beings ignorant of the arts and resembling beasts. Panofsky points out that "It was, then, in the imagination of Virgil, and of Virgil alone, that the concept of Arcady, as we know it, was born- that a bleak and chilly district of Greece came to be transfigured into an imaginary realm of perfect bliss."² Thus, Arcadia went from being a violent place to an idyllic and utopian country which is how we encounter it in Romantic literature and art.³ Now, let leave Virgil, Ovid, and Poussin in the past, and let us read Arcadia as a *myth*. For this reading may prove to be suggestive, revealing. I invite the reader to use "*les Bergers d'Arcadie*," as I did. As an image that can help us to understand an entirely different context in time and space.

¹ Erwin Panofsky, "Et in Arcadia Ego: Poussin and the Elegiac Tradition," in *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (New York: Garden City, 1957), 296.

² Panofsky, 300.

³ Erwin Panofsky and Gerda Panofsky, "THE "TOMB IN ARCADY" AT THE "FIN-DE-SIÈCLE"," *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 30 (1968): 287-304.

At this point, Virgil almost seemed to be the poster boy for an Arcadian marketing campaign. Because of him, Arcadia is still interpreted as utopian country today, as a paradise, as a place we could even imagine as a holiday destination. Arcadia lives in our imagination as an exotic destination to which one could fly and find oneself once again in bucolic, rural life. A simple but memorable slogan could work: *ARCADIA IS BEAUTIFUL AND DIFFERENT. VISIT ARCADIA.* Or even simpler: *ARCADIA IS DIFFERENT.* The economy of Arcadia would be based on tourism, flourishing as year on year more and more millions of tourists would flock to its shores. Even contemporary rhapsodes would have composed songs that would speak of the virtues of Arcadia as paradise.

*Among flowers, dances, and joy,
My Arcadia was born, the land of love
Only God could make such beauty
And it is impossible that there could be another
And everyone knows it's true
And they cry when they have to leave
That's why you will hear this refrain
Long live Arcadia!*

There would be nature, gastronomy, heritage, sun, beaches, and football, because Arcadia is usually the champion in these areas as well. “Because Arcadia is the best” confirms the rhapsodist. Many would therefore ask in confusion, “What does Arcadia have to do with death?” But the inscription that the shepherds have found on this roadside structure is unmistakable. And it would not be the only construction of that kind. There are many others, and they leave no doubt.

These shepherds who migrated to the city were descended from parents who did not want to talk about the past and whose children were not taught its importance. The challenge was the modernization of Arcadia, and the construction of a utopia. But if we read not only Virgil but also Ovid we will see that Arcadia was not always a utopia. Although they left the dead behind, there where they were buried, we find these constructions, like the one

represented by Poussin. Death is also present in Arcadia. And in a massive way. It is not clear to us where it is present: here perhaps the corpses are inside the structure, under it or somewhere in the landscape. Although they do not realize it, this construction is not the only one, there are hundreds of them and they all bring the presence of death to the world of the living. Death is everywhere because as part of a repressive scheme for the establishment of a regime of terror. Arcadia exists, and it is not a utopia. It is called the Kingdom of Spain, and *SPAIN IS DIFFERENT*,⁴ *SPAIN IS THE BEST*.⁵ It receives millions of tourists a year who are oblivious to all this violence.⁶ The country is a large mass grave and these artefacts scattered across the land remind the living of it. The dead bodies are integrated into these architectural forms that have survived from antiquity and bear witness to the violent past. They write the history not taught in schools. International legal frameworks today talk about “genocides.” The press and academic literature talk about “victims.” But the humanities and social sciences have historically explained it to us in other terms.

The myth established by Alexandre Kojève is revealing in this respect: the dialectic of the master and the slave. Herbert Marcuse interpreted Kojève’s synthesis as a revitalization of Hegel’s studies in post-war France, which highlighted “the inner connection between the idealistic and materialistic dialectic.”⁷ Kojève quoted this passage from Hegel: “Self-consciousness is in and for itself while and as a result of its being in and for itself for an other; i.e., it is only as a recognized being”⁸ which Hegel develops in the first epigraph of

⁴ *SPAIN IS DIFFERENT* is one of several versions of an advertising *slogan* that was especially popularised by the dictatorship in the 1960s in order to promote tourism. Alicia Fuentes Vega, “Aportaciones al estudio visual del turismo: la iconografía del boom de España, 1950-1970”, (PhD diss., Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2015), 66-75.

⁵ This statement and the verses versioned above come from the song popularized by Manolo Escobar, *Que viva España* (1971) composed by Leo Caerts and Leo Rozenstraten. José Manuel Gómez, “Así nació el Y viva España,” *Tiempo*, no. 1624 (2013): 58-59.

⁶ In 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Spain registered a new record in tourist arrivals, in a trend that has been dragging on since the 1960s. Carlos Molina, “España rozó los 84 millones de turistas en 2019,” *Cinco Días*, January 20, 2020, accessed May 10, 2021, https://cincodias.elpais.com/cincodias/2020/01/20/economia/1579518415_556581.html.

⁷ Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution. Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955), 440.

⁸ Georg Wilhelm Fredrich Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Terry Pinkard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 108.

the fourth chapter of the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* of 1807.⁹ A text that presented an explanation of human existence itself through subjective experiences. This passage adopted by Kojève illustrated a situation in which two beings meet. This encounter triggered a particular situation: One of them would have seen in the other nothing more than an “animal.” And he could have ignored it, but he realizes that he is not, and that perhaps the other also wishes to be recognized as a “being.” So, he becomes a risk, and from this arises the need to deny him in a struggle for the recognition of his being for himself.

The republican parties won the 1931 multi-party elections. The regime was forced to accept this outcome due to its instability. Even though the legal framework of Alfonso XIII’s Monarchy did not recognize the possibility of proclaiming a Republic, local governments took the initiative, and the first Republican flag was raised on the Eibar town hall.¹⁰ Thousands joined them all over the country. On 14 April 1931, the Spanish Republic was established for the second time in history. It was endowed with a constitution that established it as a liberal democracy on a par with other European states. This was a break with the tradition of Spanish liberalism, which had always yielded to monarchical and clerical powers.¹¹ A secular state was proclaimed.¹² Universal suffrage was established, including women who were now actively participating in politics.¹³ Equality in the eyes of the law was proclaimed and the division of state powers was established.¹⁴ Work became a social obligation and land

⁹ Hegel, 102-116.

¹⁰ Unai Belaustegui Bedialauneta, “Gipuzkoa y las raíces de la II República: del pacto de San Sebastián a la proclamación de la República en Eibar,” in *Pensar con la historia desde el siglo XXI: actas del XII Congreso de la Asociación de Historia Contemporánea*, ed. Pilar Folguera et al. (Madrid: UAM, 2015), 4439-4458.

¹¹ Manuel Álvarez Tardío, “Libertad, poder y democracia: un debate trascendental en la España de la Segunda República,” *Historia Contemporánea* 0, no. 43 (2012).

¹² José María Cayetano Núñez Rivero, “La configuración constitucional del Estado laico en la Segunda República española,” *Laicidad y libertades: escritos jurídicos*, no. 13 (2013): 201-40.

¹³ Ana M. Aguado, “La República de las ciudadanas: libertad, ciudadanía femenina y educación durante la Segunda República,” in *La Constitución de Cádiz. Genealogía y desarrollo del sistema educativo liberal: XVII Coloquio Nacional de Historia de la Educación. Cádiz, 9-11 July 2013*, ed. M. Gloria Espigado Tocino et al. (Cádiz: University of Cádiz, 2013), 577-588.

¹⁴ Rafael Escudero Alday, “Las huellas del neoconstitucionalismo. Democracia, participación y justicia social en la Constitución Española de 1931,” in *Constitución de 1931: estudios jurídicos sobre el momento republicano español*, ed. Sebastián Martín Martín, Luis Ignacio Gordillo Pérez, and Víctor Javier Vázquez Alonso (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2017), 101-24.

reform was planned.¹⁵ Minimum wage and holiday pay was established.¹⁶ The statutes of autonomy of the regions brought a possibility of self-government within the Republic,¹⁷ and schools were built and literacy and cultural democratization campaigns began.¹⁸

In no way was it a revolutionary project, not even like the liberal revolutionary projects that shook Europe until 1848¹⁹. Reform and moderation marked the political agenda. Nevertheless, the new framework with legalized parties and trade unions allowed for a change in the subjective conditions of people's self-perception. Now, in the young Republic, they were able to see themselves as historical subjects, as beings. And in this perception of one of the beings of oneself that Hegel described, it was terrifying for the one who used to be the only conscious being: that the other would cease to be an animal and could become another being. Kojève noted about this situation. The self-conscious being that previously dominated reality will provoke it, will force it to begin a fight to the death. The risk of the self-perception of the other, of self-consciousness, would trigger the most absolute negation of the other: the physical elimination of the one who may be a potential risk to its own self-conscious existence.²⁰

The Hegelian passage again seems to talk about those years. During the Republic, the Spanish Falange developed terrorist activity under a “strategy of tension.” The aim was the “social construction of fear” under José Antonio Primo de Rivera’s plan for the organization to become a paramilitary force at the service of the army. Together with them, Jose Antonio conspired to seize

¹⁵ Maria Antonia Ferrer i Bosch, “Consideracions sobre la reforma agrària de la segons república,” in *La II República espanyola: Perspectives interdisciplinàries en el seu 75è aniversari*, ed. Montserrat Duch Plana (Tarragona: URV, 2007), 121-144.

¹⁶ Fernando Valdés Dal-Ré, “El Derecho del Trabajo en la Segunda República,” *Relaciones laborales: Revista crítica de teoría y práctica*, no. 1 (2006): 291-321.

¹⁷ Àngel Duarte Montserrat, “Republicanismo, federalismo y autonomías: de los proyectos federales de 1873 a la Segunda República y los Estatutos de Autonomía,” in *Los nacionalismos en la España contemporánea : ideologías, movimientos y símbolos*, ed. Jean-Louis Guereña, and Manuel Morales Muñoz (Málaga: Centro de Ediciones de la Diputación de Málaga (CEDMA), 2006), 187-206.

¹⁸ Alejandro Tiana Ferrer, “La educación en la Segunda República,” in *Las dos repúblicas en España*, ed. Ana Martínez Rus, and Raquel Sánchez García (Madrid: Fundación Pablo Iglesias, 2018), 259-80.

¹⁹ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789-1848* (London: Abacus, 2014).

²⁰ Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, ed. Raymond Queneau (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), 13.

power.²¹ The killings carried out by Falange, reactionary sectors of the military police named Guardia Civil and other armed groups were intended to dramatize the disorder in order to prepare the *coup d'état*, according to Sergio Vaquero.²² The aggressiveness of the landowners in rural areas, together with the monarchist elites, the reactionary military and the urban fascist bourgeoisie was latent in the face of republican reform.²³ These men who had perpetuated exploitation and injustice for centuries seemed ready to take violence to its ultimate extreme, conscious of their being and their place in the world, they could accept no other place in it. They had to stop the dialectical course of history and if that was not possible, they would move forward by eliminating the other to establish themselves in a new dominant position. Thus, in May, Emilio Mola signed a top-secret order to the future coup plotters:

The action will have to be extremely violent in order to diminish the enemy, who is strong and well organized, as quickly as possible. Of course, all the leaders of political parties, societies, or trade unions who are not in favour of the movement will be imprisoned, and exemplary punishments will be applied to these individuals in order nip rebellious movements or strikes in the bud. ²⁴

Mola's instructions came months after the victory of the Popular Front at the polls. The outgoing government of the Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Right supported by the Radical Republican Party who stopped the reforms and repressed the 1934 Revolution. Finally, on 18 July 1936, the attempted coup

²¹ Roberto Muñoz Bolaños, "Escuadras de la muerte: militares, Falange y terrorismo en la II República," *Amnis. Revue de civilisation contemporaine Europe/Amériques*, no. 17 (July 16, 2018).

²² Sergio Vaquero Martínez, "La autoridad, el pánico y la beligerancia. Políticas de orden público y violencia política en la España del Frente Popular," *Historia y política: Ideas, procesos y movimientos sociales*, no. 41 (2019): 66.

²³ Gerald Brenan, *The Spanish Labyrinth: An Account of the Social and Political Background of the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

²⁴ "Se tendrá en cuenta que la acción ha de ser en extremo violenta para reducir lo antes posible al enemigo, que es fuerte y bien organizado. Desde luego, serán encarcelados todos los directivos de los partidos políticos, sociedades o sindicatos no afectos al movimiento, aplicándoles castigos ejemplares a dichos individuos para estrangular los movimientos de rebeldía o huelgas" (Translated by the author). Paul Preston, "Franco y la represión: la venganza del justiciero" in *Norísimas. II Congreso Internacional de Historia de Nuestro Tiempo*, ed. Carlos Navajas Zubeldia, Diego Iturriaga Barco (Logroño: Universidad de La Rioja, 2010), 59.

took place and Mola gave the instruction that initiated the mass murders on 19 July 1936:

*It is necessary to create an atmosphere of terror, to leave a feeling of domination by eliminating without scruple or hesitation anyone who does not think as we do. We must make a great impression, anyone who is openly or secretly a supporter of the Popular Front must be shot.*²⁵

According to historians such as Santos Juliá,²⁶ Julián Casanova,²⁷ Francisco Espinosa,²⁸ and Paul Preston,²⁹ the number of people killed is estimated at between 100,000 and 130,000. However, researchers believe that these numbers could be found to be even greater if even more archives and files were declassified and investigations were carried out village by village.

The insurgents began the offensive determined not to be denied by these newly self-aware people, flourishing under the wing of republicanism. Thus, they unleashed a process of systematic and treacherous assassinations. The timid republican reforms could not be tolerated. The colonial army, the landowners, the bourgeoisie, the Church, and the nobility lost their *raison d'être* as absolute masters of reality, as the only beings to exist in society. Any other being aspiring to existence had to be annihilated for the survival of the regime in this struggle to the death. The existence of hundreds of mass graves throughout the country is the most obvious material testimony to the extermination plan. However, not all were killed. A logic that underlies Kojève's approach to the dialectic of master and slave:

That is to say: if both adversaries perish in the fight, 'consciousness' is completely done away with, for man is nothing more than an inanimate body after his death. And if one of the adversaries remains alive but kills the other, he can no longer be recognized by the other; the man who has

²⁵ "Es necesario crear una atmósfera de terror, hay que dejar sensación de dominio eliminando sin escrúulos ni vacilación a todo el que no piense como nosotros. Tenemos que causar una gran impresión, todo aquel que sea abierto o secretamente defensor del Frente Popular debe ser fusilado" (Translated by the author). Julián Casanova Ruiz, *República y Guerra Civil* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2007), 199.

²⁶ Santos Juliá, ed., *Víctimas de la guerra civil* (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 2006).

²⁷ Francisco Espinosa Maestre, Francisco Moreno Gómez, and Conxita Mir, *Morir, matar, sobrevivir: La violencia en la dictadura de Franco* (Barcelona: Booket, 2004).

²⁸ Francisco Espinosa Maestre, *Violencia roja y azul: España, 1936-1950* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2010).

²⁹ Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust* (London: HarperCollins Publishers Ltd, 2008).

*been defeated and killed does not recognize the victory of the conqueror. Therefore, the victor's certainty of his being and of his value remains subjective, and thus has no 'truth.'*³⁰

Death is the end of the consciousness of the one who perishes. The one who is killed ceases to inhabit the natural world and the survivor no longer has an other by whom to be recognized as master. He can no longer expect anything for himself if he has annihilated the other. This is why Kojève points out:

*Therefore, it does the man of the Fight no good to kill his adversary. He must overcome him 'dialectically.' That is, he must leave him life and consciousness, and destroy only his autonomy. He must overcome the adversary only insofar as the adversary is opposed to him and acts against him. In other words, he must enslave him.*³¹

This is how the policy towards those who survived the annihilation can be understood. The new regime needed not only to be recognized as the master, but it also needed slaves. They were the exploited people who were becoming self-aware through political parties, trade unions, masonic lodges, and other organizations during the Republic. In addition to the systematic humiliation of the defeated and their families,³² there were the practices of enslavement of political prisoners³³ and the systematic exploitation of labour, which meant not only the loss of the prospect of reform but also a regression in labour rights and ownership of the means of production.³⁴ The post-war society was a society condemned to hunger and misery.³⁵

However, Elisa Magrì notes that the passage from the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (1807) adopted by Kojève³⁶ has been taken out of context and freely interpreted from an anthropological and social philosophical point of view.³⁷

³⁰ Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 14.

³¹ Kojève, 15.

³² Enrique González Duro, *Las rapadas: el franquismo contra la mujer* (Madrid: Siglo XXI de España, 2012).

³³ Isaías Lafuente, *Esclavos por la patria: un antídoto contra el olvido de la historia* (Barcelona: Planeta, 2018).

³⁴ Glicerio Sánchez Recio and Julio Tascón Fernández, *Los empresarios de Franco: Política y economía en España, 1936-1957* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2003).

³⁵ David Conde Caballero, "Tiempos sin pan. Una etnografía del hambre en la Extremadura de la postguerra" (PhD diss., UNED. Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2019).

³⁶ Hegel, 102-16.

³⁷ Elisa Magrì, "A Note on Some Contemporary Readings of Hegel's Master-Slave Dialectic," *Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy* 12, no. 1 (2016): 238-256.

Regarding Hegel, there is also a fundamental aspect to this vision of being that focuses on the role of habituality as an embodied activity situated in a context.³⁸ Following an enquiry into how memory would have been constructed on the basis of mass graves, it is appropriate to turn to the theory of Edward Casey. He recognizes the historical limits of phenomenology by suggesting that:

To be embodied is ipso facto to assume a particular perspective and position; it is to have not just a point of view but a place in which we are situated. It is to occupy a portion of space from out of which we both undergo given experiences and remember them. To be disembodied is not only to be deprived of place, unplaced; it is to be denied the basic stance on which every experience and its memory depend. As embodied existence opens onto place, indeed takes place in place and nowhere else, so our memory of what we experience in place is likewise place-specific: it is bound to place as to its own basis. Yet it is just this importance of place for memory that has been lost sight of in philosophical and common sense concerns with the temporal dimensions of memory. ³⁹

Memory, therefore, starts in the mind, but it is formed in a specific space and time that materially conditions the possibilities of the construction of consciousness. And those times and spaces in which memories of repression are particularly located are not very conducive to being communicated. The preservation of the memory of repression, which refers to a specific reality, is confronted with external material limitations for the development of the act of remembering itself: although at first the Dictatorship based its repressive system on coercion, violence and exclusion,⁴⁰ in the Transition it derived its power from a “Pact of Silence” which denied the existence of the crimes.⁴¹ Moreover, the violence took a different form, but continued to be present in the country, and the years were marked by terrorism, repression and a dirty war

³⁸ Elisa Magrì, “The Problem of Habitual Body and Memory in Hegel and Merleau-Ponty,” *Hegel Bulletin* 38, no. 1 (2017): 42.

³⁹ Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: a Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 182.

⁴⁰ Julio Aróstegui Sánchez, “Coerción, violencia, exclusión. La dictadura de Franco como sistema represivo,” in *Franco, la represión como sistema*, ed. Julio Aróstegui Sánchez (Barcelona: Flor del Viento, 2012), 19-59.

⁴¹ Roldán Jimeno Aranguren, *Amnistías, perdones y justicia transicional: el pacto de silencio español* (Pamplona: Pamiela, 2018).

on the part of the State - a State that did not favour the deconstruction of the hegemonic narrative established by the Dictatorship.⁴² The generational transmission of the memory of those who were murdered remained in the hands of families, and activists, who finally acted on the margins of an educational system based on forgetting the recent past.⁴³

Located in these spaces and times, families, and activists opted for different strategies to make memory go beyond mind. And in this sense, Casey showed the importance of ancient systems for associating memory with physical places.⁴⁴ In this case, places linked to the memory of repression, where the corpses of those who had been murdered since 1936 might have been buried: mass graves. In this sense, the forms chosen to communicate these memories are symptomatic of the need to define a place and establish a certain order. Initially, this took the form of placing stones, crosses, and flowers on the mass graves despite the repression. Subsequently, in the final years of the Dictatorship, these spaces were progressively claimed and defined. These forms gave way to the construction of enduring structures such as monoliths, gardens, and sculptures, when the bodies themselves were not exhumed and integrated into vaults, columbaria, pyramids, or obelisks in the years of the Transition. Actions that have continued to be reproduced up to the present day after a new wave of exhumations.

These are forms that in some way represent a persistence of strategies of memorization from antiquity, which reveal how in times of crisis these kinds of forms return, following Aby Warburg's idea of "*Nachleben der Antike*." These are forms that integrate the subject of representation itself into the image that represents it in the interior of the object. Warburg described these situations as imitation by identification or "*nachahmen*," which could come to imply the idea of "*einhüllen*" as covering, enveloping or above all translatable as "burying" as

⁴² Mariano Sánchez Soler, *La transición sangrienta: una historia violenta del proceso democrático en España (1975-1983)* (Barcelona: Península, 2010).

⁴³ Enrique Javier Gutiérrez Díez, *La asignatura pendiente: la memoria histórica democrática en los libros de texto escolares* (Madrid: Plaza y Valdés, 2020).

⁴⁴ Casey, *Remembering*, 182-83.

George Didi-Huberman noted.⁴⁵ A rapport between body and image that Horst Bredekamp describes as one of the possible “*Bildakten*,” a “Substitutive Image-Act,” a process of substitution in which “bodies are treated as images and images as bodies.”⁴⁶ However, these forms were not devoid of meaning; they were used in a context of material limitation where there was no other possibility for the communication of memory. In addition, their construction represented a desire to influence this and therefore they form part of a certain funerary tradition, while at the same time they are more specific insofar as they are “social actions.”

By “action” is meant human behaviour linked to a subjective meaning on the part of the actor or actors concerned; such action may be either overt, or occur inwardly- whether by positive action, or by refraining from action, or by tolerating a situation. Such behaviour is “social” action where the meaning intended by the actor or actors is related to the behaviour of others, and the action is so oriented. ⁴⁷

Thus, following Max Weber’s definition of “social action,” he states that the mere fact that people find themselves applying some apparently useful procedure they have learned from someone else, such as the reproduction of traditional or ancient forms in creating memories out of mass graves, would not in itself constitute social action. The nature of social action lies in the fact that the producer, through the observation of others in society, has become familiar with certain objective facts and directs his action to these facts. To Max Weber, social action would be causally determined by the action of others, but not significantly so.⁴⁸ Therefore, it is possible to see in this context that the decision to communicate the memory of those who were murdered will pass through affections, but also through values and criteria of rationality.⁴⁹ Thus, the social action of producing a physical structure to mark the mass graves

⁴⁵ George Didi-Huberman, *Surviving image: phantoms of time and time of phantoms: Aby Warburg’s history of art* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2018).

⁴⁶ Horst Bredekamp, *Image Acts a Systematic Approach to Visual Agency* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 137.

⁴⁷ Max Weber, *Economy and Society: a New Translation*, ed. Keith Tribe (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019), 78-79.

⁴⁸ Max Weber, *The Interpretation of Social Reality*, ed. John E. T Eldridge (London: Nelson, 1972), 77.

⁴⁹ Weber, *Economy and Society*, 101.

would acquire a meaningful character, as it is not arising in an inter-individual context, but on the contrary implies a given social reality.

Therefore, through these bodily actions, through remembrance services and intervention in the places, a memory beyond the mind is produced.⁵⁰ It is done by remembering, creating structures using the mass graves, and visiting them as part of rites and ceremonies despite the material limitations for remembrance. The production of these forms in a society dominated by repression since 1936 produces a manifestation of consciousness for those who remember. As Valentin Voloshinov says: “Consciousness can harbour only in the image, the word, the meaningful gesture, and so forth.”⁵¹ This meaningful gesture of producing a new image by means of the bodies buried in the mass graves, trying to influence the society that has ignored their existence for decades is a social action that starts from a communication of the memory beyond the mind where the memory of the murders was kept. This is how the *monument practices around mass graves* could be defined. These practices that have evolved around the mass graves are thus the object of the present research.

Given the object of this study, three main questions arise: How did the production of monument practices evolve over time and what forms did monuments take? How were monument practices inserted into the society they sought to influence? What could be the significance of this communication of memory through monument practices in the process of creating consciousness? The aim of the research was therefore to try to define the historical development of monument practices and the forms they had taken, to understand them in the society which they seek to influence, and to try to attribute a meaning to them as meaningful gestures that would imply a consciousness in this communication of memories marked by limitations that affected them. Through these questions, I formulated the following hypothesis: the monument practices around mass graves derive from a process of

⁵⁰ Casey, *Remembering*, 144-60.

⁵¹ Valentin Nikolayevich Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (New York; London: Seminar Press, 1973), 13.

consciousness in which memory is communicated in a meaningful gesture limited by the material reality that integrates the bodies in the construction of a new image with which they seek to influence society.

However, the complex nature of monument practices meant that they could not be approached through a single closed discipline. Instead, the research was done through an interdisciplinary approach that has been popularized in the last decade around what is known as *Memory Studies*. Its popularity has led to it being formalized by the creation of specific centres and departments dedicated to this field at many universities, and the launch of the *Memory Studies Association* in 2016. Many conferences have taken place in Amsterdam, Copenhagen and Madrid; the latter of these took place, in fact, while I was carrying out my research.⁵² *Journals* and *book series* devoted to the field have begun to be reproduced internationally and the theories of Maurice Halbwachs on *La mémoire collective*⁵³ as well as the later reformulations of it by Jan Assmann and Aleida Assmann around the *Kulturellen Gedächtnisse*⁵⁴ and synthesized by Astrid Erll in *Memory in Culture*⁵⁵ are referenced again and again by scholars. The possibility of approaching memory from an expanded methodological field has been instrumental in legitimising the proposal to investigate monument practices, as they could be seen as *Kulturellen Gedächtnisse*, or as part of a *mémoire collective*.

These notions have been little studied in the framework of studies on the War, the Dictatorship, the Transition, and the configuration of current society in the Kingdom of Spain, and in that sense, investigating them has been innovative. Nevertheless, there are some precedents. Javier Giráldez is one of the experts who has studied these types of actions around mass graves in the context of Andalusia most systematically and extensively.⁵⁶ His thesis

⁵² Harmer James, “The Memory Studies Association,” Memory Studies Association, accessed May 8, 2020, https://www.memorystudiesassociation.org/about_the_msa/.

⁵³ Maurice Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective*, ed. Gérard Namer (Paris: Albin Michel, 1997).

⁵⁴ Aleida Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2018).

⁵⁵ Astrid Erll, *Memory in culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

⁵⁶ Javier Giráldez Díaz, “Política de la memoria y memoria de la política. Una reflexión sobre la memoria histórica en Andalucía” (PhD diss., University of Seville, 2014).

represents a unique document for his great effort in documenting hundreds of places, and at the same time it makes explicit his great sensitivity and interest in monument practices, which he encouraged during his celebrated performance as Director General of Democratic Memory of Andalusia. Along with him, the work of Conxita Mir on the Catalan capitals,⁵⁷ or that of Ricard Conesa on Barcelona in particular,⁵⁸ are key to understanding the Catalan experience. Also, the works on Euskadi by Jesús Alonso,⁵⁹ on La Rioja by Jesús Aguirre,⁶⁰ and on Galicia by John Thompson,⁶¹ which indirectly address some monuments around mass graves. Francisco Ferrandiz has dealt with the experience of post-exhumation monument in Aranda de Duero,⁶² Vicent Gabarda has made not only an extensive study of repression in Valencia but also of the process of construction of gravestones and monuments in the Paterna cemetery,⁶³ and Layla Renshaw has dealt with the debate on the ethical dimensions of commemorations, looking at collective burials after exhumation too.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, the scarcity of publications on the material testimony of the grave or exhumation, as a monument, contrasts with the abundance of publications devoted to exhumations and their social dimension. Of these, the works of

⁵⁷ Conxita Mir and Josep Gelonch, eds., *Duelo y memoria espacios para el recuerdo de las víctimas de la represión franquista en perspectiva comparada* (Lleida: Edicions de la Universitat de Lleida, 2013).

⁵⁸ Ricard Conesa, “Monumentos para el duelo, lugares para la memoria: de la Barcelona franquista a la democrática,” in *Memorias de guerra, proyectos de paz: violencias y conflictos entre pasado, presente y futuro: VIII Encuentro de Memorias en red*, ed. Iratxe Momoitio Astorkia, and Ana Teresa Núñez Monasterio (Gernika-Lumo: Centro de Documentación sobre el Bombardeo de Gernika, 2017), 25-34.

⁵⁹ Jesús Alonso Carballés, *Memorias de piedra y acero: los monumentos a las víctimas de la Guerra civil y del franquismo en Euskadi (1936-2017)* (Gernika-Lumo: Fundación Museo de la Paz de Gernika, 2017).

⁶⁰ Jesús Vicente Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada: La Rioja 1936* (Logroño: Ochoa, 2012).

⁶¹ John Thompson, “Tres monumentos que conmemoran víctimas do franquismo: participación ciudadá e a confluencia de historia oral e historiografía,” *Murguía: revista galega de historia*, no. 29-30 (2014): 55-70.

⁶² Francisco Ferrández, “Death on the Move,” in *A Companion to the Anthropology of Death*, ed. Antonius C. G. M. Robben (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2018), 189-204.

⁶³ Vicent Gabarda Cebellán, “El Cementerio de Paterna com a exemple de monumentalització popular” in *Postguerres / Aftermaths of War*, ed. Teresa Abelló i Güell et al. (Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2019).

⁶⁴ Layla Renshaw, “Ethical Considerations in the Investigation and Commemoration of Mass Graves from the Spanish Civil War,” in *Ethical Approaches to Human Remains: A Global Challenge in Bioarchaeology and Forensic Anthropology*, ed. Kirsty Squires, David Errickson, and Nicholas Márquez-Grant (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 533-34.

Francisco Ferrández,⁶⁵ Paloma Aguilar,⁶⁶ Layla Renshaw,⁶⁷ and Walther L. Bernecker,⁶⁸ stand out for their impact, among others.⁶⁹ It is also symptomatic that the research works are mainly assigned to politically defined regions: Andalusia, Galicia, La Rioja, Euskadi and Catalonia, all territories marked by their own strong regional or national identity. For this reason, the present research makes a novel contribution by tackling a little-studied part of the memory of mass graves and also by analysing it in the country as a whole.

For this reason, when formulating my methodology, I had to shift the thematic axis from the past itself to how a narrative of the past has been produced: no longer to study repression itself or how it has been portrayed in the media, historiography, literature, or exhumations, but through these particular monument practices around mass graves. The aim was not to get to know the past through the mass graves that would have been the object of monument practices, but the context in which they are situated and that defines them. I followed José M^a Durán's warnings about how such a displacement helps to overcome two obstacles with a long theoretical tradition in the West: "the fallacy of empiricism with its objective truth" and "the well-known idealist response that considers the real to be nothing more than the result of thought, thus confusing the real with the thought."⁷⁰ This approach, which Durán applies to the arts, is relevant for dealing with monument practices, since studying them implies first of all the rejection of the monument as a

⁶⁵ Francisco Ferrández, *El pasado bajo tierra* (Barcelona: Anthropos, 2014).

⁶⁶ Paloma Aguilar Fernández and Leigh A Payne, *El resurgir del pasado en España: fosas de víctimas y confesiones de verdugos* (Barcelona: Taurus, 2018).

⁶⁷ Layla Renshaw, *Exhuming Loss: Memory, Materiality and Mass Graves of the Spanish Civil War* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

⁶⁸ Walther L. Bernecker and Sören Brinkmann, *Kampf der Erinnerungen der Spanische Bürgerkrieg in Politik und Gesellschaft: 1936-2010* (Heidelberg: Verlag Graswurzelrevolution, 2020).

⁶⁹ A bibliography on the subject can be found in Antonio Alonso et al., *Las Exhumaciones de la Guerra Civil y la Dictadura Franquista 2000-2019. Estado actual y recomendaciones de futuro* (Madrid: Ministerio de la Presidencia, Relaciones con las Cortes y Memoria Democrática, 2020).

⁷⁰ "Uno sería la falacia del empirismo con su verdad objetiva: ver para creer, es decir, la idea de que la teoría refleja de una manera abstracta la esencia real de las cosas reduciendo de este modo el pensamiento sobre lo real al objeto real. El otro sería la conocida respuesta idealista que considera que lo real no es más que el resultado del pensamiento, confundiendo así lo real con lo pensado." (Translated by the author). Jose María Durán, "El 'objeto' de una teoría materialista del arte // Breve ensayo," *Contraindicaciones*, October 16, 2013, accessed May 14, 2021, https://contraindicaciones.net/el_objeto_de_una_teoria_materialista_del_arte_breve_ensayo_de_jos_e_maria_duran/.

representation of memory or of memory in itself. It is not the notion of memory that emanates from the graves that should be the object of study, since it depends on a social framework that precedes them and therefore determines their character as representation, but the production of monument practices based on these memories. Monument practice should thus be understood as an action that takes place in a specific context, and although a monument practice will not be causally subjected to the material or economic, it will be limited by such factors. As Weber argued, we are talking about a social action oriented towards others,⁷¹ which is causally determined by the action of others, but not in terms of acquiring meaning.⁷²

It is therefore also relevant to follow Weber's warning about the rigour of the knowledge that can be gained in relation to social actions, since we are taking an interpretative approach to the subjective values that motivated the campaigners of the monument practices and how these were located in a specific context. This would be to understand the study from the point of view of interpretative sociology or *Verstehen*, in order to explain the motivations that have led someone to do something in a specific context. Weber would state in relation to this comprehensive sociology: "For a science concerned with the meaning of action, 'explanation' amounts to identification of the meaningful context to which directly understandable action belongs, corresponding to its subjectively intended meaning."⁷³ This claim brought into art history makes explicit certain common concerns that iconology has had with sociology that date back to the 1920s. Thus, when Erwyn Panofsky considered how to deal with the matter or meaning of works of art, as opposed to their form, he attempted to define the distinction between matter or meaning, on the one hand, and form, on the other. He exemplified this through the idea of a *Gentleman* who greets you by tipping his hat. We recognize an object, the

⁷¹ Weber, *Economy and Society*, 78-79.

⁷² Weber, *The Interpretation of Social Reality*, 77.

⁷³ Weber, *Economy and Society*, 84.

“gentleman,” an event “tipping his hat” and automatically attribute a “meaning” which is that of the greeting:

*The meaning thus perceived is of an elementary and easily understandable nature, and we shall call it the factual meaning; it is apprehended by simply identifying certain visible forms with certain objects known to me from practical experience, and by identifying the change in their relations with certain actions or events.*⁷⁴

To this “factual” meaning, Panofsky adds another “expressional” meaning which we identify through applying our empathy, thus amplifying the significance. He therefore warns that to understand a gesture such as the *Gentleman*, and therefore to understand a gesture such as monument practice, we should not only be familiar with the world of objects and events, but also with other, less practical, matters such as customs, traditions, and other elements of a specific context.⁷⁵ However, Panofsky warns that there is no guarantee that the analysis is correct or objective, even if we are familiar with the themes or concepts through literary sources or oral tradition. We can understand that a gesture of a monument practice, like the tipping of the hat, may respond to certain traditions or reproduce earlier patterns, but we may be ignoring other issues. Like the tipping of the hat, the monument practice is performed in front of another person or in a particular context that makes sense of the particularity of the gesture. Panofsky advised that simply describing forms does not lead to a correct pre-iconographic analysis, and similarly, indiscriminately applying literary knowledge of motifs does not lead to a correct iconographic analysis.⁷⁶ In this sense, Anne D’Alleva points out that for historical and cross-cultural analyses “it may prove to be a challenge to move from the level two to level three: all sorts of gaps in the historical record or your own knowledge, as well as your own preconceptions, may complicate your work.”⁷⁷ And this supports the idea that despite the interpretative will, we still

⁷⁴ Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 3.

⁷⁵ Panofsky, 12.

⁷⁶ Panofsky, 12.

⁷⁷ Anne D’Alleva, *Methods & Theories of Art History* (London: Laurence King, 2012), 21.

have a comprehensive approach to the phenomenon in art history. W.J. Thomas Mitchell points out that, while the idea of “iconology” would seem to be obsolete in art history in a relentless search for the meaning of allegories and motifs, the interdisciplinary research of verbal and visual media “has become a central feature of modern humanistic study. And new forms of critical iconology, or *Bildwissenschaft* or image science, have emerged across the fields of humanities, social sciences and even the natural sciences.”⁷⁸ Iconology would have played a key role in this, therefore these initial precautions should not be overlooked when approaching an object of study such as the monument practices on mass graves. In another respect, Mitchell later notes how colonial interpretations, in which totemism, fetishism and idolatry are attributed as beliefs about other people’s visual productions based on systems of racial or collective prejudice, have nevertheless continued being produced. These interpretations associate such practices with the idea of the “savage” or “primitive,” with “ignorance,” and “superstition.”⁷⁹ This is an assessment shared by David Freedberg in his work on the power of images. Freedberg criticized the denigrations of “popular” reactions to art as primitive, irrational, superstitious or explicable only in terms of “magic.”⁸⁰

Therefore, I propose to understand monument practices as an expression of memory that takes on a specific form and to situate them in the social framework that precedes them and on which they have an impact, taking into account the limitations that this places on the monument practice itself. I thus provide a reading of the meaning of the gesture that monument practice represents, being aware of the possible projection of my own perceptions despite the deep knowledge of the culture in which they are inscribed and the aspirations of objectivity. Starting from these assumptions, I organized a

⁷⁸ William John Thomas Mitchell, *Iconology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 13.

⁷⁹ William John Thomas Mitchell, *Image Science: Iconology, Visual Culture, and Media Aesthetics* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2018), 75.

⁸⁰ David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

research plan that would focus first and foremost on the recognition of the forms themselves within the space before projecting any kind of analysis.

During the first nine months of research, I conducted an in-depth study of numerous databases related to mass graves, as well as literature and social networks. I used the maps of mass graves and associated databases produced by autonomous governments such as those of Galicia, the Basque Country, Navarre, Aragon, Catalonia, Extremadura, Valencia, and Andalusia. In addition to these, there are initiatives by university research centres such as the maps and databases produced by the University of Oviedo for Asturias and the UNED for Ciudad Real.⁸¹ Likewise, much information has been published on channels such as Facebook, Twitter or Telegram, where various organizations have groups and channels to disseminate information, often referring to monument practice.⁸² These social networks have had a special importance, and will have an increasing importance in the humanistic field in general, in Memory Studies in particular⁸³ and regarding the mass graves linked to my study in specific instance.⁸⁴ In contrast, the press has lost value when it comes to documenting processes such as those I am trying to study, as it does not have clear governmental backing, or if it does, it does not have the means to enter the channels of communication that are subsequently systematically ordered in libraries or mediated by web search engines. On the basis of this review, I was able to draw up my own cartography of monument practices around mass graves in the country, with more than 600 records (Annex I). This superficial knowledge of the monument practices was fundamental in order to have an initial collection of source material on which to work and focus the research from a quantitative point of view.

⁸¹ A compilation of these maps is available at: ILLA-CSIC, “Mapas de fossa comunes,” Las Políticas de la Memoria, accessed April 6, 2021, <https://politicasdelamemoria.org/mapa-de-fosas-comunes/>.

⁸² A compilation of these links is available at: ILLA-CSIC, “Enlaces a entidades y organizaciones de memoria histórica,” Las Políticas de la Memoria, accessed April 6, 2021, <https://politicasdelamemoria.org/en-los-medios/enlaces/>.

⁸³ Andrew Hoskins, *Digital Memory Studies: Media Past in Transition* (New York: Routledge, 2018).

⁸⁴ Francisco Ferrández, “From Tear to Pixel Political Correctness and Digital Emotions in the Exhumation of Mass Graves from the Civil War,” in *Engaging the Emotions in Spanish Culture and History*, ed. Luisa Elena Delgado, Pura Fernández and Jo Labanyi (Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press, 2016), 242-61.

A first raw database included very basic data such as the municipality, the province, whether it was a grave or the result of exhumation, the time period, the financing or the campaigner. However, it was often not even possible to obtain these data. I also paid attention to certain aspects recognizable to the naked eye through the visual documentation available, which I also systematized: the form, the texts, the space, and the visibility. This allowed me to complete a first reading before carrying out further comprehensive analyses. Thanks to this, I found a great deal of relevant data: concentration of monuments after exhumation in those regions where the murders had been irregular, existence of monuments around large graves in the areas occupied by the military advance, preference for gardens in the south or for the simulation of traditional graves on the central plateau. These were simple patterns, but from them I was able to develop enough intuition to recognize that people were developing a very heterogeneous response to a shared problem. In this sense, it is important to reflect on the new possibilities that digital resources offer researchers and how the Digital Humanities integrate the traditional hermeneutical and critical tools of the field into a new spectrum of possibilities. In this situation, Rens Bod asks, “Who’s Afraid of Patterns?”⁸⁵ For Bod, the notion of a pattern covers that which lies between the inexact tendency and the specific law. It consists of a regularity, often with exceptions, and it is something that can be recognized through digital techniques in particular with a previously impossible ease.⁸⁶ This was my experience after a thorough review of databases and social networks. Contrary to what the literature and the media claimed, there were hundreds of places where mass graves had been the object of a monument practice. In fact, although I recognized more than 600, there are probably more (Map 1 and Annex I).

But what was relevant was not the pattern itself, but that the pattern was a symptom of something much more complex. And this was one of the

⁸⁵ Rens Bod, “Who’s Afraid of Patterns: The Particular versus the Universal and the Meaning of Humanities 3.0,” *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 128, no. 4 (2013): 171-80.

⁸⁶ Bod, 173.

challenges when it came to developing research in a field that had been little worked on: it was necessary to find analogies and learn about as many experiences as possible in order to find a pattern in the forms that would allow us to understand the monument practices: to understand them within a historical trajectory of production of specific forms, located in the society which they would seek to influence, and only from there to be able to investigate the meanings of this communication of memory through the meaningful gesture in the process of creating consciousness. The challenge was not to get side-tracked by anomalies; undoubtedly, there would be exceptional experiences, but in them the logic underlying the monument practices was not to be found in a way that could be generalized or extrapolated. It is thus clear that interpretations do not come out of the blue but are based on the analysis of experiences. Starting from the large amount of information that is available through digital media, my main concern is to approach the material reality of monument practice. Therefore, far from seeking unity based on generalizations, I tried to find the logic underlying each of the experiences. To do so, I decided to take a sample as broad as possible and leave the quantitative study to approach the monument practices themselves qualitatively.

I established criteria that were used to create a sample that included as many variables as possible from those included in my database. I had to include practices that had taken place during the Dictatorship, in the years of the Transition and those of the last two decades: the main periods I identified in my database when these practices had taken place. Some practices were community-based, others took place with the participation of local administrations and others with the participation of regional authorities. I also included those in which the initiatives had been family initiatives and those in which they had originated from more political or activist profiles. Furthermore, I had to include as many regions as possible, always taking several cases from each region, chosen to represent the different variables described above and where I could also consider not only the geographical, cultural, or economic disparity, but also the fact that the repression would have taken place differently

in different parts of the country and that this would have additionally conditioned the practices themselves. I retrieved this information through data collection by consulting databases, maps, publications, and social networks, but they could not be understood in a qualitative way. If I had sampled a single region, it would have been eminently biased. I therefore selected 100 localities based on these criteria and used ethnographic techniques to develop a qualitative understanding of the chosen sample (Map 2 and Annex II). In my case, I travelled along more than 25,000 kilometres of road to visit only a hundred of the more than 600 practices that have been developed at points all over the country. A large sample, which consisted of visiting the sites and interviewing those involved in these practices: family members, activists, politicians, archaeologists, forensic experts, and local and regional authorities (Annex III).

My interest in the oral sources was often not simply the construction of the historical account through the only existing testimony, but the testimony itself based on the premise that each account represented a point of view in negotiation with a collective memory and testified to certain meanings given to the production of the monument practice in which they took part from very disparate positions. At this point it is important to clarify that I conducted the interviews between December 2018 and March 2020. The interview as a situated research technique, the temporality in which they took place, is fundamental since opinions can change over time, especially in the face of an object of study that is still developing today. But it is also necessary to bear in mind that the act of interviewing meant I was building human relationships, which cannot be measured in terms of interview hours, as the human contact itself, the informal conversation, sharing time and feelings were often more revealing than the cold statements in municipal plenary sessions that have been documented. In fact, these relationships were fundamental for me for developing my own research. As Pablo Pozzi states, activism is something that is not usually recorded in written sources, but is central for understanding a political or social moment, a situation from which derives the need to resort to

interviews in the tradition of oral history.⁸⁷ Therefore, despite this desire, even if there are not many documents and even if it is possible to travel to a place to document a monument practice, it is not so easy to contact its campaigners. The networks between the people involved in the production of monuments and organizers of remembrance services were crucial for me: being in contact with an archaeologist, a relative or a politician in a region opened up the possibility of being contacted by other people involved in monument practices in the same environment or, conversely, of being sent to other regions with which they had connections.

It is these kinds of informal contacts that eventually built my contact database, and this opened opportunities for me to access qualitative knowledge of experiences of monument practices when developing the research work in the field. Taking such a large sample would therefore not have been possible without the interviewees themselves continuing to put me in contact with other people involved in monument practices, but there is a limitation in my research at times in having over-represented certain regions and in not having been able to include many more monuments in other places that I could not access simply because of the impossibility of contacting the campaigners of the practices in those places. This point also suggests an additional methodological reflection in relation to the technique and again it is the importance of mobile telephony and internet connectivity, which has allowed me to communicate through instant messaging applications which are a much less aggressive channel for making contact than direct calls and much more effective than writing letters or emails. The permanent shift that our society is undergoing towards mobile technology has also allowed research work in the field and contact with the different actors that only 10 years ago would have been unthinkable in such a short period of time and that today are a reality for ethnographic techniques.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Pablo Pozzi, “Sobre Entrevistar Militantes y Activistas,” in *Haciendo Historia. Herramientas Para La Investigación Histórica*, ed. Pablo Pozzi et al. (Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2020), 201-12.

⁸⁸ Sandra Staudacher and Andrea Kaiser-Grolimund, “WhatsApp in Ethnographic Research: Methodological Reflections on New Edges of the Field,” *Basel Papers on Political Transformations*, no. 10 Mobilities-In and out of Africa (2016): 24-40.

At this point, it is important to clarify too that in no way do I consider this work to be an “ethnography” as such. I did not live for a long time with a particular community, nor was my aim to describe their practices after such cohabitation. Neither did I turn to ethnography in the face of a “crisis” in the discipline of art history, as happened in the wake of Hal Foster’s dialogue with ethnographic and anthropological knowledge and forms to bring images associated with a cultural otherness into art history.⁸⁹ On the contrary, I opted for techniques that enabled me to access my field of study pragmatically and in a committed way from my commitment to an art history marked by comprehensive sociology: interview, observation, and participation. These were essential for me for understanding practices that had left hardly any documentary trace. There are scarce references in the media, occasional statements in municipal plenary sessions or some old photographs. This obviously refers to the material level because these practices have a much longer history and depend essentially on the living. Therefore, in order to understand the monument practices, the accounts of those people who originally campaigned these initiatives, who knew those who campaigned them or who still participate today in the care and reproduction of the practices associated with the grave, would be of fundamental importance. Above all, these practices do not correspond to primitivism, which has been denounced. If they were treated as primitive practices, a hierarchical point of view would have been produced that favours elitist artistic production.

In this sense, without my study being an ethnography as such, I have used of some of its techniques. Those techniques, including observation and participant observation, were for me a fundamental component of this work in order to break with this vertical vision. I attended various events where the monument practice extends beyond the object itself. Observations, made between January 2019 and March 2020, I always tried to carry out following the rhythms, the everyday life, and the needs of the participants. In addition,

⁸⁹ Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996).

sometimes the position of observer crossed the border into participation in the processes themselves as another member of a remembrance service, an offering in a tribute, a minute's silence in a ceremony or cleaning a mass grave itself. In such situations, one is no longer merely documenting the phenomenon, but part of it as a participant observer. The choice of these types of observed events also responds to certain defined typologies: unveilings, anniversaries of murder or specific annual celebrations such as the anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic, Working Women's Day, or International Workers' Day, related to the political community or such as All Saints' Day, with a religious bias, or the anniversaries of the 1936 *coup d'état* as the beginning of the repression. I also observed exhumation processes or the actual construction of monuments. However, it was not always possible to attend all the remembrance services, despite the desire to include different typologies. Just as it has not been possible for other researchers in the same field who have been forced to formulate rapid research responses in the face of the ephemeral nature of certain study contexts, which take place over a very short period and in very disparate geographical locations.⁹⁰ In addition to this, heeding Eduardo Restrepo's warnings, "Under no circumstances can the collection of data during fieldwork be above respect for the dignity and intimacy of the people, it cannot involve any kind of physical or symbolic aggression."⁹¹ For this reason, I often gave up photographing, filming or interviewing in order to accompany those people who were sharing a particularly important moment in their lives with me, which allowed me to exercise empathy even though I was a privileged observer. This undoubtedly hindered my research, but it reinforced my ethics as a researcher, because the work also dealt with a society in conflict, and as a researcher one bears the

⁹⁰ Francisco Ferrández, "Rapid Response Ethnographies in Turbulent Times: Researching Mass Grave Exhumations in Contemporary Spain," *Anthropology Today* 29, no. 6 (2013): 18-22.

⁹¹ "Bajo ningún motivo la obtención de los datos durante el trabajo de campo puede estar por encima del respeto por la dignidad e intimidad de la gente, no puede implicar ningún tipo de agresión física o simbólica" (Translated by the author). Eduardo Restrepo, *Etnografía: alcances, técnicas y éticas* (Bogotá: Envión, 2016), 92.

ethical and moral responsibility and the possible consequences of disclosing the materials used to compose the text to be published.⁹²

Thus, after twelve months of fieldwork, I began the analysis of the materials to address the questions that guided the research. I have organized the text into three parts, each of which covers a stage of the analysis that relates directly to one of the questions that guided the research. In this way, the first part is answered how the production of the monument practices developed historically and what forms they have taken. In the second part is answered how the monument practices become a part of the society they seek to influence. Finally, in the third part is answered what could be the significance of this communication of memory through monument practices in the process of creating consciousness. These three main parts are subdivided into three chapters each, with their corresponding sections, to progressively construct an argument that responds to the particularities of each of these questions.

Thus, in the first part, I set out a chronological account of how monument practices developed from 1936 to the present day, situating them in the context in which they were produced and recognising the main forms they took, either on the mass graves themselves or after their exhumation. In the first chapter, I begin with those initiatives that began informally, as internal acts of remembrance, and how they progressively took shape outside in the form of stones, crucifixes, and other markings, to which floral offerings organized openly or clandestinely were progressively added. After this, in the second chapter I construct the accounts of how monument practices took place over mass graves and after their exhumation in the violent context of the Transition in the 1970s and 1980s, and in the third chapter I deal with monument practices again over mass graves and after their exhumation since the year 2000, when the notions of “Historical Memory” and the “Forensic Turn” burst into the debate. For this first part I used a large amount of bibliographical and documentary sources that complemented the oral accounts and visual

⁹² Pablo Pozzi, “La ética, la historia oral y sus consecuencias,” *Historia, Voces y Memoria*, no. 11 (2017): 81-91.

documentation obtained through fieldwork. I try to systematically illustrate the process of production of the forms adopted by the monument practices without going into a detailed analysis of their social significance, beyond locating them in the discourse of the producers themselves and making the difference between those that are located on the graves themselves and those that have required the exhumation of the bodies to take place, two facts that mark parallel chronological lines in the same process that mark certain formal differences which I therefore describe separately, although they converge in the following parts of the text. In this way I define how the process of production of monument practices has developed historically and what forms they have taken.

Having provided a broad overview of the process of production of monument practices, I turn to the second part where I consider that monument practices are not only embedded in a dialectical historical process but in a complex social context. A context that had a fundamental influence on the production of these practices, and they form the context in which they seek to have an impact as social actions at the same time. In the fourth chapter, I consider the spatial dimension of the social practices organized around the graves that have been the object of a monument practice, paying attention to the ideas of mourning, political defeat, and urban ostracism. The fifth chapter then considers the arrival of the forensic paradigm and how it relates to monument practices through the notions of “dignity” and “dignified burial,” where the “Forensic Turn” has come hand in hand with an individualism that has led to the destruction of mass graves where monument practices had taken place. Finally, in the sixth chapter I look at the return to the monument. How, after the dissatisfaction produced by the arrival of the “Forensic Turn,” monument practices have returned to mass graves after their exhumation or when the graves could not be located. I therefore found in this phase of the analysis that the documentation did not yield as much result as observations and ethnographic work. In this chapter, I again made use of bibliographical sources, documents, oral sources, and direct observations, and I include

experiences of monument practices not described in the first part, which are nevertheless particularly relevant here as they respond directly to the debates surrounding exhumations and the forensic paradigm. In doing so, I show how monument practices are inserted into the society they seek to influence.

Having thus situated the monument practices in a historical production process and problematized them in various aspects in the society in which they are inscribed, I went on to analyse them, addressing the question of what the meanings of this communication of memory might be through the meaningful gesture in the process of creating consciousness, in the last part. Therefore, in the seventh chapter, I discuss how the phenomenon of memory has been produced and how a process of communication of memory can be seen. I define this process of communication formally and associate it with two ideas: the “Survivals” and the “Substitutive Image Acts,” by which monument practices produce an image that replaces that of the bodies, assuming their properties. In the eighth chapter I explain how monument practices, despite their formal features that could be linked to a funerary tradition, were responding to a desire to influence the society in which they are inscribed. This form of influence is comparable to the desire to write history, and I associate it with the idea of a lost community, which makes use of traditional knowledge of the body. Then, in the ninth chapter, I make explicit how the result of monument practice, as a process of sign production, leads to it becoming a field in dispute. While honour is expressed through certain forms, a position of dominance is reproduced through discourses. This situation is made more complex by the desire to destroy monuments, to manipulate them or to incorporate them into governmental policies. It is a dispute, therefore, which I expect will continue in the future. This third part thus responds to a final analysis in which the theories of a wide range of disparate authors converge, through which I suggest an interpretation of the materials presented above. It will be after the analysis that I will answer the question of what means this communication of memory through the meaningful gesture in the process of creating consciousness.

In this way I conclude the text, having defined the historical development of the process of production of the monument practices and the forms they have taken, understanding the society they seek to influence and attributing a meaning as gestures that would imply a consciousness in this communication of memories marked by limitations that have played against them. I therefore determine that the monument practices around the mass graves derive from a process of consciousness in which the memory is communicated in a meaningful gesture limited by the material reality that integrates the bodies into the construction of a new image with which they seek to influence society. This covers a subject little studied in the research field of the production of memories in relation to the mass graves since 1936. It covers the whole country, filling the existing gap in the academic literature on the subject, it develops an investigation goes beyond its interest based on its content and makes a novel contribution to the subject studied, and finally it contributes an original approach to the study of Art History that deals with contemporary issues.

Finally, I need to point out that the real possibility of undertaking such research has required not only adequate conceptual and methodological design, but also social and institutional support and funding. Unfortunately, the institutional frameworks from which funding can be obtained are often not suited to the advancement of theoretical and methodological debates. In this regard, I was fortunate to be the beneficiary of a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Fellowship in the framework of the pioneering EUmanities programme at the a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School for the Humanities Cologne at the University of Cologne. Here, I have been given the fundamental support of a contract, as well as absolute confidence in my project and in my conceptual and methodological approach. The spirit of a.r.t.e.s. lies in the promotion of interdisciplinary research in the Humanities, seeking to transcend the fragmentation of academia between Liberal Arts, Social Sciences and Natural

Sciences.⁹³ It is in this spirit that the vision of the EUmanities programme is framed, to have Early-Stage Researchers in the Humanities “become aware of their pivotal role in shaping the future of Europe. In an era of increasingly fast societal and technical transformations, with global and transcultural processes involving constant redefinitions of culture, life, nature and climate, excellent Humanities are highly required.”⁹⁴ It is a program that proposes research in the Humanities not in a stagnant manner but immersed in the challenges of today’s world with a view to social engagement and leading social debates within the framework of transnational democratic institutions. However, I did not develop this research alone. I had the fundamental support of Dr. Norbert Nußbaum from a.r.t.e.s. as supervisor as well as the support of Dr. Françoise Dubosquet, director of *L'équipe de recherche interlangue : mémoires, identités, territoires - ERIMIT* at the Université de Rennes 2⁹⁵ and Dr. Francisco Ferrández, senior researcher at the CSIC (Spanish National Research Council), leading the SUBTIERRO project: *Exhumations of mass graves and human rights in historical, transnational and comparative perspective*,⁹⁶ to which I am also attached and to which this research is attached, which is also essential as it brings together researchers of excellence in the field of memory policies. Finally, the research is also part of the research group *DEVISIONES. Discourses, genealogies, and practices in contemporary visual creation* at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid,⁹⁷ a partner centre for the co-tutoring of the program.

I would like to thank all those who have made this research possible. Thanks to Dr. Norbert Nußbaum, Dr. Françoise Dubosquet and Dr. Francisco Ferrández for their guidance and constant support. Moreover, it would not have been possible to write these words if the people in charge of the EUmanities

⁹³ “About a.r.t.e.s.,” a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School for the Humanities Cologne, accessed May 8, 2020, <http://artes.phil-fak.uni-koeln.de/en/about-artes/profile>.

⁹⁴ “a.r.t.e.s. EUmanities. Our Mission,” a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School for the Humanities Cologne, University of Cologne, accessed May 8, 2020, <http://artes.phil-fak.uni-koeln.de/en/doctorate/funding-programmes/artes-eumanities/our-mission>.

⁹⁵ “Équipe de Recherche Interlangues : Mémoire, Identité, Territoires (ERIMIT),” Université Rennes 2, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://www.univ-rennes2.fr/structure/erimit>.

⁹⁶ “Las Políticas de la Memoria - Balance de una década de exhumaciones en España,” accessed February 17, 2020, <https://politicasdelamemoria.org/>.

⁹⁷ “DEVISIONES. Discursos, genealogías y prácticas en la creación visual contemporánea,” DeVisiones, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://www.devisiones.com>.

programme had not believed in my project. Therefore, I would like to thank the team at the a.r.te.s. Graduate School for the Humanities for the support they have given me throughout this time. Also, to Dr. Christian Spies, Dr. Ute Planert, Dr. Stefan Grohé, Dr. Ralph Jessen, and the members of *Klasse 5* and the EUmanities programme where from the beginning of the research I was able to share my concerns in an interdisciplinary environment. As well, thanks to Dr. Jesús Carrillo and Dr. Valeria Camporesi for their support from the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, where I began my studies more than 10 years ago. In addition, I would also like to thank all those who at some point in my presentations or in academic exchanges have given me feedback, good ideas and constructive criticism at events in Santiago de Cuba, Dosotia, Cologne, Grenoble, Rennes, Barcelona, Konstanz, Cambridge, or Madrid. Together with them, I would like to thank Dr. Allen Feldman from the New York University, Dr. Vanesa Garbero from the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, and Dr. José Mª Durán from the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler for all the exchanges and good ideas. I would also like to thank Judith Kingston for her support with the language editing and Juliane Herrmann for her help retouching images. But it is also impossible not to thank the members of the “SUBTIERRO” project, because from the very first moment they welcomed me as one of their own and it was thanks to their years of experience and deep knowledge of the field that I was able to soak up the necessary knowledge to face the challenge of filling the gap represented by the monument practices within the large number of studies that they had already developed in this regard. But especially, thanks to Miriam Saqqa Carazo, who introduced me to the world of exhumations and forensic investigations and who has been developing her research on post-War exhumations at the CSIC at the same time as me, accompanying us, supporting us, and sharing our concerns all this time.

On a personal level, I would also like to thank my parents and family, my friends and all those who at some points have accompanied me in my research, shared my concerns or supported me unreservedly throughout this time. Research is not only done through a hypothesis, good ideas, and data collection

plans, but also through day-to-day practice, where the affection of those with whom we live is essential. I also cannot fail to thank all the family members, activists, associations, researchers, and other people involved individually, collectively, or officially in the development of monument practices. It is thanks to them that this research has been possible, both through sharing their experiences and through often opening a window onto an intimate but fundamental corner of their lives. This research is about their work. Without them, the memories produced about the mass graves would not exist and therefore without their willingness to share their experiences it would never have been possible to study them and connect them to each other in this comprehensive way. Finally, it is important to pay tribute to those who have been murdered since 1936 and buried in the mass graves. Though the loss of their lives was in many respects senseless, it is through their bodies that the living have continued to write history to guide us in the present, as the following pages will try to show.

FIRST PART

CHAPTER ONE

From Violence to Resistance

A PLACE IN MEMORY AND A MARK ON THE LANDSCAPE

In the areas where the *coup d'état* was successful in 1936, a repressive machinery began to be deployed with the aim of eradicating all opposition or potential opposition to the new order. It was run by the army and by armed fascist, Catholic or monarchist militias. In all cases they were protected by the State of War Order of 18 July 1936, issued by Francisco Franco from Santa Cruz de Tenerife.¹ But the infrastructures of the future Spanish State had not been defined, and the mass graves which resulted from this violent coup in 1936 have left little to no documentary trace. Francisco Espinosa points out that irregular burials in pits were very common in 1936, but later they became large mass graves in cemeteries where thousands of bodies were buried. This was a result of the judicial proceedings initiated by the military justice system.² Of those pits used outside the cemeteries, only the perpetrator knew the location, and this fundamentally limited the possibility of developing a monument practice in the future. For those graves found inside the cemeteries, the location could even be public and acknowledged in the registry books themselves. However, this was not the case in all parts of the country, and each mass grave has its own particularities.

¹ Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust* (London: HarperCollins, 2008).

² Francisco Espinosa Maestre, Francisco Moreno Gómez, and Conxita Mir, *Morir, matar, sobrevivir: La violencia en la dictadura de Franco* (Barcelona: Booket, 2004), 79-108.

Almost 83 years after the beginning of these events, in May 2019, I had the opportunity to visit the Tiétar Valley with María Laura Martín Chiappe. María Laura is an anthropologist and she had been working there for several years by the time I arrived.³ She guided me to the graves and monument practices in the valley. She also pointed out to me who to talk to in order to understand how the practices had developed. Among other places, we visited a grave where three women had been buried after their murder: Virtudes de la Puente, 53 years old and according to accounts a Protestant communist; Pilar Espinosa, 43 years old, who was murdered for having republican ideals and reading socialist publications, as well as teaching her neighbours to read, and Valeriana Granada, who was pregnant but single at the time of her murder⁴. There, at the bend in the road where they were murdered, known as “La Vuelta del Esparragal,” I spoke with Mariano López Díaz. He belonged to several groups of memory activism, and he had campaigned monument practices and exhumations. He reconstructed for me the story of the events and their repercussions. His account allows us to understand how we ended up in that very place remembering these events:

They were murdered on 29 December. They were murdered at night. They left their bodies lying there on the path. Well, then, every morning, there was a little girl who lived in a house that still exists. This little girl is now an old woman with white hair. This woman, this wonderful woman, it turns out that she was just a child and she used to take the milk jug to the road down a slope from her house. She lived a little further up, about 100 metres away. Every morning she took the milk from her goats in a milk jug to the road. There every morning the milkman's cart passed by and took the milk away. That terrible morning, when she went down to the road, she saw, not exactly where the milk was collected, but 30 or 40 metres further down in the bend, a group of men and some people lying on the ground. She saw because of their clothes that they were women lying on the ground. When she saw them go down to the road, one of the men

³ María Laura Martín Chiappe, “Micropolíticas del entierro digno: Exhumaciones contemporáneas de víctimas del franquismo y culturas memoriales transnacionales en el Valle del Tiétar” (PhD diss., Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2020).

⁴ María Laura Martín Chiappe, “Fosas comunes de mujeres: narrativas de la(s) violencia(s) y lugares de dignificación,” *Kamchatka. Journal of Cultural Analysis*, 0, no. 13 (June 9, 2019): 271-97.

who were there came up to her and said: Girl, Piss off! Turn around and don't look back! Go up to your house, go up to your house, there's no milk this morning. Well, this woman heard that we were going to dig up these women. When she heard the news through one of her sons, that these women were going to be dug up, she came to tell us that she knew exactly where they were buried. Because immediately after those men had sent her up the road with her milk, those men made the grave and buried them. After that she passed by every day to bring the milk to the road, and she also went to the village. That was the most natural route for that girl to go to the village. She passed by there, passed by the grave. Then she saw the soil piled up from where they were buried and the girl passed by all her life, even when the soil was covered with weeds and that became soil too, the same as the rest of the soil over the years, she told me when she thanked me: every day, every time I pass by that grave, by the grave of the three women, I pray an Our Father.⁵

An important point for understanding the relevance of the story is that the first time Mariano told it to me, we were standing next to a large granite block. Mariano had carved a large hole in it, dyed it red and added a plaque with an inscription in memory of the women who had been murdered there. In addition, he had placed in the empty grave of these women, exhumed in the 2000s, a particular sculpture made of old rails (Figure 1). The girl, now an elderly woman, is called Paula. Thanks to her “Our Father,” this place was not lost and that allowed monument practice years later.

It is this preservation of the memory of a place that was also present in José Vidorreta’s account. José was over 90 years old when I visited him, and he was one of the first to campaign an exhumation in La Rioja in the 1970s. In Cervera del Río Alhama, after the announcement of the coup on 19 July 1936, a meeting was called in the Workers’ Centre, the last one held to try to organize the defence of their town. On the 22 July, the Falangist, and Catholic militias, including militarized priests and seminarians, entered the town. Their superior numbers led the resisters to retreat into the mountains. Some returned, but

⁵ Phone interview with Mariano López Díaz, January 27, 2020.

arrests and executions had begun in the village.⁶ José's father was one of those who were killed. He told me how he left Cervera as a young man to work in as a labourer in manufacturing abroad, but he did not stay there long. He needed to return to his hometown and, in a way, the presence of his father in the mass grave was one of his motivations to return.⁷ "Every year, at 2 a.m. on 2 September, my thoughts go back to the events of that cursed night in 1936. This is when they charged them, this is when they killed them, and so on and so forth."⁸ For years, this annual rehearsing of the events of that night, culminating in their execution and burial in a pit, was a crucial part of this life. This ritual meant that the grave, despite being in the middle of the countryside in a place known as "El Carrascal" was not lost. Forty years later, the mass grave had become a place for remembrance and he exhumed the bodies, and, with the bodies, he continued the monument practice in the cemetery, where he built a vault (Figure 2).

Alongside these practices developed by those who witnessed or knew about the site of the events, there were others who kept the memory of the place a secret. The confession of the location by perpetrators, by spontaneous observers such as children or shepherds, was common when asking about the site of mass graves. And these stories were passed on by word of mouth, communicated in private, and they were difficult to trace. Moreover, it is possible to find perpetrators who ended up communicating indirectly the location through family connections. In other cases, there are perpetrators who were directly interrogated by relatives of the murdered and thus confessed to the place of burial. Carlos Solana Pérez commented to me, when I asked him about this situation in Arnedo, that it was an informal communication, sometimes denoting Christian sentiments and sometimes a certain solidarity.⁹

⁶ Jesús Vicente Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada. La Rioja 1936: La Rioja 1936* (Logroño: Ochoa, 2012), 427-429.

⁷ Interview with José Vidorreta Sr. and José Vidorreta Jr. in Cervera del Río Alhama, 21 January 2019.

⁸ "Todos los años, al sonar las 2 de la madrugada del día 2 de septiembre me invade el pensamiento haciendo un recorrido en los hechos de aquella maldita noche del 36. Ahora los cargarían, ahora los matarían y así sigue y sigue" (Translated by the author). Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada. La Rioja 1936*, 430.

⁹ Interview with Carlos Solana in Arnedo, 21 January 2019.

In Arnedo, the lieutenant of the Guardia Civil José Núñez Pérez declared a State of War on 20 July 1936, and the murders began a few days later, resulting in the murder of 46 people. Several graves were exhumed in the 1970s thanks to this type of informal communication, but many other graves have not been located despite these stories.¹⁰

Beyond these places, present in someone's memory, there are others where there was a more basic impulse to intervene directly at the time. The places present in memory thus took on their first material forms. This is the case where stones were placed on the graves or marks were made on nearby trees. José María Rojas and Fernando García Hernando showed me in January 2019 various vaults built to host the remains they had exhumed in recent years in Aranda de Duero and the surrounding region. Nevertheless, until 2004 when 46 bodies were exhumed from the Villamayor de los Montes grave,¹¹ Fernando told me that a stone marked the exact location of the grave. This stone was in the middle of the fields, and it was not far from the road to Burgos. After the exhumation, he put it there again. And this gesture was not unusual. Moreover, there is a plurality of means for the same purpose. There are crosses engraved on trees as in Bercial de Zapardiel in Ávila or in Castillejo de Martín Viejo in Salamanca (Figure 3). There are stones placed in Morata de Jalón in Zaragoza, in Cobertaleda, Soria, in Guisando in Ávila, or Tiedra in Valladolid (Figure 4) among many others.¹² There are also crosses painted on the cliff walls in Baiona, in the absence of knowledge of the final resting place of the bodies of the nine people shot there (Figure 5). And this is how Juan Miguel Baquero describes the actions of an inhabitant of Guillena after the assassination of Antonio García 'Botella,' a day labourer and Republican councillor. "A resident of El Ronquillo, named Plácido, witnesses the deadly escort and hears several

¹⁰ Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada. La Rioja 1936*, 276-78.

¹¹ Àngeles Fuentes, "Exhumació i Arqueologia Forense. Els Afusellats a VillaMayoor de Los Montes (Burgos)," *L'Aref* 299 (2005): 28-30.

¹² Mass graves with stones can be found in Viznar, Padul and Rosal de la Frontera in Andalusia; in Gurrea de Gállego, Santa María, Asso-Veral, Las Pedrosas, Mainar, Morata de Jalón, Murillo de Gallego, Pastriz, Santed, Villafranca de Ebro, and Alcañiz in Aragón; in Santa Cruz del Valle, Cubillos del Rojo, El Teso, Fresnedo, Montes Torozos, and Cobertelada in Castilla y León; or in Carranza, Gopegi and Tolosa in the Basque Country.

shots. On his way back from work he sees the body half buried, to the right of the road and next to a type of tree called ‘aguapero.’ With the help of his son, they placed several stones on top of the grave to ward off the inevitable interest of the wolves.”¹³

There were probably more actions of this nature, but they may not have left any documentary trace, or they may have disappeared, turning into other monument practices. It is an action that may have gone unnoticed, an intimate gesture for which there is no databases or systematic record. Accounts such as the above do not suggest their exceptionality but rather their possible abundance. However, 80 years have passed, and it was almost impossible to go back to them. They were part of a stage prior to the possibility of any future form on the ground: avoiding the loss of the grave was a fundamental necessity in the first moment after the executions. This was an essential measure for those graves whose location was not always public or that were located outside urban areas, preserved only in the memory of the perpetrators. Without these early initiatives, the monument practice would not have been able to develop in the future.

On the other hand, where the *coup d'état* was unsuccessful, the area was covered with mass graves as the insurgents advanced. These were generally located in cemeteries as a result of the repression following the advance of the dissident army, or as part of the corrupt military trials in the War and post-War period.¹⁴ These were also of great importance, since, as Francisco Espinosa points out, the existence of these mass graves was known everywhere.¹⁵ The large number of murdered people buried in these graves made them difficult to hide, if that was the wish of the perpetrators. Julián Casanova explains that the

¹³ “Un vecino de El Ronquillo, llamado Plácido, presencia la escolta mortal y oye varios disparos. Al regresar de su jornada laboral observa el cuerpo a medio enterrar, a la derecha del camino y junto a un tipo de árbol denominado ‘aguapero’. Con ayuda de su hijo colocan varias piedras encima de la tumba para evitar la previsible acción de los lobos” (Translated by the author). Juan Miguel Baquero Zurita, *Las huellas en la tierra: intervenciones en fosas comunes del franquismo en Andalucía: anuario 2016-2017* (Seville: Junta de Andalucía, 2018), 88.

¹⁴ Candela Chaves Rodríguez, “Justicia militar y consejos de guerra en la Guerra Civil y franquismo en Badajoz: delitos, sentencias y condenas a desafectos” (University of Extremadura, 2014).

¹⁵ Espinosa Maestre, Moreno Gómez, and Mir, *Morir, matar, sobrevivir*, 78.

relentless oppression that started with the massacres of the coup continued unabated with a new period of mass executions, imprisonment, and torture after the end of the War in 1939. Executions numbered in the thousands in provincial capitals such as Madrid, Malaga, Valencia, Barcelona, and Granada, among others. More than 50,000 people were executed in the decade following the end of the War, to which must be added thousands of deaths from hunger and disease in prisons and concentration camps.¹⁶

However, the fact that the location of the graves was known does not mean that practices were not carried out on them. The construction of columbariums, the *mondas*,¹⁷ or the inherent uncertainty of a burial in the ground without a grave could lead to the grave being lost, even though its location was in the public domain. This was the case with some of them, even large ones such as those in Granada, Seville, or Madrid. Moreover, these graves were usually found in marginalized areas of the cemetery, such as those earmarked for Protestants, suicides, unclaimed corpses, and the poorest people who did not have the resources for a headstone. For this reason, those who could not afford another burial, such as in Barcelona, continued to be buried there in later decades.¹⁸ To these were added the mass graves resulting from the concentration camps. These places of mass repression, despite having been spread across the entire country, disappeared, leaving little documentary and material evidence, and with them their mass graves.¹⁹

Thus, from the outset, there were practices to mark the place and avoid its location in the face of the different possibilities mentioned. In 2012, Manuel Ramírez Gimeno campaigned the exhumation of the Alcaraz grave, where the mayors of Viveros and Ossa de Montiel were murdered, along with residents

¹⁶ Espinosa Maestre, Moreno Gómez, and Mir, 19-42.

¹⁷ The process of exhumeing remains in a cemetery is known as “*monda*.” The purpose is to place the remains in an ossuary and make space for future burials. In contrast to the positive image that the ossuary may have in other European contexts, in the Kingdom of Spain ossuaries are generally used as landfill sites. This type of action responds to speculative economic interest when it comes to reselling or re-renting available space in cemeteries and not to a religious or sanitary logic.

¹⁸ Maria Dolors Bernal and Joan Corbalan, *La veu dels morts silencials* (Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, 2017).

¹⁹ Carlos Hernández, *Los campos de concentración de Franco: sometimiento, torturas y muerte tras las alambradas* (Barcelona: Ediciones B, 2019).

of this and other municipalities, some after severe torture.²⁰ When I asked him about the placing of a stone on the mass grave not long after the murders in Alcaraz, he explained to me how:

The stone was an agreement among the families. At the beginning, when they had to keep silent and could not show themselves much, it was there to mark the site so that it would not be lost because at that time the cemeteries were just soil. If you didn't mark it, you could lose the space. So, the families decided that a carved stone should be placed on top of it. Later on, in the 1960s, a cross was put up. And then in the 1970s a fence was put up.²¹

This act of placing a stone was a first step in defining the monument practices around the mass graves that developed decades later: a practice that in some places began in 1936 after the murders and has lasted for a long time. Knowledge of their location may have been public, as was the case with mass graves in cemeteries or it may not have been, as was the case with the pits outside urban centres, but common to both is the need to know the location of the burial place of the bodies. However, this was a situation that had arisen in a highly violent context, so that the first step of such monument practices must be described as part of a confrontation with the immediate environment.

REMEMBERING DURING THE “WAR” THAT BEGAN AFTER THE WAR

The period that Manuel refers to, from the laying of the carved stone to the sixties and seventies, did not pass easily. Enesida García Suárez’s parents were murdered in Tíraña, in the Nalón mining area. She wrote about her childhood memories, which was published for the first time after her death in 2018. She begins her account by stating:

When they were crowing ‘the war is over, the war is over,’ I thought so too, because we were fed up with calamity and deprivation; in a word,

²⁰ “La fosa de Alcaraz,” Mapa de la memoria democrática de Albacete, accessed January 29, 2020, <http://memoriadealbacete.victimasdeladictadura.es/listing-item/la-fosa-de-alcaraz/>.

²¹ Interview with Manuel Ramírez Gimeno in Albacete, October 5, 2019.

*starving; it turns out that the war, or something even worse than war, was about to begin.*²²

Enesida's experience includes periodic fines and arrests from October 1937; threats and allegations against her by neighbours; the arrest, torture and murder of her mother, in front of her and her siblings; the arrest, torture and murder of her father at the entrance to the mine; theft and confiscation of property; harassment, arrests and torture of her eldest sister, until her suicide in September 1942; impossibility of funeral rites for any of them; dispersion of the rest of the siblings; persecution for years of two escaped uncles until one of them is murdered and the other imprisoned; and finally, dispossessed, being condemned to work as a maid. A story that was considered "just one more" of the many that took place after the War, according to Yerba Segura Suárez in the epilogue to the text. And so, 40 years later, Enesida, together with Yerba's grandmother and other relatives, campaigned for her monument practice on the mass grave in the cemetery of Tiraña. Thus, Yerba entitles the epilogue of the edited text: "When remembering is resistance."²³ Thus, it is important to point out what they were resisting to give to their memories a visible form.

Zira Box points out how, from the end of the War, celebrations of the victory of the insurgents began to be organized, bringing together all the factions that had supported the *coup d'état* and that supported the new regime.

In short, it was a matter of respecting and executing the mandate of the dead - the vigilant and lingering dead whose presence was permanent in victorious Spain. For some, it was 'the religious and fervent yearning to serve God and Spain well'; for others, it was the so-called national-syndicalist revolution that would lead Spain along the paths of fascism and Empire. Between the one and the other, the official fall-out of Francoist involved the constant remembrance of the country's dead as a necessary source of legitimization to construct its own theodicy with which

²² "Cuando tanto cacareaban 'se acabó la guerra, se acabó la guerra', yo también lo creía así, porque estábamos hartos de pasar calamidades y privaciones; en una palabra, muertos de hambre; resulta que la guerra, o aún peor que la guerra para nosotros, empezó aquí" (Translation by the autor). Enesida García Suárez, *Mi infancia en el franquismo: Tiraña, Asturias, 1938* (Oviedo: Cambalache, 2018), 12.

²³ Yerba Segura Suárez, "Cuando recordar es resistir" in Enesida García Suárez, *Mi infancia en el franquismo: Tiraña, Asturias, 1938* (Oviedo: Cambalache, 2018), 79.

*to give meaning to so much death and with which to consolidate its victory
as the great self-affirming myth.²⁴*

Thus these “Martyrs” and the “Fallen for God and for Spain” were present in victory speeches and were honoured in parades and mass funerals.

Miriam Saqqa has studied the management of their bodies in detail. The Spanish State, through the recently created Official State Gazette (BOE), regulated the exhumation of those who had died in combat who were members of the insurgent army and militias as well as the registration of their deaths²⁵. This activity continued after 1 April 1939, so that the recovery of the bodies was extended to the whole country and was regulated by law. In addition, the municipal governments played a fundamental role in regulating exhumations, transfers and reinterments, establishing a protocol for exhumation by the Directorate of Health from 1940 onwards, as long as the bodies were only “Fallen for God and for Spain,” in accordance with the provisions of the BOE of 8 February 1940.²⁶ Therefore, the corpses were not only exhumed from their graves in battlefields but also identified on the basis of a forensic protocol and officially reburied. Their death was not understood as an indirect consequence of having led an coup against a government, but rather as part of a process of

²⁴ “Se trataba, en definitiva, de respetar y culminar el mandato legado por los muertos, unos muertos vigilantes y acechantes cuya presencia se hacía permanente en la España vencedora. Para unos, era ‘el anhelo religioso y fervoroso de servir bien a Dios y a España’; para otros, la llamada revolución nacionalsindicalista que guiaría a España por los caminos del fascismo y del Imperio. Entre unos y otros, la resultante oficial franquista recurriría al constante recuerdo de los perecidos nacionales como una necesaria fuente de legitimación para construir su propia teodicea con la que dar sentido a tanta muerte y con la que consolidar su victoria fundacional como el gran mito autorrecurrente” (Translated by the author). Zira Box, *España, año cero: la construcción simbólica del franquismo* (Madrid: Alianza, 2010), 178.

²⁵ It should be noted that the government of the Republic also carried out exhumations to investigate crimes against people who supported the 1936 *coup d'état*, on the understanding that these were extrajudicial actions that violated the republican constitutional framework. Oriol Dueñas and Queralt Solé have worked on Beltrán de Quintana, the examining magistrate in these cases in Barcelona, who conducted exhumations with judicial and forensic protocol. In Oriol Dueñas and Queralt Solé, “El juez Josep Maria Bertran de Quintana (1884-1960): compromiso político y cementerios clandestinos,” *Hispania* 74, no. 246 (April 30, 2014): 151-76.

²⁶ Miriam Saqqa Carazo, “Las exhumaciones de los Caídos por Dios y por España: La gestión de los cuerpos,” in *Luces Sobre Un Pasado Deformado: La Guerra Civil ochenta años después*, ed. Juan Andrés Blanco Rodríguez, Jesús A Martínez Martín, and Ángel Viñas Martín (Madrid: Marcial Pons, Ediciones de Historia, 2020), 505-26.

searching for the guilty, the so-called “Causa General” (General Court Case).²⁷ This was a judicial proceeding, formalized in 1940, and conducted by the Prosecutor’s Office of the Supreme Court. The aim was to gather evidence of alleged criminal acts in the area of Republican control. However, this was carried out in a politicized and biased way, and it could even be called “sectarian.”²⁸ This proceeding, as Miriam Saqqa explains, was conditioned from the outset by the very structure of the judicial system, which was looking for crimes that would justify the repression that was being exercised. This way of dealing with the process also meant that when researching the repression, it is common to find stories in which the only documentation that grandchildren have of their grandparents are the sentences handed down by this process. It is a documentation of humiliation, which converts those killed in the framework of the repression into criminals. There, Republican loyalists became rebels because they were not adhering to the military instructions of the 1936 *coup d'état* and the subsequent orders of the Spanish State. Meanwhile, the grass began to grow over the graves, fed by the buried corpses, and the government conducted a campaign of victimization of the perpetrators, as “Fallen for God and for Spain.”²⁹

In 1939 the Ministry of the Interior issued an order to unify the style and meaning of commemorative constructions, which had to be approved by the National Headquarters of the Propaganda Service. The Department of Ceremonial and Plastic Arts even created a “Style Commission for the commemorations of the Homeland,” which according to Zira Box would have been in the hands of the most radical Falangists of the time.³⁰ The designs were by architects and required beauty, simplicity, severity and above all the presence

²⁷ Officially known as the Causa General instructed by the Public Prosecutor’s Office on Red Rule in Spain (Causa general: La dominación roja en España, avance de la información instruida por el Ministerio público).

²⁸ José Luis Ledesma, “La ‘Causa General’: fuente sobre la violencia, la Guerra Civil (y el franquismo),” *Spagna Contemporanea*, 14, no. 28 (2005): 203-20.

²⁹ Miriam Saqqa Carazo, “Mártires y Caídos por Dios y por España: una aproximación a la gestión de sus cuerpos,” in *Memorias de guerra, proyectos de paz: violencias y conflictos entre pasado, presente y futuro: VIII Encuentro de Memorias en red* (Gernika-Lumo: Centro de Documentación sobre el Bombardeo de Gernika, 2017), 153-62.

³⁰ Box, *España, año cero: la construcción simbólica del franquismo*, 183.

of the cross as an integral part of the whole. Box notes that the cross was the fundamental element in the monuments to the fallen. For the regime, that was showing that they were blessed by God and the Church was therefore getting a symbolic thanks for their support since the early days of the War.³¹ Although the cross was widely used in funerary settings, the convergence of the Spanish Falange and Catholic sectors after the War led to many of these plaques and monuments to the “Fallen” being unveiled on 29 October, the day of the dead for the Falange. But the cross was joined by others: the yoke and arrows, monarchist heraldry, eagles, and laurels as allegories of strength, power, and victory.³² The country was covered with such monuments, the last megalomaniacal project being the so-called “Valley of the Fallen,” which was built by slaves. By decree in 1940 the building of a complex to perpetuate the memory of the fallen in their “Glorious Crusade” was approved in the valley of Cuelgamuros. And among the thousands of bodies that were ordered to be exhumed and transferred there was one that stood out in space and prominence over the others in the construction of the basilica itself: that of José Antonio Primo de Rivera.³³ It was he who led the *coup d'état* against the government of the Second Republic and for this he was arrested, tried and condemned to death.³⁴ This “Fallen par excellence” was glorified and mythologized by the Spanish State. His remains were exhumed and reburied, then constantly commemorated.³⁵ And not only him, other prominent coup plotters with numerous war crimes and acts of repression behind them were honoured as fallen heroes, such as Onésimo Redondo, who after his death had a large vault in the Valladolid cemetery, as well as General Mola and Sanjurjo who were given a large funeral complex in the centre of Pamplona itself, or Queipo de Llano who was buried inside the Basilica of the Macarena in Seville.

³¹ Box, 185.

³² Box, 186.

³³ Silvia Marimon and Queralt Solé, *La dictadura de pedra: el Valle de los Caídos, entre un passat negre i un futur incert* (Barcelona: Ara Llibres, 2019).

³⁴ Ian Gibson, *En busca de José Antonio* (Madrid: Aguilar, 2008).

³⁵ Box, *España, año cero: la construcción simbólica del franquismo*, 160-69.

Zira Box states forcefully that there was a political intention behind these constructions, which was to affirm the new regime. They had an exclusive idea of what “Spain” was, and they left out of the commemorative impulse those other defeated and humiliated as “anti-Spain.”³⁶ This idea is reinforced by José Luis Ledesma and Javier Rodrigo when they state that it was a matter of:

A presence that constructed an epic, mythological and fetishized past, which imposed a ‘dememorization’ and a ‘culture of forgetting’ of the real Republic and the Civil War and of the ideals and political cultures of the defeated. And it was precisely this, together with the physical elimination of thousands of Republicans, that maintained the unity of the winning coalition within the framework of a national Catholic ritual strategy and a political culture defined by concepts such as ‘purification’ and exclusion.

³⁷

And this is ultimately evidenced by the situation faced by those who survived. They were not compensated, their memories were hidden, and their relatives were not publicly recognized even as dead. For the administration, they were not desirable bodies. Francisco Espinosa points out that many deaths were unregistered simply because of fear: “fear of having to see and deal with those in the town hall or the court, and fear of compromising people by asking them to bear witness to killings that everyone knew about, but no one saw.”³⁸ In this way some of the murdered were recorded dead due to natural causes, haemorrhage, or just “other reasons.” It is, therefore, in the framework of this long post-War period that Yerba Segura’s epilogue to Enésida’s story can be

³⁶ Box, 179.

³⁷ “Una presencia que construía un pasado épico, mitológico y fetichizado, pero con la que se imponía una ‘desmemorización’ y una ‘cultural del olvido’ de la República y la Guerra Civil reales y de los ideales y culturas políticas de los vencidos. Y precisamente era eso, junto a la eliminación física de miles de republicanos lo que mantenía la unidad de la coalición vencedora en el marco de una estrategia ritual nacionalcatólica y una cultura política definida por conceptos como la ‘purificación’ y la exclusión” (Translated by the author). José Luis Ledesma and Javier Rodrigo, “Caídos por España, Mártires de la Libertad. Víctimas y conmemoración de la Guerra Civil en la España posbética (1939-2006),” *Ayer*, no. 63 (2006): 236.

³⁸ “Miedo a tener que ver y tratar con los del Ayuntamiento o con los del Juzgado, y miedo a comprometer a gente al pedirle que testificaran sobre muertes que todos conocían pero que nadie vio” (Translated by the author). Espinosa Maestre, Moreno Gómez, and Mir, *Morir, matar, sobrevivir*, 104.

understood, “when remembering is to resist”³⁹ and resisting began in the long night of the post-War period and the Dictatorship with a simple gesture: bringing flowers.

MOURNING RITUALS AND RESISTANCE

On this basis, it was easy to understand José Vidorreta’s answer to the question of whether he had been to the mass grave during the Dictatorship. “No,” and his son said, “If you think, during Franco’s lifetime, to go there and bring some flowers, you would be arrested.”⁴⁰ In order to declare political commitment to the regime, it became widespread to inform on and watch one’s own neighbour, as part of the process of replacing mass politics with submission to power.⁴¹ Likewise, in cases where the mass grave location was public, visiting it could pose a serious risk. Indeed, accounts of “watchmen” are common. Members of the state repression corps or simply sympathizers of fascist organizations used to come to the mass graves on special dates, such as anniversaries of executions or All Saints’ Day. Their purpose was to ensure that no one could bring flowers to the cemeteries or to the fields where the graves were located.

One of these stories of resistance took place in Burgos. There, prisoners were killed either as a result of summary courts martial or extrajudicial actions. After a release order was issued, the prisoner was ordered to be transferred and during the transfer they were murdered. The corpses were buried on Monte de Estépar. This place was chosen by the authorities under a directive to ensure the concealment of the bodies in view of the massive scale of the murders.⁴² However, and perhaps due to the impossibility of concealing crimes of such magnitude, the place was known to some of the relatives. The archaeologist Juan Montero explained to me that the first references they have of relatives of those murdered going up to Monte de Estépar to lay flowers date back to the

³⁹ García Suárez, *Mi infancia en el franquismo*, 79.

⁴⁰ Interview with José Vidorreta Sr. and José Vidorreta Jr. in Cervera del Río Alhama, 21 January 2019.

⁴¹ Francisco Aguado Sánchez, *El Maquis en España: sus documentos* (Madrid: Librería Editorial San Martín, 1976), 574.

⁴² Fernando Cardero Azofra and Fernando Cardero Elso, *La Guerra Civil en Burgos: fusilados, detenidos y represaliados en 1936* (Burgos: Olivares, Libros Antiguos, 2009).

1940s, in the middle of the post-War period. However, before All Saints' Day, a military check point was placed at the nearest train station. Knowing that the widows would come to bring flowers, the army was preventing them from passing. So, when relatives came, they did so in secret, to avoid being seen.⁴³ Despite the State's best efforts, they still managed to attend. During the Dictatorship, flowers, photographs, and other objects kept appearing around an oak tree that became a central point for the memory of the burial site, a place where the mass graves were scattered across the landscape. Sandra Albo records this story and goes so far as to state how, faced with the situation of the army waiting at the station, snatching the flowers, and throwing them on the tracks, the women would appear again at night to leave new ones. A circumstance that generated great perplexity among the local shepherds: "You passed by a place one day, then you passed by again and there were flowers. But you hadn't seen anyone."⁴⁴

And that bravery, the obstinacy to return to the place, transcended fear in an iconic way in La Barranca, a few kilometres from Logroño. More than 400 people were murdered there from September 1936, from workers to mayors. Their burial took place in the place known as the Dehesa de Barriguelo, chosen so as not to have to move all the bodies of the murdered to the Logroño cemetery.⁴⁵ In the manifesto read on the 30th anniversary of the unveiling of the mass grave as monument in 1979, it was stated:

Here we are today, on this land that your mothers, wives, and daughters embraced and stepped on until they made it theirs too. Women dressed in black and dignity. They made this land, which was yours by blood, ours. They are the ones who, with their presence here, year after year, no matter how much it rained, snowed or the winds of repression blew, ended up

⁴³ Interview with Juan Montero in Estepar, 14 September 2019.

⁴⁴ "Pasabas por un sitio un día, al rato volvías a pasar y había flores. Pero tú no habías visto a nadie" (Translation by the author). Sandra Albo Basurto, "Conflict y patrimonio disonante: el Monte de Estépar como ejemplo de espacio de memoria," in *Identidad y patrimonio en Castilla y León* ed. Diputación de Salamanca (Salamanca: Diputación de Salamanca, 2015), 86.

⁴⁵ Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada. La Rioja 1936*, 25.

writing the most terrible and beautiful page of Historical Memory in La Rioja⁴⁶

Years later, various monument practices took place there and the contribution of the so-called “women in black” played a fundamental role in the story (Figure 6). Ernesto Muro Díaz says about them:

The women in black had begun to visit this wasteland before the end of the war, still with the fresh imprint of the soil that had been moved. From the late thirties until well into the sixties, those ladies I knew (wives, mothers, daughters, or sisters of the murdered) came to La Barranca walking from Villamediana with a load of flowers and a bag in which they kept the day's food. Sometimes the inclement weather made the journey, the stay, and the subsequent return even harder. [...] However, the worst thing about those early years was the reception they received from the repressive forces of Franco's regime. Their sin was to show that they were immune to the paralyzing fear and amnesia, boldly visiting the scene of the massacre and demonstrating its existence. For this reason, they were treated like they were crazy and were expelled from the area without a second thought, amidst shoving, kicking and insults, for the simple reason that 'nothing had happened there.' But the women in black did not leave, they backed down, stood up, were beaten up and returned home with the firm determination to come back the following year.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ “Aquí estamos hoy, sobre esta tierra que vuestras madres, esposas e hijas abrazaron y pisaron hasta hacerla suya también. Las mujeres vestidas de negro y de dignidad. Ellas hicieron nuestro este terreno que era vuestro por la sangre. Ellas son las que con su presencia aquí, año tras año, por más que lloviera, nevara o arreciaran vientos de represión, acabaron por escribir la más terrible y hermosa página de la Memoria Histórica en la Rioja” (Translated by the author). Aguirre González, 12.

⁴⁷ “Las mujeres de negro habían comenzado a visitar ese erial sin acabar la Guerra, todavía con la huella fresca de la tierra movida. Desde finales de los años treinta hasta bien entrados los sesenta, aquellas señoras que yo conocí (esposas, madres, hijas o hermanas de los asesinados) llegaban a La Barranca caminando desde Villamediana con la carga de flores y el bolso donde guardaban la comida del día. A veces las inclemencias del tiempo hacían todavía más dura la travesía, la estancia y el posterior regreso. [...] No obstante, lo peor de esos primeros años era el recibimiento que las fuerzas represivas del franquismo les deparaban. Su pecado pasaba por mostrarse inmunes al miedo paralizante y a la amnesia, visitando con osadía el escenario de la masacre y evidenciando su existencia. Por ello se las trataba de locas y eran expulsadas de la zona sin miramientos, entre empujones, patadas e insultos, por la sencilla razón de que ‘allí no había pasado nada’. Pero las mujeres de negro no se iban, retrocedían, hacían frente, recibían golpes y regresaban a casa con la firme determinación de volver al año siguiente” (Translated by the author). Asociación para la Preservación de la Memoria Histórica de La Rioja, ed., *Mujeres de Negro* (Logroño: Asociación para la Preservación de la Memoria Histórica de La Rioja, 2011), 9.

A resistance which, despite being conditioned by Catholic logic and the patterns of behaviour traditionally imposed on women,⁴⁸ was not any kind of “subtle resistance” as has been associated on other occasions with women of that time.⁴⁹ Here the physical opposition could not have been less subtle: the surviving body in search of the corpses in the face of the repressive corps of the State. And indeed, their actions did not go unnoticed by the authorities. Jesús Aguirre recovered a letter from 1958 issued by the Directorate General of Security, Social Investigation Division, of the Seventh Brigade in Logroño, which stated:

Mr. Chief Commissioner: In compliance with your order of today's date, requested by His Excellency the Civil Governor, the undersigned officers went this afternoon to the place called <La Barranca>, located in the vicinity of Lardero, some 7 kms. from Logroño, having verified the following: That, to the right of the country road, which starts from the main road, passing through the centre of the aforementioned village and approximately two kms from it, on an esplanade, there is a place about 40 metres long by two and a half metres wide, where they have cleared the grass and smoothed the ground, all of which is surrounded by loose flowers and in the centre and along its entire length several wreaths have been placed carefully from stretch to stretch, and at the head of the same three wreaths and at their base a sign made with white flowers that says: <ANOTHER YEAR GONE AND WE WILL NOT FORGET YOU>, a place which seems to indicate that this is where the remains of those tried at the beginning of our war of liberation were buried. The appropriate steps have been taken and with the utmost discretion have resulted in finding out that this has been done successively on All Souls' Day every year, by relatives and mourners from the Capital and surrounding villages, as well as from Briones and other unspecified places.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ María Laura Martín Chiappe and Zoe de Keragnat, “Mujeres en -y en torno a- fosas comunes de la represión franquista en la Guerra Civil española,” in *Mujeres en la Guerra Civil y la Posguerra. Memoria y educación*, ed. Alicia Torija and Jorge Morín (Madrid: Audema Editorial, 2019), 261-86.

⁴⁹ Irene Murillo Aced and University of Zaragoza, *En defensa de mi hogar y mi pan: estrategias femeninas de resistencia civil y cotidiana en la Zaragoza de posguerra, 1936-1945* (Zaragoza: Prensas de la Universidad de Zaragoza, 2013).

⁵⁰ “Sr. Comisario Jefe: Cumplimentando la orden de V.S. de fecha de hoy, interesada por el Excmo. Sr. Gobernador Civil, los funcionarios que suscriben se trasladaron en la tarde de hoy, al lugar denominado <La Barranca>, sito en las inmediaciones de Lardero, a unos 7 kms. de Logroño, habiendo

These actions were not exceptional, although they may not have been public and many of them have been lost or survive in oral traditions.

Another case was the story of the grandmother of Teófilo Raboso, from Santa Cruz de la Zarza. Her husband was buried in one of the mass graves in Ocaña after being tried and murdered as a result of having founded the Communist Party committee in Santa Cruz years earlier. Teofilo explained to me:

My mother used to say that when they went to the mass graves there was a gravedigger who hit them, removed the flowers, trampled them underfoot, and one of them went into the cemetery and the others threw the flowers in from the outside so that if they were seen passing by, they wouldn't have any flowers.⁵¹

While that gravedigger was there, it was not possible to mourn directly on the grave space. Therefore, the strategy of Teofilo's grandmother and other relatives in those years was to take the flowers to the nearest graves, those of the gypsy families, who welcomed her and allowed her to conceal the fact that the mourning was not really for her relatives but for those buried in the grave. Thanks to the resistance of the relatives, and to the arrival of a new gravedigger years later, the remembrance services on All Saints' Day began to grow larger and larger, with more and more people coming to the grave. Seeing that they had claimed the grave for their own, the new gravedigger raised the alarm when trucks were arriving to exhume the bodies to take them to the new "Valley of the Fallen," as Teófilo told me. The families immediately organized themselves

comprobado lo siguiente: Que, a la derecha del camino vecinal, que parte de la carretera general, pasando por el centro del pueblo mencionado y a unos dos kms. aproximadamente del mismo, en una explanada hay un lugar de unos 40 metros de largo por dos y medio de ancho aproximadamente, donde han limpiado la hierba alisando el terrero, todo el cual está rodeado de flores sueltas y en su centro y en toda su largura varias coronas situadas de trecho en trecho con todo cuidado, y en la cabecera de la misma tres coronas y en su base un letrero hecho con flores blancas que dice: <UN AÑO MÁS Y NO OS OLVIDAMOS>, lugar que parece indicar que es donde yacen los restos de los juzgados al principio de nuestra guerra de liberación. Hechas las gestiones oportunas y con la máxima reserva han dado por resultado averiguar que esto se viene realizando sucesivamente en la conmemoración del día de Difuntos todos los años, por familiares y deudos de la Capital y pueblos circunvecinos, así como de Briones y otros sin concretar." (Translated by the author). Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada. La Rioja 1936. La Rioja 1936*, 28.

⁵¹ Interview with Teófilo Raboso in Santa Cruz de la Zarza, 30 January 2019.

and went to the cemetery, using their bodies as a roadblock to stop the authorities plundering the graves, they had already made their own (Figure 7).

And this story of the second undertaker in the Ocaña cemetery illustrates how some graves did end up being places of mourning during the Dictatorship, depending on the amount of tension with the authorities and their permissiveness or ignorance of what was happening. Something similar happened with the crosses and the rose bush that crowned the mass grave in the cemetery of San Fernando, in Cadiz, or, almost a thousand kilometres away, the cross found in the area around the mass grave of the women known as “les Candeses” in the parish cemetery of Bañuges, Asturias. The origin of these first monuments around the grave is not clear, as Francisco Javier Pérez Guirao⁵² and Sonia Santoveña⁵³ told me. The same applies to the flowers that used to appear in the place where the graves were located in Puerto de La Pedraja, in Burgos, according to Juan Montero.⁵⁴ Their origin was unclear, but these monument practices confirm that those were places of mourning during the Dictatorship. Sometimes this was evident from the oral accounts through recurring statements about how “at All Saints’ Day flowers always appeared” and even sometimes with a simple photo taken after the War, like the one Miguel Freire showed me of Rosario Martínez, Bruno Martínez’s sister and great aunt, kneeling on a tombstone placed over the grave in Mondoñedo (Figure 8). There a group of the murdered people were buried by the roadside. Their corpses were abandoned for a day in full view of passers-by until the locals buried the bodies in graves. But even this humiliation was not enough for the Falangists, and the mourners were rebuked when they went to bring flowers.⁵⁵ In short, these kinds of stories show how this mourning always started from that position of resistance by the survivors.

⁵² Interview with Francisco Javier Pérez Guirao in San Fernando, 16 July 2019.

⁵³ Interview with Sonia Santoveña in Bañuges, 17 November 2019.

⁵⁴ Interview with Juan Montero in Burgos, 14 September 2019.

⁵⁵ “Memoria Histórica inició la búsqueda de cuatro fusilados en Mondoñedo,” La Voz de Galicia, June 21, 2009, accessed May 14, 2021, https://www.lavozdegalicia.es/noticia/amarina/2009/06/21/memoria-historica-inicio-busqueda-cuatro-fusilados-mondonedo/0003_7799264.htm.

The mass grave in the cemetery of San Salvador de Oviedo can be used as another example of this resistance to authority through these kinds of gestures too. The grave was used from 1937 to 1952 to bury the bodies of more than 1000 people murdered during the period of repression.⁵⁶ Despite the initial fear, flowers were brought there on All Saints' Day. In 1967, on the initiative of four relatives, a first stone fence was erected around the grave, in an area where the burials were in the ground. These relatives were José Peláez Prado, Juan González Rodríguez, Joaquín Álvarez González and Felicísimo Gómez Villota.

These commissioned men first went to the Oviedo city council, who refused to do any work, as they were 'reds' who had been shot during the Civil War. The commission then thought of setting up a fund and for this purpose a notice was placed in the local press, informing the Asturian people of the opening of a current account in the Caja de Ahorros de Asturias, with the aim of collecting funds for the work of fitting out the mass grave. Only the newspapers 'Región' and 'La Voz de Asturias' wanted to publish this notice.⁵⁷

This resistance through grief had to be enacted in the face of the 1964 celebration of "25 years of peace."⁵⁸ Out of nowhere, social housing estates appeared and were built with the yoke and arrows on them. Hospitals and roads were officially opened in the name of peace and billboards and postcards by the famous cartoonist Mingote spoke of "Spain in Peace," in contrast to the supposed chaos and poor conditions in which people lived during the time of the Republic. The State came to be headed by Opus Dei, and the regime was

⁵⁶ Carmen García García, "Aproximación al estudio de la represión franquista en Asturias: 'Paseos' y ejecuciones en Oviedo (1936-1952)," *El Basilisco: Revista de materialismo filosófico*, no. 6 (1990): 69-82.

⁵⁷ "Estos hombres en comisión acudieron primeramente al Ayuntamiento de Oviedo, cuya corporación se negó a hacer obra alguna, ya que se trataba de 'fusilados rojos' durante la Guerra Civil. Entonces la comisión pensó en una suscripción popular y para ello se puso una nota en la prensa de la provincia, comunicando al pueblo asturiano la apertura de una cuenta corriente en la Caja de Ahorros de Asturias, con objeto de recoger fondos para las obras de acondicionamiento de la Fosa Común. Sólo los diarios 'Región' y 'La Voz de Asturias' quisieron coger esta nota" (Translation by the author). Asociación de Viudas de Guerra de la República (Asturias), *Fosa común del cementerio de Oviedo* (Gijón: Asociación de Viudas de Guerra de la República, 1984), 24.

⁵⁸ Javier Redondo, "La paz perpetua del caudillo: el régimen organiza una vasta campaña para celebrar los 25 años transcurridos desde el final de la guerra civil," in *Franco celebra sus XXV años de paz: 1964*, ed. Juan Carlos Laviana, Daniel Arjona, and Silvia Fernández (Madrid: Unidad Editorial, 2006), 6-25.

legitimized through the Organic Law of the State. This functioned as a constitution, and under its protection the institution of a monarchy was planned, with Juan Carlos de Borbón chosen to be the new king and to succeed Francisco Franco as head of State after his death. Together they presided over the commemorative parade from the rostrum.⁵⁹

Clearly, this resistance around the mass grave did not take place in isolation. These gestures, which represent a first step in creating a monument practice, took place within a complex situation. While the regime was being reformulated and strengthened, workers' resistance was re-emerging in the 1960s. In this sense, the construction of the stone fence at the mass grave in Oviedo in 1967 was an act that cannot be dissociated from the fact that in 1962 there had been another mining strike in Asturias. The strike, despite the repression, achieved concessions for the workers while trade union activity also gradually returned, albeit clandestinely.⁶⁰ The Comisiones Obreras (Workers' Commissions) emerged in those years, and the UGT, CNT and ELA reappeared in the trade union sphere. It was also when the PCE and the PSOE were formed again in the country, when ETA's activities became more coordinated, and when the FRAP was in the process of being established.⁶¹

A generational change took place at this time, and by the 1960s the resistance led by the surviving women was strengthened by their offspring. The children of the murdered, as well as the children of the workers and peasants who, after the victory of the insurgents, continued to suffer exploitation as workers, began to develop monument practices. In this way, the links between republican, communist, socialist, anarchist, free masons and trade union members and the relatives of those murdered in these years were consolidated.

⁵⁹ Enrique Moradiellos García, *La España de Franco (1939-1975)* (Madrid: Síntesis, 2000), 153.

⁶⁰ Isabel Munera, "Asturias: renace la lucha obrera," in *Del contubernio de Múnich a la huelga minera: 1962*, ed. Juan Carlos Laviana, Daniel Arjona, and Silvia Fernández (Madrid: Unidad Editorial, 2006), 46-53.

⁶¹ Unión General de Trabajadores, UGT (General Workers' Union), Confederación Nacional del Trabajo, CNT (National Confederation of Labour), Eusko Langileen Alkartasuna, ELA (Basque Workers' Solidarity), Partido Comunista de España, PCE (Communist Party of Spain), Partido Socialista Obrero Español, PSOE (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party), Euskadi Ta Askatasuna, ETA (Basque Country and Freedom), and Frente Revolucionario Antifascista y Patriota, FRAP (Revolutionary Anti-Fascist and Patriot Front).

These interpersonal relationships were diffuse but marked most of the monument practices on mass graves from 1936 onwards and can be associated with other fields of activism. The alliance between families and activists, whether or not the family itself was also activist was unbreakable. Therefore, the fact that activists or activist family members join in the mourning implies a change of character in the monument practice, as it is no longer simply a traditional imitation of reacting to the loss of a loved one but an act of resistance.

A perfect illustration of this situation is the practice started in 1951 in Dos Hermanas. There is a mass grave there which began to house hundreds of corpses due to the saturation of the mass graves in Seville.⁶² When the place became known as a mass grave, the anarchist Joaquín Benítez Villalta began to march to the grave to bring flowers. He was joined by more CNT members, and it was Pepe Sánchez who has continued the initiative to this day. A strange activity for a trade union, but Julio Guijarro González explains that:

They thus found a way of keeping alive their memory and the resistance they had been exercising against the Franco dictatorship. In those early years, the marches took place under cover of family visits to the deceased on 1 November, and in groups of 2 or 3 anarcho-syndicalist activists, so as not to arouse suspicion.⁶³

This is what Pepe himself explained to me when Jesús Mari García took me to meet him at his house. These trade unionists organized themselves into a kind of commando group, hiding the flowers in their clothes so that they could leave them on the grave without being noticed. A kind of guerrilla mourning that ensured that this place was not lost and thus became the object of subsequent

⁶² “Mapa de fosas,” Junta de Andalucía, accessed January 30, 2020, <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/organismos/culturaypatrimoniohistorico/areas/memoria-democratica/fosas/mapas-fosas.html>.

⁶³ “Encuentran así una manera de mantener viva su memoria y la resistencia que venían ejerciendo contra la Dictadura franquista. En esos primeros años, las marchas se hacen encubiertas con las visitas que los familiares hacen a sus difuntos en la festividad del 1º de noviembre, y en grupos de 2 o de 3 militantes anarcosindicalistas, para no despertar sospechas” (Translated by the author). Julio Guijarro González, “José Sánchez Gutiérrez. La importancia de recordar todos los nombres,” Todos los Nombres, accessed January 31, 2020, <http://www.todoslosnombres.org/content/materiales/jose-sanchez-gutierrez-la-importancia-recordar-todos-los-nombres>.

monument practices from the 1970s until today. Nowadays, every 18 July, hundreds of people gather, summoned by an elderly Pepe Sánchez, who, in a wheelchair and with his fist raised, has not given up participating in the event decades after he started going to the grave to drop flowers clandestinely (Figure 9).

CHAPTER TWO

Recovering Bodies and Places

BACK TO THE MASS GRAVE IN THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY

At first glance, there are no anomalies in the oldest areas of the Cemetery of Nuestra Señora del Sagrario in Toledo. However, a careful reading of the names of certain vaults and tombs can lead one to recognize that some of them are not normal graves. An apparently normal tombstone could include the names of five, seven, ten people, who did not share the same surname, but did share the same date of death (Figure 10). The fact is that around the 1970s, people intervened to mark the mass graves in this way throughout the country. In general, these were family initiatives. They merely mimic the funeral which the murdered never received as they were buried in a pit. When they appeared is uncertain, and it is difficult to know when they were built given the scarcity of oral accounts, but there is a general sense in oral tradition that they were built “when Franco died.” In any case, they took place in a context of strengthening struggles against the regime.

It was this type of construction that Xulio García Bilbao showed me in the Guadalajara cemetery. A brick and cement construction, which encompassed the graves corresponding to those murdered by the firing squad on a succession of days (Figure 11). While in many places it was necessary to mark the location of the events on the ground or preserve it in memory to avoid their loss, in other places, such as in Guadalajara, and in general where the murders corresponded to courts martial and summary trials, the location was

public. It was recorded and kept in the cemetery register books, if they had not been subsequently destroyed. Consequently, it is possible to find these structures especially in cemeteries in the south of Castile, Valencia, or Aragon. However, some of these constructions may have been placed before Franco's death, and the inscription of names and epitaphs we think were added after his dead: "Al alba y por la Libertad" (At dawn and for freedom) is carved on some of the tombstones in Toledo or "Murió por la Libertad" (He died for freedom) in Guadalajara. But like so much other information about the monument practices on mass graves, the only information available was from oral sources. These sources often establish Franco's death in 1975 as a starting point, although it was not until 1977, the year of the first multi-party elections since the Republic, when the monument practices began to take a more explicit and evident form. This situation can be understood through the events that took place in those years in two rural municipalities on the banks of the Guadalquivir: Lora and Alcolea del Río.

Through social anthropologist Ángel del Río, I got in touch with Antonio Lozano Aguilar in Alcolea, who was the first mayor since the Republic for the PCE and founder of the CCOO (Workers' Commissions) in the municipality. Antonio was waiting for me at the retirement home from where we would go to visit the mass grave in the cemetery, where his uncle, the singer Manuel Aguilar Villalba "Torrealta" was buried, a day labourer and CNT member. His killing was a murder that was part of the "black September" that followed the "bloody August" in which the Falangists assaulted the town, ransacked the houses, and publicly humiliated the women, as well as murdering any neighbours with suspect political views, directed by the priest and the military police.¹

Several comrades, and mainly the one who was closest to me, Cayetano Villa Claro, began to remove the remnants of other burials that were littered there: coffins, dried flowers, bricks, and we began to tidy the place

¹ Manuel Rodríguez Castillo and Antonio Lozano Aguilar, *Los alzados de la tierra: memoria obrera y represión franquista en un pueblo andaluz, Alcolea del Río*, ed. Ángel del Río Sánchez (Seville: Aconcagua, 2017), 139-84.

up. We spoke to one of the people who were still alive, one of those who had been forced to bury those who were shot. And he said: look, this is where they are. And then we started to decorate it. We put black tulle around the perimeter of the grave, and we started to plant flowers. We covered the whole place with flowers. And when people arrived on the date of the celebration of the Saints, they placed candles, flowers. They didn't stop. It was a coming and going to see the place, because for many people they didn't even know what it was. What is this? What is this for? Until they became aware of what it was. ²

In Antonio's account, he again emphasized the importance of the permanence of the place in the memory of a witness, whether perpetrator, collaborator or accidental. The place was necessary for returning to the grave years later. It was necessary to parameterize and begin the monument practice that continued two years later with the construction of a pyramid and geometrically articulated gardens around it, delineating the perimeter of the grave (Figure 12). However, these actions, in a place that had been converted into a cemetery rubbish dump, could not take place before 1977. That was also the year that the municipality's CCOO and PCE were legalized, whose local group led the actions.³ In January of the same year, the trade union organizations had been legalized, but a commando had also assassinated five labour lawyers in Calle de Atocha.⁴ So, although after forty years of operating underground, the clandestine party with the widest implementation throughout the country was legalized, its legalization, along with that of other political and trade union organizations, was not proclaimed in a peaceful context of model adaptation to "democratic canon." These situations were also linked to the monument practices around the graves themselves. This was the case a few kilometres from Alcolea in Lora del Río.

² Interview with Antonio Lozano Aguilar in Alcolea del Río, 28 May 2019.

³ Rodríguez Castillo and Lozano Aguilar, *Los alzados de la tierra*, 233.

⁴ Gloria Cabrejas de las Heras, "La matanza de Atocha y la Semana Negra de la transición española," in *Historia del PCE: I Congreso, 1920-1977, Vol. 2*, ed. Manuel Bueno Lluch, José Ramón Hinojosa Montalvo, and Carmen García García (Madrid: Fundación de Investigaciones Marxistas, 2007), 399-412.

Juan Manuel Lozano Nieto, in his memoirs, collected several photographs of the first steps towards the monument practice on the mass grave where more than 1000 people were buried in 1936, after the arrival of the insurgents:

*Here I am to live
As long as my soul sings to me
And here I am to die
When my time comes
In the flow of people
From now on and
FOREVER*
Miguel Hernández⁵

This poem was placed on a poster over the grave, which also ceased to be a cemetery dump in 1977 and was cleaned, cordoned off and adorned with flowers and candles and with the Republican and Andalusian flag. An action that ended with an event on 1 November 1977 organized by a grouping of the Andalusian Communist Movement, the Andalusian Labour Party, the Andalusian Socialist Party, the PCE and the PSOE.⁶ One of the people who participated in that process is Rafael López Álvarez, who told me how they also cleaned the grave and that the relatives started to bring flowers and candles. But before the monument was built, he and other comrades stood guard over the mass grave to avoid possible vandalism. This is a totally justified fear, as there were members of Fuerza Nueva operating in the region.⁷

At the end of the 1960s and during the 1970s, numerous fascist groups emerged, encouraged, protected, and enabled by the Spanish government. Their acronyms even appeared to claim a single determined action, thus covering up the militancy of organizations such as Fuerza Nueva (New Force), FE y de las JONS (Spanish Phalanx and of the Councils of the National

⁵ “Aquí estoy para vivir, mientras el alma me suene, y aquí estoy para morir, cuando la hora me llegue, en los veneros del pueblo, desde ahora y desde, SIEMPRE. Miguel Hernández” (Translated by the author).

⁶ Juan Manuel Lozano, *A sangre y fuego: los años treinta en un pueblo andaluz* (Córdoba: Almuzara, 2006), 182-83.

⁷ Interview with Rafael López Alvarez in Seville, 30 May 2019.

Syndicalist Offensive)⁸ or CEDADE (Spanish Circle of Friends of Europe), which had their own sections for the encouragement of street violence, repression at demonstrations or attacks on bookshops, such as that of Rafael in Lora del Río, as well as assassinations.⁹ The brutality of the repression and the omnipresent violence during those years could not therefore be overlooked or dissociated from the monument practices around the mass graves, as well as the political debates on the representation of the murdered. In this context, every fascist crime will require the majority groups on the left making some concession to the government.¹⁰ Despite this, many people in these years were not deterred and persevered in the development of monument practices around the mass graves. Despite the legalization of political parties and trade unions, or the calling of multi-party elections under the protection of a new constitution that reorganized the Spanish State into the Kingdom of Spain as a parliamentary monarchy, the major political organizations clung onto the erasure of the murders as a concession to the lingering supporters of the old regime.¹¹ For this reason, there were no legal guarantees when it came to developing monument practices.

Weeks before Franco's death, the future King Juan Carlos de Borbón presided over the celebration of the anniversary of Franco's proclamation as head of State, a celebration that took place only 4 days after the last 5 executions that he was to order while in power¹² under the auspices of the Anti-Terrorist Law in lieu of ordinary military trials.¹³ Only a year had passed since the murder

⁸ Falange Española de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista. Party created in 1976, not to be confused with Falange Española de las JONS (Falange Española de las JONS) created in 1934 or Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista (Traditionalist Spanish Falange and the Juntas of National Syndicalist Offensive), the only party of the regime created in 1937 and dissolved in 1977.

⁹ Mariano Sánchez Soler, *La transición sangrienta: una historia violenta del proceso democrático en España (1975-1983)* (Barcelona: Península, 2010).

¹⁰ Alfredo Grimaldos Feito, *Claves de la transición 1973-1986: de la muerte de Carrero Blanco al referéndum de la OTAN* (Barcelona: Península, 2013), 109.

¹¹ Elena Yeste, "La Transición Española. Reconciliación nacional a cambio de desmemoria: el olvido público de la guerra civil," *Historia Actual Online*, no. 21 (2010): 7-12.

¹² *Cinco héroes del pueblo: 27 septiembre 1975* (Agencia de Prensa España Popular, 2005).

¹³ Isabelle Renaudet, "Mourir en Espagne : « Garrot Vil » et Exécution Capitale Dans l'Espagne Contemporaine," in *L'exécution capitale : Une mort donnée en spectacle*, ed. Régis Bertrand and Anne Carol (Aix-en-Provence: Presses universitaires de Provence, 2013), 52.

by garrote of MIL member¹⁴ Salvador Puig Antich.¹⁵ Also in Elda, Vitoria, Montejurra, Almería, there were murders of students and strikers in 1976, when Juan Carlos de Borbón was already in power.¹⁶ The police and parapolice murders did not cease, exceeding a hundred in those years, and the judicial system that protected them was a watered down version of the previous institution's: the Public Order Court, which at the time replaced the Military Tribunals, and the Special Tribunal for the Repression of Freemasonry and Communism now became the National Court. This was a judicial institution prior to the 1978 Constitution coming into force which retained the pre-existing structure of the previous Court.¹⁷ The same had happened with the Armed Police, which became the National Police and changed the colour of its uniform, or the Civil Guard military police, which did not change at all.¹⁸

The threat of violence may therefore have had a fundamental influence on the fact that many people decided not to come back to the mass graves, as we have seen. On the other hand, violence also meant that the decision to undertake a monument practice represented a situation of risk, of open, unarmed confrontation with the established order. A chronicle on this subject was written by Alfredo Grimaldos, who recounts his presence as a correspondent for the magazine *Interviú* at an exhumation in 1978 in the parish cemetery of Cáceres. Grimaldos recalls how a retinue from Navas del Madroño arrived at the cemetery, where, after showing the permits, they began to dig, sobbing all the while. Documenting the process caused a conflict with the sacristan, who tried to stop photographs being taken to keep the event away from the press. After interviewing residents of Navas about the events, the journalists were expelled at gunpoint from the village by some fascist

¹⁴ Movimiento Ibérico de Liberación – Grupos Autónomos de Combate, MIL (Iberian Liberation Movement-Autonomous Combat Groups).

¹⁵ Ferran Aisà i Pàmpols, “Garrote vil para Salvador Puig Antich,” in *Cien imágenes para un centenario: CNT 1910-2010* (Madrid: Fundación de Estudios Libertarios Anselmo Lorenzo, 2010), 186-187.

¹⁶ Floren Aoiz, *El jarrón roto: la transición en Navarra : una cuestión de Estado* (Tafalla: Txalaparta, 2005), 229.

¹⁷ Manuel Gallego López, “La creación de la Audiencia Nacional desde el Tribunal de Orden Público,” *Revista de Derecho de la UNED* (RDUNED) 0, no. 17 (2015): 753-74.

¹⁸ Mariano Sánchez Soler, “La violencia institucional durante la transición española. Terrorismo involucionista, represión policial y guerra sucia (noviembre, 1975-diciembre, 1983)” (PhD diss., Universitat d'Alacant - Universidad de Alicante, 2009).

locals.¹⁹ Also in Magallón, where more than 80 people from 19 localities were murdered,²⁰ the construction of a sculpture and fence around the mass grave was done under the watchful eye of the military. Pilar Gimeno, president of the Asociación de Familiares y Amigos de los Asesinados y Enterrados en Magallón (Association of Relatives and Friends of the Murdered and Buried in Magallón) explained to me

I remember that the secret police came, the Civil Guard military police surrounded the cemetery. It is a village of 1,200 inhabitants and more than a thousand people attended the unveiling ceremony, with a mayor still from the Dictatorship.²¹

When she invited me to a remembrance service in the cemetery a few months later, I met Jerónimo Navarro, the campaigner of the first monument built over the grave in 1978. After the 1979 municipal elections he would be elected mayor by the local socialist group. He told me about the tension of the situation. Although they had obtained authorization and the initiative had not depended on public funds but on donations and voluntary work coordinated by the local socialist group, the inscription on the tombstone was not well received: “PSOE y UGT de Magallón, familiares y simpatizantes, a sus compañeros presentes y ausentes fusilados alevosamente en el 1936-1937 por desear unos derechos humanos que nunca habían tenido” (PSOE and UGT of Magallón, relatives and sympathizers, to their present and absent comrades who were treacherously shot in 1936-1937 for desiring human rights that they had never had) (Figure 13). This inscription had to be covered up on the day of the unveiling.²² Francisco Laína, the civil governor, who would later be appointed director of State Security with the rank of Secretary of State during the *coup d'état* of 23 February 1981, threatened to intervene on the day of the unveiling. During the

¹⁹ Alfredo Grimaldos, “Extremadura, La Crónica de un Genocidio/ No56 / Exhumación de Republicanos en Cáceres,” El Otro País, July 2011, accessed May 10, 2021, <http://www.elotropais.com/index.php/memoria-historica-mascosas-33/264-extremadura-la-crónica-de-un-genocidio-n56>.

²⁰ Vicky Méndiz Casas, Virginia Méndiz Casas, and Christian Losada de Castro, *Silencio enterrado* (Ambel: AFAAEM, 2010).

²¹ Pilar Gimeno, WhatsApp message, August 1, 2017. July 24, 2019.

²² Interview with Jerónimo Navarro Manero in Magallón, November 8, 2019.

event, the police made their presence felt outside the venue, with participants fearing that the event would not end “peacefully.”²³ And this tension during the monument practices in those years was not exceptional.

Carlos Solana told me how during the procession to the Arnedo cemetery, when the anthem of the Republic was played over the loudspeakers, many terrified people who were taking part in the march automatically disbanded.²⁴ The threat of violence was also present in Otsoportillo at the Sierra de Urbasa. There, the bodies of those murdered in 1936 had been dumped in a chasm, and Jimeno Jurío himself, who went down into the chasm and published several articles about the events, received death threats. There was also an attack on the magazine *Punto y Hora*, which published information about the repression in Urbasa in 1977.²⁵ Three years later, a committee of relatives organized a remembrance service on the first Sunday in September and decided to put up a sculpture over the chasm (Figure 14).²⁶ But on the night of 6 September, the families kept watch by the chasm until the unveiling on the following Sunday morning.²⁷ They were afraid that a bomb might be placed there that would harm the sculpture.²⁸ Here, the feelings of open conflict were still present. In the Basque Country, the 1936 War may have been seen as just another episode in the long repression of Basque national identity, and the conflict was still open and ongoing. This was made explicit in the assassination of the last mayor of the Dictatorship in Oiartzun by ETA in 1975,²⁹ giving rise only two years later to one of the first monument practices on a mass grave in the Basque Country. This monument comprises numerous components of

²³ Sergio Murillo Gracia, “Políticas de La Memoria En Mallén y Magallón Durante La Transición Española,” in *Veinte años de Congresos de Historia Contemporánea [1997-2016]*, ed. Carlos Forcadell and Carmen Frías (Zaragoza: Institución Fernando el Católico, 2017), 413-26.

²⁴ Interview with Carlos Solana in Arnedo, January 21, 2019.

²⁵ Balbino García de Albizu, *¿Qué hicimos aquí con el 36?: la represión de civiles en retaguardia por su ideología en las Améscoas y Urbasa* (Pamplona: Lamiñarra, 2017), 357-58.

²⁶ García de Albizu, 361-62.

²⁷ Egin, “El Monumento a los fusilados vascos será inaugurado el próximo domingo en Urbasa,” *Egin*, September 2, 1980.

²⁸ Interview with relatives and activists in Otsoportillo, September 1, 2019.

²⁹ “El Alcalde de Oyarzun (Guipuzcoa), asesinado en su domicilio,” *ABC*, November 25, 1975.

Basque national identity.³⁰ In Oiartzun, just two years later, Ignacio Aristizábal Iriarte, the new mayor of the municipality, was arrested for alleged involvement with ETA.³¹

Monument practices in these years developed within an atmosphere of fear and open conflict, and the internal struggles of what had been anti-Franco organizations. Felipe González's leadership of the PSOE led to the abandonment of "Marxism" at the 1979 Extraordinary Congress embracing "social democracy."³² For its part, the leadership of Santiago Carrillo led the PCE not only to embrace "Eurocommunism"³³ but Carrillo also forced symbolic actions as far-reaching as the recognition of the Monarchy and the red-and-white flag. The secretary general told the press:

*From now on, the flag with the official colours of the State will be displayed next to the flag of the Communist Party. Being a part of the State, the flag of the State cannot be the monopoly of any political faction, and we could not abandon it to those who want to prevent the peaceful transition to democracy.*³⁴

Nevertheless, the same flag was present in the Tribunals of Political Responsibilities at which they ordered the murders linked to the mass graves.

This type of action speaks to us of the "generosity of the victims" which Ignacio Sánchez Mata remarks on in relation to their demands for justice, for having postponed them until a "better time."³⁵ And this was also illustrated at the trade union level by Carlos Navales, a prominent CCOO trade unionist,

³⁰ Jesús Alonso Carballés, *Memorias de piedra y acero: los monumentos a las víctimas de la Guerra civil y del franquismo en Euskadi (1936-2017)* (Gernika-Lumo: Fundación Museo de la Paz de Gernika, 2017), 221-24.

³¹ Antonio González, "Detenido el alcalde de Oyarzun por supuesta vinculación a ETA," *El País*, January 17, 1979.

³² Antonio Muñoz Sánchez, "La Fundación Ebert y el socialismo español de la dictadura a la democracia," *Cuadernos de historia contemporánea*, no. 29 (2007): 257-78.

³³ Santiago Carrillo, *Eurocomunismo y Estado* (Barcelona: Grijalbo, 1977).

³⁴ "En lo sucesivo la bandera con los colores oficiales del Estado figurará al lado de la bandera del Partido Comunista. Siendo una parte de ese Estado, la bandera de éste no puede ser monopolio de ninguna fracción política, y no podíamos abandonarla a los que quieren impedir el paso pacífico a la democracia" (Translated by the author). Joaquín Prieto, "La bandera nacional ondeará en los actos del Partido Comunista de España," *El País*, April 16, 1977.

³⁵ Ignacio Fernández de Mata, "El surgimiento de la memoria histórica: sentidos, malentendidos y disputas," in *La tradición como reclamo: antropología en Castilla y León*, ed. Luis Díaz Viana and Pedro Tomé Martín (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Cultura y Turismo, 2007), 195-208.

who said that “the Spanish working class must be recognized for having prioritized the need to consolidate democracy, even if this was at the cost of losing many jobs.”³⁶ In this sense, although Santos Juliá points out that at this time the past was used as a “weapon of war” in the framework of political debates,³⁷ at the official level among the political elite there was a “Pact of Silence” in order not to have to pay for the crimes of the failed *coup d'état*, War and Dictatorship, so that the regime achieved immunity and the PSOE and PCE some degree of legitimacy.³⁸ It was therefore not surprising when interviewing campaigners of monument practices in those years, that I met old members of the PT, MC, CNT or PCPE,³⁹ or party members of the main organizations, such as PSOE and PCE, who somehow did not fully represent this “consensus” that guided the political agendas of those years. The division between the reality of the PSOE and PCE leadership and the local members of those parties was therefore fundamental for the local political dynamics in which the monument practices were framed.

In this way, the monument practices respond to a very particular situation. On the one hand, the monument practices respond to the survival in memory of the places where the bodies were found, and on the other, to a political situation which, through pacts and violence, made it impossible to deal with the situation publicly and on a large scale. Thus, very particular, and difficult to define alliances were established. On the one hand, there were groups dissenting from the large organizations or those who, despite belonging to them, decided to return to the mass graves, linking themselves to historical socialism, republicanism, anarchism, free masonry, and communism, in a tradition that led them to the present day. On the other hand, there were those

³⁶ “A la clase obrera española hay que reconocerle que priorizara la necesidad de consolidar la democracia, aunque ello fuera a costa de perder muchos puestos de trabajo” (Translated by the author). Grimaldos Feito, *Claves de la transición 1973-1986*, 20.

³⁷ Santos Juliá Díaz, “Memoria, historia y política de un pasado de guerra y dictadura,” in *Memoria de la guerra y del franquismo* (Madrid: Taurus, 2006), 27-77,

³⁸ Paloma Aguilar Fernández, “La evocación de la guerra y del Franquismo en la política, la cultura y la sociedad españolas,” in *Memoria de la guerra y del franquismo*, ed. Santos Juliá Díaz (Madrid: Taurus, 2006), 279-318.

³⁹ Partido del Trabajo, PT (Labor Party), Movimiento Comunista, MC (Communist Movement); Partido Comunista de los Pueblos de España, PCPE (Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain).

relatives who had not given up fighting against the imposed oblivion. The frontier was fluid and although the political organizations did not monopolize the actions, neither did the families. There were also activists with no family ties and family members with no political ties, or family members who were very active political activists. It is only within this large palette of greys that the monument practices on mass graves can be described, in situations where the actions of the big parties could not be aligned with local will, and where the latent violence was real. These monument practices took place in an environment full of threats, which their campaigners faced with courage, because as José Vidorreta told me: “I went there with blood, with feeling, without fear of what could happen to me.”⁴⁰

BUILDING MONUMENTS ON MASS GRAVES

When the town councils became democratic in the seventies, the families who had been coming to the mass grave, with their own resources, became friends. They always met here in an unwritten agreement on 1 November. They brought flowers; they were in contact. People began to lose their fear, in the seventies many people came here. It was the only time that Ocaña had a socialist mayor. And then they asked him for permission to dignify the graves with a monument. [...] The space was still municipal. The families continued to put in money. I tell you that this was also very laborious, because now we have cars, we have computers, but at that time my father, for example, didn't have a car and he went all over the province of Toledo, from house to house asking for money to do this.⁴¹

This is how Cármén Díaz Escobar introduced me to the story of the mass graves in Ocaña and their monument practice. They had resisted for 40 years. Despite threats and aggressions, the families continued to bring flowers, they stopped the attempt to exhume the bodies for transfer to the Valley of the Fallen, no other graves or columbaria were built over them... and so with the support of a PSOE mayor they managed, after raising the money, to build three

⁴⁰ Interview with José Vidorreta Sr. and José Vidorreta Jr. in Cervera del Río Alhama, January 21, 2019.

⁴¹ Interview with Cármén Díaz Escobar, Julián Ramos Duro, Teófilo Raboso, and Celedonio Vizcaino Frutos in Ocaña, January 23, 2019.

large marble monuments, with a fence of chains, as they had previously done with flowers, and three obelisks that rose above the graves with the dates of the murders. Teófilo Raboso showed me some photographs from the year of the unveiling. In them you can see one of the graves, with its marble structure and obelisk, again covered with flowers, as had been done for decades when there was nothing but soil. But now the obelisk, which crowned the platform, was also adorned with wreaths and a sash (Figure 15). Carmen told me: “It was a giant step. Some people have already found peace. My grandmother, for example, said she could now die in peace.”⁴²

Through databases, I have seen how, around 1977 and the following years, there was a real upsurge in this type of practice around mass graves, in the context of some political changes.⁴³ In 1979, after Franco’s death, multi-party elections were finally held at the municipal level. This meant that some town councils, which had until then still been governed by people sympathetic to the regime, switched to being governed by mayors who were members of different organizations with greater sensitivity towards the symbolic recognition of those murdered since 1936. Thus, with 28.17% of the votes going to the PSOE and 13.06% to the PCE, among other organizations, mayors from these parties were appointed in numerous municipalities.⁴⁴ These results opened the door to local memory policies, despite the State-wide adherence of these parties to the “Pact of Silence” based on forgetting. Thus, locally, they developed different initiatives of symbolic reorganization of public space: changing street names and removing monuments to the “Fallen for God and Spain” or converting them by erasing the inscription on “simple” crosses or changing the text to speak of the “war” in the abstract or of “all the dead.”⁴⁵

⁴² Interview with Cármén Díaz Escobar in Ocaña, January 23, 2019.

⁴³ In Andalusia alone, it is possible to find more than 60 monuments. “Mapa de fosas,” Junta de Andalucía, accessed January 30, 2020, <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/organismos/culturaypatrimoniohistorico/areas/memoria-democratica/fosas/mapas-fosas.html>.

⁴⁴ “Consulta de Resultados Electorales. Ministerio del Interior,” accessed Feb. 18, 2020, <http://www.infoelectoral.mir.es/min/busquedaAvanzadaAction.html?vuelta=1&codTipoEleccion=4&codPeriodo=197904&codEstado=99&codComunidad=0&codProvincia=0&codMunicipio=0&codDistrito=0&codSeccion=0&codMesa=0>.

⁴⁵ Paloma Aguilar, “Memoria y transición en España. Exhumaciones de fusilados republicanos y homenajes en su honor,” *Historia y Política* 0, no. 39 (2018): 291-325.

No massive and coordinated public plan of intervention in public space was developed by the State, and most of the commemorative monuments of the previous years remained present in the public space. Despite this, the arrival of new governors in the town halls marked a turning point in the monument practices regarding mass graves. They could now cease to be clandestine and could be carried out, if not with the support, at least with the legal protection of a permit or authorization. Especially because the monument practice implied in its most basic and material dimension the execution of the works on mostly municipal land, as they were mainly mass graves located in cemeteries managed by the local council.

At this point it is necessary to point out that the possibility of requesting permits from the local councils did not necessarily imply funding from them. This funding came from the relatives who were found at the graves every year, who had developed these networks of solidarity and resistance which had in turn overlapped with the networks of those activists who recognized themselves in the political trajectory of the murdered. Through this union, formal and informal commissions were formed in these years to raise funds for the development of monument practices around the graves. The extreme informality of this process means that there are no documents available to attest to these forms of financing, although they were present in the oral accounts of all those who in some way had to do with the monument practices developed over those years. For 50 pesetas, vouchers were sold for “Aid for the monument to the fallen in defence of the Republic and Freedom” in Aranjuez, Javier Torres Montenegro explained to me.⁴⁶ Antonio Rodriguez Sanz told me how a collection was also organized in Guadalajara by the PCE immediately after the first municipal elections. There, the PCE handed out raffle tickets to all the party members to be sold in order to build the monument a few metres from the graves, where the relatives had begun to delineate each grave and build their own mock vaults on top.⁴⁷ But there are no major documentary traces of

⁴⁶ Interview with Javier Torres Montenegro in Aranjuez, March 9, 2019.

⁴⁷ Interview with Antonio Rodriguez Sanz and Celia Portillo González in Guadalajara, March 3, 2019.

those actions, and with regard to the Guadalajara monument itself, Emilia Cañas, a PT member and also the daughter of Antonio Cañas, the murdered mayor of Guadalajara of the Republican Left, told me how in the dry cleaning shop where she worked with her sister in the Arguelles neighbourhood, the wives of the soldiers who brought their husbands' uniforms there for dry cleaning unknowingly donated money for the monument to those who "Murieron por la Libertad" (Died for the Freedom) without knowing it.⁴⁸ These small stories are at risk of being lost along with the first generations involved with the monument practice, but they show that, along with political will, money was needed.

However, there is no clear rule either. In other places, there was direct involvement from the city council. In Valladolid, the PSOE mayor himself donated the land to the UGT for the construction of the monument on the mass grave: a grave that mainly housed hundreds of party members and trade unionists assassinated after the *coup d'état*, and arrested after they had gathered in the socialist Casa del Pueblo (People's House) to organize themselves against the coup.⁴⁹ The Councils also supported the construction of monuments for the graves in municipalities in different parts of the country, such as Paterna, Talavera, Seville, Baeza, Camposancos... However, while it is true that some municipalities supported the initiative, either by providing the land or contributing financially, it was also a common occurrence that no public money was used for the construction or that it responded to the will of the families and activists rather than the town councils' own directives. Antonio Lozano states in his report on the construction of the monument in Alcolea del Río, where he was mayor:

The work was halted before it was completed due to a lack of financial resources. Up to that point, some of the names of those who had been shot had been put on it. The collaboration of businesses and individuals was

⁴⁸ Interview with Emilia Cañas in Guadalajara, March 12, 2019.

⁴⁹ Orosia Castán, "Sublevación Franquista: Así fue en Valladolid," in *La represión Franquista en Castilla y León. Memòria Antifranquista del Baix Llobregat*. Associació per la Memòria Històrica i Democràtica del Baix Llobregat, Year 13 Num. 18 (Cornellà de Llobregat: Centre Cultural Joan N. García-Nieto, 2018).

requested, as we did not want the Town Council to intervene in this matter with public funds. In this sense, we took the decision that the relative who wanted to add another name would pay for the letters and we would engrave them with our own means.⁵⁰

In several municipalities I was shown photographs of the unveiling, which was attended by the PSOE mayor, only to later hear angry complaints that “the mayor never came back here.” This cannot be generalized or taken as a rule, but it is symptomatic that there was no official support from the organizations in a coordinated manner for this type of event in the country. It is therefore important to point out that, despite these occasional assistance from the municipal government, emphasis should be placed on the high degree of self-management and self-organization involved in the process. These are fundamental and should be emphasized and seen in conjunction with the neighbourhood movements and other self-management initiatives that were multiplying throughout the country.⁵¹ Also the activist experience of self-organization and resistance of many of the relatives and friends, which in this context could be put into practice at an organizational and logistical level, often went against the State level directives on remembrance but could take place at a local level.

Despite the inauspiciousness of the situation, there was an imperative need that went beyond financial support, permissions, or a activist network to support the monument practices on the graves. This was the location of the grave itself, that the bodies had not been exhumed to be transferred to the “Valle de los Caídos,” which people resisted in Ocaña as Teófilo Raboso told me.⁵² Or those columbaria had not been built on top of it, as I was able to see

⁵⁰ “Se dio por finalizada la obra sin poder rematarla por falta de recursos económicos. Hasta ese momento se pusieron parte de los nombres de los fusilados. Se pidió la colaboración de comercios y particulares, pues no queríamos que el Ayuntamiento interviniere en este asunto con fondos públicos. En este sentido, tomamos la decisión de que el familiar que quisiera poner el nombre de alguna otra persona costeara las letras y nosotros las fijaríamos con nuestros medios” (Translated by the author). Rodríguez Castillo and Lozano Aguilar, *Los alzados de la tierra*, 233-34.

⁵¹ Iván Bordetas Jiménez, “Nosotros somos los que hemos hecho esta ciudad. Autoorganización y movilización vecinal durante el tardofranquismo y el proceso de cambio político” (PhD diss., Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 2012).

⁵² Interview with Teófilo Raboso in Santa Cruz de la Zarza, January 30, 2019.

in Mancha Real thanks to Pepe Cobos and Francisco Rosa, when the construction of columbaria over the grave was abruptly halted by the decision of some sympathetic administrator.⁵³ However, the building of columbariums over the graves was a frequent occurrence and has led to the loss of hundreds of them throughout the country. Therefore, there was a need to go to the grave to delineate it during the Dictatorship, as in Oviedo. But also in the seventies, monuments were built over the mass graves pretending to be a vault instead of a construction superimposed on the mass burial as in Toledo or Guadalajara. Also, when the graves began to be revisited, they were marked with ropes and fabric as in La Carolina, Lora and Alcolea del Río or with the flowers themselves as in La Barranca (Figure 16).

Creating a fence was necessary in the first place to avoid new burials in the ground over the mass grave, as Herminio José García Riaño told me at the mass grave in Oviedo.⁵⁴ This is something that happened in Barcelona on a massive scale, and also in other places where the mass grave continued to be used (and had been used before) as a place for the burial of Protestants, suicides, poor or unbaptized people.⁵⁵ I found, therefore, that within the marked-out perimeter of the grave there were also plaques to Protestants, as in Baeza after the construction of an enclosure on the initiative of the PSOE mayor, Eusebio Ortega Molin,⁵⁶ or in Castellón, where Queta Ródenas developed a detailed study showing that the graves of the murdered shared characteristics with those of the others buried in the civilian courtyard of the cemetery.⁵⁷ The possibility of losing the bodies due to the impossibility of physically recognizing the grave led to these initiatives, so that the grave “would not be lost,” as Manuel Ramírez Gimeno explained to me in Alcaraz. Indeed,

⁵³ Interview with Pepe Cobos and Francisco Rosa in Mancha Real, September 12, 2019.

⁵⁴ Interview with Herminio Jose Garcia Riaño in Oviedo, November 17, 2019.

⁵⁵ Isabel Gómez de Rueda, “Ritos exequiales: no creyentes, no bautizados y suicidas,” *Revista Murciana de Antropología*, no. 2 (1995): 179-88.

⁵⁶ Interview with Eusebio Ortega Molina in Baeza, September 13, 2019.

⁵⁷ Ródenas Queta, *Primer 'cementeri civil' de la ciutat de Castelló*, (Castelló: Grup per la Recerca de la Memòria Històrica de Castelló, 2016), 16.

in the grave in Alcaraz, a stone gave way to a cross, and in the 1970s a fence was built around the grave in the face of encroaching burials nearby.⁵⁸

The form these fences took varied greatly. In addition to mock vaults on the grave itself, large slabs, fences and enclosures, gardens were also a recurrent feature. In Andalusia alone, it is possible to find more than 44 gardens.⁵⁹ However, the construction of gardens was nevertheless controversial, although in places such as the Cemetery of San Fernando in Seville they were not interpreted as something positive as they were not developed by relatives but by the cemetery staff themselves (Figure 17).⁶⁰ In other places, such as in Mancha Real, Jaén, they were interpreted positively by Pepe Cobos, who was the socialist mayor at the time. This impression was evoked even though the gardens around the grave were landscaped prior to the construction of the monument and were of unknown origin, probably created by the cemetery staff themselves, who also decided not to build columbariums or excavate more graves in the vicinity of the grave (Figure 18).⁶¹ The fact is that this was a common practice in these years, especially in Andalusia, where, thanks to the map of graves of the Andalusian government, 46 graves with gardens can be counted. Gardens were also built in these years over large graves in Mediterranean cities such as Valencia and Barcelona, or in Castilian cities such as Talavera and Burgos, but the Castilian cases are most exceptional in its context (Figure 19).

⁵⁸ Interview with Manuel Ramírez Gimeno in Albacete, October 5, 2019.

⁵⁹ Bornos, Benamaoma, Medina-Sidonia, San Fernando, Baena, Castro del Río, Montilla, Palma del Río, Pozoblanco, Villafranca de Córdoba, Villaharta, Aracena, Beas, Campillo, Gibraleón, Huelva, Linares de la Sierra, Nerva, Rociana del Condado, Rosal de la Frontera, San Juan del Puerto, Santa Olalla de Cala, Villanueva de los Castillejos, Cazorla, Linares, Marmolejo, Villacarrillo, Álora, Arriate, Coín, Gaucín, Humilladero, Riogordo, Ronda, Sierra de Yeguas, Abdalajís, Alcolea del Río, Carmona, Écija, El Saucejo, Paradas, Sanlúcar la Mayor, and Villanueva del Río y Minas. “Mapa de fosas,” Junta de Andalucía, accessed January 30, 2020, <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/organismos/culturaypatrimoniohistorico/areas/memoria-democratica/fosas/mapas-fosas.html>.

⁶⁰ Eva Ruiz, “Fosas comunes en el cementerio de San Fernando de Sevilla,” Todos los nombres, accessed February 19, 2020, <https://studylib.es/doc/6222409/fosas-comunes-en-el-cementerio-de-san-fernando-de-sevilla>.

⁶¹ Interview with Pepe Cobos and Francisco Rosa in Mancha Real, September 12, 2019.

In this way, a place that had been used as a rubbish dump could be beautified through vegetation, but finally also accommodate the construction of a monument in the centre. This is what happened in Alcolea del Río:

On 1 November 1977, the day of the dead, we decided to fence off the place where the graves were located with black tulle and we planted a variety of flowers called “crestas de gallo.” That year, relatives and onlookers visited the place where they laid flowers and lit candles. In 1978 we decided to buy the area of the temporary ornament. With funds from the local trade union, the land was purchased and put in the name of the Workers’ Commissions trade union in the village.

Subsequently we decided to build a definitive monument and in December we set up a fund in order to raise money for the construction of the monument. We raised some money, mainly from relatives, but we did not raise enough to finish the monument. At that time, we were already involved in the first municipal elections, and we continued with the project by excavating the foundations where the monument would be located: in the first excavation we found human remains of comrades who had been shot, which we left in the same place. In April, after the first democratic municipal elections, we won the city council and continued with the construction of the pyramid.⁶²

Antonio Lozano Aguilar’s account summarizes the process and shows the key construction phases of the monument.

However, the location of the mass graves was not always clear. This was often the case with mass graves located outside cemeteries. Despite this, it was decided to build monuments on the approximate site and even perimetrise it.

⁶² “Llegada la fecha del 1 de noviembre 1977, día de los difuntos, decidimos rodear el perímetro del lugar que ocupaban las fosas, con un tul negro y sembramos una variedad de flores llamadas crestas de gallo. Aquel año, familiares y curiosos visitaron el lugar donde depositaron flores y encendieron velas. En el año 1978 nos planteamos la compra del recinto que ocupaba aquel ornamento provisional. Con fondos del sindicato local se adquirió el terreno, que se puso a nombre del sindicato de Comisiones Obreras del pueblo.

Posteriormente decidimos la construcción de un monumento definitivo y en el mes de diciembre abrimos una suscripción popular con el fin de sacar dinero para la construcción del mismo. Recaudamos algún dinero proveniente fundamentalmente de familiares, sin que se recaudara lo suficiente para su terminación. En ese tiempo estábamos ya metidos en las primeras elecciones municipales, y continuamos con el proyecto excavando los cimientos donde se ubicaría el monumento: en la primera excavación dimos con restos humanos de compañeros fusilados, que dejamos en el mismo lugar. Alcanzada la fecha de abril, celebradas las primeras elecciones municipales de la democracia, tomamos posesión del Ayuntamiento y continuamos con la construcción de la pirámide.” (Translated by the author). Rodríguez Castillo and Lozano Aguilar, *Los alzados de la tierra*, 233-234.

Two such examples can be found in Burgos. In the La Pedraja mountain pass, on the border between Burgos and La Rioja, more than 100 people were murdered.⁶³ The archaeologist Juan Montero, who has worked on numerous graves in the province of Burgos, explained to me that, during the Dictatorship, it is said that flowers used to appear along the mountain pass.⁶⁴ It was not clear where the mass graves were to be found and in the 1980s a large memorial was built on the initiative of the families in the rough location associated with the mass graves (Figure 20). A similar initiative took place not far from there. Juan Montero, also pointed out the experience of Estepar. There, although during the post-War period itself flowers were placed at the site, gradually the relatives began to take their tributes to a specific tree on a recurring basis. That oak tree became a place where numerous relatives and activists came not only to lay flowers and meet every November. They also came to leave photographs of the murdered, posters alluding to them, until the formal installation of a commemorative plaque in 1989 by the local PSOE (Figure 21).⁶⁵

However, patterns emerge within this heterogeneity. One of them is the construction in stone of something that stands out in the landscape, that marks the boundaries of the grave, and that is visible, with plaques, monoliths, and columns and that can include an epitaph and even a list of names. Paradoxically, formal decisions were often left to local marble workers, such as the granite surface with two broken columns that was built in Guadalajara. The columns were interpreted by several of the people I interviewed as a reference to the Republic that was cut short, but as it was the marble worker who decided to include them, we may never know their intended meaning (Figure 22). But if there was one thing that stood out in all of them, it was the general absence of crucifixes, except in very exceptional cases such as Burgos, Coín or Dos Hermanas.

⁶³ Pedro Barruso Barés, *Morir en La Pedraja: conflictividad social y represión en La Rioja Alta (1931-1936)*, (Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2019).

⁶⁴ Interview with Juan Montero in Burgos, September 14, 2019.

⁶⁵ Ignacio Fernández de Mata, *Lloros vueltos puños: el conflicto de los “desaparecidos” y vencidos de la Guerra Civil española* (Granada: Comares, 2016), 130-32.

The latter would have been supported by Pedro Laín Entralgo, a poet and member of the Falange who paid for the construction of the monument at the request of his wife, who had relatives buried there - the same grave to which CNT activists had been clandestinely bringing flowers for years. For this reason, despite now having a monument, the cross that crowned it was torn off one night and tied with a chain to a car on the other side of the cemetery wall by local anarchist activists (Figure 23).⁶⁶ The rejection of the cross was also a recurring pattern, given the high degree of involvement of the Church in the repressive processes, and because crosses were the main reference used in the monument programs for the “Martyrs” and “Fallen for God and for Spain.” From these experiences, I could see how in the 1970s, monument practices were chosen which were not a funerary stele, but opted for a greater sculptural complexity in search of their own iconographic reference in a very heterogeneous way.

The cross was also rejected at La Barranca. There, the “women in black” had been bringing flowers for 40 years, when at the end of 1976 the entrance to the site was levelled so that cars could be parked. In 1977, the Civil Governor met with a delegation of the relatives of the murdered, comprised of Damián Santamaría Sánchez, Pablo Sáenz Arancón and Lorenzo Zaldívar Alonso and granted them authorization to organize a remembrance service. They formed a committee to make decisions regarding “the works, monuments, installations or any other activities aimed at definitively decorating this place,” Jesús Aguirre reports.⁶⁷ With the cession of the land by the owner, and the various donations received, the construction of an enclosure began, which was opened to the public on 1 May 1979. The committee hoped that the mass grave would be recognized as a “civil cemetery.” Therefore, a fence was built, the space was paved, and three long stone rows marked the location of the graves, with a large sculpture welcoming the visitor (Figure 24). This sculpture rose up like a great

⁶⁶ Interview with Jesús Mari García in Dos Hermanas, May 30, 2019.

⁶⁷ “las obras, monumentos, instalaciones o cualesquiera otras actividades tendentes a adecuar definitivamente ese lugar” (Translated by the author). Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada. La Rioja 1936. La Rioja 1936*, 28.

triumphal column, but was in fact made up of the realistically depicted bodies of the defeated murdered women and men lying on top of each other. Women and men, workers, and peasants, they were carved by the hand of Alejandro Rubio Dalmati, who did not charge anything for his work.⁶⁸

Hundreds of kilometres away in Barcelona, people had been visiting the mass grave for decades and the monument practice in the 1970s would take the form of a remembrance service and finally a sculpture.

Every day of the month, from 1939 until the year of the Eucharistic Congress [1952], a truck would bring a cartload of human flesh to the Fossar de la Pedrera. They carried them from the Camp de la Bota where they had died “of an internal haemorrhage,” from the castle, from the prison, from the concentration camps... With the corpses they were shovelling in a little bit of clay and a little bit of soil. It was necessary to leave it looking fairly neat, because the next day more would come. Soon, what had once been a deep rocky area was reduced by half. On Christmas day in 1977, a group of widows, sons, and daughters... of those who died during the post-war period “for freedom in Catalonia,” went to the Fossar de la Pedrera to pay homage to their parents. “Els Segadors” was sung there, at two o’clock in the morning on Christmas Day, that was one of the most thrilling songs that the Cementiri Nou had ever felt. It was the first time that “Els Segadors” was sung here since ’39. May it not be the last -said the president of the committee for the memory of those killed for freedom in Catalonia.⁶⁹

Ricard Conesa, in his research, reports how the Associació Pro Memòria als Immolats per la Llibertat de Catalunya (Association for the Memory of the

⁶⁸ Aguirre González, 29.

⁶⁹ “Cada dia del món, des del 1939 fins l’any del Congrés Eucarístic [1952], un camió vessava una carretada de carn humana al Fossar de la Pedrera. Els portaven des del Camp de la Bota on havien mort «d’una hemorràgia interna», del castell, de la Model, dels camps de concentració... Damunt els cossos tiraven una mica de calç i una mica de terra. Calia deixar-ho més o menys bé. Car l’endemà en vindrien més. Així, allò que un dia fou una profunda pedrera, es reduí a la meitat. El dia de Nadal del 1977, un grup de vídues, de fills... d’aquells que van morir durant la postguerra «per la llibertat a Catalunya», es van aplegar al Fossar de la Pedrera per retre un homenatge als seus parents. «Els Segadors» que es va cantar allà, a les dues del migdia del dia de Nadal, són un dels cants més emocionats que ha sentit mai el Cementiri Nou. És la primera vegada que es canten aquí «Els Segadors» des del 39. Que no sigui l’última —va dir el president de la comissió pro memoria dels immolats per la llibertat a Catalunya.” (Translated by the author). Maria Dolors Bernal and Joan Corbalan, *La veu dels morts silenciat* (Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, 2017), 29.

Immolated for the Freedom of Catalonia) began to organize remembrance services in what was the poorest part of the Montjuic cemetery and to raise money to build a monument. They came to collect donations from the Executive Council and Parliament of Catalonia around 1980, and in 1981 they commissioned the sculpture from Ferran Ventura, having raised almost 5 million pesetas. Ventura thus produced a *pietà* in Ulldecona stone (Figure 25).⁷⁰ Another of the exceptional sculptures built over graves was that of the Otsoportillo chasm, a place already mentioned for its firm decision to continue with the monument practice in the face of violence. There they placed an abstract composition by José Ramón Anda Goikoetxea, executed by a workshop in Alsasua, over the abyss in which the corpses were thrown in 1936. The sculpture was paid for by donations,⁷¹ and its aesthetic would be in tune with the new trend in Basque sculpture towards abstract forms that referred to the void and the interpretation of the Basque soul in the wake of Jorge Oteiza's theories, which had a fundamental influence on the generation of artists to which José Ramón Anda belonged (Figure 26).⁷²

In contrast to these formal resources, which were always heterogeneous, and showed the lack of formal cohesion in the absence of a common iconographic programme, it is worth briefly mentioning the discourses of the texts inscribed on them. In a generalized way, there was a general trend towards a certain lukewarmness in the texts carved on the plaques, and the texts were somewhere between the traditional and the political epitaph.⁷³ Thus, on plaques from the late 1970s and early 1980s one could read “En memoria de los olvidados” (In memory of the forgotten), next to the mass graves of Castellón, “A los que amaron la paz” (To those who loved peace) on a monument in Albacete, “Todos los fusilados por la libertad, la democracia y el progreso social”

⁷⁰ Ricard Conesa i Sánchez, “Del duelo clandestino al recuerdo colectivo : El Fossar de la Pedrera del Cementerio de Montjuïc,” ed. Conxita Mir and Josep Gelonch, *Duelo y Memoria: Espacios para el recuerdo de las víctimas de la represión franquista en perspectiva comparada.* (Lleida: Universitat de Lleida, 2013): 171-98.

⁷¹ García de Albizu, *¿Qué hicimos aquí con el 36*, 361-63.

⁷² Daniel Palacios González, “Artistas vascos y navarros: una revisión generacional (1966-2007),” *Revista Internacional de los Estudios Vascos, RIEV* 60, no. 1 (2015): 100-130.

⁷³ Eliccer Crespo-Fernández, *El lenguaje de los epitafios* (Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2014).

(All those shot for freedom, democracy and social progress) on a monument over the graves in Paterna, “Al alba y por la Libertad” (At dawn and for freedom) on the mock vault in Toledo or even “A todas las víctimas de la Guerra Civil” (To all the victims of the Civil War) on the plaques at the mass grave in Valladolid.

According to oral accounts, there was a certain fear of making the word “Republic” explicit, and this word is largely absent from most of the plaques dating back to these years. Experiences such as the one in Valladolid showed a disconnect between this desire to include all those murdered without taking into account their affiliation and the reality of their situation: socialists, communists and anarchists were buried there, because of their militancy or membership of the UGT or CNT trade union; it was unlikely that the Falangists were intended to be included in the phrase “All victims” when the bust of Pablo Iglesias was placed there, which the daughter of the last Republican mayor had hidden for more than 40 years (Figure 27).⁷⁴ Especially when this mass grave is located a few metres from the great monument of Onésimo Redondo, the Falangist known as the “Caudillo de Castilla” (Warlord of Castile), responsible for the murders of thousands of people in Valladolid.⁷⁵

But the oral account did not always allude to fear when referring to the inscriptions. In Guadalajara, where the text states “Murieron por la Libertad y la democracia” (They died for freedom and democracy) Emilia Cañas told me with frustration “We put up what they allowed us,” adding “but they didn’t die, they killed them.”⁷⁶ Censorship and self-censorship therefore characterized these monument practices. For this reason, texts such as the one on the mass grave in Oviedo which says “A la memoria de los hombres y mujeres asesinados por la represión franquista sin más causa que haber luchador por la Libertad, la Justicia y la República” (To the memory of the men and women murdered

⁷⁴ Interview with Orosia Castán in Tudela de Duero, June 13, 2019.

⁷⁵ Matteo Tomasoni, “Fascismo agrario y proselitismo revolucionario en el pensamiento de Onésimo Redondo,” in *Falange, las culturas políticas del fascismo en la España de Franco (1936-1975)*, Vol. 2, ed. Miguel Ángel Ruiz Carnicer (Zaragoza: Instituto Fernando El Católico, 2013), 578-592.

⁷⁶ Interview with Emilia Cañas in Guadalajara, March 12, 2019.

by Franco's repression for no other reason than having fought for freedom, justice and the republic) were rare. This was also evident in the tension experienced in Magallón during the unveiling of the monument over the mass grave, where the text referred to "A sus compañeros presentes y ausentes fusilados alevosamente en el 1936-1937 por desear unos derechos humanos que nunca habían tenido" (Their comrades present and absent, who were shot with malice in 1936-1937 because they wished for human rights they had never had), but the "shot with malice" had to be covered up, as Jerónimo Navarro Manero told me.⁷⁷

However, fear is not the only conditioning factor. Decades later, similar texts were frequently used on the plaques by the graves. "A lembranza destos dinos ciudadanos fusilados i enterrados neste lugar por defender as libertades democraticas en Asturias" (In memory of these worthy citizens shot and buried in this place for defending democratic freedoms in Asturias) in the village of Garda in Camposancos 1986 (Figure 28), "Aquí yacen los restos de un número indeterminado de hombres y mujeres que dieron su vida por la Libertad" (Here lie the remains of an undetermined number of men and women who gave their lives for freedom) on the plaque campaigned by the town council of Talavera in 1987 (Figure 29) and even "En memoria de quienes dieron su vida por la Libertad" (In memory of those who gave their lives for freedom) on a plaque commissioned by the Socialist Youth of Salamanca in 1996 and financed by the community (Figure 30). On the other hand, the permanence and extended temporality of this form of practice also indicates that they were carried out when there was an opportunity in the negotiations between authorities, activists, and relatives, or even with their election as representatives for the town councils. In Baeza, in the 1970s, the communists cleaned the grave, according to Eusebio Ortega Molín, but it was not until 1983, when he became mayor for the PSOE, that the possibility of erecting a structure on the grave

⁷⁷ Interview with Jerónimo Navarro Manero in Magallón, November 8, 2019.

was discussed, and not directly after Franco's death, as often appears in the accounts (Figure 31).⁷⁸

BONES AS A REQUIREMENT FOR REMEMBRANCE

Parallel to the practices listed so far, there were other requirements on some mass graves for the monument practice. The location of the bodies in the graves could be a conditioning factor for the form. I came to realize this when Alfonso Delgado and Juan de la Torre González, PSOE members in La Carolina, told me about their experience with the exhumation of a grave in their town. There, the number of people killed in the repression when the insurgents arrived in 1939 was counted at 82.⁷⁹ The corpses were buried in a pit in the cemetery, and they knew the place, but nobody had been able to go there to carry out any kind of practice for decades. Thus, around 1978, a group of relatives put pressure on the town council, supported by the local socialist group. They raised money and the mayor gave them a space, where they built a vault to house the bodies after their exhumation in 1979.⁸⁰ Alfonso showed me some photographs taken by the local socialist group in which Fraternidad and Libertad, daughters of one of the murdered posed next to the grave. The grave was fenced in and covered with flowers, a banner read "Os recuerdan familiares y compañeros" (Relatives and comrades remember you) and on the ground there was another large red cloth that read "Caídos por la Libertad" (Fallen for Freedom) (Figure 32). However, this intervention on the grave was not enough for them. It was not enough to define the boundaries, bring flowers and make the political significance of the murdered visible. Thus, they exhumed them and took the bodies to a monument built expressly for them (Figure 33).

Generally, 1978 has been considered the starting point for this type of activity, with 1979 as the peak in which the greatest number of such actions took place. This coincided with the first multi-party municipal elections after

⁷⁸ Interview with Eusebio Ortega Molina in Baeza, September 13, 2019.

⁷⁹ Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica de Jaén, ed., *Estudios y actividades Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica de Jaén* (Jaén: Diputación Provincial de Jaén; Junta de Andalucía, 2007).

⁸⁰ Interview with Alfonso Delgado and Juan de la Torre González in La Carolina, September 13, 2019.

Franco's death, a fact that suggests a positive attitude to this type of initiative on the part of the local administration, with a subsequent decline that Aguilar associates with fear.⁸¹ New opportunities emerged to develop monument practices in different parts of the country where the sites in mass graves had not been lost in the memory of relatives, witnesses, or perpetrators. Nevertheless, the idea of exhuming these bodies was associated, with a few exceptions such as La Carolina or Aranjuez, with mass graves outside the cemeteries. There, the bodies had not received the burial that could have been expected within the usual funerary customs, and the survivors had also witnessed the process of exhumation of the "Fallen for God and Spain" also described above.

Jimi Jiménez points out in relation to the Navarre experience that "despite its specific characteristics, the process of exhumation and homage shared features with events in other regions."⁸² The first of these is the leading role played by anonymous relatives and friends, who organized management commissions or assemblies to coordinate and jointly cover the expenses, sometimes receiving municipal aid, and to carry out the exhumation process with their own hands. Paloma Aguilar affirms how collaboration between the various management commissions was not only necessary but also encouraged to improve the effectiveness of the initiatives.

The more people supported the efforts, the easier it was to deal with the administrative hurdles, and the more people participated in the remembrance services - coaches were even chartered from several villages - the easier it was to overcome the fear that everyone admitted they were feeling and, as has been pointed out to me in more than one testimony, the more the mourners felt supported. ⁸³

⁸¹ Aguilar, "Memoria y transición en España. Exhumaciones de fusilados republicanos y homenajes en su honor," 318.

⁸² "pese a sus rasgos propios, el proceso de exhumación y homenaje tuvo características comunes" (Translated by the author). Jimi Jiménez, "1939-1980. De la clandestinidad a la reivindicación. Exhumaciones tempranas," in *Bajo tierra: exhumaciones en Navarra = Lur azpian : desobiratzeak Nafarroan, 1939-2019*, José Miguel Gastón Aguas and César Layana Ilundain, eds. (Pamplona = Iruña: Nafarroako Gobernua = Government of Navarra, 2019), 26.

⁸³ "Cuanta más gente respaldaba las gestiones más sencillo resultaba afrontar las trabas administrativas, y cuantas más personas participaban en los actos de homenaje —incluso se llegaron a fletar autocares

This was also the case with the monument practices carried out directly on the graves that I described. On the other hand, Zoé de Kerangat talks about how the fact that exhumations took place mainly in Navarre and La Rioja, followed by Extremadura, Jaén or Murcia, speaks of a process of expansion in “waves,” so that an exhumation in one municipality could spread the idea that this was possible to others, which demonstrates the informal and diffuse nature of the process.⁸⁴

Jesús Aguirre’s work is exceptional in illustrating the process of exhumations in La Rioja. His village-by-village research led him to give an account of the repression in the region but also of the memorial initiatives in the towns. His pages abound with photographs of exhumations, taken informally. In them we see groups of family members, activists and friends working on the mass graves, with the bones in their hands, showing them to the camera⁸⁵ and putting them in coffins to be buried again in their home town.⁸⁶ On the one hand, the logic of self-management of the process was palpable in these practices, and on the other hand, a collectivist logic was crucial. The bodies were collectively exhumed and collectively buried again. And it is this destination of the bodies that lay at the heart of the exhumation process, making it not an end but just another phase of a monument practice understood in a broad sense. And it was the construction of a monument, a necessity for many, which could not be separated from the exhumation of the bodies themselves. It was a process that could not be isolated in its stages. One of the few video documents available of the exhumations is the *Super 8* film made by Mario López Delgado in Montijo during 1980 and 1981. However, the video does not only record the exhumation, but it also begins by showing the memorial plaque that was placed

desde varios pueblos—, más fácil era vencer el miedo que todos reconocían sentir y, como se me ha señalado en más de un testimonio, más acompañados se sentían los dolientes.” (Translated by the author). Paloma Aguilar, “Memoria y transición en España. Exhumaciones de fusilados republicanos y homenajes en su honor,” *Historia y Política* 0, no. 39 (April 17, 2018): 291-325.

⁸⁴ Zoé de Kerangat, “Remover Cielo y Tierra. Las exhumaciones de víctimas del franquismo como fisuras del silencio en la transición” (PhD diss., Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2019), 91.

⁸⁵ Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada. La Rioja 1936*. La Rioja 1936, 191.

⁸⁶ Aguirre González, 421.

at the grave site before the exhumation, goes on to show the exhumation process and ends with the burial of the bodies in a large collective monument in the shape of a pyramid.⁸⁷

The bodies were an essential component of the monument practice: they were killed, and they were located somewhere. But that location was also necessary. A place that was sometimes engraved in the mind of a witness, that could have been marked or it could have become the site of floral offerings in previous decades. Carlos Solana told me about this situation:

Many of these things, when the first family meetings were held, they didn't know. And when they went to dig up the remains of the people, for example, in this one in Ausejo. In this one they were digging, and they found nothing. So, they were there, a man came by and said:

Who are you looking for? The people from Arnedo?

Yes. They said.

Wait, don't dig any more, I'll bring you someone.

He brought the woman who had seen everything, and that woman said: Don't dig here, they're here, and don't dig with the shovel, you're going to find them soon. First, you're going to find a woman and then thirteen men.

Also, at that time, when they went to a vineyard or to a place to dig, the owners of the vineyards, you would find things that you would say.... You seem to reconcile yourself a little bit with the human being. For example, there was a man who had the whole vineyard cultivated and a small piece that was uncultivated. And he said:

Here they are.

And how come you haven't cultivated it?

No, no, no... This is sacred land. There are Christian remains here, and so this is always kept like this because it is sacred land. ⁸⁸

And it was again this place in Arnedo where the exhumation and reinterment of the bodies in the cemetery took place during these years (Figure 34). It was not enough for José Vidorreta in Cervera del Río Alhama to keep the memory

⁸⁷ Mario López Delgado, "Las fosas de Montijo," YouTube, April 17, 2016, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IwUfRMRdiR8>.

⁸⁸ Interview with Carlos Solana in Arnedo, January 21, 2019.

of his father and his companions safe, his memory of the whole sequence of events in which they were arrested, tortured, murdered... and it was not enough for him to go there freely. According to Zoe de Keragnat, in 1976 a commission was set up to assess the possibility of organizing a remembrance service, which took place on 2 September 1977, the anniversary of the execution by firing squad. On that day they went to Carrascal, the place where the grave was located, with the authorization of the Civil Governor of Logroño, José María Adán García. The grave was fenced off, covered with flowers, and a tribute was paid at the graves, with the participation of members of the local socialist group (Figure 35).⁸⁹

However, this practice must not have been felt to be sufficient and a year later, again coinciding with the date of the executions, the exhumation was carried out.

*We couldn't do it before. I was anxious to bury the remains here, and we brought them here: the day they were shot, 41 years later. I say that that day was the greatest day of my life. I have never been so excited as I was that day.*⁹⁰

It was with these words that José Vidorreta began his account of these events when I asked him about them in the Cervera del Río Alhama cemetery, and the place was no coincidence. The place José referred to was the cemetery, where they had finally built a monument for the bodies, and where José went every Sunday to bring flowers that he himself had grown at his home, and where he has been paying homage every year since then (Figure 36). The bodies were necessary, not the grave itself for this monument practice. I could understand that the exhumation was not the end in José's story, as it was not in Montijo's film, but the construction of the monument for the recovered bodies.

A similar situation, which made explicit this function of exhumation as a means of achieving a monument practice, took place in Alcanadre. There,

⁸⁹ de Kerangat, "Remover cielo y Tierra. Las exhumaciones de víctimas del franquismo como fisuras del silencio en la transición," 86-87.

⁹⁰ José Vidorreta Sr. and José Vidorreta Jr. in Cervera del Río Alhama, 21 January 2019.

Jesús Aguirre took me to meet Emilio Barco Rojo in January 2019. He had participated in the exhumation of the mass grave in 1979, and from his comments I understood the communal and political dimension of these processes. In Alcanadre, the Falangists and Catholic militias murdered 29 people, and then for decades repressed their widows and descendants, who the perpetrators would say they should also have killed.⁹¹ But those who survived resisted by remembering and between 1978 and 1979 they decided to exhume the grave, which was not in the region but 150 km away, in the Torrero cemetery, Zaragoza. Collaborating with Navarrese people also involved in the exhumations, they themselves managed to find some of the bodies. However, the construction of columbaria over the grave made this difficult and limited their work.

I think that here the most striking part of what Jesús Vicente de la Rivera was teaching you is the way it was made. That is the fundamental thing that differentiates it from the present. It's the organic way of going about things, in the sense of not formally requesting permits, not identifying the bodies through analysis and genetics. But the objective at the time was to just do it, and I think that time has proven that we were right. Now it is almost at a standstill and at a point of reversal. They can tell you that it wasn't rigorous, that it wasn't scientific, that it wasn't... I don't think people think that is true. I think people didn't care about that in the slightest. They didn't care whether the bone belonged to my grandfather or not. They were all of them. It was something else. The atmosphere at that time.⁹²

Emilio explained to me that they had to pay for the buses themselves to go to Zaragoza for the exhumation. They also paid for the necessary materials and finally got support from the town council for the construction of the cemetery, the bodies kept in the town hall itself the night before the new interment. In the monument, a crucifix is placed between the names and under it “Pasaran los años aplastaran ideas. Manos asesinas cortaran los pensamientos. Pero cada recuerdo será un sendero hacia la Libertad” (Years will pass by, ideas will be

⁹¹ Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada. La Rioja 1936*. La Rioja 1936, 191.

⁹² Interview with Jesús Vicente Aguirre and Emilio Barco Rojo in Alcanadre, January 22, 2019.

crushed. Murderous hands will cut down thoughts. But every memory will be a path to Freedom) (Figure 37). A text that Emilio told me he made up as he went along, because “we hardly had time for anything.”⁹³

But it was not only in La Rioja that this type of practice took place: in Navarre, Andalusia, Extremadura, and Murcia I also found some of these monuments. A practice that reacted formally to the way family memorials were built, with the difference that in this case the family was not biological but knit together by their shared political ideals in the present and the shared tragedy of their past. “Everyone belonged to everyone,” Emilio told me.⁹⁴ Zoe de Keragnat argues that what was important here was the community and the care for one another: it didn’t matter if they were the remains of one person or another, as they were part of one community in death. The exhumed bodies were divided between towns, but in the end they remained together in the final collective burial.⁹⁵ However, this structure executed by local marble workers was perhaps the most common, but not the only shape used.

When building structures for the final destination of exhumed bodies, there was also the possibility of locating them in more visible places in the territory than where the mass graves were located. This led to a change in the burial location of the bodies in this type of cemetery, so that the monuments tended to be built in more visible or centralized spaces. Thus, on entering the cemetery of Casas de Don Pedro in Extremadura, the first thing one encounters is the large monument which houses the remains exhumed in 1978, murdered by the Council of War more than a month after the end of the War⁹⁶ (Figure 38). The bodies were moved from a mass grave in the Olivar de las Boticarias area to the local cemetery on the 39th anniversary of their assassination, their names engraved in the marble memorial. The process of exhumation, transfer

⁹³ Interview with Jesús Vicente Aguirre and Emilio Barco Rojo in Alcanadre, January 22, 2019.

⁹⁴ Interview with Jesús Vicente Aguirre and Emilio Barco Rojo in Alcanadre, January 22, 2019.

⁹⁵ de Kerangat, “Remover Cielo y Tierra. Las exhumaciones de víctimas del franquismo como fisuras del silencio en la transición,” 103.

⁹⁶ Fernando Barrero Arzac, “Los fusilamientos del 15 de Mayo de 1939 en Casas de Don Pedro (Badajoz),” Todos los nombres, 1939, accessed May 10, 2021, http://www.todoslosnombres.org/sites/default/files/investigacion34_1.pdf.

of the bodies and construction of the monument was not without its problems, because of the political implications of such monument practices, even though this was one of the rare monuments I documented where the political dimension was not made explicit in an epitaph. However, this is understandable when, in the context of this process, the Civil Governor asked that “the act of transfer should not be used as an opportunity for a political demonstration,” to which Juan Carlos Rodríguez Ibarra, the PSOE deputy who had mediated in the process, replied “[w]e know that no group is going to attempt this kind of manoeuvre.”⁹⁷ Ibarra himself went to visit the family to put pressure on them and prevent the exhumation. But as I mentioned at the beginning, the will of the family members and local activists was often not compatible with adherence to party directives to remain silent.

On the other hand, there were decisions such as the one taken in Valdepeñas, where, after the mass exhumation of mass graves in 1979, this obelisk was designed to commemorate the bodies with the epitaph “Caídos por la Libertad” (Fallen for Freedom) (Figure 39). This attracted attention not only because of the location in the cemetery but also from the structure itself. Moreover, on other occasions, these actions did not correspond solely to family wishes to house the bodies in a place in the cemetery in accordance with traditional funerary practices. There were also places where exhumations were carried out solely led by a political agenda and without including relatives in the process which led to the construction of this type of structure. Therefore, despite it being an exception, the memorial built in Oiartzun in 1977 cannot be overlooked (Figure 40). This was one of the first sites dedicated to housing bodies exhumed after Franco’s death. It was functional and at the same time represents the desire to give political significance to the bodies in a context of violent confrontation. The memorial was designed by the architect Luis Peña

⁹⁷ “que no se aprovechara el acto de traslado para hacer una manifestación política” and “[c]reemos que ninguna agrupación va a intentar este tipo de maniobra” (Translated by the author). Paloma Aguilar Fernández, “El primer ciclo de exhumaciones de fusilados republicanos en la Siberia Extremeña. Iniciativas ciudadanas de memoria y reparación en la Transición Española,” in *Extremadura durante la Transición (1975-1983)*, ed. Guillermo León and Juan Andrade (Badajoz: Diputación de Badajoz, 2018).

Ganchegui, who opted for a *frontón*,⁹⁸ with an opening in the centre, connecting the exterior space and the interior of the cemetery under a *lauburu*,⁹⁹ with a horizontal flagpole on which an *ikurriña*¹⁰⁰ was flown.¹⁰¹

The fact is that the exhumations of the Transition aroused the interest of the tabloid press in the seventies and eighties, *Interviú* being one of the few media that gave coverage to this type of practice.¹⁰² They have also aroused great interest in recent years, from academia and again from the media, either because they represent a precedent for the exhumations of the last two decades, or because of the shocking and previously unseen photographs of the bodies that have come to light during this process. However, despite the importance of these monument practices, in the database that I began to build in 2018 of graves that have been the subject of a monument practice, which currently has more than 600 records and continues to grow as I write these lines, less than 10% of the graves have been exhumed and have been destined for the construction of a cemetery. This is a practice which continues to feel exceptional, although it is key to understanding the connection between grave, bodies and monument practice and the forms they adopted in response to each situation.

Moreover, the exhumation itself is not the objective for many of the campaigners. It was only necessary for the transfer of the remains from a grave to a tomb in accordance with local burial traditions, which in turn may have a more versatile symbolic function than a grave in a difficult-to-access location. But the necessity for such a practice is the presence of the grave: the physical location of the bodies, which are not the object of a ritual such as the laying of flowers on the surface of the grave itself but are exhumed and taken to the cemetery in order to produce a material memory. But to do this, it was necessary

⁹⁸ *Frontón* is the wall where Basque traditional ball games are played.

⁹⁹ Basque traditional hooked cross.

¹⁰⁰ Basque national flag.

¹⁰¹ Alonso Carballés, *Memorias de piedra y acero*, 221-223.

¹⁰² Paloma Aguilar and Francisco Ferrández, “Memory, Media and Spectacle: Interviú’s portrayal of Civil War exhumations in the early years of Spanish democracy,” *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 17, no. 1 (January 2, 2016): 1-25.

to keep the place of burial in memory, and despite the abundance of stories throughout the country of places where flowers appeared, where there were markers... they still amount to only a small number of the many graves that we do not know the location of today, and that is if we only take into account the graves resulting from the repression of the *coup d'état* in 1936 and the Dictatorship, not of those killed in combat. If it is difficult to know where, at the time of the failed *coup d'état*, a group of fascists or militarized Catholics went to assassinate members and sympathizers of socialist and communist parties, Masonic lodges, or trade unions in those years, it is even more difficult to know the fate of those who were mobilized and died in the midst of military operations supporting the Republic. Moreover, sometimes the location was clear, but the recovery of the bodies was impossible... or not necessary for these monument practices. However, this is a situation that changed around the year 2000.

CHAPTER THREE

Building Monuments in times of “Historical Memory”

NEW PARADIGMS AND DISCOURSES

In those years of the Transition, the mayor was Agapito Moreno. When the families went to present the project to him, he told them: “Well, children, well, I think it’s great that you want to bury them in the cemetery.” And the town council over which he presided gave all kinds of facilities, as well as providing the land... The least important thing is that Agapito was from Alianza Popular (People’s Alliance). What is more important is that right now, in 2006 and 2007, Carlos Solana told me, more hurt than surprised, some mayors in other parts of Spain make it difficult for the relatives of the murdered republicans to exhume them from graves and ditches to bury them in cemeteries...¹

Jesús Vicente Aguirre includes this reflection in one of his books on the repression in La Rioja on the process of exhumations and monument practices during the seventies and eighties. However, with the arrival of the 2000s, there were still no formal remembrance policies in relation to the War and the Dictatorship developed by the Spanish government. In this sense, for young

¹ “En aquellos años de la Transición, el alcalde era Agapito Moreno. Cuando fueron las familias a exponerle el proyecto les dijo: ‘Bien, hijos, bien, me parece muy bien que los queráis enterrar en el cementerio’. Y el Ayuntamiento que presidía dio toda clase de facilidades, además de poner el terreno... Lo de menos es que Agapito fuera de Alianza Popular. Lo de más que ahora mismo, en 2006 y 2007, me comenta más dolido que extrañado Carlos Solana, algunos alcaldes en otros lugares de España dificulten a los familiares de los republicanos asesinados el que puedan exhumarlos de fosas y cunetas para enterrarlos en cementerios...” (Translated by the author). Jesús Vicente Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada: La Rioja 1936* (Logroño: Ochoa, 2012), 278.

people who grew up in the 1980s with a post-Francoist educational format, the War and the Dictatorship had never existed. Thus, Enrique Díez points out that history lessons focused excessively on the War, erasing the post-War period, misrepresenting the causes of the War as a “conflict between brothers” or a consequence of the “chaos of the Second Republic,” not talking about a “coup d'état,” or claiming that the Dictatorship was only “undemocratic” because there was no “freedom of expression,” promoting the narrative that “both sides claimed as many victims” and completely hiding both the role of the Church and the role of the anti-fascist fighters after the War. Diez also states that he found that the students stated that this subject is not usually dealt with in class and that the teachers do not want to deal with it either because it is a “thorny subject.”²

Nor was this past evident in public spaces. Urban centres continued to be dedicated to the kings and names of streets were still dedicated to Falangists, military coup plotters and other important collaborators of the regime. Most of the monuments were never removed either: crosses to the “Fallen,” eagles, insignias of the Spanish Falange, well into the 21st century. The deep-rooted presence of defenders of the regime in many town halls and institutions has allowed some of the statues or monuments to endure over the years, as Jesús de Andrés states.³ In fact, although the adherence of the Spanish government and the majority parties to a “Pact of Silence” led to an absence of clear remembrance policies in relation to the War and the Dictatorship, this does not mean that there were no monument projects in the public space from the 1980s onwards. On the contrary, it was just as it had been during the reign of Alfonso XIII, when the corporatist military dictatorship of Primo de Rivera was committed to recovering the colonial past of the Kingdom of Spain in order to strengthen the country’s legitimacy, resulting in the Ibero-American Exhibition in Seville in 1929. This time, the PSOE government of Felipe González was

² Enrique Javier Gutiérrez Díez, *La asignatura pendiente: la memoria histórica democrática en los libros de texto escolares* (Madrid: Plaza y Valdés, 2020).

³ Jesús de Andrés Sanz, “Las estatuas de Franco, la memoria del franquismo y la transición política española,” *Historia y política: Ideas, procesos y movimientos sociales*, no. 12 (2004): 184.

committed to once again vindicating the colonial past of the Kingdom of Spain in 1992. This line of action saw its greatest expression in the 1992 Universal Exposition of Seville and the celebration of the “V Centenary of the Discovery of America.”⁴ But the great project that filled Seville with colonial references, highlighting the imperial project, was complemented by local monument programs.

The sculptures with which the PSOE and the PP adorned the cities in the eighties and nineties were empty of meaning. The so-called “roundabout culture” emerged as a system of urban traffic management, which caused changes in the road system,⁵ also created these spaces of special importance in the urban landscape which could house all kinds of art work. Roundabouts came to contain all kinds of sculptures and heterogeneous architectural structures disconnected from both the artistic scene and monument traditions. As Elia Canosa Zamora and Ángela García Carballo state, roundabouts have allowed politicians, construction businessmen and artists to converge in their interests in a sculptural format that turns this resource for the road into a new reference that standardises and impoverishes the landscape.⁶ Thus, while the monuments on the mass graves were self-managed and reclaimed a past that had been erased on the peripheries of the cities and cemeteries, the urban centres were plagued by innocuous sculptures, implying a new lost opportunity to develop memory policies in the public space. Nevertheless, something disrupted the panorama with the new century.

In 2000, the exhumation of thirteen people murdered by Falangists in 1936 in Priaranza del Bierzo took place.⁷ The image of those bodies was said to be “shaking the foundations of society,”⁸ bringing back the “ghosts of the

⁴ Giulia Quaggio, “1992: La modernidad del pasado. El PSOE en busca de una idea regenerada de España,” *Historia y Política*, no. 35 (2016): 95-122.

⁵ Jordi Dalmau, “La cultura de la rotonda,” *Revista de Girona*, no. 173 (1995): 14-15.

⁶ Elia Canosa Zamora and Ángela García Carballo, “Enmascarando la pobreza del paisaje urbano: rotundas y arte público,” *Boletín de la Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles*, no. 51 (2009): 249-73.

⁷ Francisco Etxeberria Gabilondo et al., “Antropología del pasado reciente: una fosa común de la Guerra Civil Española en Priaranza del Bierzo (León),” in *Antropología y biodiversidad, Vol. 1, 2002, Antropología y biodiversidad* (2002): 431-46.

⁸ Mercedes Yusta Rodrigo, “El pasado como trauma: Historia, memoria y “recuperación de la memoria histórica” en la España actual,” *Pandora: revue d'études hispaniques*, no. 12 (2014): 25.

civil war,”⁹ or making the past “resurface” through those graves.¹⁰ Priaranza turned that into a sort of “myth,” as it was the first of a new wave of exhumations: exhumations that went hand in hand with hundreds of new monument practices. But these actions did not take place outside of their political context. In 1996, José María Aznar became president for the PP, which meant the coming to power of a party founded by Manuel Fraga Iribarne, Franco’s minister.¹¹ It is at this time that the War and the Dictatorship came back to the political debate in a more systematic way, evidenced by the words “Franco,” “Francoism,” and “Francoist” appearing in 57% of parliamentary initiatives during the PP legislature.¹² Consequently, the PSOE, at a low point after a long time in power, sought to reinforce its image as a “left-wing” party,¹³ as did a PCE in crisis,¹⁴ integrated into the coalition Izquierda Unida, IU (United Left). To do so, they turned to the Francoist past of the PP leaders. This allowed PSOE and IU to capitalise on the discontent generated by the unpopular policies of the new Spanish government, thus reconstructing a political identity using the image of the historical party and their voters, and from this breeding ground the new “Historical Memory” emerged as trendy concept.¹⁵ But before the Spanish government started developing policies,

⁹ Francisco Ferrández, “The Return of Civil War Ghosts: The Ethnography of Exhumations in Contemporary Spain,” *Anthropology Today* 22, no. 3 (2006): 7-12.

¹⁰ Paloma Aguilar Fernández, and Leigh A. Payne, *El resurgir del pasado en España: fosas de víctimas y confesiones de verdugos* (Barcelona: Taurus, 2018).

¹¹ Justo G. Beramendi, “Los nacionalismos hispánicos y Europa: 1975-2000,” in *Construcción de Europa, democracia y globalización*, ed. Ramón Máz Suárez (Santiago de Compostela: Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, 2001), 974.

¹² Paloma Aguilar Fernández, “La evocación de la guerra y del Franquismo en la política, la cultura y la sociedad españolas,” in *Memoria de la guerra y del franquismo*, ed. Santos Juliá Díaz (Madrid: Taurus, 2006), 279–318.

¹³ In the Transition, the organization named PSOE inherited the acronym of the historic revolutionary socialist party founded by Pablo Iglesias in 1879. The historical PSOE supported the Republican reforms, the 1934 Revolution and their militants became leaders of the Second Spanish Republic during the war. Nevertheless, the Transition party headed by Felipe González abandoned Marxism and during his government (1982-1996) they adopted neoliberal positions and were affected by corruption and support for state terrorism among other scandals.

¹⁴ The PCE went from being the clandestine political force with the strongest base in the country during the dictatorship to collapsing after embracing Eurocommunism and the red and yellow flag under the leadership of Santiago Carrillo, eventually only winning 10% of votes as the IU coalition in 1996 and 2015 under the leadership of Julio Anguita and Cayo Lara respectively. IU thus became purely a support for the PSOE when they don’t get a majority. At the same time, its dissidents, such as the PT, MC, PCPE, ended up being marginalized.

¹⁵ Ignacio Fernández de Mata, “El surgimiento de la memoria histórica: sentidos, malentendidos y disputas,” in *La tradición como reclamo: antropología en Castilla y León*, ed. Luis Díaz Viana and Pedro Tomé Martín (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Cultura y Turismo, 2007), 195-208.

when the PSOE came to power again in 2004, it was the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (Association for the Recovery of the Historical Memory), better known as AMRH, who defined the discourse. This was an association created after the media storm caused by the exhumation of Priaranza by one of its campaigners: the journalist Emilio Silva.

The name of the association refers to an activity that can be understood much more broadly (education, psycho-social intervention, dissemination...) but its main and most visible activity has been the exhumation of mass graves. For this reason, in 2002 they filed a complaint with the United Nations, based on the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, approved in resolution 47/133 of 1992, which led to the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. Although the complaint was dismissed as the Working Group has no jurisdiction over pre-1945 cases, it would lay the groundwork for the term “disappeared” in the framework of “human rights” was used more widely.¹⁶ This was skilfully capitalized on by the opposition to the PP, thus legitimizing itself politically on the basis of these international legal frameworks.¹⁷ In this way, various civil associations began to carry out exhumations on their own, and with the victory of the PSOE in the 2004 elections, support began to be given to this type of private initiative carried out by private associations in the form of subsidies. As a result of the PSOE-IU agreement, Law 52/2007 of 26 December 2007, which recognises and extends rights and establishes measures in favour of those who suffered persecution or violence during the civil war and dictatorship, known as the “Historical Memory Law,” was finally passed in 2007.

This law was interpreted as “unacceptable,” “a great disappointment,” “lost opportunity,” “dangerous precedent,” and “terrible example,” according to Josefina Cuesta, who also points out that the State did not assume any

¹⁶ Derek Congram, *Missing Persons: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on the Disappeared* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2016).

¹⁷ Daniel Palacios González and Miriam Saqqa Carazo, “De la exhumación a la monumentalización: Una perspectiva interdisciplinaria sobre la legitimación política en España desde el año 2000,” *Amnis. Revue de civilisation contemporaine Europe/Ameriques*, no. 18 (2019).

responsibility. Cuesta showed how the law spoke only about “victims,” but did not overturn convictions, did not refer to perpetrators and did not speak of the right to the truth. It also restricted access to archives, there was no public recognition of crimes, it did not address the problem of the seizure of property by the coup plotters and the Dictatorship, it denied the right to reparation and finally it sponsored a model of private exhumations of mass graves, always within the framework of the possibility of access to subsidies, but without guaranteeing them or providing judicial support for the processes.¹⁸ Furthermore, the Law made no provision for an educational program or the rectification of the narrative around the War and Dictatorship by the State. Nor did it include a monument program or a program for the re-signification of places associated with the repression or the Dictatorship. The Law just encourages the removal of symbols and the changing of street names. But it is important to note that the Law thus encourages but does not oblige. Because if these actions of removal were not carried out, no penalties were incurred. In fact, if instead of executing a change of street name following the regular administrative procedure, the law was invoked, the process was considerably more difficult.

Despite the inadequacy of the format provided by the Law to develop remembrance policies, more than 750 mass graves have been exhumed in the last 20 years, with varying scientific and investigative results, though nevertheless painting a telling picture of the post-War era.¹⁹ This may be understood as part of an international trend, the “Forensic Turn.” Elisabeth Anstett and Jean Marc Dreyfus defined this “turn” as “the arrival of forensic pathologists and anthropologists on the scene of mass violence as the decisive agents of the practices in the search for bodies.”²⁰ Zuzanna Dziuban defines

¹⁸ Josefina Cuesta, “Los debates sobre la Memoria y la Historia en España. La Ley de Memoria Histórica diez años después,” in *Diez años de leyes y políticas de memoria*, ed. Jordi Guixé, Jesús Carballés Alonso, and Ricard Conesa (Madrid: Catarata, 2019).

¹⁹ Francisco Etxeberria Gabilondo and Queralt Solé i Barjau, “Fosas comunes de la Guerra Civil en el Siglo XXI: antecedentes, interdisciplinariedad y legislación,” *Historia contemporánea*, no. 60 (2019): 401-38.

²⁰ Élisabeth Anstett and Jean-Marc Dreyfus, “Introduction: Why Exhume? Why Identify?,” in *Human Remains and Identification*, ed. Élisabeth Anstett and Jean-Marc Dreyfus, *Mass Violence, Genocide, and the Forensic Turn’* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 4.

this as the application of scientific and technological knowledge to investigation to establish facts in criminal courts, something that developed through standardized practices to produce data that are used in the detection of crimes and admissible in legal contexts. These methodologies, despite dating back to the 19th century, have grown in popularity since the 1980s and have assumed a dominant role in the investigation of human rights violations, war crimes and genocide at an international level.²¹ But Dziuban also points out how the “turn” has generated its own world view. “The ‘Forensic Turn’ relates also to a fundamental shift in the position of the dead within contemporary cultural and political imaginaries, especially those shaped in response to the experience of political violence.”²² And in this sense in the Kingdom of Spain the “Forensic Turn” had an impact on the ways in which exhumation processes were developed, and how the new monument practices were conducted. For understanding the “turn” through a local case, the anecdote by Francisco Ferrandiz about the 2010 exhumation in La Pedraja, Burgos, is of interest (Figure 41).

An elder slowly approached the portable office located in the surrounding area of the excavation [...] and, after carefully observing the archaeological and forensic display, he said to those present, in a whisper, looking suspiciously to the right and left, while he indicated the entire extent of the mass grave with his cane, taking us into his confidence: have you secured the perimeter?²³

The exhumation of the mass grave within forensic protocols therefore fell within the logic of the “Forensic Turn” but so did the way this person reacted. And he responds within the narrative of the investigation of crimes through the recovery of corpses that has circulated through the media. The media have

²¹ Zuzanna Dziuban, ed., *Mapping the ‘Forensic Turn’: Engagements with Materialities of Mass Death in Holocaust Studies and Beyond* (Vienna: Vienna New Academic Press, 2017).

²² Dziuban, 27.

²³ “Un anciano se acercó pausadamente a la oficina portátil ubicada en el entorno de la excavación [...] y, tras observar atentamente el despliegue arqueológico y forense, nos dijo a los presentes, en un susurro, mirando con desconfianza a derecha e izquierda, mientras abarcaba toda la extensión de la fosa con su bastón, regalándonos una confidencia: ¿habéis asegurado el perímetro?” (Translated by the author). *La calavera de Mengele - Prólogo de Francisco Ferrández*, Sans Soleil Ediciones Argentina, October 6, 2015, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.sanssoleil.es/argentina/la-calavera-de-mengele-prólogo-de-francisco-ferrández/>.

also generally shown the success of these techniques, through real or fictional cases, and as part of this “turn” have generated an unexpected resurgence of scientific positivism that has become known among professionals in the sector as the “CSI effect.”²⁴ This effect, based on the heroic image of the forensic scientist in television fiction, has generated great expectations of the possibilities of forensic techniques to locate, recover and identify corpses in violent contexts. This represented a return to confidence in scientific positivism, which was, nevertheless, one of the only safeguards offered by the media to society at a time of profound crisis.

This crisis of the Kingdom of Spain as a Nation-State was evident not just in the local and global economy from 2008 and the economic adjustment policies implemented by the Spanish governments since then.²⁵ Mass protests also took place in this context, such as the seizure of the squares by the 15-M movement in 2011 and the miners’ marches in 2012 or the “dignity” marches in 2014.²⁶ In addition, there was a proliferation of texts that questioned the gentle image of the Transition of the 1970s,²⁷ as well as the hardening of pro-independence and nationalist positions. These led to events such as Catalonia’s unilateral declaration of independence in 2017²⁸ and, alongside it, the popularisation of new populist parties such as Ciudadanos (Citizens), Podemos (We can) and Vox (Voice).

In short, this was a crisis that seemed to go hand in hand with the persistence of the regime established after the War, especially because the terror and fear imposed at the time was still present in the society of the new millennium. Anna Miñarro thus brought the concept of the generational transmission of trauma into psychology in relation to the 1936 *coup d'état*, the

²⁴ N. J. Schweitzer and Michael J. Saks, “The CSI Effect: Popular Fiction about Forensic Science Affects Public Expectations About Real Forensic Science,” *Science*, 47, Jurimetrics (2007): 357-364.

²⁵ Pedro Ramiro and Erika González, *A dónde va el capitalismo español* (Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños, 2019).

²⁶ Jorge Cagiao y Conde and Isabelle Touton, *España después del 15M* (Madrid: Catarata, 2019).

²⁷ Carmen Peña Ardid, *Historia cultural de la Transición: pensamiento crítico y ficciones en literatura, cine y televisión* (Madrid: Catarata, 2019).

²⁸ Fermí Rubiralta i Casas, *Historia Del Independentismo Político Catalán: De Estat Català al 1 de Octubre* (Tafalla: Txalaparta, 2020).

War, and the Dictatorship.²⁹ Miñarro has shown how, through the pain of loss, torture, political persecution, prohibitions, or professional purges, she encountered hidden, unthought-of and unnamed stories in her work. She perceived a generalized fear, as a consequence of the repression, which had been used as means of control and an excuse to introduce structural changes that would otherwise have been rejected.³⁰ That same fear had dragged the situation on for so long, making a return to the graves pertinent. The mass graves were still there, they were now visible in the media, and still the Spanish government offered no symbolic referents to society against the surviving discursive hegemony of the regime. Therefore, other actors decided to build them by breaking with that fear as others did 30 years before. And again the graves were the key place to do so.

POST-EXHUMATION MONUMENT PRACTICES

If we only pay attention to what has been published in the media, it seems that there have been no monument practices following the exhumation of the graves since 2000. However, even the media milestone of the Priaranza del Bierzo exhumation ended with the installation of a plaque.³¹

*This ditch was, for 64 years, the anonymous grave of thirteen
Republican civilians, victims of Franco's repression. Its exhumation, on
21 October 2000, broke the silence about thousands of disappearances
and gave rise to the birth of the Association for the Recovery of
Historical Memory. Their dignity and their tragedy must be part of our
memory.³²*

²⁹ Anna Miñarro and Teresa Morandi, *Trauma y transmisión: Efectos de la guerra del 36, la posguerra, la dictadura y la transición en la subjetividad de los ciudadanos* (Barcelona: Xoroi, 2014).

³⁰ Anna Miñarro and Joan Pijuan, "Sabes como me espeluzna lo que dices: de las Mujeres, del Miedo y de la Transmisión," *Norte de Salud Mental* 12, no. 49 (2014): 54.

³¹ "Los Trece de Priaranza," Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, August 10, 2000, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://memoriahistorica.org.es/los-trece-de-priaranza/>.

³² "Esta cuneta fue, durante 64 años, la fosa anónima de trece civiles republicanos, víctimas de la represión franquista. Su exhumación, el 21 de octubre de 2000, rompió el silencio sobre miles de desaparecidos y dio lugar al nacimiento de la Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica. Su dignidad y su tragedia deben formar parte de nuestra memoria." (Translated by the author).

The members of the ARMH themselves told me, “we do not build monuments.”³³ However, the exhumations led to the construction of dozens of them, all over the country. I was able to visit, document and relate to the experiences of their campaigners in Burgos, Cuenca, Guipúzcoa, Seville, Navarra, Valencia, Ávila, Tarragona, Málaga, Cádiz, Salamanca, Jaén, Coruña, Lugo, Albacete, Zaragoza, Cáceres and Badajoz. Just like with the exhumations of the 1970s, monument practices continued taking place. The point of divergence was that the economic management and the discourses around these monument practices had changed substantially.

Intending to find and exhume the bodies of their relatives from mass graves, groups of relatives and activists organized themselves into associations. This was a mandatory requirement in order to be eligible for the source of funding offered by the government of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero: subsidies based on specific projects so that the work could be carried out privately. The funds they applied for, as was usual during Zapatero’s government, came from the Prime Minister’s Office. However, other municipal, regional, and private subsidies were welcomed by the associations from then on. Such was the case of the ARMH in Burgos itself, which accepted funding from Francesc Torres, an artist who wanted to create a piece of art on the subject of mass graves, and thus obtained the funds for the exhumation of a grave in Villamayor de los Montes.³⁴ Unlike in the 1970s, the organization of commissions to self-manage the process (not only organizationally but also financially) gave rise to formal associations dependent on funds of some kind. Likewise, to access them, it was an additional requirement to present projects, as indicated in the 2007 Law, adapted to forensic methodologies, without further specification. This also resulted in the dependence of these new associations on third party agents who

³³ It is urgent to clarify that the acronym ARMH and the name Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (Association for the Recovery of the Historical Memory) correspond to the organization led by Emilio Silva, the campaigner of the exhumation in Priaranza del Bierzo. However, other associations that have used the expression Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (Recovery of the Historical Memory) in the name of their associations and even the acronym ARMH followed by a regional entity will be named, but they are independent and not formally linked to ARMH.

³⁴ Domingo Martínez Rosario, “Versiones anti-heroicas de la historia reciente de España como recurso en el arte contemporáneo: memoria del presente,” in *Las huellas del franquismo: pasado y presente*, ed. Jara Cuadrado (Granada: Comares, 2019), 1371-1391.

did not participate in a self-managed process as had been the case 40 years earlier.

Nevertheless, to make the exhumation possible there were other requirements, which was a memory of the mass grave and its location. In Villamayor de los Montes, as in so many other places, the grave was still marked with a stone placed after the War, as Fernando García Hernando and José M^a Rojas, members of the ARMH in Burgos, explained to me.³⁵ Fernando told me how he had always wanted to take his father from there, from that pit near a road, and finally bury him in the cemetery. After the odyssey of obtaining funding and the stress of the exhumation itself, the process was completed in 2004.³⁶ 46 bodies were exhumed by teams from the Aranzadi Science Society and the Autonomous University of Madrid, which two years later would be returned to the municipality for reburial in a vault in the cemetery (Figure 42). As with the exhumations of 40 years before, the bodies were again exhibited in municipal buildings, only now explanatory panels introduced the forensic investigation process. As only 9 bodies had been identified, they were finally reburied collectively.³⁷

This need for the new burial thus combined the construction of the vault with a certain symbolism, but it also represented a pragmatic solution to the unexpected fact, following the expectations placed on forensic science, that exhumed bodies which had not been individually identified would have to be reburied. And this situation was not exceptional in Burgos, the province where most exhumations are said to have taken place since 2000.³⁸ For this reason, a large monument was placed in the cemetery of Aranda de Duero (Figure 43). Two plaques with hundreds of names flanked a large relief with a dove. Flowers

³⁵ Interview with José M^a Rojas and Fernando García Hernando in Villa Mayor de los Montes, January 14, 2019.

³⁶ Francisco Ferrández, “Gritos y susurros: Exhumaciones y relatos de la derrota en la España del siglo XXI,” in *Evidencias y narrativas en la atención sanitaria: Una perspectiva antropológica*, ed. Ángel Martínez Hernández, Susan M. Di Giacomo, and Lina Masana (Tarragona: Publicacions URV, 2013), 447-478.

³⁷ Francisco Ferrández, “Death on the Move,” in *A Companion to the Anthropology of Death*, ed. Antonius C. G. M. Robben (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2018), 189-204.

³⁸ Luis Ríos Frutos, “Identificación de restos óseos exhumados de fosas comunes y cementerios de presos de la Guerra Civil y primeros años de la dictadura en Burgos (1936-1943)” (PhD diss., Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2012).

covered the structure and José M^a explained to me how hundreds of bodies from the exhumations they had carried out during the previous years had been reinterred there.³⁹ Although these processes were carried out by prestigious organizations such as the Aranzadi Science Society, and teams such as that of the University of Burgos, many bodies could not be identified or claimed. In this way the idea of the “proper funeral” returned, but it was joined to that of “freedom fighters” for José M^a, who had been denied recognition since the time of the War.⁴⁰ These “fighters” were assassinated from 1936 onwards in a territory where the War did not take place, only the extermination plan of the coup perpetrators.⁴¹

From 2000, monument practices were therefore characterized by this type of vaults, given that the objective of the process was the exhumation of the bodies as dictated by the 2007 Law and the media. This process, however, led to the need to bury the exhumed bodies somewhere, even if this was not the initial objective. In this regard, places such as Estépar, the municipality next to the hill where hundreds of prisoners were executed and buried, are of interest, which I introduced earlier in relation to the resistance of the relatives who, despite the harassment of the Civil Guards, persevered in going to the graves to bring flowers.⁴² In 2014, the exhumations of some of the graves that could be located began, and although identifications were made and some bodies were handed over to their relatives, it was generally not possible to identify all the remains. The large number of those murdered, the absence of relatives of many of them, as well as the lack of both testimonies and DNA samples, made it impossible to fulfil the high expectations that many relatives had of the total identification of those exhumed. Thus, 96 of the bodies exhumed in the cemetery of Estépar in 2017 were buried in a structure

³⁹ Interview with José M^a Rojas in Aranda de Duero, January 14, 2019.

⁴⁰ Francisco Ferrández, “Death on the Move,” in *A Companion to the Anthropology of Death*, ed. Antonius C. G. M. Robben (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2018), 189–204.

⁴¹ Espacio Tangente, ed., *El lugar que ya no está: la represión franquista en Burgos*, (Burgos: Espacio Tangente, 2012).

⁴² Sandra Albo Basurto, “Conflictio y patrimonio disonante: el Monte de Estépar como ejemplo de espacio de memoria,” in *Identidad y patrimonio en Castilla y León* ed. Diputación de Salamanca (Salamanca: Diputación de Salamanca, 2015), 73-92.

campaigned for by three groups: Coordinadora por la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica de Burgos (Coordinating Committee for the Recovery of Historical Memory in Burgos), Espacio Tangente (Tangent Space) the Asociación Cultural Denuncia (Cultural Association Denounces) (Figure 44).

This care on the part of the forensic anthropologists, archaeologists, and those campaigning for the exhumation is thus given form in a structure that not only stores the bodies, but despite the impossibility of identifying them through forensic science, commemorates their names in stone. Similarly, hundreds of kilometres away, Ángel Olmedo, a member of ARMHEx (Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory of Extremadura), explained to me how, when they exhumed a mass grave in Extremadura where not all those murdered were found or only partially found, they suggested that, when building the monument to house the recovered bodies, they should include not only the names of those identified but of all those murdered “as a tribute to all the victims, to avoid differentiating between relatives who had recovered the remains and those who had not.”⁴³ as they did in Llerena in 2007 (Figure 45). An example of this can be found in Extremadura’s Siberia, in Puebla de Alcocer where the bodies of 42 murdered people were exhumed in 2012. Exhumation campaigned by the Agrupación de Familiares de las Víctimas de la represión en Puebla de Alcocer (Association of Relatives of the Victims of Repression in Puebla de Alcocer) .⁴⁴ Then, in 2013, they proceeded to build a monument where the names of the people whose bodies were exhumed from the mass grave were carved in granite (Figure 46) or in Castuera, where the exhumations of the graves of the prisoners of the concentration camp located in the municipality could not be identified, but the names were placed on plaques next to the columbarium housing the bodies of those exhumed by the by the Asociación Memorial Campo de Concentración de Castuera (Castuera Concentration Camp Memorial Association). (Figure 47).

⁴³ Interview with Ángel Olmedo in Mérida, December 5, 2019.

⁴⁴ Laura Muñoz, *Memoria Arqueológica de Exhumación de Las Fosas Comunes de Puebla de Alcocer (Badajoz)* INT 2012/052 (Mérida: Dirección General de Patrimonio Cultural. Department of Education and Culture. Junta de Extremadura, 2014).

On the other hand, in these post-exhumation monument practices there was also a desire to make a political statement in the content of the monument practices. The media discourse had not highlighted the political aspect much, instead encouraging the narratives among those involved that “revenge is not sought,” there were no “grudges,” nor “open wounds.” While in some places the political significance of the vaults is limited, in most of the monument practices a political meaning continued to be assigned to the political meaning of the murders. Thus, alongside these media discourses, in an indirect way the monument practices testified to the political dimension of the exhumation to which they were linked. Consequently, Juan Luis Vega told me how the bodies of those murdered in 1936 were exhumed and buried again in a monument in Paterna de Rivera a few weeks before our interview.⁴⁵

*When I saw the 2007 Law, I saw that this could be done, because the ARMH took the people out of Priaranza. So, I met with historians, with activists who were doing this. I had a meeting, and I told them, I want to do this. They gave me the steps to follow and then I exposed it: first to the city council in a plenary session, then to the Andalusian government. I sent letters to the United Nations and then I started to make my way. But I had many obstacles. At the judicial level, not at the local political level. Even the Church continually tried to stop me. On Friday, two days before the unveiling, I was summoned by a prosecutor to stop the burial. And I told the mayor, the current mayor, that I had all the permits granted by the town council, even from the PP, and that they told me in the letter that we could not unveil the monument. That we could bury them but that it would not be unveiled.*⁴⁶

It was appropriate for the authorities to exhume the graves, but it was inappropriate to unveil the monument. The chosen piece was a figure with two arms: one with a raised fist and the other holding up a book (Figure 48).

⁴⁵ José Luis Gutiérrez Molina, “Sobre las víctimas de la represión golpista en Paterna de Rivera (Cádiz) entre julio de 1936 y marzo de 1937,” Todos los nombres, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://todoslosnombres.org/content/materiales/sobre-las-victimas-la-represion-golpista-en-paterna-rivera-cadiz-entre-julio-1936>.

⁴⁶ Interview with Juan Luis Vega in Paterna de Rivera, July 17, 2019.

This practice of highlighting the political significance of the exhumed bodies through monument practice was not performed without risk either, even 40 years after Franco's death. The vice-president of the Paterna de Rivera association himself had a target painted on the door of his home on two occasions as a threat.⁴⁷ However, what Juan Luis finally spoke to me about was the need for people like him, who had decided to initiate the project, to make contact, to get into networks, to inform themselves, and to begin the struggle by negotiating with the governments and applying for a grant. So, the exhumation was just a small part of a much broader process: a process which differed from case to case and could never be generalized on the basis of a single regional or local situation. While in one municipality in Extremadura I was told of all the facilities that the PSOE council had provided for the exhumation and construction of the monument for the exhumed bodies, a few kilometres away another municipality also governed by the PSOE had put up all kinds of obstacles to prevent it. As in the 1970s and 1980s, the local political situation itself was a determining factor. Especially in the absence of a clear political line in these organizations at the State level. Therefore, each municipality responded to its own trajectory and idiosyncrasy when faced with the decision whether or not to support this type of monument practice of which the exhumation of mass graves was a fundamental part, since the Law only covered the exhumation itself and not the development of any type of monument practice.

But monument practices after exhumations didn't just depend on a certain political will, forensic techniques or subsidies to associations. The location of the mass grave also had to be established, and this was not always a place marked with stones, where perhaps the relatives had been able to bring flowers for the last 80 years. The singer-songwriter and activist Lucía Sócam in Guillena participated in the creation of an association in the municipality,

⁴⁷ "Paterna de Rivera (Cádiz). Pintan diana en la puerta del domicilio del vicepresidente de la ARMH local," Todos Los Nombres, accessed February 25, 2020, <http://www.todoslosnombres.org/content/noticias/paterna-rivera-cadiz-pintan-diana-en-la-puerta-del-domicilio-del-vicepresidente-la>.

Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica “19 Mujeres” de Guillena (Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory “19 Women” of Guillena), in which different neighbours with no special contact among them had converged because they had family backgrounds of persecution. They began to search for the documentation on the women who were murdered in 1937. They were killed due to their political affiliation or because they were partners of party and union members who had escaped from the town and, in order to put pressure on them the new authorities targeted their loved ones.⁴⁸ After they were murdered, their graves were found in Gerena, a nearby municipality, where their bodies lay in one of the rows of the cemetery.⁴⁹

Lucía explained to me that it was thanks to the testimony of José Domínguez Núñez who, with his walking stick, showed them the specific location. When he was seven years old, he was playing near the cemetery. He and his friends heard the truck arrive with the women screaming. From the top of an olive tree, he saw how they made them run to shoot them as they fled, and then buried them in a prepared grave. “Thanks to José Domínguez, we opened it and there were the 17 roses.”⁵⁰ They were reburied in the cemetery of Guillena, where the first thing one sees on entering are the two large plaques with their names and the names of those murdered from the village, under two waving Republican flags, so that the visitor cannot doubt the political significance of these women and the others murdered in Guillena. Various remembrance services have taken place in the cemetery since then and Lucía herself has dedicated a song to them in which she sings “Que no se olvide la memoria de mi gente” (May the memory of my people not be forgotten) as is also written on the plaques in the cemetery (Figure 49).

Besides those small-scale initiatives, it is worth mentioning the experience of Malaga. The city experienced some of the harshest episodes of

⁴⁸ Francisco Cobo Romero, *La represión franquista en Andalucía: balance historiográfico, perspectivas teóricas y análisis de los resultados* (Sevilla: Centro de Estudios Andaluces, 2012), 95.

⁴⁹ Juan Manuel Guijo Mauri, “Las 17 rosas de Guillena. Evidencias de crímenes contra la humanidad en el franquismo,” Todos los nombres, accessed May 10, 2021, https://todoslosnombres.org/sites/default/files/tln_sintesis_informe_antropologico_guillena_r.pdf.

⁵⁰ Interview with Lucia Socam Guillena, May 29, 2019.

large scale persecution carried out after the arrival of the insurgents. At the beginning of 1937, Gonzalo Queipo de Llano led the offensive of the insurgent army, supported by Moroccan regular troops and the Italian CTVs. The capture of the city led to the “desbandá.” Thousands of refugees fled the city in the direction of Almería where they were gunned down and bombed from the sea and air by the insurgent troops.⁵¹ Besides the horrific fate of those who managed to flee, there were those who remained in the city. In Malaga, Hugh Thomas states that there were more than 4,000 murders,⁵² in which Carlos Arias Navarro acted as prosecutor under the nickname “the Butcher of Malaga” forty years before becoming the first president of the government of the Transition. But in the 1930s and 1940s, the panorama left by the repression was one of gigantic mass graves in the San Rafael cemetery, the largest ever found in the whole of country. In the 1970s, a timid monolith had been placed there in memory of those murdered by the local socialists. However, when Malaga city council decided to dismantle the cemetery, the Asociación contra el Silencio y el Olvido por la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica de Málaga (Association against Silence and Forgetting for the Recovery of Historical Memory of Malaga) intervened to exhume the graves. As two of its members, Pepe Sánchez, and Rafael Molina, explained to me, the exhumation work began with the approval of Francisco de la Torre. He was the mayor and PP member who was known for being disconnected from the party at national level and for his liberal affinity. Thus, the town council proposed a solution for the bodies exhumed by the Association: their interment in a monument built in the centre of a memorial park.⁵³ The pyramid housing the bodies had already been constructed and unveiled in 2014 (Figure 50). When the park is finished it will be the largest memorial complex linked to a mass grave in the whole of country (Figure 51).⁵⁴

⁵¹ Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution and Revenge* (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), 195.

⁵² Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War: 1936-1939* (Paris: Ruedo Ibérico, 1976), 635.

⁵³ Interview with José Sánchez and Rafael Molina in Málaga, July 5, 2019.

⁵⁴ Andrés Fernández, “Los trabajos en las fosas comunes del cementerio de San Rafael (Málaga). Metodología arqueológica y fuentes documentales,” *Arch-e, Revista Andaluza de Archivo* 5 (2010): 177-203.

The Malaga project is of interest not just because of its magnitude, but also because it set a standard to aspire to, for instance for the people in Seville, where the relatives decided to remove the gardens and exhume the mass grave (Figure 52). In 2020, María Luisa Hernández was awaiting the progress of the exhumation of the mass grave where her grandfather lies in the San Fernando cemetery in Seville. While in the midst of this process, she explained to me:

We have a very nice reference point, what they are doing in the memorial park in the San Rafael cemetery in Malaga. A beautiful park, where you can sit in silence, where they are going to make sure that there are no games, respect and so on. Here in Pico Reja they could also make a beautiful monument. There they have made a pyramid with the names, here they could make something that is aesthetically pleasing. And also magnificent, that has a beautiful appearance and that also has the names of these murdered people. It should be a place where one can sit, where there is shade and where one can contemplate and read the history or read poems, poems that can be... a beautiful place, where one can rest in peace. A beautiful place, with flowers, with trees, with benches, even, and where one can rest there and accompany all those people who were mistreated and all their family, all their descendants. And where one can feel that peace, that tranquility. And I want my grandfather to be there. Obviously, we don't have a family place either, the generations that have already died have been cremated and so the remains are nowhere. And for me, and I represent the family to some extent, so that he would be there with his companions in the tragedy, because they lived through a tragedy. With the double revictimization, because by being hidden, by being disappeared, by being ignored, by not having the right to a pension, by being singled out, it was and has been so long. 84 years of nonsense and now it can be turned around, can't it? [...] A space of memory, with trees and benches, that one can stand there with the satisfaction of having done one's duty. That a national mandate has been fulfilled because this is not a family affair, the whole country has to know what happened.⁵⁵

In fact, government organizations initiating monument practices like in Malaga has been one of the novelties of the period compared to previous decades.

⁵⁵ Phone interview with María Luisa Hernández, July 27, 2020.

Of these government initiatives, the main and most influential has been the “Columbarium of Dignity” in Elgoibar. An initiative of Gogora, the Institute of Memory, Coexistence and Human Rights of the Basque government, it was unveiled in 2017 in an event attended by the Lehendakari Iñigo Urkullu. He said: “This space symbolises the passage from oblivion to memory, from darkness to light,” considering it “another step in the recovery of Historical Memory” (Figure 53).⁵⁶ The precedent for this initiative was the action taken by the Navarrese government in response to the same need for a practical solution to the inability to identify all the bodies after exhumation. An agreement was reached in 2015 in regional government presided by Unión del Pueblo Navarro (Union of the Navarrese People)⁵⁷ and the city council, to inter bodies exhumed within the framework of the Exhumation Plan of the Government of Navarre.⁵⁸ These actions show that these types of monument practices have begun to be on the agenda of the politics of memory, although they are still in the minority.

In his analysis of the politics of memory in Andalusia, Javier Giráldez explains how, to develop monument practices, the relatives had to gain the support of the local councils to be able to carry out interventions in the cemeteries because they are municipally owned. And indeed, he points out the importance of the fact that it has been their initiatives which, at the municipal, regional, or State level, have allowed actions to be carried out on the graves. If they had not taken the initiative, governmental institutions would have continued (and continue to do so in most of the country) without developing memory policies.

⁵⁶ “Este espacio simboliza el paso del olvido a la memoria, de la oscuridad a la luz [...] un paso más en la recuperación de la Memoria Histórica” (Translated by the author). “Reconocimiento a quienes dieron su vida en defensa de la democracia,” Euskal Irrati Telebista, January 30, 2017, accessed February 25, 2020, <https://www.eitb.eus/es/noticias/politica/detalle/4619592/inaugurado-elgoibar-columbario-dignidad/>.

⁵⁷ Unión del Pueblo Navarro (Union of the People of Navarre).

⁵⁸ “Inhumados en Pamplona los restos de 46 víctimas del golpe militar de 1936,” Euskal Irrati Telebista, April 1, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.eitb.eus/es/noticias/politica/detalle/6307643/inhumadas-pamplona-46-victimas-golpe-militar-1-abril-2019/>.

Taking this fact to the extreme, that without the relatives there would be no remembrance, we could reach a dark conclusion: the day that the day that the most direct relatives have gone, will be the day when the process of recovering historical memory runs the risk of stalling. It will be difficult, and we can only look at the facts here, for governmental institutions to safeguard these memories without the pressure from the relatives and remembrance organizations.⁵⁹

It is probably due to this concern that Javier Giráldez, after writing these words and as Director General of Democratic Memory of the Andalusian government, supported this need to exhume the mass graves and develop monument practices on them. Initiatives which, as he himself stated in his thesis, start from the relatives and organizations, but need governmental support. His decision, therefore, was not to develop a hierarchical memory policy imposing a centralized narrative, but rather to give a voice and official recognition to those who historically had been marginalized.

Finally, it should be noted that there are exhumation initiatives that have led to monument practices on the exhumed grave itself. Of these, the experience of Fonsagrada, where I met Xosefa Ortiz de Galisteo Pérez, Nenoso, and Jesús Samartino Murias, stands out for its revealing story. There, for decades, the memory of the Galician Battalion was preserved. They were a unit operating in Asturias, a part of which was led by a man known as Commander Moreno, a Galician trade unionist and member of the CNT at the time. On his retreat to Galicia, he and his comrades were ambushed in O Acebo. Nenoso and Jesús showed me the place. The place, which today looks like a forest due to reforestation, still preserves the hut where Moreno and his comrades had taken refuge when they were ambushed, and also an inn that existed at the time. This inn was still run by the family who reported the

⁵⁹ “Llevando al extremo este hecho, que sin los familiares no habría memoria, podríamos llegar a una reflexión tenebrosa: el día que los familiares más directos, es decir hijos, nietos y bisnietos, desaparezcan, el proceso de recuperación de la memoria histórica corre el riesgo de desaparecer. Difícilmente, y a los hechos nos remitimos, las instituciones van a velar por esa memoria, si no tienen la presión de los familiares y de las entidades memorialistas” (Translated by the author). Javier Giráldez Díaz, “Política de la memoria y memoria de la política. Una reflexión sobre la memoria histórica en Andalucía” (PhD diss., University of Seville, 2014), 290.

presence of the retreating men to the local Falangists. As in many places, it was incredible how accurately those locations had been kept in memory. Despite not having any family connection with those killed, that massacre made a great impression on the region because they were from Galicia. So much so, that a ballad still survives, which tells the story of Commander Moreno and his fate, explicitly alluding to the place of his murder and that of his comrades.⁶⁰ Based on this information, the ARMH of Galicia proceeded between 2007 and 2008 to exhume the graves where they found those murdered men of the Galicia Battalion mentioned in the ballad.⁶¹ They interred the bodies in the cemetery of Fonsagrada, in a vault. A quote from the Galician poet Ramón Cabanillas was carved on the grave next to the names “Freedom has never lost a fight” (Figure 54). However, Nenoso and Jesús explained to me, not without some discomfort, that they had not been allowed to carry Republican flags during the ceremony. As we walked along the road where the graves were located, Jesús explained to me how they continued to place them on a flagpole tied to a tree in that spot. The exhumation was not enough, and they had also campaigned for the installation of a large post in that spot to commemorate the Galicia Battalion (Figure 55). Both he and Nenoso expressed to me a desire that once again went beyond the presence of the bodies: to create a memorial in the area around the original grave, even though it was now empty, so that the story told in the ballad would not be lost.⁶²

Despite the importance of exhumations, the monument practices linked to exhumations have not been the only ones to be developed since 2000. The practices developed after exhumation, as in the 1970s and 1980s, are not the most common. They require finding the graves of those executed outside of summary trials and burial in cemeteries, and this has not always been possible. Thus, even with the new wave of exhumations, “the majority have either been

⁶⁰ Severiana Murias performs the romance in: “Romance del Comandante Moreno por Severiana Murias,” YouTube, November 26, 2010, accessed April 14, 2020, <https://youtu.be/jWeHc6815Rg>.

⁶¹ “Exhumación A Fonsagrada,” Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, accessed April 14, 2020, <https://memoriahistorica.org.es/exhumacion-a-fonsagrada/>.

⁶² Interview with Xosefa Ortiz de Galisteo Pérez and Jesús Samartino Murias in Fonsagrada, September 22, 2019.

exhumed or have been lost forever due to the passage of time,”⁶³ according to Francisco Etxeberria, the main forensic pathologist from the Aranzadi Science Society involved from the beginning in the exhumation of mass graves. In this way, the monument practices around mass graves linked to their exhumation have had a clear limitation, but this does not mean that there have been no alternative monument practices to these during the period. As was also the case in the 1970s, hundreds of graves were located, often in accessible places such as cemeteries. Although media visibility was given to the exhumation process, the final destinations of the bodies was mostly denied coverage. Therefore, the next section will shed some light on them.

NEW STRUCTURES ON THE GRAVES

Although the media gave little account of it and most of society had never heard about these places, from the 1970s onwards, tributes continued to be paid to the mass graves that had been the object of monument practices. On the dates of the murders, on Republic Day or All Saints’ Day, the mass graves and the buildings erected over them continued to receive visitors. Likewise, when the notion of “Historical Memory” arose, it ignored the work of decades of relatives, researchers, and activists. Despite this, many of the people who had not given up since the immediate post-War period received the notion of “Historical Memory” positively. In the last pages of her memoirs, Emilia Cañadas, who was one of the campaigners of the monument in the Guadalajara cemetery in the 1970s, states:

Before closing these Memoirs of a Republican Woman, I would like to pay a heartfelt tribute to the struggle of my colleagues in the Foro por la Memoria de Guadalajara. They have collected hundreds of verified facts. Most of them are sad and chilling, but they are necessary to give those whose lives were so unjustly taken just for defending Spain back their voice and their stories. A certain sector of the right wing resents this work,

⁶³ “La mayoría o se exhumaron o se han perdido para siempre por el paso del tiempo” (Translated by the author). Juan Miguel Baquero, “Décadas de retraso en memoria histórica condenan a la mayor parte de familias a no recuperar jamás a sus muertos,” *eldiario.es*, October 26, 2019, accessed February 25, 2020, https://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/Franco-realidad-comunes-franquismo-Espana_0_953304881.html.

*and they spend their time saying that these are all old stories. What a lack of shame... And to think that they call themselves popular... The Historical Memory offers specific data of many good Spaniards who ended their days thrown in ditches and secreted along the roads and in the concentration camps of France or Nazi Germany.*⁶⁴

In the case of graves that were not being exhumed, it has been very common to see subsequent interventions with three main motivations: maintenance, political resignification and the inclusion of names. Beyond the routine maintenance that a construction in the open air inevitably needs after forty years, any revision of the grave monuments to update them were intended to introduce discourses that were sometimes more explicit or informative, as well as to include the names of the murdered. These activities were initiated by associations such as the Foro por la Memoria (Memorial Forum) in Guadalajara to which Emilia refers. This and other associations were dedicated to recovering documentation, putting relatives in contact with each other, reinforcing networks of collaboration and deepening knowledge about the historical events linked with the mass graves.

An example of this can be found in Ocaña too. There, the families, who for decades had been gathering every year, and who with their own resources had built three monuments over the mass graves, decided to formalise themselves as an association after the 2007 Law came into force. Carmen Díaz Escobar explained:

It had to become a legal entity in order to be preserved. This was very good. The families would come every November 1st and put in whatever money they could afford, with absolute transparency and honesty. They continued to conserve it, they brought flowers... but it had to be maintain

⁶⁴ “Antes de cerrar estas Memorias de una mujer republicana, quiero rendir un sentido homenaje a la lucha de mis compañeros y compañeras del Foro por la Memoria de Guadalajara. Han recabado centenares de datos auténticos. La mayoría son tristes y escalofriantes, pero necesarios para devolver la voz y la palabra a aquellos a quienes tan injustamente les quitaron la vida solo por defender una España mejor. A cierto sector de la derecha esta labor le molesta y se pasan el día diciendo que todo esto son episodios antiguos. Qué falta de vergüenza... Y pensar que se llaman populares... La Memoria Histórica está ofreciendo datos concretos de muchos españoles de bien que acabaron sus días tirados por las cunetas y desaparecidos por las carreteras y en los campos de concentración de Francia o de los nazis.” (Translated by the author). Emilia Cañadas, *Memorias de una mujer republicana* (Guadalajara: Edición Privada, 2018), 149.

*because it was deteriorating. And then at the beginning of 2000 we set up as an association. Our families were pioneers in all of this because they began to meet spontaneously at the mass grave on the first of November and at other events such as weddings, despite the threats. They got together, got to know each other, became friends. And we were the ones who took over the baton, the children. Julián turned up, he knew that his grandfather was here. And we decided to find out who was here. Then he had the brilliant idea of going to the registry office. We had no idea what we were going to find at the registry office. Some people were speculating that the books might have been burnt. The first thing they did was to refuse us entry. But let's see... Big problems call for big solutions. It didn't take me long to send a fax to the High Court of Justice of Castilla-La Mancha asking for permission to enter, because we argued that we were the legitimate heirs and we wanted to know who was in the mass graves. We went in. And the books were there: old but legible. All of them, complete, no burnt pages, no nothing. [...] And those names, we felt we had to give them physical form.*⁶⁵

This is how they founded AFECO, Asociación de Familiares de Ejecutados en el Cementerio de Ocaña (Association of Relatives of the Executed at the Ocaña Cemetery),⁶⁶ to give shape and visibility to the information they had collected and to support other relatives who were looking for their murdered relatives. Under the umbrella of the association, they applied for a grant to the Prime Minister's office while José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero was in power, with the aim of finally engraving the names that they had collected onto the mass grave. Now the names of the murdered are visible on the sides of the monoliths (Figure 56).

The formalization of associations in relation to the graves and the memorials that were built over them was in turn evidence of a constant movement of renewal of the monuments. In this sense, the most significant experience was that of La Barranca. The grave, a few kilometres from Logroño, housed hundreds of bodies as I explained in previous sections and was never

⁶⁵ Interview with Cármel Díaz Escobar, Julián Ramos Duro, Teófilo Raboso and Celedonio Vizcaino Frutos in Ocaña, January 23, 2019.

⁶⁶ “Qué es AFECO,” AFECO, accessed Feb. 26, 2020, <http://afeco.net/breve-historia-de-afeco/>.

abandoned. In 1979 the site was inaugurated as a civil cemetery with various monuments, and since then the remembrance services have not ceased. Thus, in 2008, La Barranca was founded as Asociación para la Preservación de la Memoria Histórica en la Rioja (Association for the Preservation of Historical Memory in La Rioja).⁶⁷ As an association, they have continued caring for the mass graves and also showing their history in the form of exhibitions, publications, guided tours and even educational handbooks.⁶⁸ They were planning to build an visitors center when I visited them in 2019. In 2011, a sculpture of the “women in black” was included in the enclosure (Figure 57) and progressively panels have been included with the names of the murdered and other information that was uncovered by the research carried out in La Rioja (Figure 58).

The role of the activists in developing monument practices around the mass graves at that time was also essential, but their role must be considered with care. At the national level, the PSOE and IU’s adherence to the discourse of “Historical Memory” may have been presented in a context of political weakness and the need to reaffirm themselves as “left” through the politics of memory, and there are also approaches that have emerged at the local level, as I found in Noblejas, where the PSOE mayor’s office placed a lukewarm monument with names and no political connotation in the cemetery when there was no mass grave of repressed people in the municipality itself. But also on the other hand, the pressures to make the party members adhere to the “Pact of Silence” had been left behind, and no party member was now obliged to fly the flag of the Monarchy like in the seventies.⁶⁹ Therefore, there was no need for mayors and party members to disregard, as in previous decades, the guidelines of their parties at the State level. And with the Law having placed all the weight of responsibility on personal and family initiatives in particular,

⁶⁷ Asociación “La Barranca,” *30 aniversario de la inauguración La Barranca, 1.5.1979-1.5.2009* (Logroño: Asociación para la Preservación de la Memoria Histórica en La Rioja, 2010).

⁶⁸ Asociación “La Barranca,” “Represión en La Rioja, 1936: unidad didáctica.” (Logroño: La Barranca, Asociación para la Preservación de la Memoria Histórica en La Rioja, 2010).

⁶⁹ Alfredo Grimaldos Feito, *Claves de la transición 1973-1986: de la muerte de Carrero Blanco al referéndum de la OTAN* (Barcelona: Península, 2013), 14.

many associations emerged under the protection of political parties and town councils, giving rise to monument practices around mass graves or the political resignification of those that had taken place decades before.

An example of this can be taken from the Zamora municipality of Benavente where Manuel Burrón García, councillor for the PCE-IU,⁷⁰ decided in 2017 to campaign the installation of a sculpture featuring a raised fist on the pre-existing monolith over the mass grave, installed twenty years ago, as well as some crucifixes and a fence that was built in the 1970s (Figure 59).⁷¹ This was also the experience of Colmenar Viejo, where Mariano Martín García, Pablo Aldama Blanch and Roberto Fernandez Suárez explained to me how, starting from a previous investigation motivated by the results of the First Congress of Victims of Francoism held in Rivas in 2012. Motivated by the strength of the “Historical Memory” movement, they began to organize a remembrance service at the mass grave. They brought printed lists of those murdered there, and after some years they put up a plaque displaying the names (Figure 60).⁷² Or in Coín, where IU members decided to create a memory commission to eventually form the Foro Coineño para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (Coín Forum for the Recovery of Historical Memory).⁷³ They applied for a grant and finally arranged for the construction of some mosaics and methacrylate to display the names of the murdered. Names which they had now also managed to collect, and thus re-signify the cross over the mass grave from 1978 (Figure 61)⁷⁴. Finally, it is necessary to point out the large mass grave Patio 42 of the Nuestra Señora del Sagrario cemetery in Toledo. It is estimated that around 800 people were buried there. In 2011, it was covered with artificial turf

⁷⁰ Interview with Manuel Burrón García in Benavente, June 13, 2019.

⁷¹ J. A. G., “Una investigación destaca la singularidad de la fosa de los represaliados en 1936,” *La Opinión. El Correo de Zamora*, accessed Feb. 27, 2020, <https://www.laopiniondezamora.es/benavente/2019/06/29/investigacion-destaca-singularidad-fosa/1174762.html>.

⁷² Interview with Mariano Martín García, Pablo Aldama Blanch and Roberto Fernandez Suarez in Colmenar Viejo, January 15, 2019.

⁷³ Interview with José Manuel García Aguera in Coín, July 5, 2019.

⁷⁴ Foro Coineño para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, *Inauguración del primer monumento en Coín dedicado a las Víctimas del Franquismo en la Guerra Civil* (Coín: Foro Coineño para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, 2010).

and in the centre an altar was built on the initiative of the local IU group present in the city council through the Ganemos Toledo coalition (Figure 62).⁷⁵

The Toledo initiative is a distinct addition to those put forward in recent years within the framework of the so-called “City Councils for Change.”⁷⁶ This was arguably an opportunity to intervene in the symbolic construction of the city or even to opportunistically appropriate a tradition of struggle, and yet they let this opportunity pass them by. The lack of consensus within these organizations revealed the lack of consistency of their public policies in general and of the memory programs in particular. In 2019, in Barcelona, Ada Colau, mayor for Barcelona En Comú, unveiled the Camp de la Bota memorial, near the site of the wall against which more than 1,700 people were shot. However, in the absence of the mass grave, some ventilation grilles of a parking were used as structure for the memorial. At the same time, the Colau government forbade the continued development of monument practices around the mass grave of La Pedrera, where most of the bodies were found.⁷⁷ But the biggest scandal was not the recycling of a space in Barcelona. It was the case of the capital, Madrid. There, given the lack of knowledge of the exact location of the mass grave and destination of the bodies, a memorial was planned by the mayor’s office headed by Manuela Carmena for the Ahora Madrid candidacy. This memorial began to be built two weeks before the end of her term of office,⁷⁸ so it never materialized as such and began to be dismantled before its completion (Figure 63). This happened after a long debate encouraged by the mayor which involved the creation of a commission that recommended not to include the

⁷⁵ “Más de un centenar de personas dignifican a las víctimas franquistas en el Patio 42 del cementerio de Toledo,” Europa Press, February 5, 2011, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.europapress.es/castilla-lamancha/noticia-mas-centenar-personas-dignifican-victimas-franquistas-patio-42-cementerio-toledo-20110205142927.html>.

⁷⁶ Pedro Fernández Riquelme, *Los Ayuntamientos del cambio en España. Eslóganes, denominaciones y discurso en las elecciones municipales de 2015* (Murcia: Ateneo cantonal de estudios políticos, 2016).

⁷⁷ “Colau inaugura un memorial en el Camp de la Bota en homenaje a los ejecutados por el franquismo,” Europa Press, February 24, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.europapress.es/catalunya/noticia-colau-inaugura-memorial-camp-bota-homenaje-ejecutados-franquismo-20190224163818.html>.

⁷⁸ Marta R. Domingo, “Almeida frena el Memorial de La Almudena que incluía a los «chequistas» como víctimas,” ABC, Julio 14, 2019, consultado Mayo 10, 2021 https://www.abc.es/espana/madrid/abci-memoria-historica-almeida-frena-memorial-almudena-incluia-chequistas-como-victimas-201907150058_noticia.html.

names of the murdered and to pay tribute to the perpetrators as “victims” of the War.⁷⁹

Nevertheless, in recent years, regional governments have developed more consistent monument practices in relation to the graves. These were part of regional governments’ assumption of responsibility for what had been neglected by the Spanish government. One of the most successful projects is the Memorial Democratic (Democratic Memorial), which depends on the Catalonian government.⁸⁰ The organization was founded at the time of a progressive coalition,⁸¹ which had broken with the hegemony of Jordi Pujol’s liberal Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya (Democratic Convergence of Catalonia) after two decades in power. As official institution, it supported the installation of signage on the mass graves, which included plentiful information for the interpretation of the repressive past by a visitor unfamiliar with the history of the War and the Dictatorship.⁸² In fact, the Democratic Memorial commission has even published a style manual so that municipal governments that decide to signpost mass graves follow a set of standards for the integration of all of them under the same visual scheme (Figure 64).⁸³

A similar experience is that of the Andalusian government under the last two PSOE governments. Through Decree 264/2011 of 2 August, they created and regulated the official status of Historical Memory Sites of Andalusia and the Catalogue of Historical Memory Sites of Andalusia. In successive agreements they declared numerous mass graves throughout the region as Sites of Memory, installing next to them large panels also uniform with the corporate

⁷⁹ Tatiana G. Rivas, “El Comisionado entierra el plan sectario de Valiente con un memorial para todas las víctimas,” ABC, Abril 26, 2018, consultado Mayo 10, 2021, https://www.abc.es/espana/madrid/abci-comisionado-entierra-plan-sectario-valiente-memorial-para-todas-victimas-201804260939_noticia.html.

⁸⁰ Memorial Democràtic, *Balanç de cinc anys de treball: 2004-2008*. (Barcelona: Memorial Democràtic, 2009).

⁸¹ Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya - Ciutadans pel Canvi (Party of the Socialist of Catalonia – Citizens for the Change), Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (Republican Catalan Left) and Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds - Esquerra Unida i Alternativa (Initiative for Catalonia Greens - United Left and Alternative).

⁸² “Xarxa d’Espais de Memòria,” Memorial Democràtic, accessed March 20, 2020, <http://memoria.gencat.cat/ca/que-fem/banc-memoria-democratica/fons/xem/>.

⁸³ Memorial Democratic, *Manual tècnic de senyalització dels Espais i Rutes de la Memòria* (Barcelona: Memorial Democràtic, 2009).

aesthetics of the Andalusian government (Figure 65).⁸⁴ A similar initiative began to be developed in Navarre in 2018 with the publication of the Foral Law 29/2018 on Places of Historical Memory of Navarre, which has also led to the placement of monuments in line with a unified aesthetic in places including the graves of Olabe, Txauri, Tejería de Monreal, Valcardera, Ibero, those on the road from Igual to Vidángoz, those commemorating the escape from Mount Ezkaba, the Sierra del Perdón and the Otsoportillo chasm (Figure 66).⁸⁵

Finally, one of the most extensive initiatives for the installation of monuments by graves in a systematic manner and under governmental oversight is that of the Principality of Asturias, which under the PSOE government, at the initiative of IU, installed dozens of monuments marking mass graves under the logo of “Memoria Democrática d’Asturias” in 2010 (Figure 67).⁸⁶ However, the lack of political will remains in the country, and the project was interrupted due to several governmental conflicts. This led a group of activists from Siero to create the Plataforma pro Dignificación Fueyes Comunes de Siero (Platform for the Dignification of the Siero Mass Graves) with the idea of continuing to build monuments.⁸⁷ They decided to place plaques on the mass graves that the Principality of Asturias failed to mark in their region, which is presented as a return to the self-management of 40 years ago. Regarding the plaque placed in Lieres in 2019 (Figure 68), one of the members of the platform stated: “We, the civilians, continue to do the work to which the administrations committed themselves.”⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Javier Giráldez Díaz, Miguel Ángel Melero Vargas, and Eduardo Barrera Becerra, “Lugares de memoria en Andalucía. Un camino por recorrer,” *Huarte de San Juan. Geografía e historia*, no. 27 (2020): 47-70.

⁸⁵ José Miguel Gastón Aguas and César Layana Layana Ilundáin, “Del terror a la esperanza, lugares de memoria en Navarra,” *Huarte de San Juan. Geografía e historia*, no. 27 (2020): 71-94.

⁸⁶ Pablo Alcántara, “Los monolitos de la desmemoria,” Radio Recuperando memoria, August 7, 2016, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://radiorecuperandomemoria.com/2016/08/07/los-monolitos-de-la-desmemoria/>.

⁸⁷ Interview with Manuel Amago in Siero, April 20, 2019.

⁸⁸ “Seguimos haciendo nosotros, los civiles, la labor a la que se comprometieron las administraciones” (Translated by the author). A. Illescas, “Lieres reconoce a los represaliados con una placa fuera del cementerio,” *La Nueva España*, December 21, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021 <https://www.lne.es/centro/2019/12/22/lieres-reconoce-represaliados-placa-fuera/2575070.html>.

SECOND PART

CHAPTER FOUR

A Public yet Private Space

FROM MOURNING TO SOCIAL REMEMBERING

When Ricardo Blanco, Jesús Vicente Aguirre González, Pedro Navarro Bretón and Francisco Marín Yécora received me in Villamediana, as representatives of La Barranca association, they gave me various materials that their organization had published: pamphlets, secondary school handbooks, postcards with photographs of the Barranca monument, and even some key rings of the sculptures placed on the graves. All these materials showed me the long road the association had travelled. Among these materials, of interest is a small pocket calendar, with a photograph of La Barranca taken from the outside, with the large sculpture in the foreground (Figure 69). The months are arranged as follows: the days of the week in yellow, public holidays in purple, and 14 April, 1 May, and 1 November in red. On handing it to me, Paco Marín pointed out that the days in red are our days, 14 April is Republic Day, 1 May is the anniversary of La Barranca and 1 November is the day of the relatives.¹

Most of the mass graves share All Saints' Day as the main date for the remembrance service, but the anniversaries of the murders, or other politically relevant dates, combine the tradition of mourning with the political significance

¹ Interview with Ricardo Blanco, Jesús Vicente Aguirre González, Pedro Navarro Bretón and Francisco Marín Yécora in Villamediana, January 21, 2019.

of the atrocities. Thus, on 21 April I attended a remembrance service in Tiraña that had been taking place every year since the 1970s, on the date of the murder of 13 people in the town (Figure 70).² In fact, the homage could even have started earlier at an individual level, as in interviews with the relatives they told me how some of the older relatives claimed to remember attending the occasion before the Transition.³ In the Otsoportillo chasm in the Sierra de Urbasa, the date chosen is the first Sunday in September, also since 1980 when the Etxarri Arantz town council first supported it (Figure 71).⁴ This is the approximate date of the murders in the Sierra in 1936.⁵ In Andalusia, 18 July is an important date. On this day, remembrance services commemorate the date of the *coup d'état*, which meant the rapid arrival of the insurgents, marking the beginning of the repression.⁶ Near Pamplona, on Mount Ezkaba, a remembrance service is organized every year at the end of May to mark the mass escape of prisoners.⁷ Their murder took place over the following days and the corpses were buried in graves in the surrounding municipalities where they were summarily shot. The event has been taking place since 1988 when the first monument was erected (Figure 72). This remembrance service is the culmination of a long history of suffering and struggle. This mourning linked to the monuments therefore underlies something that can be understood as a kind of coping strategy through which the loss has been overcome, sometimes anchored in melancholy.⁸

Notwithstanding the repression, exploitation, and fear, people developed different actions around the mass graves. One cannot fail to be reminded of this situation by Enesida's childhood stories about the repression in Tiraña,⁹

² Albino Suárez, *Tiraña, Abril 1938* (Pola de Laviana: Albino Suárez, 2005).

³ Interview with collective of relatives in Tiraña, April 21, 2019.

⁴ Balbino García de Albizu, *¿Qué hicimos aquí con el 36?: la represión de civiles en retaguardia por su ideología en las Améscoas y Urbasa* (Pamplona: Lamiñarra, 2017), 361.

⁵ García de Albizu, 112-86.

⁶ Jesús Narciso Núñez Calvo, "La represión y sus directrices sevillanas en la provincia de Cádiz," *Almajar: Revista de Historia, Arqueología y Patrimonio de Villamartín y la Sierra de Cádiz*, no. 2 (2005): 195-208.

⁷ José Francisco Etxeberria, Koldo Pla, and Elisa Querejeta, *El Fuerte de San Cristóbal en la memoria: de prisión a sanatorio penitenciario: el cementerio de las botellas* (Pamplona: Pamiela, 2014).

⁸ Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. Volume XIV*, ed. James Strachey and Anna Freud (London: Vintage, 2001), 243-58.

⁹ Enesida García Suárez, *Mi infancia en el franquismo: Tiraña, Asturias, 1938* (Oviedo: Cambalache, 2018).

and the extreme violence suffered by her and her siblings as survivors of the murder of their parents, or the resistance of the women in La Barranca or Ocaña, who after decades of bringing flowers managed to claim the grave.¹⁰ These graves that have been the object of long standing monument practices and the associations linked to them have developed an extensive range of social projects surrounding them: workshops, theatre performances, visits, books, as well as remembrance services. Belonging to communities with social significance was of great help: the close relationship between relatives and activists, forged in the 1970s in the context of the resistance at the grave and in the subsequent collaborations between political actors and relatives, where the closest relatives were not also activists in some way.

I observed these communal coping strategies when I participated in the remembrance services at the graves. Visiting the mass graves at that time meant visiting the sites in order to recognize them and understand the long monument practice that had led these places to be preserved until the present day. In different parts of the country, I found politicized rituals, where family grief was part of a political struggle, and the activists mingled with the relatives, sharing in their tears and in the singing of hymns and the reading of heart-rending stories or heroic dreams of a new society in the years of the Republic. In Tiraña, in the context of the heartfelt remembrance service, the song of the “Socialist International” is sung every year. In Otsoportillo, I didn’t just meet relatives of the murdered. The whole local community was involved in the remembrance, and the Basque national identity was acknowledged in the use of the Basque language and traditional dances. On 18 July, in Dos Hermanas, many mourn not only their own family members. The words of Jesús Mari García during the 2019 service remembering some of the women murdered in the repression were part of the task begun by Pepe Sánchez years before to recover the stories of those murdered and their political significance, dedicating the remembrance service to one murdered person each year.

¹⁰ Asociación para la Preservación de la Memoria Histórica de La Rioja, ed., *Mujeres de Negro* (Logroño: Asociación para la Preservación de la Memoria Histórica de La Rioja, 2011).

In this sense, the question arises as to whether we find politicized relatives or relatives who identify with a political community. It is not possible to generalize, but I did recognize that in the framework of the encounters that take place around the monuments, a process of mutual recognition had been forming for years between the relatives of the murdered and the activists, whether or not the relatives or the activists were themselves members of the other group. Thanks to Yerba Suarez, I understood through Tiraña's story the importance of this mutual recognition and support between organizations. Her family descended from those murdered in that mass grave, to which relatives would go before the Dictatorship, over which a mock vault was built in the 1970s, and to which they have gone every year since then, as I mentioned. But her grandmother Mercedes Díaz Coto realized that, if she did not involve the party members of the Laviana socialist group in the commemoration, in the long term it could end up being lost. Subsequently, it shifted towards an associative format not linked to traditional militancy with the formalization of the Asociación de Familiares y Amigos de la Fosa Común de Tiraña (Association of Relatives and Friends of the Mass Grave of Tiraña). The idea was no longer to link the association to a single political party but to question the whole of society through memorial activism, something that was formalized through books and social work.¹¹ This experience showed me the need to give a social dimension to mourning at the monument and integrate it into the reality of the living. The same thing happened when in the La Pedrera in Barcelona, not only was it decided to build a “pietà” next to the grave, but also to sing “Els Segadors.”¹² In Castilla or Extremadura, dozens of participants sang “The Internationale” at the end of the remembrance service, or in commemorations in Andalusia where the anthem of the Republic was played together with the “Anthem of Andalusia” with lyrics by Blas Infante, also assassinated in 1936. The narrative of the mainstream media and mainstream political groups is to

¹¹ Interview with Yerba Segura in Oviedo, November 17, 2019.

¹² Maria Dolors Bernal, and Joan Corbalan, *La veu dels morts silenciats* (Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, 2017), 29.

separate the two notions.¹³ They speak of a process that is apparently only familiar and politicizing it would even be in “bad taste.” But the forensic scientist Francisco Etxeberria himself denounced in a conference in 2015

We have recovered more than 6,000 or so skeletons of people who had families, who had political demands, who had trade union affiliations and all manner of other things. Someone said to us at the beginning: you are doing this for political reasons. Of course, we are. Of course, this is done for political reasons. It is because of politics that there are still graves hidden along the roadsides in Spain. ¹⁴

Despite the disagreements between political parties on the politics of memory, this point of “non-politicization” is often the subject of consensus.¹⁵ However, the dynamic is the opposite in the case of rituals linked to the monuments.

In some of the largest celebrations held throughout the country, politicization could not be more evident. In fact, in the remembrance service organized in Paterna in 2019, traditionally coordinated by the Plataforma 14 de abril por la III República (Platform 14 April for the Third Republic) with the collaboration of the Republican Athenaeum of Paterna and with the historical participation of organizations such as PCPE or CNT, it was the first year in which the conglomerate of political organizations was joined by the relatives of the recently created Federación Asociaciones de Familiares Víctimas del Franquismo Fosas Paterna (Federation of Associations of Relatives of Victims of Francoism Graves Paterna) (Figure 73).¹⁶ Or in Granada, where for the first

¹³ “Encuentro digital con Emilio Silva,” El Mundo, October 29, 2008, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.elmundo.es/encuentros/invitados/2008/10/3301/>.

¹⁴ “Hemos recuperado más de 6000 y pico esqueletos que son personas, con sus familias, con sus reivindicaciones políticas, con su militancia sindical y todo este asunto. Alguien nos dijo al principio: esto lo hacéis por cuestión política. Claro. Claro que esto se hace por cuestión política. Es que es por cuestión política por lo que en España sigan existiendo fosas clandestinas en las cuentas de las carreteras” (Translated by the author). Francisco Etxeberria Gabilondo, “Congreso Internacional: Cuerpo, Ciencia, Memoria y Política en las exhumaciones contemporáneas, ILLA-CSIC, 2015,” YouTube, September 22, 2015, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5hEoEDtil4>.

¹⁵ Berta López, “Las propuestas de los partidos para el 28-A: memoria histórica,” elPeriodico, April 15, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.elperiodico.com/es/politica/20190415/las-propuestas-de-los-partidos-para-el-28-a-memoria-historica-7409075>.

¹⁶ “Asociaciones de familiares de fusilados de Paterna se unen en una federación para acelerar las exhumaciones,” 20minutos, March 6, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.20minutos.es/noticia/3580920/0/asociaciones-familiares-fusilados-paterna-se-unen-federacion-para-acelerar-exhumaciones/>.

time the remembrance organized at the cemetery walls on 20 July 2019 was organized in a unified way, by relatives, associations, and diverse political organizations. During the ceremony, the heart-breaking account of the repression was combined with the contribution of the murdered man to society by working for a “better world.” Thus, a granddaughter painted a picture of both a loved one and a political agent who deserves recognition by relating the life story of Francisco Menoyo Baños, one of the Republican mayors of Granada assassinated after the coup.¹⁷ With her words, his granddaughter constructed an identity which, starting from the pain of his loss for the family, goes on to present her loved one as a political hero for all those present at the political level (Figure 74).

On the other hand, All Saints’ Day is not the only day on which people traditionally return to the mass graves where the monuments were built. Returning at other times that are not associated with the Catholic calendar expresses the social value of these chosen dates and of the very act of going to the site, which is not simply a matter of mourning but of an inter-subjective exchange. The Barranca calendar makes explicit the family dimension of mourning, but also the collective and political dimension. In this way, the monument becomes not only a place of mourning, but also a place where activists and relatives find common ground. Thus, what is relevant about monument practices is that they have not ended with the exhumation or with the construction of architecture over the mass grave to commemorate or contain the dead. On the contrary, they continue to be reproduced year after year. In this sense, the practice contrasts with the idea that interventions on mass graves are aimed at “healing wounds” or “moving on” as many authors,¹⁸

¹⁷ Michael Alpert, *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 343.

¹⁸ José Guillermo Fouce Fernández, “La Memoria Histórica cierra heridas,” *Nómadas: Critical Journal of Social and Juridical Sciences*, no. 20 (2008): 519-21.

journalists,¹⁹ and politicians²⁰ comment and rehearse daily in the media.²¹ In fact, the gatherings that are an expression of how those attending identify with the struggle faced by those who were murdered there. This dimension of memory can correspond to the last phase of mourning described by Sigmund Freud: When accepting that the object no longer exists, the surviving ego confers value on new objectives.²²

REPRESENTATIONS OF DEFEAT

These mass graves and their monuments represent a place of political importance for many organizations when it comes to organizing commemorations. The annual remembrance services organized on these sites by memory associations, political parties and trade unions state the recognition of those who were murdered in the framework of the construction of an alternative political project, which they either identify with informally or formally connect with as historical organizations. The second time I visited the Oiartzun cemetery, Olatz Retegi told me how on *Aberri Eguna*, the day of the Basque homeland, a Basque flag “ikurriña” is used to be placed on the mast by the monument that houses the bodies exhumed from the mass graves near the town.²³ The identification of today’s Basque nationalists with those murdered in the context of the 1936 *coup d'état*, the War and the Dictatorship, is present in this small act of choosing this grave as the place to raise a flag on their national day. The anthems, therefore, sung at the foot of the grave speak of a need to symbolically connect those who were murdered to the current political situation. The singing of Andalusian or Catalonian hymns at various events, mentioned in the previous point, shows how certain contemporary groups

¹⁹ Natalia Junquera, *Valientes: el relato de las víctimas del franquismo y de los que les sobrevivieron* (Madrid: Aguilar, 2013).

²⁰ Junta de Andalucía, *Susana Díaz valora la Memoria Histórica para conocer la verdad, reparar y cerrar heridas*, YouTube, accessed March 12, 2020, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Y6g22xFcmk>.

²¹ Repor - Abrir fosas, cerrar heridas, RTVE.es, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.rtve.es/alacarta/videos/repor/repor-abrir-fosas-cerrar-heridas/5256759/>.

²² Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. Volume XIV*, 243-258.

²³ Interview with Olatz Retegi Rekalde in Oiartzun, February 17, 2019.

identify with those who were assassinated while constructing national and regional identities different from that of the centralist Spanish State model promulgated by reactionary and pro-coup factions. I recognized the same process at work when, in the ceremonies held on 13 April in the General Cemetery of Valencia and on 14 April in the Paterna cemetery, the people gathering to pay their respects at the mass graves, were accompanied by *dolçainers*, traditional Valencian flautists, and the whole event was conducted in the Valencian language.

The 1931 Constitution set out a new State model that provided a political and administrative structure for the country. Antoni Jordà i Fernández pointed out that there was a desire to

establish a great integral State, in which the regions could work together with greater Spain through an integral system, making it possible for each of the regions to receive the autonomy it deserves for its degree of culture and progress. Some will want to remain part of the larger union, others will have their self-determination to a greater or lesser degree²⁴

in the words of Luis Jiménez de Asúa, President of the Drafting Commission. This was a model that would make the 1932 Statute of Catalonia possible, as well as start writing the Basque and Galician Statutes. It was the Constitution of the Second Republic itself that recognized the possibility of granting autonomy to the regions based on historical, cultural, and economic criteria through Article 11. Thus although the possibility of federation was not genuinely feasible, it represents a fundamental shift towards recognizing regionalist and nationalist aspirations.²⁵ This is a problem that has been dragging on historically, a product of the War of Secession and the abolition of the *fueros*, legal statutes of medieval origin that for centuries protected a system

²⁴ “establecer un gran Estado integral, en el que sean compatibles, junto a la gran España, las regiones, y haciendo posible, en ese sistema integral, que cada una de las regiones reciba la autonomía que merece por su grado de cultura y de progreso. Unas querrán quedar unidas, otras tendrán su autodeterminación en mayor o menor grado” (Translated by the author). Antoni Jordà i Fernández, “Federalismo, regionalismo, nacionalismo: el restablecimiento de la Generlitat y el Estatuto catalán durante la Segunda República,” *Iura vasconiae: revista de derecho histórico y autonómico de Vasconia*, no. 10 (2013): 372.

²⁵ Jordà i Fernández, 386.

of local self-government.²⁶ Therefore, the emergence of these symbols in the rituals on the monuments linked to the mass graves implies a much broader social dimension, where language, music, costumes, and dances can be understood as responding to claims of another possible territorial model which the assassinated were assumed to have died for: either because they actively advocated it or simply because their identity suggested a resistance to Spanish centralism.

But the social dimension of the historical conflict is also present in the aforementioned songs like “The Internationale” in its different versions: communist, socialist or anarchist. Following the proclamation of the Republic in April 1931, the workers’ movement also began to enjoy certain freedoms and prospects for the future that were out of reach under the Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera and the Monarchy. The CNT represented one of the greatest forces of workers’ unionization in terms of achieving strikes, adopting in the National Plenum of November 1930 an agreement for the setting up of a revolutionary movement.²⁷ The PSOE and the UGT, of which large sections of the leadership had been favoured by the Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera to incorporate certain corporatist social measures into their political agenda,²⁸ now began to split into different factions. To overcome the crisis to which the party was subjected, it now opted for a coalition with the liberal republican parties, as Salvador Forner points out, “the differences began only at the point of defining the role that the PSOE should play in that revolution.”²⁹ The PCE, in turn, had held its Third Congress in 1929 and was also preparing for the future “bourgeois-democratic” revolution. It had its sights set on the peasantry and the working class to play a leading role in it. They argued that they should be integrated into the republican reformist agenda with all the repercussions that

²⁶ Santiago de Pablo Contreras, “El Estatuto vasco y la cuestión foral en Navarra durante la II República,” *Gerónimo de Uztariz*, no. 2 (1988): 42-48.

²⁷ Salvador Forner Muñoz, “El movimiento obrero en la II República,” *Anales de Historia Contemporánea*, no. 5 (1986): 166-167.

²⁸ Julio Aróstegui, *Francisco Largo Caballero: el tesón y la quimera* (Barcelona: Debate, 2013), 173-98.

²⁹ “las diferencias comenzaban tan solo en el momento de definir el papel que el PSOE debía desempeñar en esa revolución” (Translated by the author). Salvador Forner Muñoz, “El movimiento obrero en la II República,” *Anales de Historia Contemporánea*, no. 5 (1986): 167.

would bring.³⁰ Thus, during the years of the Second Republic, initiatives were widely developed to lay the foundations for a new system of labour relations. A new legal framework for labour relations was created, including subsidies, fair hiring practices, labour inspections and the promotion of cooperatives.³¹ Land reform was also proposed. This measure failed due to the inability of the government to tackle the problem from a reformist point of view and the disputes between parties (and even within the PSOE itself), as well as the blocking of the project during the reactionary government headed by the CEDA.³² As a result, in the 1930s the CNT continued to play a leading role in the uprisings and insurrections.³³ Also in 1934, in view of the inadequacy of the reform, anarchists, socialists and communists led a revolution. This was cut short and repressed by the government, led by the Radical Republican Party of Alejandro Lerroux in alliance with the Catholic conservatives of the CEDA and the Agrarian Party.³⁴ From that failure within the framework of republican legality, and before the outbreak of conflict, organizations such as the CNT and the POUM gave free rein to their revolution.³⁵ At the same time, large sections of the PSOE and the PCE fully identified with the international anti-fascist movement, influenced by the Spanish League for the Defence of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, Freemasonry and the Third International.³⁶ These facts, which speak of the importance of workers' struggles at that time, would explain the link to a tradition of political struggle when it came to visiting the graves for remembrance services (Figure 75). There, trade unions such as the UGT see themselves recognized or try to establish legitimacy by reinforcing the link

³⁰ Fernando Hernández Sánchez, "El Partido Comunista de España en la Segunda República," *Bulletin d'Histoire Contemporaine de l'Espagne*, no. 51 (June 1, 2017): 85-100.

³¹ Julio Aróstegui Sánchez, *La república de los trabajadores: la Segunda República y el mundo del trabajo* (Madrid: Fundación Francisco Largo Caballero, 2006), 176-311.

³² Miguel Ángel Giménez Martínez, "El fracaso de la reforma agraria en las Cortes de la Segunda República," *Bulletin d'Histoire Contemporaine de l'Espagne*, no. 51 (2017): 197-217.

³³ Ángel Herrerín López, "El insurreccionalismo anarquista durante la II República," *Bulletin d'Histoire Contemporaine de l'Espagne*, no. 51 (2017): 101-17.

³⁴ Adrian Shubert, *The Road to Revolution in Spain: The Coal Miners of Asturias, 1860-1934* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987).

³⁵ Julián Casanova Ruiz, "El sueño anarquista: guerra civil y revolución," in *El combate por la historia: la República, la Guerra Civil, el Franquismo*, ed. Ángel Viñas Martín (Barcelona: Pasado & Presente, 2012), 399-416.

³⁶ Hugo García et al., *Rethinking Antifascism: History, Memory and Politics, 1922 to the Present* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2018), 94.

between the name of their current organization and that of a historical organization,³⁷ while others such as CGT or CCOO, which did not exist at the time of the Republic, claim to be heirs of the trade unionists of that time in some way (Figure 76).³⁸

But beyond political and trade union organizations, there are other groups that are acknowledged in these ceremonies. In Guadalajara, I witnessed the unveiling of a plaque in recognition of the women of Guadalajara murdered during the War and the Dictatorship, in the ossuary next to one of the mass graves in the city's cemetery. This action was carried out by Mujeres Libres de Guadalajara (Free Women of Guadalajara) and the Plataforma Feminista de Guadalajara (Feminist Platform of Guadalajara) (Figure 77). When I talked with them, they explained to me how none of them had a family connection with the murdered women, but nevertheless they felt linked to them by their struggle.³⁹ Thus, a ceremony was held at which flowers were placed and poems were read as well as the names of the murdered women, after which a plaque was unveiled which says: “A todas las mujeres asesinadas que lucharon por la libertad frente al fascismo. Por vosotras, por nosotras, por todas. Juntas gestando futuro, aún en medio de la noche nadie nos detendrá” (To all the murdered women who fought for freedom in the face of fascism. For you, for us, for all of us. Together we are building the future, even in the middle of the night, no one will stop us).⁴⁰

The monuments linked to the mass graves are thus part of a broad social context. The monuments involve interventions in their surroundings in the

³⁷ Jorge Moreno, “Socialistas y ugetistas recuerdan en el cementerio del Carmen a las víctimas de la Guerra Civil,” El Norte de Castilla, April 14, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.elnortedecastilla.es/valladolid/socialistas-ugetistas-recuerdan-20190414134116-nt.html>.

³⁸ “CC.OO. organizes this Thursday a tribute to the victims of the Camposancos concentration camp (A Guarda),” GaliciaPress, October 10, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.galiciapress.es/texto-diario/mostrar/1593911/ccoo-organiza-jueves-homenaje-victimas-campo-concentracion-camposancos-guarda>.

³⁹ Interview with members of Mujeres Libres de Guadalajara and the Plataforma Feminista de Guadalajara, March 3, 2019.

⁴⁰ Foro por la Memoria de Guadalajara, “Las feministas alcarreñas colocan una placa de homenaje a las fusiladas por el franquismo,” Foro por la memoria, April 3, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.foroporlamemoria.info/2019/03/las-feministas-alcarrenas-colocan-una-placa-de-homenaje-a-las-fusiladas-por-el-franquismo/>.

form of ceremonies and commemorations. Through the monument, the mass grave thus becomes a meeting place, and visiting it, due to its historical significance, makes power relations and political affiliations explicit, whether or not one has a family connection with the murdered. You could say that these remembrance services are part of what Thomas W. Laqueur calls “The work of the dead,” which is only possible “because they remain so deeply and complexly present and because they share death with its other avatars: ancestors, ghosts, memory, history.”⁴¹ And in this sense, the presence of death in those avatars that are summoned in the services by the mass graves that were the object of monument practices is manifested as defeat, unfulfilled anti-fascist deeds or failure of both the reformist and revolutionary projects described above. Although it is not a mass grave, Luis García Montero describes in his verses inspired by Ángel González’s visit to the grave of Antonio Machado:

[...]
*What brings us here,
is not the dawn of childhood.
These sacred places let us live
our history through each other's eyes.
The flowers on Machado's tomb
echo the colour of a flag
made sacred by
my melancholy.
All we have lost,
these cold hands, these words lost in time,
the pain of lives cut short
by the sharp edge of their shattered destiny,
all this rests now, all but naked,
in a poet's grave.
When do we arrive in Seville?
his mother asked when they entered Colliure.
Such hard luck
for people to be protected by*

⁴¹ Thomas Walter Laqueur, *The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 79.

nothing more than a poem's mercy.

So hard

Machado's final solitude.

The moon comes to the sea,

the sea comes to Seville,

we come to a memory

and to this pale,

helpless feeling

of a shared defeat.⁴²

The consequence of defeat is made explicit in the discomfort of mourning.

That is why the ceremonies I attended were always marked by that melancholy described by García Montero, that “helpless feeling of a shared defeat.”⁴³

Truncated political projects, added to the feeling of debt and shared defeat after decades of repression and denial of one’s own existence by the Spanish government, led to the construction of a particularly complex conceptual framework for the political communities that keep monument practices alive through remembrance services and other activities. These communities ultimately look to the future from a painful past that induces nothing but the suffering of melancholia. Sigmund Freud argues that mourning, *Trauer*, differs from melancholia, *Melancholie*, and that although they are common responses to loss, the former reaction involves awareness of the specific loss of the beloved, whereas in melancholia, the bereaved would not be able to identify or understand the loss, so it is an unconscious process.⁴⁴ The absence of the “other,” the lack of the “other” can lead to a feeling of abandonment and sometimes to cowardice and melancholy itself can be understood as an obstacle

⁴² “Lo que nos trae aquí, / no es el sol de la infancia. / Los lugares sagrados nos permiten vivir / una historia de todos en primera persona. / Las flores de la tumba de Machado / imitan el color de una bandera /sagrada por mandato / de mi melancolía. / Aquello que perdimos una vez, / y el frío de las manos, la palabra en el tiempo, / el dolor de las vidas que se cortan / en el cristal de los destinos rotos, / descansa hoy, casi desnudo, / en una tumba de poeta. / ¿Cuándo llegamos a Sevilla?, / preguntaba su madre al entrar en Collioure. / Qué difícil la suerte / de los pueblos que viven protegidos / por la misericordia de un poema. / Qué difícil la última / soledad de Machado. / La luna llega al mar, / el mar llega a Sevilla, / nosotros a un recuerdo / y a esta pálida, / desarmada emoción / de compartir una derrota.” (Translated by Judith Kingston and the author). Luis García Montero and Françoise Dubosquet Lairys, *Une mélancolie optimiste = Una melancolía optimista* (Paris: Al Manar, 2019), 101-104.

⁴³ García Montero and Dubosquet Lairys, 103.

⁴⁴ Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. Volume XIV*, 243-58.

to desire.⁴⁵ Ezno Traverso describes this attitude in the “left.” He argues that revolutions have always had a need for strategic remembrance, preserving past experiences to face the future. Nevertheless, the expectation of better times would have been buried after the fall of the Soviet Union and the socialist block, thus falling into a state of melancholy at the loss of the beloved in Freudian terms, according to Traverso. The beloved can also be a collective ideal, and this would be made explicit in manifestoes, political programs, and culture.⁴⁶ And the remembrance services at the site of the mass graves represent this melancholy, which ultimately arises from failure.

When it comes to constructing these political identities from defeat, through the remembrance ceremony at the grave, it benefits the collective by making them feel heirs to a historical struggle. However, this construction of political identity from defeat is not exempt from criticism from other collectives. For years, a service of remembrance has been organized at the monument every year on 14 April. On my first of many visits to the Guadalajara cemetery, Xulio García Bilbao, a member of the Foro por la Memoria in Guadalajara explained to me how, in his opinion, 14 April, the day of the Republic, is not a day just to go to the cemetery, but to go into the streets, where commemorative and protest demonstrations are usually organized⁴⁷. Going to the grave on this day can lead to a perception of the republican ideals as extinct. It represents being stranded in the past, prey to melancholy, incapable of influencing current political debate. In a way, the wreath laying on 14 April, while it constitutes a symbolic repayment of the debt with the republican past, also draws attention to the impossibility, given the weakness of the republican movement today, of ever coming to proclaim a Third Republic. Colin Davis adds a fundamental component to the notion of the return of the dead to the present: “So the dead return in part because their

⁴⁵ Coralía Echeverría Fernández, “Melancolía: un obstáculo al deseo,” *Metaphora*, no. 3 (2004): 39-54.

⁴⁶ Enzo Traverso, *Mélancolie de gauche: La force d'une tradition cachée (XIXe-XXIe siècle)* (Paris: La Découverte, 2018).

⁴⁷ Interview with Xulio García Bilbao in Guadalajara, January 11, 2019.

affairs on earth are not yet complete.”⁴⁸ The political agenda that is remembered by visiting the monuments is unfinished and identifying with this unfulfilled political agenda can easily induce melancholy, that melancholy that makes it impossible to achieve your desire. Nevertheless, the possibility of overcoming this melancholic stage, through the incorporation of the lost object into the ego, the identification with it.⁴⁹ This need to overcome the melancholic state, which underlies Xulio’s criticism, is linked to an interesting observation by James Berger: “our culture remains haunted by multitudes of ghosts, who are ourselves, the living symptoms of historical catastrophes, and we cannot determine how to respond to our traumatic histories.”⁵⁰

Society itself, as a living testament to the 1936 *coup d'état*, War and Dictatorship, has the power to decide what to do with the inheritance represented by the monument. Xulio argued that it was inappropriate to go to the grave on 14 April, but he is not denigrating the republican past and the political ambitions of those murdered there, quite the contrary: he carries out a highly valuable task together with his colleagues in the Foro por la Memoria, researching, disseminating, supporting the relatives of those murdered, and giving value to these murdered people, not only through the monument practices but also through a wide range of activities that are carried out by his organization. Identifying with the murdered does not mean the end of mourning for them. Taking up the political agency of the murdered women was what underpinned the logic of the plaque that feminists, supported by the Foro, placed in Guadalajara itself: “Together we are creating a future, even in the middle of the night, no one will stop us.”⁵¹

⁴⁸ Colin Davis, *Haunted Subjects: Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis and the Return of the Dead* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 2.

⁴⁹ León, Natalia, “La Respuesta Melancólica” in *La respuesta melancólica. Jornadas Jacques Lacan y la Psicopatología* (Buenos Aires: Universidad de Buenos Aires, 2014).

⁵⁰ James Berger, *After the End: Representations of Post-Apocalypse* (University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 52.

⁵¹ Foro por la Memoria de Guadalajara, “Las feministas alcarreñas colocan una placa de homenaje a las fusiladas por el franquismo,” Foro por la memoria, April 3, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.foroporlamemoria.info/2019/03/las-feministas-alcarrenas-colocan-una-placa-de-homenaje-a-las-fusiladas-por-el-franquismo/>.

Just as the feminists of Guadalajara were looking to the future with their remembrance service, the speeches I heard on 14 April in the Paterna cemetery were also focused on what was to come. “Let’s go for the Third [Republic].” Applause resounded and flags waved on that April day to signify the desire to build a new Republic, concentrated at the gates of the cemetery (Figure 78). The wreaths laid by organizations were interspersed with floral offerings from activists and relatives on the monuments that were covering the graves (Figure 79). Another day was chosen for the family to grieve which was not the anniversary of the proclamation of the second Republic. But the overcoming of melancholy was made explicit in the speeches not just in the desire to proclaim a “Third.” It also meant that the program of activities did not end at the mass grave on 14 April. On that afternoon, the participants were once again convened in the centre of Valencia, which was the seat of government of the Republic from 1936 to 1937 instead of Madrid. It was a demonstration not only to commemorate the proclamation of the Second Republic 88 years earlier, but also to demand the proclamation of a new Republic. In this remembrance service at the monument, the mourners abandoned their melancholy as they integrated the ideals of the murdered into their current political agenda.

EMERGING FROM URBAN OSTRACISM

When I visited the site of La Pedrera mass grave in the Montjuic cemetery in Barcelona with Ricard Conesa, I saw a space that represented one of the largest graves in the whole of the country, and the largest monument of this kind in Catalonia. A wide entrance with pillars bearing the names of the murdered (Figure 80), leads to a large grassy esplanade: the mass grave (Figure 81). Various sculptures and plaques complete the complex, which also includes the mausoleum of the president of the Catalan government during the War, Lluís Companys.⁵² At the back of the same enclosure were now piled up the plaques and tombstones which for years were placed over the large mass grave which

⁵² Ricard Conesa i Sánchez, “Del duelo clandestino al recuerdo colectivo : El Fossar de la Pedrera del Cementerio de Montjuïc,” ed. Conxita Mir and Josep Gelonch, *Duelo y Memoria: Espacios para el recuerdo de las víctimas de la represión franquista en perspectiva comparada* (Lleida: Universitat de Lleida, 2013): 183.

had remained in use continuously even after the repression (Figure 82). This was the poorest part of the cemetery, on the outskirts of the city. It was a place for mass graves, for burials in the ground, for those who could not afford to pay for any other type of burial. It was also a place for unclaimed bodies. Thus, among the various plaques with political connotations and references to historical organizations such as the International Brigades, the Partido Socialista Unificado de Cataluña (Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia) or the local Freemasons, which preceded the great intervention project on the grave one stood out, not for its form, but for the painful and revealing text in relation to this space:

To the memory of my dearest mother

Emilia Gil Albesa

She died on 8-7-1942 at the age of 26 and due to lack of financial means and social conscience she was buried in this place. I also wish to pay tribute to the memory of all those people who, because of their humble means, religion, or political ideals, have been buried in this sad and forgotten place over the years. My tears, my pain, my hate, and the darkness did not let me see the light of the place where you are. Today, fortunately, after stumbling in darkness I found you and my light, which was grey, now has colour. Death is the only human condition that makes us equal, even if the living continue to persist in our differences.

May God receive you in his glory.

Your son always cried for you

This anonymous son of a young mother who died in conditions of extreme poverty, thus recognizes the negative charge of this place. He describes a place where the poor, the excluded and the repressed were united because of the rejection they suffered from the regime for decades (Figure 83). I recognized this situation in a multitude of mass graves that have been the object of monument practices in cemeteries that I was able to visit, such as those in Toledo, Seville, Valencia, Oviedo, and Cuenca, among others.

As part of a drive towards public sanitation in the 18th century, the dead began to be buried individually, not for theological or religious reasons, but for political and sanitary reasons, to safeguard the living, to protect them from the

influence of the dead. Therefore, cemeteries started to appear on the outskirts of the villages. There, the dead arrived at their final destiny, controlled, lined up, analyzed, reduced, isolated and, above all, outside the city. The spaces represented by cemeteries were defined by Foucault as “heterotopic” spaces, “other” spaces. And therefore, the fate of the “other” in Foucault’s biopolitics should not be overlooked: exclusion and confinement.⁵³ And in our case, the final murder: being exiled to an “other” space within the urban area, the cemetery, but within that to another even more heterotopic space destined for the excluded: the mass grave. Burial in graves, despite being in cemeteries, would therefore condition monument practice in an essential way as well as the commemorative actions carried around the monuments. If the monument was produced over the mass grave or after the exhumation, it invariably suffers from the ostracism to which these spaces are condemned in the urban space: the peripheries. This leads to a double absence of references in public spaces that refer to those murdered in the 1936 *coup d'état*, War and Dictatorship. Historically, the State has not developed any monument programme to recognise them, and the monuments and commemorations that have since been organized were linked to the bodies of those murdered and buried in the grave. Thus, the conditioning of the space of the grave or for the burial of the exhumed bodies means that it is not possible to escape from the same ostracism that the insurgents and the Dictatorship imposed on these bodies. The condemnation of these monuments and the remembrance services associated with them to urban exile led me to recognize a social will to break with this limitation by mean of certain memorial actions, so that the monument practices expand beyond the limits of the mass graves.

The idea of “*enterrarlos como Dios manda*” (burying them as God intended) was underlying the process of the exhumations carried out in the 1970s and early 1980s.⁵⁴ Zoe de Kerangat states: “intentionally placing these bodies, however cursory, helps to address the dead towards the place they should

⁵³ Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits: 1954-1988* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1994), 206-218.

⁵⁴ “Como Dios manda” (Translated by the author).

occupy, because it implies an order and is a gesture of care.”⁵⁵ However, the transfer to the cemetery, performed out of a religious belief and developed within the framework of care for the violated body, has undeniable spatial implications. Burial in the cemetery on the outskirts of the cities does not respond to a religious criterion but to a political-sanitary one, and therefore, by taking the bodies to the cemetery, it is not an act of “justice” towards the divinity but of “justice” in relation to the city. Edward Soja argues that human actions take place in specific spaces, always generating advantages and disadvantages depending on location. But this makes clear the prevalence of the notion he posits as spatial “justice” and “injustice.” Justice, democracy, and citizenship are defined according to Soja as rights to participate in the politics of the State, something that since classical antiquity also involves the exclusion of certain people and groups from the city itself. The city becomes a space of privilege, and marginalisation implies restricting participation in the social life of the city for segments of the population based on some kind of attribute,⁵⁶ based in turn on the reading of David Harvey, who defines territorial justice as the search for a distribution of social resources.⁵⁷

Soja’s theories throw an interesting light on the remembrance services associated with the mass graves, as the bodies were being returned to the urban environment from which they had been excluded. They were symbolically returned to the *polis* and reincorporated into a space regulated by it. The spatial dimension of the act of exhuming and reburial in a vault in the cemetery during the service makes the spatial injustice explicit as well as the desire for justice, even though it is by the community’s own hand. Burial in the cemetery because of modern sanitary policy is one of the urban social resources linked to this notion of “spatial justice.”⁵⁸ It is therefore essential to observe here the

⁵⁵ “Dar esta orientación corporal, aunque somera, ayuda a dirigir a los muertos hacia el lugar que deben ocupar, porque recompone un orden y es un gesto de cuidado” (Translated by the author). Zoé de Kerangat, “Remover Cielo y Tierra. Las exhumaciones de víctimas del franquismo como fisuras del silencio en la transición” (PhD diss., Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2019), 107.

⁵⁶ Edward W. Soja, *Seeking Spatial Justice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

⁵⁷ Harvey David, *Social Justice and the City* (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2010).

⁵⁸ María Laura Martín-Chiappe, “De la fosa al cementerio: El complicado camino de la reparación para los represaliados/as por el franquismo,” in *Construyendo memorias entre generaciones. Tender puentes, buscar verdades, reclamar justicia*, ed. Ana Messuti (Madrid: Postmetropolis, 2019), 121-58.

resolution of the tension between body-grave-monument during those remembrance services carried out after the exhumations. The mass grave ceases to have any importance as a place in the land, unlike in the contexts where the monument was built over it, in the majority of cases where the grave was not in the cemetery but outside the urban environment. It thus gives way to the subconscious vindication of spatial justice through interventions on the graves, of a recovery of belonging to the community and of a reincorporation of the excluded individual through those services.

However, the “heterotopic” or “other” character of the cemetery still reinforces, despite the transfer of the bodies to the cemetery after exhumation, that these murdered people are not being recognized in the epicentre of the urban public space, a centrality formalised around squares, around a monument or at the foot of buildings that denote power over the surroundings. These are spaces that function in a common use by the inhabitants, either for commercial exchange or for social encounters or political performativity.⁵⁹ And they are thus places that can be understood through Jürgen Habermas’s notion of the public sphere, as a consequence of the construction of democracy in bourgeois society: it is in this sphere that the private becomes public.⁶⁰ And it is from this space, the public sphere, that these people have been excluded. Not only from the communicational space, in the absence of debate on the subject in high-level politics,⁶¹ but also in the physical space itself, in the inhabited, named, rationalized territory. That is why I could not fail to see this desire to change the status in space when I listened to José Vidorreta and Carlos Solana talk about the ceremonies they organized in La Rioja.

José commented to me, standing next to the monument that they had built to house the remains after the exhumation, which was later enlarged with lists

⁵⁹ John Parkinson, “Symbolic Representation in Public Space: Capital Cities, Presence and Memory,” *Representation* 45, no. 1 (2009): 1-14.

⁶⁰ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge Polity, 2015).

⁶¹ Paloma Aguilar Fernández, “La evocación de la guerra y del Franquismo en la política, la cultura y la sociedad españolas,” in *Memoria de la guerra y del franquismo*, ed. Santos Juliá Díaz (Madrid: Taurus, 2006).

of names and other symbols, that their concern was to “bury the remains here, so we brought them here.” When he says “brought them here” he refers to the cemetery on the outskirts of town. But they did not go there directly. On 2 September 1978, when the exhumation took place, a procession of around 3000 people passed through the streets of Cervera del Río Alhama with the coffins in which the exhumed bodies had been placed (Figure 84).⁶² Finally, as Jesús Vicente Aguirre reports, the relatives did not want a ceremony in the church, despite having passed by it, as none of the priests intervened in 1936 to prevent the executions.⁶³ They wished to occupy the public space that had been denied them, but not to assume its authority. Their transit vindicated the injustice to which they were subjected, and their march had a funerary dimension but also a claim to space. This was a practice of the community as rebellious citizens, not of the State, not of the anti-democratic government of the *polis* itself that had excluded them.

A few kilometres away, in Arnedo, Carlos Solana told me about a similar initiative, which took a little longer. Since 1979 they had been trying to exhume those who had been murdered but were unable to re-inter them until the end of 1980.

We did it carrying the coffins. They were in the corner of the village, towards the far end, where the military police barracks are now. That's where they were. And they were taken from there: first to the church. Because they wanted to go to the church. Maybe now many people say, 'but it was the priests who were responsible [for the killings]. These are the children...' One of the phrases you hear them say is 'my father is going to have a church funeral service; he's not going to be buried like a dog.' That is what they wanted you to think; they told you it was a way of dignifying them. So, they were carried like that, on their shoulders.

His wife, Inmaculada Moreno continued, showing me a photograph:

⁶² Interview with José Vidorreta Sr. and José Vidorreta Jr. in Cervera del Río Alhama, January 21, 2019.
⁶³ Jesús Vicente Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada: La Rioja 1936* (Logroño: Ochoa, 2012), 430.

Look, this is the beginning, where they were taken from, and they walked through the whole town.

Carlos continued:

We passed through places carrying the Republican flag at the head of the procession. A lot of people from Navarre came, because they came here just as we were coming there. They were carrying the Republican flag. They shouted again and again ‘Viva la República’ (Long live the Republic) and sang the anthem of the Republic. Here, where I was, the anthem of the Republic was played. [...] When we passed by the house of one of those who had gone out to kill, people started shouting even louder.

⁶⁴

He pointed out to me that the route was planned to pass through “the main streets” before reaching the cemetery (Figure 85).

This shows that it was necessary for them to disrupt the city during the ceremony as they processed in the direction of the monument. They were interrupting the living space of those who had made the murders possible or those who had ignored them. This extension of the monument practice into urban space was something that I did not just associate with these first exhumations of the 1970s; a very similar initiative took place in Alcaraz 30 years later. After the exhumation and analysis of the bodies of those murdered in what was once one of Albacete’s main towns, a march set off through the historic centre and up to the cemetery on the outskirts of the town. The relatives carried the coffins with the bodies accompanied by a group of traditional Castilian musicians, whose piper played the Hymn of the Republic (Figure 86). This scene that Manuel Ramírez Gimeno described to me in 2019 as part of the process he initiated in 2012, could well have happened decades before like in La Rioja.⁶⁵ It happened again in Soria in 2018, where relatives walked through the streets in a procession with the bodies of their relatives that were handed over to them after the exhumation (Figure 87).

⁶⁴ Interview with Carlos Solana and Inmaculada Moreno in Arnedo, January 21, 2019.

⁶⁵ Interview with Manuel Ramírez Gimeno in Albacete, October 5, 2019.

Space does not represent a clear text to be read, as Henri Lefebvre pointed out, despite the premises of semiotics. Everything there is confused and disordered.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, as Lefebvre argues, space is a signifier of what is essential and what is not, and it is a subliminal way in which to exert power. For this reason, when it comes to addressing the tension that underlies these rituals linked to the monuments, practices that are not limited to the direct vicinity of the mass grave itself, and that move across a much wider area than that delimited by the grave or cemetery itself. The space of representation, as a lived space, is the space where the physical and the imagined spaces overlap. As the place where social life takes place, it is evidently controlled by the dominant powers, as can be seen in so many town squares throughout the country where even today there are crosses to the “Fallen for God and for Spain” placed there by the Dictatorship and maintained by the Monarchy. This is evident to the people, while at the same time this space contains the possibility of disobedience and subversion. This is what happens in the marches to move the bodies after the exhumations, but even without bodies, the subversion of urban space is nevertheless overtly present in other practices I found in relation to the graves.

On 18 July 2019, I attended a march that has been taking place for more than forty years on the anniversary of the 1936 *coup d'état*. After taking Seville, Gonzalo Queipo de Llano gave free rein to mass murder.⁶⁷ Once the San Fernando cemetery in Seville was full, corpses began to be buried in Dos Hermanas. Jesús Mari García told me at the mass grave monument that the walls of the cemetery had to be pulled down to facilitate the transport of such many bodies.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, the grave continued to be visited, and even CNT commandos had delivered flowers. Pepe Sánchez was one of the activists who decided not only to pay for and organize services at the monumentalized grave, but also to carry out tireless research work to recover the identities of those

⁶⁶ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Hoboken: Blackwell Publishing, 2016), 68-168.

⁶⁷ Gonzalo Queipo de Llano, *Queipo de Llano: Sevilla, verano de 1936*, ed. Ian Gibson (Barcelona: Grijalbo, 1986).

⁶⁸ Interview with Jesús Mari García, May 30, 2019.

murdered there⁶⁹. Pepe sent me a letter a few weeks before the date of the remembrance service that he had been organizing for decades: “As every year, on 18 July at 8 p.m., I will leave El Arenal with a bouquet of red carnations decorated with the tricolour flag to place them on the mass grave in the Dos Hermanas cemetery.” I travelled there, on the date indicated, and that evening we walked from El Arenal to the Dos Hermanas cemetery, where the service took place at the mass grave where they had started bringing flowers decades before and they built their monument.

In Puerto de Santa María, that same morning of the 18 July, the anniversary of the *coup d'état*, I attended another march. While the march in Dos Hermanas had been a tradition for several decades, the one in Puerto de Santa María was being held for the first time. We gathered at the former Central Prison. The place is recognized by the regional government as a “Lugar de Memoria Democrática de Andalucía” (Place of Democratic Memory of Andalusia). From there, we processed to the cemetery where the mass graves are located and where a monument was built on the initiative of Rafael Gómez Ojeda, son of one of those murdered in El Puerto, a historical PCE member and mayor of the municipality in 1981. In Puerto de Santa María, the march was not solemn, but a community-building experience, something I also found at similar events in which I participated in other regions (Figure 88). Everyone was talking. Being descendants of a murdered person, because of reprisals or political affiliation, united the people who, in ordinary clothes, walked cheerfully between two places that formed part of the repressive device that was deployed in the province of Cádiz.⁷⁰ Thus, at one point, one moment of bad luck made explicit the dimension of spatial injustice and how this practice did nothing but resist and reclaim a better space in the city. Only one lane of traffic was interrupted by the march as it moved through the streets, but when it reached a roundabout,

⁶⁹ Julio Guijarro González, “José Sánchez Gutiérrez. La importancia de recordar todos los nombres,” Todos los Nombres, accessed January 31, 2020, <http://www.todoslosnombres.org/content/materiales/jose-sanchez-gutierrez-la-importancia-recordar-todos-los-nombres>.

⁷⁰ Fernando Romero Romero, “La represión en la provincia de Cádiz: bibliografía y cifras,” *Ubi Sunt?: Revista de historia*, no. 17 (2005): 27-30.

traffic came to a complete standstill. Several police officers accompanied the march, not to protect it or to ensure its safety, but to facilitate and control the traffic. The point is that the marchers were heterogeneous, and while the front part of the march was walking faster, the rear part was lagging, either because of those who needed to walk more slowly due to their physical limitations, or because of the atmosphere of quiet conversation that was taking place. In such a situation one of the officers approached the tail of the march suggesting that if they could not walk faster, they would tell the front of the procession to walk more slowly. This caused great anger among several of the marchers, who complained to the officers, “for one day they let us march, they are not going to tell us how to walk.”

These practices are not exceptional, and although they cannot be established as a necessary part of the monument practices linked to the mass graves or as a condition for the remembrance itself, they show a need for spatial transcendence beyond the location of the mass grave or the place of reinterment. An example of this is a route, organized by the Foro por la Memoria del Valle del Tiétar y La Vera, which in 2018 covered in one route the mausoleum in the cemetery of Candeleda, the monument at the grave exhumed at the bend known as “La Vuelta del Esparragal,” the mass grave in the cemetery of Poyales del Hoyo, the monument on the road from El Hornillo to El Arenal where another grave was located nearby, the mass grave in Ramacastañas, the monument in the mass grave in Santa Cruz del Valle, the mass grave on the old road to Pedro Bernardo, the monument in the cemetery of Pedro Bernardo, the mass grave on a farm in Pedro Bernardo and the vault in the cemetery of Casavieja.⁷¹ This event was called “Recorrido en Recuerdo y Dignificación de la Víctimas de la represión franquista en el Valle del Tiétar” (Tour in Remembrance and to Bring Dignity to the Victims of Franco’s Repression in the Tiétar Valley) (Figure 89), so it was clearly not an informative tour, nor a leisure activity. This activity connected the monument practices

⁷¹ “Recorrido en recuerdo de las víctimas del franquismo,” Diario de Ávila, November 1, 2018, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.diariodeavila.es/noticia/z181405cc-c58e-062d-5005a9893ef6a828/recorrido-en-recuerdo-de-las-victimas-del-franquism>.

outside the walls of the cemetery, to the exhumed graves with the vaults where the bodies are housed, the graves not exhumed and the graves yet to be found, but were the object of monument practices despite their uncertain location.

A similar initiative was organized on several occasions, marching from the cemetery to the Castuera Concentration Camp, where between 15,000 and 20,000 people were imprisoned.⁷² During the 2019 march, an incident took place:

During the journey, on a stretch through the centre of the town, there was a disturbing incident: the street had not been closed to traffic by the authorities, as has been the case all these years, even though the association had all the necessary permits to hold the demonstration.⁷³

Once again, it causes perplexity when living space is recovered to connect the urban centre with the monument linked to the mass graves. It causes surprise, moreover, that this was an authorized march, which seems not to have been allowed to modify the space by the local authority. Just as the desire to establish marches is not exceptional, the discomfort they cause among local authorities is not either.

What is relevant about these initiatives is that they establish a network that connects “heterotopic” spaces, places that would not otherwise be visited because they are not located along commonly travelled routes. They construct a spatial narrative by making use of the graves that are the object of monument practices and setting them up against the spaces historically claimed by the governmental institutions. The initiative “Araken Memoria, Memoria de las Cunetas” (Memory of the Ditches) is representative of this, and Joaquín Iraizoz, one of its supporters, showed it to me firsthand.⁷⁴ This has been developed in

⁷² Alfredo González Ruibal, “Excavaciones arqueológicas en el campo de la concentración de Castuera (Badajoz): primeros resultados,” *Revista de estudios extremeños* 67, no. 2 (2011): 701-49.

⁷³ “Durante el trayecto, en un tramo por el centro de la localidad, se vivió un incidente sorprendente: no se habían cortado la calle al tráfico por las autoridades competentes, como se ha venido haciendo todos estos años, pese a que la asociación contaba con todos los permisos necesarios para celebrar la manifestación.” (Translated by the author). “MEMORIA Y MÁS MEMORIA (Y II),” Asociación Memorial Campo de Concentración de Castuera, July 4, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <http://amecadec.blogspot.com/2019/04/memoria-y-mas-memoria-y-ii.html>.

⁷⁴ Interview with Joaquín Iraizoz Vizkar “Toki,” in Ibero, March 29, 2019.

the Cendea of Oltza, in Navarre, by the Benetan Elkartea collective, focused on the promotion of Basque culture and language, together with the Zurbau memorial collective. They set out to work on what they considered to be a “gap in our history,” in order to “restore dignity to the people who were murdered and those who were repressed by the dictatorship.”⁷⁵ For this reason, between research and dissemination activities, they decided to give shape to a project that would link the mass graves in the territory to each other, through a website and information panels in the place where the monuments were built (Figure 90). This project was possible thanks to their voluntary work, the contributions of the local community and the support of the Directorate General for Peace and Coexistence of the Government of Navarre, an involvement of the most committed official institutions, which makes explicit the need to recognize not only the murdered person but also their presence in the space.

Thus, it is in Navarre that we find a very particular spatial extension of these monuments on mass graves, which also refers to a much wider space than that of the grave itself and breaks with the traditional notion of the procession as a process of mourning, a tribute to or dissemination of the historical event. Fermín Ezkieta explained the initiative to me in Olave, a small municipality at the foot of Mount Ezkaba.⁷⁶ At the top of the mountain is Fort San Cristobal, which never functioned as a fort, but rather as a prison, first to hold the revolutionaries of 1934 and then, in Navarre controlled by the insurgents, to hold more than two thousand prisoners in subhuman conditions. In 1938, they managed to mutiny and more than 700 of them began a terrible flight through the surrounding mountains in search of the French border. Only three managed to reach the border, and the mountain passages are dotted with graves where many of those killed in their flight were buried.⁷⁷ The GR 225 was traced through such a place following the route possibly taken by Jovino Fernández,

⁷⁵ “devolverles la dignidad a las personas asesinadas y a las represaliadas por la dictadura” (Translated by the author). “Araken Memoria. Memoria de Las Cunetas,” Zurbau, accessed March 19, 2020, <https://zurbau.eus/>.

⁷⁶ Interview Fermín Ezkieta in Olave, March 29, 2019.

⁷⁷ Iñaki Alforja Sagone, *Fuerte de San Cristóbal, 1938: la gran fuga de las cárceles franquistas* (Pamplona: Pamiela, 2006).

one of those who completed the escape (Figure 91). This is a long-distance route under the acronym used internationally and signposted in the territory with a white and red sign. The website created to advertise the initiative explains it to the interested visitor:

Walking along it, the hiker will enjoy the natural landscapes through which it passes, but will also honour the memory of those who - many years ago - walked through these same mountains and valleys in search of a better life: those who were sent back to the misery of their imprisonment, those who died in the attempt and those who achieved freedom.⁷⁸

Thus, the monuments built over mass graves are connected through hiking. This initiative interrupts the walking space and memory is incorporated through playfulness. More than a thousand kilometres from there, another similar initiative took place. The Club Senderista La Desbandá (La Desbandá Hiking Club), connects the 250 kilometres between Málaga and Almería, via the route that those fleeing from the arrival of the insurgents to the city of Málaga ran and in which they were victims of harassment at the hands of the insurgent troops, naval bombardments, and air raids.⁷⁹

Finally, one of the largest, healthiest, and longest-running initiatives taking place in urban space, connecting city centres with mass graves and their monuments is the Republican Caravan of Valencia. There I conducted a participant observation. On the morning of 14 April, on the banks of the old Turia riverbed near the Jardines de Viveros, dozens of vehicles gathered as they do every year (Figure 92). When I arrived with my car, I met some of the activists who normally organize the event and who, seeing my car without flags, handed me some so that, like all the other vehicles, I could fly the tricolour flag. The atmosphere was festive, emotional, but also uneasy because, as several of

⁷⁸ “Recorriéndolo, el caminante disfrutará de los parajes naturales por los que transcurre, pero también honrará la memoria de aquellos que -hace muchos años- transitaron por esos mismos montes y valles en busca de una vida mejor: de los que fueron devueltos a la miseria de su encierro, de los que murieron en el intento y de los que alcanzaron la libertad” (Translated by the author). “GR-225 - Fuga de Ezkaba 1938 - Ezkabako Ihesa,” GR225, accessed March 19, 2020, <http://www.gr-225.org/>.

⁷⁹ Encarnación Barranquero Texeira, “El drama de la carretera Málaga-Almería,” *Andalucía en la historia*, no. 35 (2012): 58-63.

the participants pointed out to me, the police were always trying to facilitate traffic so that the march would not disrupt the urban space as it was intended. So, there was a discussion about whether this year they should run the traffic lights and not give way to pedestrians. When the time came, the cars started up, and began to drive through the city along the main streets of a city that was the capital of the Spanish Republic during the War: a city that has no major reference to those events in the public space. Republican hymns, songs of the War, as well as other pop and rock songs with historical references were played from the cars. As the cars drove by, honking their horns, some passers-by waved, others raised their fists. But there were also faces of bewilderment, because for many that Sunday, 14 April, was just another day in the calendar. There were also signs of aggression, arms raised in the air, fascist salutes, shouts and even threats from other vehicles. The police meanwhile facilitated the traffic on their motorbikes. The event went on for more than two hours, until we finally arrived at the Paterna cemetery, on the outskirts of Valencia, the place thousands of people were murdered and then buried, and the destination of this massive procession by car.

These processions link central places in the urban space with places where the monuments were built, which are condemned to urban ostracism. These experiences refer to Lefebvre's defense of the people's right to the city.⁸⁰ But also, through claiming the space, people enter into a complex game of identifications: these collectives identify themselves with the image returned to them by their peers, who they are, and who they wish to be.⁸¹ And that would be the drama of this type of march, the aspiration to occupy a public space, to be recognized in it, while monuments are relegated to urban ostracism. The bodies of the participants are a living memory of the bodies of the murdered, who have been ostracized, buried in mass graves beneath the monuments that are the final destination of these marches that start from the city centres. Thus, without leaving Lefebvre, alongside these collectively produced spaces, we find

⁸⁰ Henri Lefebvre, *Le droit à la ville* (Paris: Economica-Anthropos, 2009).

⁸¹ Julieta Piastro Behar, *Los lenguajes de la identidad: la subversión como creación* (Barcelona: Herder, 2019), 66.

those that are progressively conceived by governmental institutions, where both the relations of power and the productive possibilities themselves are made explicit. If a governmental institution wishes, space can be endowed with greater symbolic importance within the framework of the politics of memory. This speaks precisely, not of the monopoly, but of the greater amount of means of production available to the State when it comes to generating this type of monument practice in contrast to those that are by necessity entirely self-managed by the community. This is a situation that can be understood through the experience of Catalonia, one of the territories where memory policies have been most developed in recent years.

The “Xarxa d’Espais de Memòria” (Network of Memory Spaces), is an initiative of the Memorial Democràtic (Democratic Memorial), an official institution dependent on the Catalonian government, which together with the Directorate-General for Democratic Memory develops memory policies in Catalonia and is defined as follows:

The Network of Spaces of Democratic Memory of Catalonia brings together a set of sites that constitute the tangible and intangible memorial heritage, representative of the struggles and conflicts to gain democratic rights and freedom, from the proclamation of the Second Republic to the democratic Transition, and that articulate a common will to recover, preserve and disseminate them.

It includes reference exhibition centres, heritage recovered in situ (trenches, bunkers, places of pain, mass graves, etc.), paths of remembrance (routes of exile, of freedom, etc.), places and spaces of resistance, archives and documentation centres and memorial monuments.⁸²

⁸² “La Xarxa d’Espais de Memòria Democràtica de Catalunya agrupa un conjunt d’indrets que constitueixen el patrimoni memorial, tangible i intangible, representatiu de la lluita i els conflictes per aconseguir els drets i les llibertats democràtiques, des de la proclamació de la Segona República fins a la transició democràtica, i que articulen una voluntat comuna perquè es recuperin, es conservin i difonguin. Inclou centres expositius de referència, patrimoni recuperat in situ (trinxeres, búnquers, espais de dol, fosses comunes, etc.), camins de memòria (rutes de l’exili, camí de la llibertat, etc.), llocs i espais de resistència, arxius i centres de documentació i monuments memorials.” (Translated by the author). Joan Saura i Laporta, “ORDRE IRP/91/2010, de 18 de febrer, per la qual es crea la Xarxa d’Espais de Memòria Democràtica de Catalunya,” Portal Jurídic de Catalunya, February 18, 2010, accessed May 10, 2021, <http://portaljuridic.gencat.cat/ca/document-del-pjur/>.

The mass graves where monument practices have taken place within the framework of the Network represent one of multiple points in an interconnected space where the grave is only one element (Figure 93). The transcendental aspect of the Catalan approach effectively lies in not seeing the violence or the bodies in the graves as violence in the abstract, but as part of a repressive device that also has consequences such as movements towards exile, given the country's border with France. A space projected onto the country by the Catalonian government, that creates milestones in a network by mean of those places such as the monumentalized mass graves. This is the only way to perceive the space, as a complex geography inherited from a past of war and repression.

Beyond the monument practice, this need for planning also underlies the need for the State to conceive of space. This has been translated into the inventories of graves in the country through maps, such as the first one published by the Ministry of Justice in 2011. However, this initiative was full of errors and omissions, and led to other more complete and accurate maps being drawn up at regional level in Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, the Canary Islands, Catalonia, Valencia, Galicia, Navarre, and the Basque Country.⁸³ Many graves on these maps are categorized as lost, but if one browses through them, one discovers hundreds of photographs on which it is clear where they are located. A monolith stands over them, or a vault houses the remains that were once buried in the grave. This documentation of mass graves thus makes explicit the presence of hundreds of monumentalized mass graves. They are no longer simply mass graves, despite being relegated to spaces of limited visibility.

⁸³ Las Políticas de la Memoria, "Mapas de fosas comunes," accessed March 20, 2020, <https://politicasdelamemoria.org/mapa-de-fosas-comunes/>.

CHAPTER FIVE

Forensic Turning Points

“DIGNITY” AND “DIGNIFIED BURIAL”

The new millennium started in the Kingdom of Spain with a PP government presided over by José M^a Aznar. This is the moment when the PSOE tried to reclaim its image as a “left-wing party,” after widespread criticism of its long stay in power and the policies associated with that period. The opposition in Congress started mentioning war crimes and the figure of Franco in plenums, trying to make visible links between the Dictatorship and the leaders of the government.¹ It was a generational change: Aznar is the son of a Falangist and his party was founded by prominent members of Francisco Franco’s regime, bringing together in the PP factions ranging from Christian Democrats to neo-liberals, but not breaking with the legacy of the previous Dictatorship.² It is in this context that the opposition put forward a Non-Legally Binding Position Statement³ declaring and urging the public authorities to make moral reparation

¹ Aguilar Fernández, “La evocación de la guerra y del Franquismo en la política, la cultura y la sociedad españolas,” in *Memoria de la guerra y del franquismo*, ed. Santos Juliá Díaz (Madrid: Taurus, 2006), 290.

² Vicente Navarro López, “Las derechas españolas y el fascismo: nostalgias franquistas en el seno del PP,” *Le Monde diplomatique en español*, no. 165 (2009): 3.

³ According to Article 95 of the Regulations of the Congress of Deputies approved in 1982, “The Position Paper will be debated, in which a representative of each of the Parliamentary Groups that have presented amendments may speak after the Parliamentary Group that is the author of the Position Paper, followed by those that have not presented amendments. Once these interventions have been concluded, the proposal, with the amendments accepted by the proposer of the proposal, will be put

to the victims of the civil war who disappeared and were murdered for defending republican values and to recognize the right of relatives and heirs to recover their remains, name and “dignity.”⁴ Beyond the doubts that arise as to what a “moral” reparation approved by a governmental institution might actually imply, the proposal has certain components of great relevance for the context, as it officialises the use of the concept of “victim.” Victims are understood as a social group differentiated from society. In addition, priority is given to the recovery of “remains” as well as to the recovery of “dignity.”

This vocabulary, eminently connected to the graves and thus to monument practices, shows a political drift of redefinition and reaffirmation as “left” while at the same time inscribing itself in the international revisionist current. José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, the leader of the PSOE at the time and the future president who would enact the 2007 Law of Memory, arrived after the imposition in his party of what he called the “Nueva Vía” (New Way). Rodríguez Zapatero’s proposal was a simple adaptation of UK Prime Minister Tony Blair’s “Third Way,” a model defended by Anthony Giddens and imposed on the Labour Party to internalize neoliberal policies in historically working class parties.⁵ It is at this point, therefore, that two fundamental factors converge through which I was able to understand how monument practices had been affected since 2000: the identity paradigm of “dignity” as a banner and the neoliberal policies assumed by historically “left-wing” organizations. The concept of “dignity,” present in the 2002 Non-Legally Binding Position Statement was not new although officialised at the time. Its use had already become widespread two years earlier. It formed a fundamental part of the communicational narrative that came hand in hand with the exhumation of

to the vote.” This Non-Legally Binding Position Statement demonstrates the opposition’s opinion but does not have any legal implications.

⁴ Grupo parlamentario socialista, “Proposición No de Ley ”Por la que se declara y se insta a los Poderes públicos a reparar moralmente a las Víctimas de la Guerra Civil desaparecidas y asesinadas por defender valores republicanos y a reconocer el derecho de familiares y herederos a recuperar sus restos, nombre y dignidad (Número de Expediente 161/001591),” Congreso de los Diputados, November 20, 2002, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.congreso.es/public_oficiales/L7/CONG/DS/CO/CO_625.PDF.

⁵ Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way and Its Critics*. (Hoboken: Wiley, 2013).

Priaranza del Bierzo and the aims of ARMH.⁶ However, its use was not limited to the ARMH. In the newspaper archives we find an abundance of the term, continuing to the present day, when the PSOE once again began a media campaign to make its work in “Historical Memory” visible under the slogan “For Dignity and Memory.”⁷

“The self is constructed through a complex game of identifications in which it introjects and identifies itself with the image reflected by its peers. And it is also constructed out of what one is not yet, but wishes to be,”⁸ says Julieta Piastro Behar, writing about need for recognition. The fact is that this could already have happened during the Transition, when the PSOE had abandoned Marxism. Censorship and self-censorship when it came to participating in monument practices was latent, since the consensus was that of the transition from the Spanish State to the Kingdom of Spain, and in the parliamentary framework, where no party under the republican label was allowed to participate in the first elections on its own behalf. In this way, the social discourses on memory in those years would not have been a “mask game”⁹ to be accepted by a society that for decades had denied recognition to those who were killed in the War and post-War period. This situation continues to this day. It is in this context that today most associations of remembrance or descendants of the murdered consider themselves to be “Victims of Francoism.” This is how they are viewed by the media and by the 2007 Law itself, even without official responsibilities.¹⁰ Despite the benefits of the mediatisation of an issue that has been absent from political debate for decades, its reintroduction under the concept of “dignity” and “victims” is particularly

⁶ “Resoluciones e informes.” Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, accessed March 23, 2020, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://memorahistorica.org.es/resoluciones-e-informes/>.

⁷ “Por la Dignidad y la Memoria,” PSOE, accessed March 23, 2020, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.psOE.es/actualidad/por-dignidad-y-memoria/>.

⁸ “El yo, se construye a través de un juego complejo de identificaciones en las que introyecta y se identifica con la imagen que le devuelve el semejante. Y también se construye con lo que no se es, pero se desea ser.” (Translated by the author). Piastro Behar, *Los lenguajes de la identidad: la subversión como creación* (Barcelona: Herder, 2019), 66.

⁹ Piastro Behar, 69.

¹⁰ Jefatura del Estado, “Ley 52/2007, de 26 de diciembre, por la que se reconocen y amplían derechos y se establecen medidas en favor de quienes padecieron persecución o violencia durante la guerra civil y la dictadura,” BOE, December 27, 2007, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2007-22296>.

problematic. In a certain sense, being given the identity of a “victim” trapped those involved in the monument practices in recent years, excluding them again from any claims to social recognition. The hierarchical social recognition based on honour has been progressively abandoned in favour of “dignity,” presumably universal and based on “human rights.” However, the political dimension of these “rights,” historically constructed through the imposition of the liberal state model, should not be overlooked.¹¹

Thus, connected with an economic project, the concept of universal “dignity” that underlies the claims for recognition was described by Francis Fukuyama in the context of current political demands. In his latest work on the notion of “identity,” Francis Fukuyama argues that conflicts driven by what he calls the “politics of resentment.” This particularly applies to cases in which he argues that political leadership mobilizes its followers to confront the loss of the group’s “dignity” in cultural terms, making it a much more emotional than economic issue.¹² Furthermore struggles arise everywhere on the planet, according to the author, for the recognition of one’s own “dignity.” Liberal democracy, according to Fukuyama, is based on the notion of individual rights and equal “dignity” for all by recognizing its citizens by law as agents capable of self-government, leading him to explain the French revolution from his particular Hegelian point of view: “The demand for the equal recognition of dignity animated the French Revolution, and it continues to the present day.”¹³ This is the rebellion against the masters who only recognized “dignity” for the few, to bring it to all.¹⁴ Going back to the year 2000 in Priaranza del Bierzo, passing the Law of Memory of 2007 was allegedly intended to “restore dignity to the victims of Francoism,”¹⁵ but its character can perhaps be better understood as part of a “politics of resentment.”

¹¹ John Brown, *La dominación liberal: Ensayo sobre el liberalismo como dispositivo de poder* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 2014).

¹² Francis Fukuyama, *Identity* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018), 7.

¹³ Fukuyama, 42.

¹⁴ Fukuyama, 40-41.

¹⁵ “El PSOE señala que la Ley de Memoria Histórica está para “devolver la dignidad a las víctimas del franquismo,” Tribuna de Ávila, September 27, 2012, accessed May 10, 2021,

Paradoxically, despite the significance of the murdered as subjects without “dignity,” which must be re-established for their re-entry into liberal democratic society, they have not actually made this re-entry. In this sense, it was implemented of a memory policy, not only based on classical liberal discourses of “dignity,” but also on a model of minimal state intervention for its enactment based on private initiative. Thus, in addition to the lack of recognition, this is one of the main problems for one of the largest memory associations in the country: the Federación de Foros por la Memoria (Federation of Memory Forums). Its president, Arturo Peinado, stated:

When you look for victims, you end up asking about perpetrators. The Law of Memory explicitly denies the right to justice of the victims and their families and decides to privatize and subcontract the management of exhumations, subsidizing families, organizations, and professionals. Nowadays, the victims of Franco's regime continue to be treated as an exception by the State, which does not recognize their existence and keeps them in a legal limbo where the usual judicial processes are not applied. Thousands of people extrajudicially executed and made to disappear by force are treated as archaeological remains instead of victims of serious human rights violations.¹⁶

The unease expressed in Arturo’s words is understandable in the face of a process of exhumations, initiated in 2000, which, under the pretext of “dignity,” has led to the exhumation of mass graves, which represent for many an evidence of crimes against humanity, without criminal investigation. His unease is therefore not only that these people do not have “dignity” as citizens of a

<https://www.tribunaavila.com/noticias/el-psoe-senala-que-la-ley-de-memoria-historica-esta-para-devolver-la-dignidad-a-las-victimas-del-franquismo/1551267095>.

¹⁶ “Cuando se busca a las víctimas se acaba preguntando por los verdugos. La Ley de memoria niega explícitamente el derecho a la Justicia de las víctimas y de sus familias, y además opta por privatizar y externalizar la gestión de las exhumaciones, subvencionando a familias, asociaciones y profesionales. Hoy, las víctimas del franquismo continúan siendo tratadas como una excepción por el Estado, que no reconoce su existencia y las mantiene en un limbo jurídico al que no se aplican los procedimientos habituales de la Justicia. Miles de personas ejecutadas extrajudicialmente y hechas desaparecer por la fuerza, reciben el trato de restos arqueológicos, en vez de víctimas de graves agresiones a los derechos humanos.” (Translated by the author). Arturo Peinado, “Las fosas del franquismo: qué y para qué,” Cuartopoder, February 11, 2020, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.cuartopoder.es/ideas/2020/02/12/las-fosas-del-franquismo-arturo-peinado/>.

liberal democracy in the terms defined by Fukuyama, but also that the possibility of attributing it to them has been privatized.

But this is a private model with minimal governmental involvement, which also confuses the concept of “dignity” under the liberal canon with that of “dignified burial” under the Christian canon linked to funerary practices. In this sense, the Code of Canon Law, the fundamental body of ecclesiastical laws for the Catholic Church, is the one that regulates and recognizes that deceased members of the Christian faithful must be given funerals, acknowledging this as a right for them and emphasizing the importance of the burial of the corpse.¹⁷ As an illustration, in 2008, only one year after the approval of the Law of Historical Memory, a debate on public television was held on these topics. The debate included as participants to Manuel Fraga, one of Franco’s old ministers and founder of the party that later became the PP; Santiago Carrillo, Secretary General of the PCE during the Transition; and Juan Carlos Rodríguez Ibarra, president of Extremadura for more than twenty years for the PSOE. At a time when more mass graves were being opened and more monument practices were being enacted throughout the country, Fraga once again argued that the past should be left behind, but not before accusing the Republican government of crimes. The former minister of the Dictatorship’s reluctance to review the State repression was unsurprising, given that he himself had signed death sentences. What was revealing were the positions of Carrillo and Ibarra, when the former claimed that the actions being taken today were intended to match those taken after the Dictatorship when those murdered by alleged Republican violence were given a “Christian burial.”¹⁸

However, in these supposed “demands for dignity” and “politics of resentment” to use Fukuyama’s words, monument practices have generally been absent. Nothing in the 2007 Law creates an obligation to build a

¹⁷ Luis Rodríguez Ennes, “La polémica en torno a los enterramientos y los suicidas en la España de la Ilustración,” *Anuario da Facultade de Dereito da Universidade da Coruña*, no. 22 (2018): 320-28.

¹⁸ “Fraga y Carrillo se enfrentan por la memoria histórica en '59 segundos,’” RTVE.es, December 3, 2008, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.rtve.es/noticias/20081203/fraga-carrillo-se-enfrentan-memoria-historica-59-segundos/202275.shtml>.

monument to house the exhumed and subsequently buried bodies, nor to acknowledge them in the public space or in educational programmes. Again, this is a private matter, invisible to society. As Hannah Arendt states, the private has to do with the absence of others, leading the private human being to a situation that takes him away from what is truly human and makes it as if he did not exist.¹⁹ For this reason, under the protection of the 2007 Law, where there is a complete absence of monument policies aimed at public spaces, the demands of numerous associations, including the most visible ones such as ARMH and the Foro por la Memoria, have been moulded to the liberal canon under the concepts of “dignity” and “human rights” in recent years. These discourses, when taken up by governmental institutions, nevertheless suffer from a failure to develop a *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, a confrontation with the past and its negative aspects.²⁰ Confrontation in the public debate that questions the fascist past of the Kingdom of Spain, the faults, and responsibilities of society in general and its leaders in particular, has led to open criticism from the UN and the European Commission of the Spanish government on numerous occasions.²¹

“A ‘dignified’ burial does not necessarily recover the dignity of the victims, nor does it bring them justice,” Arturo Peinado points out speaking on behalf of the Foro por la Memoria.²² His position argues that the murdered can be recognised by the State, can be given burial, can be attributed the status of “victim” in accordance with the law, but that this “dignity” limited to the possibility of exhuming the bodies, locating them, identifying them and naming them has little to do with that of social recognition through the political agency of these people. This is something that coincides with the explanations that

¹⁹ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

²⁰ Norbert Frei, *Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi past: the politics of amnesty and integration* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

²¹ José Antequera, “Los relatores de la ONU también suspenden a España en memoria histórica,” Diario16, February 13, 2020, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://diario16.com/los-relatores-de-la-onu-tambien-suspenden-a-espana-en-memoria-historica/>.

²² “Un entierro ‘digno’, no recupera necesariamente la dignidad de las víctimas, ni les hace Justicia” (Translated by the author). Arturo Peinado, “Las fosas del franquismo: qué y para qué,” Cuartopoder, February 11, 2020, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.cuartopoder.es/ideas/2020/02/12/las-fosas-del-franquismo-arturo-peinado/>.

Xulio García Bilbao, also a member of the Foro por la Memoria, gave me when he showed me the different burial areas of the Guadalajara cemetery. In the mass grave in the Catholic cemetery, more than 370 people were buried in a large grave, which has now disappeared, according to data from the Foro por la Memoria. The real reasons why some of them ended up in one place or another in the cemetery are unknown. Some testimonies gathered by the Foro por la Memoria indicate that those who decided to confess before being killed were thrown into the mass grave in the 4th courtyard and those who refused to do so were thrown into the civil cemetery, although according to the Foro's own study, this could simply be one of several reasons. The fact is that people were taken out of prison every day to be executed in the Guadalajara cemetery, where they were buried in pits dug to dispose of the day's bodies. But Xulio showed me many other graves where the murdered had been buried: either in family vaults or in individual graves. This was a situation of which I was unaware, and Xulio explained to me in a way that contributed fundamentally to the formulation of this analysis around "dignity." At the time of the murders, some relatives were able to pay to take the bodies to their family vaults or to bury them individually. An unofficial practice that was widespread in those years. So Xulio asked me and provoked me: "Is dignity something you get from where you are buried in the cemetery?"²³

In many informal conversations, as it is a controversial subject, the story of Federico García Lorca came up when discussing burial locations. While it is undeniable that he was murdered after the *coup d'état* in 1936 because of his sexual orientation, his political militancy, and his links to Freemasonry,²⁴ the place where his body was buried has always been the subject of historiographical, journalistic and pub debates. Although the most publicised place for his burial is the one indicated by Ian Gibson, the Fuente Grande in

²³ Interview with Xulio García Bilbao in Guadalajara, January 11, 2019.

²⁴ Eduardo Molina Fajardo, *Los últimos días de García Lorca* (Córdoba: Almuzara, 2011).

Alfácar,²⁵ excavations in 2009 did not uncover his remains.²⁶ Again, there were attempts in 2014, despite the family's refusal.²⁷ Perhaps the grave will never be found or it is possible that the family, like many others, informally paid the killers to take the body. Whatever the case, his work is studied in schools, squares and institutions have been named after him, and he has monuments dedicated to him from Madrid to San Francisco in the United States. Less famous is the story of Jorge Sepúlveda, the famous *bolero* and *paso doble* singer, who previously served in the Popular Army of the Republic during the War. He was condemned and shot in the cemetery of Palma de Mallorca. However, the gunshot failed in killing him, and when the assassins did not bury the bodies immediately, he managed to escape. After that he became one of the most popular singers during the Dictatorship. Nobody knew about his past, but he never forgot it. That's why he asked to be buried in the mass grave where his comrades were buried before he died in 1983.²⁸ Also, today, the mass grave of La Barranca, already mentioned as one of the largest monumentalized mass graves in the country, is the place where dozens of people have decided to deposit the ashes of their deceased loved ones.²⁹ In fact, returning to Guadalajara, in the opinion of the Foro por la Memoria, they consider it important to give "dignified burial" to the murdered. However, they consider that the "main indignity" committed is that their sentences are still upheld by law, and the courts that issued them are still considered to be legal. And this aspect seems to have been forgotten. In Patio 4 of the Guadalajara cemetery, more than a hundred murdered people were buried in individual graves, because their families could afford to pay the bribery for an individual or family

²⁵ Ian Gibson, *The Assassination of Federico García Lorca* (London: Penguin Books, 1987).

²⁶ Javier Martín-Arroyo and Valme Cortés, "La posibilidad de que ahí hubiera algo era ninguna," El País, December 18, 2009, accessed May 10, 2021, https://elpais.com/cultura/2009/12/18/actualidad/1261090806_850215.html.

²⁷ Natalia Junquera, "24 pasos y 78 años para buscar a Lorca," El País, November 22, 2014, accessed May 10, 2021, https://elpais.com/cultura/2014/11/22/actualidad/1416689210_359312.html.

²⁸ Félix Población, "La fosa común del más popular cantor de boleros de la dictadura franquista," El Salto, March 22, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.elsaltodiario.com/los-nombres-de-la-memoria/la-fosa>.

²⁹ Juan Miguel Baquero, "La victoria de las 'mujeres de negro' sobre 40 años de franquismo en La Barranca," eldiario, July 15, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/memorial-barranca-victoria-mujeres-franquismo_1_1441589.html.

burial. Consequently, the indignity of their conviction is still valid, in the opinion of the Foro por la Memoria.³⁰

There is a contradiction, therefore, between the dominant discourse and the reality of the mass graves. It would be difficult to say that Lorca has no “dignity” if we cannot exhume his body from a mass grave and give him a “dignified” burial, and it is incoherent to think that Jorge Sepúlveda or the relatives and friends of La Barranca are opting for an “undignified” place for the final resting place of their bodies. The fact is that exhumation practices have become inextricably linked to the concept of “dignity,” which is linked to “victim” and this in turn is linked to “human rights,” and everything has been confused under the idea of a “dignified burial” as defined by “Canon Law.” Thus, where “dignity” is read in the context of “human rights,” it is translated into “dignified burial” according to “Canon Law.” But in addition, the essential point is that instead of a criminal investigation or a policy of public memory, the State decided to support the private recovery of bodies through forensic or archaeological methodologies with the objective of just reinterring them. Since 2000, the recognition provided by monuments seems to have been insufficient under this conceptual framework. Thus, the only possibility of obtaining “dignity” appears to be by searching for and finding the bodies of the murdered, always blindly trusting that science will provide the answers that the State has failed to provide in eighty years.

THE INDIVIDUALISM OF THE “FORENSIC TURN”

When there are 10 people in a ditch. You know who they are. They belong to the community. That way when you go to them, in solidarity, everybody belongs to everybody. That happened in places like the Rincón area. When there are people from Navarre and La Rioja, they split the bodies up. Each community takes 12. You could only tell the difference

³⁰ Interview with Xulio García Bilbao in Guadalajara, January 11, 2019.

when there is a woman or a boy or a lame man or someone carrying medicines... but they wouldn't take them separately either.³¹

Emilio Barco explained to me the particularities of the exhumation in which he took part in Alcanadre in the 1970s. The bodies were exhumed without asking for permission. There was no possibility of forensic or genetic identification and there was no attempt at scientific rigour. Emilio told me “I don’t think people cared about that in the slightest. They didn’t care if the bones belonged to my grandfather or not. They were all of them. It was something else.”³² These were also Zoe de Kerangat’s conclusions when she analysed the photographs in which the relatives after the exhumation arranged the bones collectively in coffins before taking them to the vault in the cemetery: “this reconstructed hydra-like body was a composite of the bones of several people put together in the same coffin, indicating in this way that it was the group of murdered people that was important, and so they were kept together.”³³ However, Emilio’s statement that “it was something else” is because today we see the exhumations and monument practices of those years through a different lens, which ties in with David Le Breton’s idea of the body, where modernity has heralded a retreat from popular traditions and in turn has led to the arrival of Western individualism, marking borders between individuals and leading to a withdrawal of the subject into himself.³⁴ That’s why since 2000 I have started to see an increase in introspection. Something that is understood as part of the construction of neoliberal society and that has to do with José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero’s “New Way” and the impact of these theories on society. This is understandable because Anthony Giddens is not only a sociologist but also a member of the Labour Party in the United Kingdom, and the main advocate of this political proposal.³⁵ A sociologist who, together with Ulrich Beck and

³¹ Interview with Emilio Barco Rojo in Alcanadre, January 22, 2019.

³² Interview with Emilio Barco Rojo and Jesús Vicente Aguirre in Alcanadre, January 22, 2019.

³³ “este cuerpo de hidra re-compuesto era uno colectivo, con los huesos de varias personas juntados en un mismo ataúd, indicando de esta manera que lo importante era el grupo de asesinados, que se mantenía unido como tal” (Translated by the author). Zoé de Kerangat, “Remover Cielo y Tierra. Las exhumaciones de víctimas del franquismo como fisuras del silencio en la transición” (PhD diss., Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2019), 105.

³⁴ David Le Breton, *Anthropologie du corps et modernité* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2013), 28.

³⁵ Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way ~the Renewal of Social Democracy*’ (Cambridge: Polity, 2008).

Zygmunt Bauman, has been at the forefront of the theories of individualism.³⁶ Giddens proposes the transformation of the self in a project of dismemberment of social ties in the process of globalisation in what he calls “identity in high modernity,”³⁷ which Bauman associates with the consumer society.³⁸ But it is perhaps Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim’s notion of an individualism based on a second reflexive modernity that may be more suggestive for thinking about the paradigm shift.³⁹

The mythical story of Priaranza begins with a grandson in search of his grandfather, murdered and buried in a mass grave in a place in El Bierzo. This fact leads us to recognise in the figure of the many other grandchildren who would begin to investigate and campaign exhumations, that they have made an introspection into their own self, into their family memory, and now decide from that self to begin a search for “their relative.” Thus, appropriating their body and their legacy under the current canon, protected by the Law, as illustrated by the appeals to the UN by the ARMH or the so-called “Querella Argentina.”⁴⁰ And this is a fundamental point for which it is urgent to return to Fukuyama in order to understand the ideological dimension of the process: “The broadening and universalization of dignity turns the private quest for self into a political project.”⁴¹ This political project is synthesised around the 2007 Law of Memory, in which the relatives are the only ones in charge of searching and exhuming through private means. Therefore, this is both a consequence of an individualistic society and the product of a legal framework that is also supported by the media. But this requires technical means, and this is where

³⁶ Liza Cortois, “The Myth of Individualism: From Individualisation to a Cultural Sociology of Individualism,” *European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology* 4, no. 4 (2017): 407-429.

³⁷ Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

³⁸ Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018).

³⁹ Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, *Individualisation: Institutionalised Individualism and Its Social and Political Consequences* (London: SAGE, 2001).

⁴⁰ Marina Montoto Ugarte, “Las víctimas del franquismo en ‘la Querella Argentina’: luchas por el reconocimiento y nuevas desigualdades,” *Papeles del CEIC, International Journal on Collective Identity Research*, no. 1 (2017): 2.

⁴¹ Fukuyama, *Identity*, 37.

the “Forensic Turn” fundamentally alters the monument practices that had been developed until 2000.⁴²

It is worth re-emphasizing that the “Forensic Turn” is associated with the arrival of forensic experts, physical anthropologists, and archaeologists at the scenes of mass violence to search for bodies, and that it is not confined to the local context but has an international dimension. This process, according to some of the forensic scientists, physical anthropologists, and archaeologists with whom I have had the pleasure of talking in various situations, has generated the aforementioned “CSI effect.” People have high expectations of the forensic procedures as a consequence of the success of such methods in TV series in solving crimes. In the absence of any other kind of recognition, all hope is pinned on a process that could offer reliable, and accurate data, brought to light after decades of disorientation and invisibility.⁴³ It is understandable that a need arises, faced with the possibility of recovering the body of a murdered person from a mass grave, to identify the body as an individual. This was a need that did not exist before, and it was awakened by the advent of forensic protocols, the approval of the Law of Memory and the rise of a generalized individualism. Evidently this would have led to the fact that, unlike the exhumations of the 1970s and 1980s, instead of building a vault for all the exhumed bodies, the aspiration is to take the body to the family vault. This is one of the factors that has fundamentally affected monument practices. While in previous processes the recovery of bodies was necessarily linked to the monument practice, in this process, at least in theory, the objective is for the relatives to take the identified and individualised bodies with them. As David Le Breton argues, little by little the traditional knowledge of the community

⁴² Francisco Etxeberria Gabilondo, “Panorama organizativo sobre Antropología y Patología Forense en España. Algunas propuestas para el estudio de fosas con restos humanos de la Guerra Civil española de 1936,” in *La memoria de los olvidados: un debate sobre el silencio de la represión franquista*, ed. Emilio Silva Barrera, Pancho Salvador, María Socorro Asunción Esteban Recio, and Javier Castán Lanaspa (Valladolid: Ámbito, 2004), 183-219.

⁴³ Miriam Baeta et al., “Digging up the Recent Spanish Memory: Genetic Identification of Human Remains from Mass Graves of the Spanish Civil War and Posterior Dictatorship,” *Forensic Science International: Genetics* 19 (2015): 272-279.

about the body has been displaced by that of the “experts” in the biomedical field.⁴⁴

But there is an additional factor linked to this reliance on forensic processes that also fundamentally affects monument practices. These processes generated their own images.⁴⁵ Images of skeletons, corpses with signs of torture and gunshots and bodies piled up. And those images began to flood the media, not only distributing traumatic memories through the media but also triggering their consumption.⁴⁶ These images have also generated a great deal of unease among certain relatives, who have made it clear that their publication has caused them offence and distress. This situation contrasts with the fact that no images have ever been published in the press of Spanish army soldiers killed in operations abroad or of police officers killed in the line of duty. These are bodies that the State and the media assume as their own, respect them and grant them privacy. Therefore, exposing the bodies of murdered people, members of the Popular Army of the Republic, of the Republican government institutions or at the hands of terrorists and paramilitary groups who rebelled because of their ideology or political agency as republicans, freemasons, anarchists, communists, or socialists, in the process of exhumations again designates them as “other” bodies, not recognized by the State.⁴⁷

Beyond their visibility, the fact remains that these images have been used for multiple purposes, one of which is essential: to certify the success of the forensic intervention on the mass graves. This could be witnessed in the film *El Silencio de Otros* (*The Silence of Others*, 2018). In a story based on reinforcing the concept of “victim,” it focuses on the exhumation of a mass grave in the

⁴⁴ Le Breton, *Anthropologie du corps et modernité*, 107-48.

⁴⁵ Layla Renshaw, “The Iconography of Exhumation: Representations of Mass Graves from the Spanish Civil War,” in *Archaeology and the Media*, ed. Timothy Clack and Marcus Brittain (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2007), 237-52.

⁴⁶ Francisco Ferrández and Alejandro Baer, “Digital Memory: the visual recording of mass grave exhumations in contemporary Spain,” *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 9, no. 3 (2008).

⁴⁷ The best example of this situation, which aroused indignation in the social networks, occurred during the process of exhumation of Francisco Franco from the Basilica of the Valley of the Fallen, his body was not shown to the media, the coffin was not even opened, and he was taken out in his coffin with the flag of the Order of San Fernando, Spain's highest military distinction.

Guadalajara cemetery, where they searched for the body of Timoteo Mendieta under a court order for the “transfer of remains” at the request of one of his relatives. The documentary shows a scene in which the grave is opened and in a close up shot we see the bones. A technician tells Timoteo Mendieta’s daughter “this is your father.” Science triumphs and the forensic expert outdoes himself, identifying the body by eye, without even any need for scientific protocol. Almost a million viewers watched this documentary broadcast on television in 2019.⁴⁸ In my experience, when I spoke with friends and relatives who had seen the documentary on television in those days, they were moved and especially shocked by that scene. A scene that was, however, a fake as it was shown by the filmmakers. The bones shown in that shot and indicated by the ARMH technician were not only not those of Timoteo Mendieta, but he was not even in that grave.⁴⁹ The effect that this type of media product has on the population in general and on those who have a murdered relative, however, is that of trusting in a scientific methodology that, like the TV shows, can bring back the body of their loved one.

The fraudulent image created by the award-winning film is also symptomatic of describing the “Forensic Turn” and the imposition of the individualist narrative and the “victim,” that in one of its sequences in which several shots are dedicated to a monument to those shot in Puerto del Torno. The film stated that this is one of the only monuments to the “victims of Franco’s regime in Spain.” Perhaps the filmmakers did not know many other places of the more than 600 that can be found in the country and had set out to create a story using only a small number of cases. However, just as they had manipulated the scene at the Guadalajara cemetery, they had ignored what was behind the exhumed grave: the monument that relatives and activists had unveiled in 1979. A monument practice that began by clandestinely going to

⁴⁸ “El silencio de otros’ sorprende en La 2 con un dato para recordar: 5.2% , por encima de Cuatro,” eldiario.es, April 5, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, https://vertele.eldiario.es/audiencias-canales/analisis-espana/Audiencias-jueves4abril-elsilenciodelosotros-documental-la2-tve_0_2109988983.html.

⁴⁹ “Las pruebas de ADN descartan que los restos exhumados en Guadalajara sean de Timoteo Mendieta,” eldiario.es, December 30, 2016, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.eldiario.es/clm/Pruebas-ADN-descartan-Timoteo-Mendieta_0_596340668.html.

the grave to bring flowers, which took lasting shape in a context of extreme violence with great courage. A monument to which various organizations still go to pay tribute to those who were killed there. In the film, the monument was not even allowed to appear. All it would have taken was to turn the camera 180 degrees and try to give another angle, beyond that of the families who aspire to privately recover their loved one. A deliberate omission that is illustrative when it comes to describing the media representation of the “Forensic Turn,” based on this systematic concealment of monument practices.

Perhaps in this resistance against monument practices we can see one of the last onslaughts of the spirit of the Enlightenment. It brought new needs to society, based on the possibility of accessing one’s own happiness. Heroes, battles, and cosmologies that gave a non-rational meaning to our lives and symbolic practices are left behind.⁵⁰ From this perspective, it makes sense that the idea of producing heroic monuments is not generally included in political agendas, as it is seen as old-fashioned. Instead, the focus has shifted to restoring “dignity,” which is much more relevant in a liberal democracy. However, “dignity” has been consistently interpreted as the forensic process which enables a “dignified” burial. This would be the end of the story if we were able to trust the media’s account of the success of forensics and the narrative that exhumations genuinely restore “dignity.” The fact is that this is not the case. The situation is actually more complex in the field.

THE DESTRUCTION BEHIND “DIGNITY”

The exhumations of 2016 and 2017 in Guadalajara, popularised through the above-mentioned film, showed the complexity of the situation they generated. Several DNA samples were taken, one of them that of Ascensión Mendieta, daughter of the trade unionist murdered and buried in one of the mass graves in the old civil cemetery of Guadalajara. Marina Montoto points out the expectation generated around an exhumation that was ordered by an Argentinean judge, something new, leading to two exhumations in 2016 and

⁵⁰ Lewis A. Coser, *The Idea of Social Structure* (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1975), 420.

2017, and how Ascensión Mendieta sought to recover her father's bones so that when she died she could be buried with them.⁵¹ However the media always ignored that those bodies were found in an environment where several monument practices had already taken place and where remembrance services beyond family mourning were regularly carried out. They also concealed the fact that there was no consensus when it came to exhumation.

At a memorial service organized at one of the mass graves in the Guadalajara cemetery in 2019 I had the opportunity to meet María Ascensión Florian Reyes. Her grandfather had also been murdered and buried in the mass graves. Weeks later I was able to visit her at her home and she introduced me to the story of her grandfather and the events that took place around the time of the exhumation two years earlier. Her father never told her anything about the repression, like so many children of those murdered, arguing that they were protecting the grandchildren. Therefore, Ascensión told me about her father: "they left him fatherless, took away their means of survival and fined them," pointing out to me that "those they didn't kill, they wanted to starve to death."⁵² Ascensión's father became hardened and never allowed himself to cry, his daughter told me. They didn't acknowledge to Ascensión that her grandfather had been killed until she was 30 years old. Her grandfather was a trade unionist, and he was accused by a landlord who, after the coup, proclaimed in the streets "that he was the owner of the town," walking around with a shotgun in his hands. Thanks to the help of Xulio García Bilbao, from the Foro por la Memoria in Guadalajara, they found her grandfather's grave in the cemetery register, and since then she has regularly visited the mass grave where he was buried. Nevertheless, the exhumation of the mass grave where Timoteo Mendieta was buried affected the mass grave of Ascensión Florian's grandfather. On that topic, she explained to me:

⁵¹ Marina Montoto Ugarte, "Un viaje de ida y vuelta: la construcción social de la 'víctima' en la querella argentina contra los crímenes del franquismo" (PhD diss., Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2019), 153-56.

⁵² Interview María Ascensión Florian Reyes in Guadalajara, March 12, 2019.

This lady [Ascensión Mendieta, daughter of Timoteo Mendieta] managed to get the grave opened with political backing. She went to the town hall to get them to contact the relatives of grave number 2 because in the cemetery accounts, he was listed as being buried in grave number 2. In January 16, mass grave number 2 was opened and twenty people were taken out. But when they did the DNA test, Timoteo Mendieta was not found. Then they sent another order from Argentina that grave number 1 had to be opened. Because he could have been one of the last ones. The grave was practically full, and as they couldn't fit any more in grave number 2, what did they do? And Ascensión, thank God, she wanted the remains of her father, and they gave her the remains of her father. But when they opened grave number 1, which is the one they opened in 2017, I sent a letter saying that I was opposed to them opening the grave. Nobody here has the right to anything, in other words, I said to them: I recognise the rights of Ascensión Mendieta, I recognise them, because she loves her father, and as a human being, I recognise what she wants. It is logical, she is a 92 or 93 year old lady, who is already very old. She is probably ill, I recognise her rights. But my father has rights too. And what my father wants is for justice to be done. So what is the most important thing? Because it is as I was saying: here, this grave is as dignified as the grave of anyone who is there in the Catholic cemetery. Because it is not the cemetery that gives you dignity, dignity comes from the person themselves.⁵³

Therefore, the objective of María Ascensión Florian Reyes was not the transfer of remains from one grave to another. She was seeking justice, and the exhumation implied the destruction of the monuments built over the graves decades before rather than any sort of justice. It was just a transfer of remains according to the law. Indeed, the town hall asked the Mendieta family for the transfer fees for operating inside a municipal cemetery and transferring bodies.⁵⁴

Despite the great media coverage, there was no judicial resolution restoring the murdered man's innocence by overturning his sentence or

⁵³ Interview María Ascensión Florian Reyes in Guadalajara, March 12, 2019.

⁵⁴ "El Ayuntamiento de Guadalajara reclama 2.057 euros por la exhumación de Mendieta," ABC, November 7, 2017, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.abc.es/espaa/castilla-la-mancha/abci-ayuntamiento-guadalajara-reclama-2057-euros-exhumacion-mendieta-201707111958_noticia.html.

investigating and condemning those responsible for the murder. Furthermore, Timoteo Mendieta had never “disappeared” as was reported in the media and by the ARMH itself, which carried out the exhumation.⁵⁵ Everyone knew where he was, he appeared in the registers and had a tombstone in his name above the grave. Pedro García Bilbao states in his article on this event:

Timoteo Mendieta was not a missing person. What is missing in the Mendieta case in almost all of what has been said and published, or in the actions taken so that he could have a personalised, family burial, is the fact that he was arrested, imprisoned, tried, sentenced, led, executed, and buried in accordance with the laws of the Francoist State. It is simply indecent to conceal the facts and call them what they are not. We know that it is difficult to accept that the legality of Franco’s regime is not questioned where it should be, in the Official State Gazette (BOE), but it is something that should not be hidden. ⁵⁶

For this reason, the objective of María Ascensión Florian Reyes and the Guadalajara Foro por la Memoria is to have the process brought to court.

“Dignity” is therefore, despite the media’s narrative, not even considered from the point of view of the law of liberal democracy, as in other exhumations. The term is confused and associated only with the final burial of an exhumed body that is still serving a sentence given by a dictatorship. It is only from this point of view that we can understand what happened after the exhumation: the gravestones that monumentalized the graves were torn up and piled in a corner. The old vaults built over the grave were destroyed, and all that was left was a muddy mess. ARMH left and not even the access road to this part of the cemetery, also destroyed during the exhumation, was rebuilt.

⁵⁵ “Timoteo Mendieta,” Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, accessed March 26, 2020, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://memoriahistorica.org.es/tag/timoteo-mendieta/>.

⁵⁶ “Timoteo Mendieta no fue un desaparecido. Lo que está desaparecido en el caso Mendieta en la casi totalidad de lo que se ha dicho y publicado, o en las acciones llevadas adelante para que pudiera tener un entierro personalizado y familiar, es el hecho de que fue detenido, encarcelado, juzgado, sentenciado, conducido, ejecutado y sepultado de acuerdo a la legalidad del Estado franquista. Es sencillamente indecente ocultar los hechos y calificarlos de lo que no son. Sabemos que es difícil de asumir que la legalidad del franquismo no se cuestiona donde debe, en el Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE), pero es algo que no se debe ocultar.” (Translated by the author). Pedro A. García Bilbao, “Timoteo Mendieta no fue un desaparecido,” *eldiario.es*, September 5, 2017, accessed March 26, 2020, https://www.eldiario.es/clm/palabras-clave/Timoteo-Mendieta-desaparecido_6_683191697.html.

The bodies were also missing. Those identified were distributed among the relatives who wanted them and those who did not were kept for years in plastic boxes in the ARMH offices hundreds of kilometres away from the place where they were honoured every year around the monument. Despite this, Ascensión continued to bring flowers to the place where the grave used to be and where, although there were no longer any bones, the flesh and blood of her grandfather, she explained to me, was still in the soil and had nourished the cypress tree next to the grave (Figure 94).

I also found this kind of destruction after an exhumation in Talavera, where Emilio Sales of the Foro por la Memoria in Toledo took me to the large grave by the back wall of the cemetery in January 2019.⁵⁷ The mass grave in the Talavera cemetery is neatly maintained. It is a long, landscaped grave, on the centre of which the town council placed a monument in 1987 to mark it. On the cemetery wall along which the mass grave is located, dozens of plaques commemorate the people who were murdered and buried there, placed there by relatives and activists on their own initiative. The garden is fenced in, and laces with the Republican flag could be seen, placed during some memorial services organized there months ago. However, there is something that will strike you about this large, well-tended grave: part of the garden is now a pile of muddy soil. An exhumation to find the remains of the trade unionist Enrique Horcajuelo Ramos was arranged by his descendants so that “he would have a dignified burial,”⁵⁸ and yet to this day, people are still bringing flowers there (Figure 95). Paradoxically, they were unconcerned about the burial which must have been “unworthy” for the advocates of exhumation.

These situations show disparities between the sensibilities of the advocates of exhumation and other groups and make explicit the lack of regulation in this respect, a lack of protection and above all the imposition of

⁵⁷ Interview with Emilio Sales Almazán in Talavera, January 13, 2019.

⁵⁸ “Exhumados los restos de Enrique Horcajuelo, fusilado y enterrado en una fosa común del cementerio de Talavera,” La Voz de Talavera, November, 19, 2018, accessed March 26, 2020, <https://www.lavozdetalavera.com/noticia/50656/actualidad/exhumados-los-restos-de-enrique-horcajuelo-fusilado-y-enterrado-en-una-fosa-comun-del-cementerio-de-talavera.html>.

one practice over the others. The exhumation process cannot be assumed as a process of restitution of “dignity,” since the legal guarantees of a liberal democracy do not exist. Even less can it be considered a symbolic restitution of “dignity” linked to burial when bodies are removed from a treasured environment where for decades they have been honoured and valued, to be stored in plastic boxes in a laboratory. In those actions there is a lack of respect and consideration for the community involved in the monument practices that have been carried out for decades at mass graves, when the media offers as the only possible perspective that “dignity” is being conferred through exhumations, as if their work to preserve memory had no value. However, this situation did not always lead to conflict within the community. In Magallón, where a monument was built on the grave in 1978 in a context of extreme violence and tensions, it was decided in 2009 to exhume the grave. Jerónimo, who was mayor of the municipality, explained to me that at first there were tensions because they wanted to remove the monument in order to gain access to the grave, but they quickly agreed to put it back after the exhumation, which is what happened.⁵⁹ I also found a similar situation when I visited the San Fernando cemetery in Cádiz where Francisco Javier Pérez Guirao was supervising an exhumation of a large grave. Francisco told me how some relatives commented that their parents would not have liked the removal of the cross that had crowned the grave for decades (Figure 96).⁶⁰ But this situation speaks of a change in needs which, given the circumstances, can lead to debate and even confrontation among relatives of the murdered.

But there does not necessarily have to be conflict even if the exhumation involves the destruction of a previous monument practice. So even if there has previously been a memorial practice on the grave, the possibility of exhumation could be consensual and welcome. These were situations where the monument practice was a mark made so as not to lose the place and exhume it in the future. This was the case especially in those places where the grave was outside the

⁵⁹ Interview with Jerónimo Navarro Manero in Magallón, November 8, 2019.

⁶⁰ Interview with Francisco Javier Pérez Guirao in San Fernando, July 16, 2019.

cemetery, as in the experience recounted in the first chapter by Fernando García Hernando in Villanueva de los Infantes where a stone marked the grave for decades until it could be exhumed.⁶¹ But inside the cemeteries such situations have also occurred. That has been the experience in Paterna, where the graves occupied clearly marked plots with the knowledge that the murdered would be found there, which led to a monument practice that has developed over decades, from the placing of tiles with the names to the progressive installation of tombstones, slabs, photographs, stands for flowers... as Vicent Gabarda reported in his study.⁶² Thanks to these practices, the relatives were able to form associations by grave number to arrange the exhumations that have taken place in recent years, for which these memorials on the graves have been removed (Figure 97). Another experience of the destruction of a previous monument in aid of exhumation, but seen from a positive point of view, I found in Castelló, where the graves had always been unique, something exceptional in the whole country. When I visited Juan Luis Porcar and Queta Ródenas, they explained to me with great precision the location of the different people who had been murdered.⁶³ They had been buried in different rows that she was able to locate and identify, and thanks to this location the physical anthropologists were able to exhume those whose relatives had claimed them through the Grup per la Recerca de la Memòria Històrica de Castelló (Group for the Research of the Historical Memory of Castelló).⁶⁴ According to Juan Luis Porcar, a member of the Grup, the exhumation process delayed the construction of a memorial garden on the site. This project was postponed to avoid the exhumations destroying it (Figure 98).⁶⁵

This interplay between exhumations and other planned memorial practices is something I found at several locations. The prospect of

⁶¹ Interview with José M^a Rojas and Fernando García Hernando in Villa Mayor de los Montes, January 14, 2019.

⁶² Vicente A. Gabarda Cebellán, “Un aspecte de la repressió franquista: els afusellaments a Paterna,” *Afers:fulls de recerca i pensament* 2, no. 3 (1986): 261-70.

⁶³ Interview with Juan Luis Porcar and Queta Ródenas in Castelló, October 1, 2019.

⁶⁴ Alberto Suárez, “El Ayuntamiento de Castelló inicia los trámites para exhumar a siete víctimas del franquismo,” Cadena SER, April 22, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, https://cadenaser.com/emisora/2019/04/22/radio_castellon/1555924631_384430.html.

⁶⁵ Interview with Juan Luis Porcar in Castellón, October 1, 2019.

exhumations affected the development of monument practices on the graves, as they would have been destroyed if they had taken place. Miguel Ángel Valdivia of the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica de la provincia de Jaén (Association for the Recovery of the Historical Memory of the Jaén Region), explained to me in the Jaén cemetery how if they had to exhume, nothing bad could happen. They would remove the structure that they themselves had built as it could be replaced later (Figure 99).⁶⁶ Miguel Ángel even took me to visit the monuments that his association had had built in the province, one of which, in the Martos cemetery, had been intentionally placed beside the grave's surface. They built it in a place where, if exhumation went ahead, it could be done without affecting the sculpture and the plaques (Figure 100). This logic of not affecting the grave also underlay the idea of using artificial turf on the gigantic grave in Patio 42 in the Toledo cemetery, as explained to me by Cármén María Duarte Cervera and Javier Mato Álvarez de Toledo, two campaigners for this grave from the city council.⁶⁷

On the other hand, the prospect of the destruction of the material testimony of the monument practice that condenses decades of struggle and resistance, as well as of sustained mourning dating back to the years of the Dictatorship, has generated, still generates, and will generate vehement opposition to the possibility of exhumation. In Oviedo we find one of the first graves where the monument practice took material form in the 1960s in the context of the mining strikes and it was also where one of the first conflicts arose in the early 2000s with the arrival of the new movement to exhume mass graves, which was opposed by most of the relatives.⁶⁸ But this conflict was not merely confined to the time of the first exhumation processes. Even today, the family members of AFECO, heirs of those who, despite suffering violence and harassment, did not stop going to the grave after the War, and of those who in the 1970s campaigned the monument practices, told me that they would do

⁶⁶ Interview with Miguel Ángel Valdivia in Jaén, September 12, 2019.

⁶⁷ Interview with Carmen María Duarte Cervera and Javier Mato Álvarez de Toledo in Toledo, January 25, 2019.

⁶⁸ Georges Tyrastor and Juan Vila, *Memoria y testimonio: Representaciones memorísticas en la España contemporánea* (Madrid: Editorial Verbum, 2012), 54.

everything possible to ensure that no one exhumed there.⁶⁹ In fact, “no exhumation of bodies” is one of their stated objectives. This is because the current legal model prevents such a situation and puts the wishes of whoever wishes to exhume over the wishes of the rest of the community. Moreover, the positive media treatment of any organization involved in exhumations has hindered any public critical debate. Thus, the question arises as to what would happen if a family or organization decided to put their interests first in order to exhume some of the large graves where monument practices have taken place, and if this could happen even to some of the most iconic ones, such as La Barranca, four decades after the complex was built as a “civil cemetery” and eighty since those women in black did not give up their work of bringing flowers to such an inhospitable place.

Unfortunately, the answer is “yes.” Such intervention could happen, and I found it in Valladolid. Orosia Castán, member of the Asociación Verdad y Justicia (Truth and Justice Association), explains the problems derived from the fact that ARMH of Valladolid exhumed one of the mass graves in the El Carmen cemetery in 2016:

*The grave was excavated. Naturally, remains were discovered and it became clear that the original mass grave was much larger and that new graves had been dug on top of it. Finally, the remains of 186 people were extracted, the grave was closed and to date, it has simply disappeared. The conclusion, not at all encouraging, is that a reference grave where relatives used to go has been destroyed to build another one in which the same remains will be reburied without identification and without the relatives ever knowing whether the remains thus transferred correspond to their relatives or not.*⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Interview with Cármen Díaz Escobar, Julián Ramos Duro, Teófilo Raboso and Celedonio Vizcaino Frutos in Ocaña, January 23, 2019.

⁷⁰ “La fosa fue excavada. Como es natural aparecieron restos y se evidenció lo anteriormente dicho: que la fosa original era mucho mayor y que sobre ella se habían construido nuevos enterramientos. Por fin, se trajeron restos de 186 personas, la fosa fue cerrada y a fecha de hoy, simplemente ha desaparecido. La conclusión, nada alentadora, es que se ha destruido una fosa de referencia a donde los familiares solían dirigirse, para construir otra en la que se volverá a enterrar los mismos restos sin identificar y sin que los familiares lleguen a saber si los restos trasladados de esta manera corresponden a sus familiares o no.” (Translated by the author). Orosia Castán, “Paradojas de la Memoria Histórica

This is not encouraging, as the remains have been in the possession of the ARMH of Valladolid since then and the place where relatives could bring flowers (Figure 101) has been turned into a plot of empty soil (Figure 102). But the story didn't finish there. The following year the ARMH of Valladolid excavated the mass grave known as "de Pablo Iglesias" a few metres from the previous one, which had been the object of monument practices in the seventies by PSOE and UGT, who were given the land by the first socialist mayor after Franco's death. However, the ownership was not formalised and this loophole was used by ARMH of Valladolid to again exhume a mass grave where for more than 40 years tribute had been paid to those murdered there. As with the other mass grave, the bodies disappeared in the possession of ARMH Valladolid, leaving one of the oldest monuments without bodies. Even the bust of Pablo Iglesias that crowned the monument, that used to be owned by the last mayor of Valladolid and hidden by his daughter during decades of Dictatorship, was now placed on the ground without its pedestal (Figure 103).

The situation has been concealed by the city council, while the media have not reported on the conflict, giving a voice only to ARMH Valladolid. Castán states:

The absence of information, the use of the remains, the destruction of the graves, the lack of identification of the victims, the struggle to prevent the placement of the relevant ideological symbols, the contempt and disregard with which the citizens have been treated, are the real problems resulting from the intervention in the cemetery, and those demand an active solution that will certainly not be achieved through tributes or photos.⁷¹

en Valladolid," últimoCero, September 10, 2017, <http://ultimocero.com/opinion/2017/09/10/paradojas-de-la-memoria-historica-en-valladolid/>.

⁷¹ "La ausencia de información, la utilización de los restos, la destrucción de las fosas, la falta de identificación de las víctimas, la pugna para impedir la colocación de los símbolos ideológicos pertinentes, el desprecio y la desconsideración con que se ha tratado a los ciudadanos, son los auténticos problemas derivados de la intervención en el cementerio, y exigen una solución activa que desde luego no va a conseguirse mediante homenajes o fotos." (Translated by the author). Orosia Castán, "Las fosas comunes de El Carmen, un error inexplicable," últimoCero, November 11, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021 <https://ultimocero.com/opinion/2019/11/11/las-fosas-comunes-carmen-error-inexplicable/>.

Despite the praise in the media for the exhumation processes, what I saw instead was that exhuming destroyed a monument, without identifying any bodies or contributing to a criminal investigation. My questions after meeting Orosia Castán and encountering the heartless situation in Valladolid could not but be about the reason for continuing exhumations under these conditions, and whether monument practices can still contribute something in the face of the hegemony of the “Forensic Turn.”

CHAPTER SIX

The Return to the Monument

DISSATISFACTIONS WITH THE “FORENSIC TURN”

According to our data have been carried out a total of 60 exhumations in Andalusia since 2000. But in very few of them has it been possible to identify the victims. The reasons why it is still difficult to identify the victims today lie in a series of circumstances which, as José Antonio Lorente Acosta states, have to do with technology, the state of the remains, the difficulty in finding living relatives with whom to compare the DNA, etc. The cases of Gerena and Sierro are a good example. Sierro rural guerrilla remains were exhumed in 2010, relatives could only be traced for one of them, Indalecio Fuentes, whose son, Antonio Fuentes, had DNA samples extracted for analysis. Well, despite having two bodies and a relative, what could have been expected to be a simple process turned into a complex one due to the poor condition of the bodies. This made it impossible to find samples in good condition among the exhumed remains. It was also impossible to genetically identify all the women in the case of Gerena, even though there were relatives of almost all of them. In short, it is very complicated to give back the victims to their families. It is advisable to make the relatives aware of this before beginning any exhumation process, out of responsibility and common sense.¹

¹ “Se han llevado a cabo un total de 60 exhumaciones en Andalucía desde el año 2000, según nuestros datos. Pero en muy pocas de ellas se ha podido identificar a las víctimas. Los motivos por los cuales aún hoy día es difícil identificar a las víctimas radica en un conjunto de circunstancias que, como afirma

With these words, Javier Giráldez describes the limitations of the so-called “forensic turn.” But I documented such situations too. In May 2019, when I was conducting my research in the province of Seville, I visited Marchena. There, Ana Ribas Parra, and José Manuel Romero Sánchez received me in the Museum of Memory set up by the Asociación Dignidad y Memoria de Marchena (Dignity and Memory Association of Marchena).² Ana explained to me how the museum and so many other initiatives have come about after trying to exhume the mass grave. After the takeover of the town by the insurgents, Javier Gaviria counted in his studies 200 people killed in July 1936.³ Ana told me how at the beginning of November flowers appeared in that area where her mother “was not allowed to tread.” In the eighties, a monument was erected on the initiative of the local socialist group. Years after that initiative, mourning continued at the site of the grave, but then a shift took place in the public debate.

We went to the first conference organized by the Association of Historical Memory and Justice of Andalusia, which no longer exists. And it was there in 2004 that we became aware that we were not crazy, but that there were people there who wanted the same thing. We emerged as a group because one day in 2000 I read about the opening of Emilio Silva's grave in Priaranza and it caught my attention. I said to my mother:

José Antonio Lorente Acosta, tienen que ver con la tecnología, el estado de los restos, la dificultad para encontrar parientes vivos con los que comparar el ADN, etc. Los casos de Gerena o Sierro son paradigmáticos. Por ejemplo, de los maquis de Sierro exhumados en el año 2010 solo se pudieron encontrar familiares de uno de ellos, Indalecio Fuentes, a cuyo hijo, Antonio Fuentes, se le extrajeron muestras de ADN para realizar los análisis. Pues bien: a pesar de disponer de dos cuerpos y un familiar, lo que podía preverse sencillo se convirtió en un proceso complejo debido al mal estado de los cuerpos. Lo que impedía encontrar muestras en buen estado entre los restos exhumados. En el caso de Gerena también fue imposible identificar genéticamente a todas las mujeres, a pesar de que había familiares de casi todas ellas. En definitiva, es muy complicado devolver las víctimas a sus familiares. Es conveniente, por responsabilidad y por sentido común, hacer ver esto a los familiares antes de comenzar cualquier proceso exhumatorio.” (Translated by the author). Javier Giráldez Díaz, “Política de la memoria y memoria de la política. Una reflexión sobre la memoria histórica en Andalucía” (PhD diss., Universidad de Sevilla, 2014), 292.

² “DIGNIDAD Y MEMORIA: Visita a Museo de la Memoria DIME Marchena,” Dignidad y Memoria, October 23, 2015, accessed May 10, 2021, <http://dimeMarzoena.blogspot.com/2015/10/visita-museo-de-la-memoria-dime-Marzoena.html>.

³ Javier Gavira Gil, *En busca de una historia oculta: la Guerra Civil en Marchena (1936-1939)* (Marchena: Asociación Dignidad y Memoria, 2007).

Look what they have done in León. And she said: I want to do the same with my father.⁴

Before then, Ana told me, her mother had never considered the possibility of exhuming the body of her father. “The need must have been there all the time,” she told me, but circumstances would not have allowed her to address it. However, the need could not be met. Ana and José Manuel explained to me how excavations had been carried out, but they had found nothing but jumbled bones, to their “total frustration.”⁵

This frustration, due to an unmet need, is predicted by many of those involved in the execution of the exhumations themselves.⁶ Angel Olmedo, from ARMHEX, explained to me how, before the exhumation process, his association works with the families to make them aware that a failed exhumation or partial identification of the bodies is also possible.⁷ This is a real possibility that physical anthropologists themselves recognize,⁸ and science cannot guarantee it can meet their need, due to its limitations. And that results in many dramas. In places like Utrera I met Juan Valle, who with tireless energy and dedication was searching in the local cemetery for the mass grave where his grandfather was to be found. He felt that the monument that had been placed at the entrance to the cemetery had not dealt with the problem (Figure 104).⁹ However, the mass grave was not found. It was therefore a double loss of the body: first it was taken away through murder, then it was taken away again by the forensic expert who testified that the place where they had been mourning over the decades was not where the body was buried. The assurance of success suggested by the “CSI effect” turned out to be a lie. Rosi Braidotti points out how “Technological interventions neither suspend nor do they automatically improve the social relations of exclusion and inclusion that

⁴ Interview with Ana Ribas Parra in Marchena, May 30, 2019.

⁵ Interview with Ana Ribas Parra and José Manuel Romero Sánchez in Marchena, May 30, 2019.

⁶ Juan Montero, “Exhumando el legado material de la represión franquista. De la percepción social a la encrucijada jurídica y patrimonial,” in *Recorriendo La Memoria*, ed. Jaime Almansa Sánchez (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2010), 67-82.

⁷ Interview with Ángel Olmedo in Mérida, December 5, 2019.

⁸ Luis Ríos, “Identificación En Fosas Comunes de La Guerra Civil: Limitaciones y Posibilidades a Partir Del Caso de Burgos,” *Boletín Galego de Medicina Legal e Forense* (2012): 125-42.

⁹ Interview with Juan Valle in Utrera, May 29, 2019.

historically had been predicated.”¹⁰ This is perfectly applicable to those murdered and buried in mass graves, for they have also been historically constructed as “other” by their political agency. Forensic technique has come to “solve the problem” and “suspend” these relations of exclusion, but this is not automatic.

In 2004 the manifesto “To Support ARMH is to Bury Memory”¹¹ was published. It was a plea against the “forensic turn,” setting out how the “turn” did not lead to justice and reincorporation of the excluded into society in the Kingdom of Spain. Besides that, another frustration was the unrealistic expectations of the process, since in most cases identification does not take place, as the recurrent failures in identifications testify.¹² But other major dissatisfactions that have come hand in hand with the “forensic turn” are those related to the absence of clear protocols for psychosocial intervention in exhumation processes, often resulting in re-traumatization by subjecting relatives to images of violence without support in a society that continues to marginalize them. This is a marginalization that forensic science is not equipped to cope with. Forensic science does not involve educational, memorial, or informative programmes. It does not reintegrate the murdered into society, not even under the liberal concept of “dignity.” This suggests that, despite the blind trust placed in scientific protocol, as Martin Heidegger pointed out, “science does not think.”

This situation is grounded in the fact that science itself does not think, and cannot think—which is its good fortune, here meaning the assurance of its own appointed course. Science does not think. This is a shocking statement. Let the statement be shocking, even though we immediately add the supplementary statement that nonetheless science always and in its own fashion has to do with thinking. That fashion, however, is genuine

¹⁰ Rosi Baidotti, “Bio-Power and Necro-Politics’ Originally Published in German as ‘Biomacht Und Nekro-Politik. Überlegungen Zu Einer Ethik Der Nachhaltigkeit,’” *Springerin, Hefte Fur Gegenwartskunst, Band XIII Heft 2*, (2007): 18-23.

¹¹ José M^a Pedreño, “Apoyar a la ARMH es enterrar la memoria,” Foro por la Memoria, January 23, 2004, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.foroporlamemoria.info/documentos/jmpedreno_23012004.htm.

¹² Ainhoa Iribarri, “La identificación forense es infalible, la memoria no,” El Español, November 13, 2015, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.elespanol.com/ciencia/20151113/78992146_0.html.

*and consequently fruitful only after the gulf has become visible that lies between thinking and the sciences, lies there unbridgeably. There is no bridge here- only the leap. Hence there is nothing but mischief in all the makeshift ties and asses' bridges by which men today would set up a comfortable commerce between thinking and the sciences.*¹³

It has been automatically assumed that forensic science provides answers, but it does not provide them by itself. In addition to being part of a process that has no legal implications, some of the technicians who carry out exhumations are sometimes unaware of the consequences. If exhuming can lead to re-traumatization at the sight of terror, it is also re-traumatizing to witness a process that does not offer a story that gives value to the murdered person, as this should be the responsibility of society and institutions. The forensic techniques offer a violent image of twisted, suffering, wounded corpses, now exposed in pieces of news published in the media and on social networks. The murdered are subjected to a regime of visibility that continues to cast them as “others.”

The image of the corpse that forensic science offers today is the image that the regime wanted to impose on the survivors, if we remember General Mola’s instructions at the time of the coup:

*It is necessary to create an atmosphere of terror, to leave a feeling of domination by eliminating without scruple or hesitation anyone who does not think as we do. We must make a great impression, anyone who is openly or secretly a supporter of the Popular Front must be shot.*¹⁴

Therefore, simply exhuming the bodies, without officially restoring the agency of the murdered and condemning the perpetrators, does not reverse the repressive order that established the “terror.” The repressive potential of the Spanish State and the possible consequences of supporting agendas ranging from reformist republican to revolutionary, from feminist to freemasons, are made clear through the media that disseminates these images of violence. The

¹³ Martin Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking?* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 7-8.

¹⁴ Paul Preston, “Franco y la represión: la venganza del justiciero” in *Novísima. II Congreso Internacional de Historia de Nuestro Tiempo*, ed. Carlos Navajas Zubeldia, Diego Iturriaga Barco (Logroño: Universidad de La Rioja, 2010), 59.

social anthropologists who attended the first exhumations in the 2000s spoke of the fear, the tension, which was palpable in the atmosphere during these exhumation processes. Francisco Ferrández describes an exhumation he documented in 2009 in Extremadura:

A month later, on 28 and 29 November, the technical team returned to the site of 'Las Palomas' in the municipality of Valverde de la Vera, to search for two other mass graves containing those residents of Villanueva de la Vera who had also been executed during the terror of the autumn of 1936. On the ground that soon became a large mudflat under the pouring rain, the graves gave at least a brief clue that the scenes of terror and death that infiltrated the memories and testimonies of relatives and witnesses were not a mere paranoid invention: at the site of one of the two graves was being searched, three pairs of shoe soles were found that corresponded to the three people who had been shot: Teodoro Tornero, Lorenzo Cordero, and Gregorio Recio. Next to them, a red button, and a coin. Nothing else was left in the grave. A small number of personal objects were the only trace of thirteen people who had been shot. However, an important part of the work had been done although practically nothing had been found. They were there. That was the place where they had been badly buried.¹⁵

Nevertheless, when visiting an exhumation, it is common to find flags and flowers. In relation to this practice, Lourdes Herrasti, one of the archaeologists with the most experience in the exhumation of graves as part of the Aranzadi team, pointed out to me that flowers placed in the empty grave were a recurrent

¹⁵ "Un mes después, el 28 y 29 de noviembre, el equipo técnico regresó al paraje de 'Las Palomas' en el término municipal de Valverde de la Vera, a buscar otras dos fosas con vecinos de Villanueva de la Vera ejecutados también durante el terror caliente del otoño de 1936. Bajo el aguacero, y en un terreno que pronto se convirtió en un gran barrizal, las fosas dieron en este caso al menos una breve pista de que las secuelas de terror y muerte que infiltraban los recuerdos y los testimonios de los familiares y testigos no eran una mera invención paranoica: en el emplazamiento de una de las dos fosas que se buscaban aparecieron tres pares de suelas de calzado que correspondían a los tres fusilados que se estaban buscando: Teodoro Tornero, Lorenzo Cordero y Gregorio Recio. Junto a ellas, un botón rojo y una moneda. En la fosa no quedaba nada más. Escasísimos objetos personales como único rastro de trece fusilados. Pero, aunque no hubiera aparecido prácticamente nada, una parte importante del trabajo estaba hecho. Estaban allí. Ese era el lugar donde les mal enterraron." (Translated by the author). Francisco Ferrández, "Fosas comunes, paisajes del terror," *Disparidades. Revista de Antropología* 64, no. 1 (2009): 77-78.

action (Figure 105).¹⁶ And indeed the director of the team to which she belongs, Francisco Etxeberria, not only stood out in recent years for his intense work in directing and coordinating exhumations throughout the country, but he also directed and coordinated symbolic processes beyond forensic science. To him we owe rituals such as the taking of photographs of the relatives reproducing the position of the murdered inside the exhumed grave (Figure 106) or the exchange of bottles with messages after the exhumation of the cemetery of Mount Ezkaba, as those bottles gave the clue to the identification of the bodies (Figure 107)¹⁷. In the absence of a spiritual guide, this forensic expert became a producer of rites as he recovered the bodies and returned them to the relatives at events during which he explained the techniques he had used during the exhumation and identification process (Figure 108).

But these rites, despite their forensic semantic load, are not scientific rites in any way and have been produced purely because of the sensitivity of a committed professional such as Francisco Etxeberria. Therefore, as Heidegger pointed out, between science and thought there is a leap, not a bridge, and the connection is not guaranteed. But what to do with death bodies after exhumations is therefore a challenge. Bones cannot speak for themselves and it is up to the living to choose how the dead live on in memory and history. And this is an obligation that science cannot fulfil by itself. In this sense, during the unveiling of a sculpture by the CNT of Burgos at the graves exhumed in the Monte de Estepar in Burgos,¹⁸ Raquel Neira, the daughter of Nicolas Neira, the trade unionist murdered and honoured that day, made a revealing comment: “What difference does it make if they are all bones, they are all the same.”¹⁹ These words were uttered by Raquel when, after the ceremony, a young man

¹⁶ Lourdes Herrasti and Francisco Etxeberria, “Trincheras como lugar de enterramientos en la Guerra Civil” Postguerras / Aftermaths of War, ed. Teresa Abelló i Güell et al. (Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2019).

¹⁷ José Francisco Etxeberria, Koldo Pla, and Elisa Querejeta, *El Fuerte de San Cristóbal en la memoria: de prisión a sanatorio penitenciario: el cementerio de las botellas* (Pamplona: Pamiela, 2014), 153-88.

¹⁸ “La CNT de burgos organiza unas jornadas de homenaje a Nicolás Neira, secretario de la CNT,” CNT de Palencia, August 31, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <http://palencia.cnt.es/2019/08/31/burgos-cnt-memoria-historica-la-cnt-de-burgos-organiza-unas-jornadas-de-homenaje-a-nicolas-neira-secretario-de-la-cnt-asesinado-en-estepar-en-1936/>.

¹⁹ Raquel Neira comment during the CNT memorial event, 14 September 2019.

pointed out the body that could be her father on a large canvas that reproduced the mass grave in real size. And indeed, after the body of Nicolas Neira was handed over to his daughter, the remembrance service continued. The scientific result of the exhumation ceased to be central, and the recovered body became just another observer of his own remembrance service from the boot of the family's car. A service organized around a new sculpture in the surroundings of the mass graves (Figure 109).

As Hans Belting points out, it is obviously impossible to take new pictures once a person is deceased. In photography a mortal body can be reproduced to infinity through the negative, but it is a body that is never released from death. Therefore, even if it seems obvious, it is impossible to take a picture of the murdered person after death, and when photographing the graves, the skeletal remains are photographed, not the people themselves.²⁰ In such circumstances, when the bodies are given to the relatives after exhumation, they can be reinterred without further ado, in the social anonymity of family vaults if possible, or in a collective ossuary or an anonymous columbarium if they have not been identified or claimed. But the question arises as to other possibilities. Is it possible to produce images beyond forensic science or has the “forensic turn” annulled all other possibilities? This concern arises when the only answer seems to be the technical report and the boxes with bones that someone will not always want to take care of. However, it is not the only solution.

MONUMENTAL SOLUTIONS

Two of the main forensic experts involved in the process of exhuming mass graves from the War and the Dictatorship, Fernando Serrulla and Francisco Etxeberria, point out that having registered a total of 2,457 graves, by 2020 more than 700 graves would have been exhumed, recovering more than 8,000 individuals, and it is estimated that there are 20,000 individuals still to be

²⁰ Hans Belting, *An Anthropology of Images Picture, Medium, Body*. (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014), 84-124.

exhumed, of which less than a third might be identifiable. However, taking as a reference the figure suggested by Francisco Espinosa of 130,199 people murdered, the forensic experts suggest that only 0.2% of the 130,199 individuals estimated to have been murdered have been genetically identified, which is just 260 individuals.²¹ Therefore, the most obvious thing to do, given the limitations of forensic science, would have been to give up searching for the missing bodies, but giving up did not seem to be an option for those involved. Science does not provide absolute answers and therefore the monument practice re-emerges in society as a way of dealing with mass graves. As David Le Breton argues, in these situations medicine distances itself from the recourse to the symbolic, and yet it could enhance its effects.²² In fact, Francisco Etxeberria himself observed from his experience as a forensic expert exhuming graves, how thanks to many exhumations, monuments were built after finding the bodies. And that's why thanks to the construction of those monuments those places are considered by the authorities as "places of memory:"

*There are hundreds, one might say thousands, of places in Spain that could be places of memory. I'm not talking about exhumations, I'm talking about recognizing the site, identifying it, and that it should be recorded in the town hall that we have a clandestine grave in the municipality, outside the cemetery, in such and such a place. And that this space should be protected in perpetuity, regardless of whether we know who the relatives are, regardless of whether there are bones underneath, regardless of whether DNA testing is carried out or the cause of death is established, regardless of anything else: a clandestine grave within the municipal boundaries in itself should be treated differently.*²³

²¹ Alonso, Antonio, et al., *Las Exhumaciones de la Guerra Civil y la Dictadura Franquista 2000-2019. Estado actual y recomendaciones de futuro* (Madrid: Ministerio de la Presidencia, Relaciones con las Cortes y Memoria Democrática, 2020), 140-154.

²² David Le Breton, *Anthropologie du corps et modernité* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2013), 134.

²³ "Hay centenares, se podrían decir miles, de lugares en España que podrían ser lugares de memoria. Uno se llena la boca con esta cuestión, pero no hacen absolutamente nada ni si quiera, no digo exhumar, no estoy hablando de la exhumación, estoy hablando de reconocer el sitio, identificarlo, y que conste en pleno del Ayuntamiento que tenemos una fosa clandestina en el término municipal, fuera del cementerio, en el paraje tal. Y que ese espacio se deba proteger a perpetuidad, con independencia de que sepamos quienes son los familiares, con independencia de que haya huesos abajo, con independencia que se haga el ADN o se interprete la causa de muerte, con independencia de todo, una

One of the questions that Etxeberria poses in the same lecture is how the monument practice re-emerges, strengthened by the forensic process, although it is not the forensic process itself that campaigns the monument practice. This is a necessary response for those involved in the process and derives from the dissatisfaction produced by the exhumation itself. It is not something new, but something that had already occurred before and Etxeberria himself exemplifies in the same lecture through experiences such as that of La Barranca.

As in La Barranca, during the seventies and eighties the solution of building a collective vault after exhumation was the most common. In the first part, I spoke of those built after exhumations in La Rioja, Navarra, and Extremadura, as well as the pioneering ones in Oiartzun in Gipuzkoa, Aranjuez in Madrid or Valdepeñas in Ciudad Real. These were all places where exhumations were carried out as a collective task, involving neighbours, raising funds and with no technical means other than their own hands and traditional knowledge of how to care for the dead. The graves were emptied to build vaults where the bodies were housed and from then on, they were the object of devotion, mourning and remembrance. Despite this, their media visibility was almost nil, so that rather than using a historical reference, I recognized a subconscious memory in terms of what to do with the bodies that connects the Dictatorship, the Transition and nowadays in a non-linear way: the decision to develop monument practices to house the exhumed bodies. Thus, in the first part I dealt with some of these monument practices whose purpose it is to house the bodies after exhumation, and now I will return to them and complement them with other experiences to propose how the monument practice returns as a necessity for the different social agents involved in the exhumation processes.

Firstly, it should be noted that the monument practice arose again after the exhumations as a pragmatic solution, a means in the face of a need that the

fosa clandestina en los límites del término municipal por si solo ya debería ser tratada de otra manera.” (Translated by the author). Etxeberria Gabilondo, “Congreso Internacional: Cuerpo, Ciencia, Memoria y Política en las exhumaciones contemporáneas, ILLA-CSIC, 2015,” YouTube, September 22, 2015, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5hEoEDtI4>.

forensic investigation did not meet for the relatives. It is therefore not surprising that, despite all the media attention paid to the exhumation process in Villamayor de los Montes, the ending of the story of the exhumation of the 46 bodies by the Aranzadi Science Society and the UAM in 2006,²⁴ was when the bodies were collectively reburied in the municipal cemetery where Fernando García Hernando told me that he had always wanted to bring his father.²⁵ In this type of experience, where the grave was located outside the cemetery, the need to exhume and re-inter was logical. However, I also found the solution of the monument practice in experiences of exhumation in graves inside cemeteries. This was the experience of Alcaraz too, where following an agreement the families had made after the murders, a stone was placed after the War. With that stone, they marked the burial place in a cemetery as there was a risk that the grave could be lost among others. A cross was placed there in the 1960s and finally, in the 1970s, a fence was built. Years later Manuel Ramírez Gimeno initiated the exhumation of the grave. According to what he told me, his original objective had been to take the body of his grandfather, like those other grandchildren of the murdered of his generation had wanted. However, the process did not turn out as expected.²⁶ Successive local and regional PSOE and PP governments obstructed the exhumation in various ways.²⁷ When they finally managed to overcome all the bureaucratic hurdles imposed by the administration, the technical team found 35 bodies, which was more individuals than expected due to the subsequent use of the space for other burials. But some of those who were murdered by the regime did not turn up in the exhumation. Only two bodies were conclusively identified by DNA.²⁸ In view

²⁴ Francisco Ferrández, “Death on the Move,” in *A Companion to the Anthropology of Death*, ed. Antonius C. G. M. Robben (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2018), 189–204.

²⁵ Interview with José M^a Rojas and Fernando García Hernando in Villa Mayor de los Montes, January 14, 2019.

²⁶ Interview with Manuel Ramírez Gimeno in Albacete, October 5, 2019.

²⁷ Espinosa-Dominguez, “Exhumación De 17 Republicanos en la fosa de Alcaraz (Albacete),” A.R.I.C.O = Memoria Aragonesa, December 7, 2013, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://aricomemoriaaragonesa.wordpress.com/2013/12/07/exhumacion-de-17-republicanos-en-la-fosa-de-alcaraz-albacete/>.

²⁸ Luis Benítez de Lugo Enrich et al., “Exhumación y recuperación de la Memoria Histórica de los represaliados en el Cementerio de Alcaraz (Albacete)” in *Actas de la I Reunión Científica de Arqueología de Albacete*, ed. Blanca Gamo Parras and Rubí Sanz Gamo (Albacete: Diputación de Albacete, 2016).

of this situation, it was therefore necessary to build a new structure in the cemetery where tribute was paid to the murdered and where the exhumed bodies could be housed (Figure 110). This need did not conflict with forensic science, but on the contrary helped to make up for its shortcomings, to deal with the dissatisfactions generated. But spatiality is also fundamental, it is necessary to have a place to house the bodies, and science itself does not provide this either.

Another drama was faced by the groups of relatives of those murdered in Paterna. In 2019, the physical anthropologist Javier Iglesias and his team Arqueoantro were exhumeing the mass graves in the cemetery of Paterna, scarcely four-square meters of surface area, but up to 6 meters deep, housing 200 bodies.²⁹ At the same time as this exhumation process was taking place, Javier put me in contact with Carolina Martínez Murcia. Carolina and other relatives, under the banner of the Plataforma de Asociaciones de Familiares de Familiares de Víctimas del Franquismo de las Fosas Comunes de Paterna (Platform of Associations of Relatives of the Victims of Francoism of the Mass Graves of Paterna), were going to begin receiving the bodies exhumed from the mass graves at the end of the year. Many of them had not been identified, and for others there were no relatives, and they did not know what to do with them. There were previous tombstones, plaques and sculptures that had begun to be installed decades ago, but they were destroyed by the technical team in order to proceed with the exhumation of the mass grave. They submitted the following request to the town council:

We request the that the PATERNA TOWN COUNCIL take responsibility for and give urgent priority to the creation of a large mausoleum, to be agreed with the ASSOCIATION OF RELATIVES OF VICTIMS OF FRANCOISM OF THE MASS GRAVE N°94 OF PATERNA, above ground level, in a new site, inside the Municipal Cemetery that meets the optimum

²⁹ Javier Iglesias, “Proceso de exhumación, cadena de custodia e identificación de los cuerpos. Aspectos técnicos y jurídicos. Antropología forense durante los trabajos en el cementerio municipal de Paterna” in *I Jornades de Memòria Democràtica*, ed. Francisco José Sanchis Moreno (Valencia: Diputació de València, 2017).

conditions of preservation of the remains, as well as providing access for future identifications, and that at the same time fulfils the function as great Space of Memory and Dignity for the victims of the dictatorship.

At the same time, we would like to request as a future project that the remaining first lot of land be converted into a Great Memorial Square indicating the outline of the existing mass graves, where the names of the 2,238 victims murdered in Paterna can be placed, remembering and reporting the horrors of the dictatorship and fascism, as a guarantee that history will not be repeated.

We want to remind you that it is required by law, that those who suffered persecution or violence during the civil war and the dictatorship are recognized and measures are established to honour their memory.

Carolina Martínez Murcia

President of the Association

Alberto Pedro Martínez

Secretary of the Association³⁰

Despite this, the town council, under the PSOE, refused to give them a solution. Juan Antonio Sagredo, mayor of Paterna, refused to receive both relatives and the Platform as an organization, delegating the meetings to the deputy mayor but in an unofficial capacity. The only concession he grants them was to rebury their relatives in the grave. The Paterna town council went so far as to tell *elDiario.es* newspaper “We are not in favour of the columbarium, how dare they tell us how to organize our cemetery?”³¹ In a request to the city council by the platform for the same things, the relatives referred to this

³⁰ “La creación prioritaria y urgente por parte del AYUNTAMIENTO DE PATERNA como responsable y a convenir con la Asociación FAMILIARES DE VÍCTIMAS DEL FRANQUISMO DE LA FOSA COMÚN N°94 DE PATERNA, de un Gran Mausoleo sobre el nivel del suelo, en una nueva ubicación, dentro del Cementerio Municipal que cumpla las condiciones óptimas de conservación de los restos, así como accesibilidad para futuras identificaciones, y a la vez cumpla la cualidad de gran Espacio de Memoria y dignidad hacia las víctimas de la dictadura. / A la vez se solicita como futuro proyecto, reconvertir el cuadrante primero 1º izquierda en una Gran Plaza Memorial donde se localice la delimitación de las fosas existentes y los nombres de las 2.238 víctimas asesinadas en Paterna, recordando e informando de los horrores de la dictadura y el fascismo, como garantía de no repetición. / Rogamos se atienda esta necesaria petición cumpliendo siempre la legalidad vigente, y se reconozca y se establezcan medidas en favor de quienes padecieron persecución o violencia durante la guerra civil y la dictadura. / Carolina Martínez Murcia. Presidenta de la Asociación. Fdo.: Alberto Pedro Martínez. Secretario de la Asociación.” (Translated by the author).

³¹ “No somos partidarios del columbario, ¿cómo nos van a decir desde fuera cómo organizar nuestro cementerio?” (Translated by the author). Juan Miguel Baquero, “¿Huesos devueltos a una fosa franquista? El conflicto que desafía a familias de víctimas del ‘paredón de España,’” *eldiario.es*, November 2, 2020, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/huesos-devueltos-fosa-franquista-conflicto-desafia-familias-victimas-paredon-espana_1_6365444.html.

decision as “an incoherence and an atrocity, the burial in the same mass grave where their murderers placed them.”³² In 2020 Carolina and the platform continued to fight for the construction of a place where the exhumed bodies could be housed, while the city council continued to avoid dealing with the problem, hiding behind the 2007 Law of Memory. Today a sign has been placed over the grave stating “39 inocentes han estado 80 años ocultados injustamente en esta fosa. Los familiares no queremos que vuelvan” (90 innocent people were unjustly hidden in this grave for 80 years. We, the relatives, do not want them to return here) (Figure 111). Finally in 2021 the platform managed with the support of various associations, journalists, and academics to get the mayor to give in and in the coming years a monument will be built to house the bodies of those exhumed.³³

The success of the Paterna relatives, however, shows that despite their victory the most dramatic point of all this is not the lack of political will of town councils such as Paterna but the legal vacuum of the 2007 Law and the 2011 protocol which simply states that unclaimed or unidentified bodies must be re-interred in the municipal cemetery, without further symbolic recognition:

They are interred in the cemetery of the town where the grave is located. For this purpose, the most appropriate containers will be used, according to the indications of conservation and restoration technicians. Each individual will be buried in an individualized way after an identification that will allow them to be located in future exhumations, together with the personal effects that have been found. This identification should include in all cases the study register number. ³⁴

³² “Una incoherencia y una atrocidad, la inhumación en la misma fosa común donde los ubicaron sus asesinos” (Translated by the author).

³³ “La Generalitat y el Ayuntamiento de Paterna colaborarán en la construcción del Mausoleo de las víctimas de la Guerra Civil y el franquismo,” Gabinete de Comunicación. Generalitat Valenciana, March 5, 2021, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.gva.es/inicio/area_de_prensa/not_detalle_area_prensa?id=945416.

³⁴ “Se inhuman en el cementerio de la población donde se halla la fosa. Para ello, se utilizarán los contenedores más adecuados, según las indicaciones de técnicos en conservación y restauración. Cada individuo será inhumado de manera individualizada previa una identificación que permita su localización en futuras exhumaciones, junto con los efectos personales que hayan sido hallados. Dicha identificación deberá incluir en todos los casos el número de registro de estudio.” (Translated by the author). Ministerio de la Presidencia, “Orden PRE/2568/2011, de 26 de septiembre, por la que se publica el acuerdo del consejo de ministros de 23 de septiembre de 2011, por el que se ordena la

But not even such a technical procedure is carried out. And sometimes, this produces a new monument practice. I found an illustration of this situation when I visited the mass grave in Benavente. In the city of Zamora, the grave has been the subject of monument practices for decades, to which a sculpture with a raised fist was added in 2016 at the initiative of the IU councillor Manuel Burón. But from the point of view of the current discussion, what stands out about the Benavente mass grave are some plaques on the edge of the grave, where it is indicated that the ARMH has buried four murdered people, exhumed, and unidentified or unclaimed by their relatives. The ARMH thus considered that the best place to bury them was in another mass grave where a monument practice had taken place (Figure 112). A similar decision was also taken in Magallón. There a first plaque had been placed over the grave in 1978, as I mentioned under extremely violent conditions. After negotiations for the removal of the plaque so that the grave could be exhumed on the initiative of the Asociación de Familiares y Amigos de los Asesinados y Enterrados en Magallón (Association of Relatives and Friends of the Murdered and Buried in Magallón), under the condition that it would be returned, the grave was finally exhumed in 2009. Although the idea was purely to locate only those murdered in the municipality, many more bodies were discovered: more than 80 people from 19 localities. The reality is that dozens of those bodies could not be identified, and no one would claim them, so the restitution of the plaque was not only part of the agreement, but also the solution to the fate of these bodies. The original structure was enlarged into a large vault where the 81 exhumed bodies were reinterred, with their names displayed (Figure 113).³⁵ And this will probably happen again in future, as I saw in Puerto Real. Paco Aragón, CNT activist and member of the Asociación por la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica Social y Política de Puerto Real (Association for the Recovery of the Social and Political Historical Memory of Puerto Real) explained to me how in

publicación en el Boletín Oficial del Estado del protocolo de actuación en exhumaciones de víctimas de la guerra civil y la dictadura,” Boletín Oficial del Estado, September 27, 2011, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.boe.es/eli/es/o/2011/09/26/pre2568>.

³⁵ “Magallón y Ateca homenajean a los asesinados en la guerra,” Heraldo de Aragón, April 9, 2011, accessed April 2, 2020, <https://www.heraldo.es/noticias/aragon/zaragoza/2011/04/10/magallon-ateca-homenajean-los-asesinados-la-guerra-135084-2261126.html>.

2016 a long grave was exhumed, the largest in the province, where about 200 people had been killed in 1936 with the rapid arrival of the rebel army from Africa.³⁶ Paco explained to me that the local CNT decided to organize days of remembrance, which later led to the founding of the memorial association, the construction of a monument at the cemetery and finally the exhumation of the mass grave. When we talked, the bodies were kept at the town hall. When I spoke to them, they were still waiting for the results of the analysis, but they had a clear idea of how to continue the process:

The idea that the laboratory has, and it is the idea that we have too, from previous experience, that nobody from the association, nor from the town council, nor anybody else knows the results of the analysis. Why? Because they bring them in a sealed envelope. All the relatives are summoned to a meeting at the town hall, and then the sealed envelope is given to the relatives. This is where you are told whether the DNA matched the remains or not. If it matches, fine, if it doesn't, then nothing. That's why an official act is held in the town hall, and it is the laboratory that brings the results directly and hands them over. And the Association, the town council and the Andalusian government have to be present, plus them. And then they hand them over to them. And once this has been done, everyone is given the opportunity to... because we are going to make a kind of 'U' to build all the columbaria in the monument, to put all the little boxes inside. So, any family member who wants to take his or her body can take it, no problem. Do you see what I mean? So this is how it will work even after the DNA analysis has been done. Because there are many relatives here who say that, if the bodies have been under the ground together for 83 years, they should be exhumed together and be buried together.³⁷

This experience once again represents a way that monument practices provide a solution to the problems that flow from the exhumation processes, while also fostering a sense of community.

³⁶ Juan Miguel Baquero Zurita, *Que fuera mi tierra: intervenciones en fosas comunes del franquismo en Andalucía: anuario 2015* (Sevilla: Extra! Comunicación and Dirección General de Memoria Democrática, 2016), 87.

³⁷ Interview with Paco Aragón and Antonio Molins in Puerto Real, July 19, 2019.

I found a similar dynamic at work in the province of Cuenca, where the protocol was not enough. There ARMH of Cuenca exhumed more than 400 bodies in the cemetery of the Monastery of Uclés,³⁸ used as a prison after the War. When I visited the place with Juan Pedro Bru Rubiato in April 2019, he showed me the large vault that ARMH of Cuenca had had to build in Uclés, as most of the bodies had not been identified.³⁹ However, there was nothing at the vault to clarify who those people were. The association resolved the situation months later in a ceremony where plaques with their names were placed on the structure and their political affiliation was acknowledged with tricolour flags and flowers (Figure 114).⁴⁰ But this action taken recently in Uclés stems from the personal concerns of its supporters and not from a legal necessity, protocol requirement, or scientific method. I recognized this situation in numerous other examples of structures in very different places, where people had faced the same problem in a similar way, such as Estepar, Puebla de Alcocer or Paterna de Rivera, which I mentioned in the first part. In fact, with regard to the latter, Juan Miguel Baquero tells the story of Luis Vega, whose parents were murdered.

They forced people from the village to dig “the pits,” he says. Luis, a child still, wondering about the fate of his parents, used to sneak into the cemetery grounds. Every day, to an open mass grave. Not even fear prevented him from trying to recognize someone among the dead. Still today, as an old man, he slowly walks every day to those open mass graves. Perhaps neither Catalina nor Francisco are in the graves. But Luis hopes that among those silently screaming bones he will find his father. Or that one of the women rescued from the parish cemetery in Paterna will be his mother. The same mother who was always screaming from somewhere “my children, my children.”⁴¹

³⁸ Jesús Manuel Peraza Casajús, “Exhumación de la Tahona de Uclés: estudio médico quirúrgico de noventa individuos” (PhD diss., Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2010).

³⁹ Interview with Juan Pedro Bru Rubiato in Tarancón, April 27, 2019.

⁴⁰ Francisca Bravo, “Los nombres de las víctimas del franquismo en la prisión de Uclés ya cuentan con sus placas de homenaje,” eldiario.es, November 17, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, https://www.eldiario.es/clm/nombres-victima-dictadura-Ucles-homenaje_0_963804347.html.

⁴¹ “Obligaban a gente del pueblo a hacer «dos boquetes», dice. Luis, que aventuraba la suerte corrida por sus padres, deslizaba su cuerpo de niño hasta los alrededores del cementerio. Cada día, en cada fosa abierta. Ni el miedo impedía la posibilidad de reconocer a alguien entre los muertos. Como ahora,

His son Juan Luis presides over the Association for the Recovery of the Historical Memory of Paterna de Rivera and decided to support the exhumation. He received me days after the unveiling of the monument that houses the exhumed bodies (Figure 115). A monument built as it was impossible to identify individually each body even after analysing the DNA. Moreover, part of the mass grave could not be exhumed as there is now a columbarium on top of it. Despite not having been able to find the exact body of his grandfather, Juan Luis told me: "Now they are buried with dignity."⁴²

This idea of developing monument practices to solve the problems caused by forensic science is not exceptional. They are also developed with the idea that, although the cycle of exhumations has been completed, there may be more in the future. Therefore, more bodies may be handed over to relatives or that it may be necessary to house more as new graves are opened. In the first part, I spoke about the experience of the ARMH in Burgos and the Asociación En Medio de Abril (Association In the middle of April). When faced with dozens of unclaimed or unidentified bodies, they opted to build a large complex where they could house all the bodies in Aranda de Duero, instead of building a vault in each municipality as they did after the exhumation in Villamayor de los Montes mentioned above. But another example of this is the large mausoleum that was built, in 2011, in the Candeleda cemetery, with the aim of housing the bodies exhumed in the region with the support of the Foro por la Memoria, which in those years was still advocating for exhumations (Figure 116).⁴³ A similar initiative took place in Salamanca, where a similar need arose. Thus, in the graves of the San Carlos Borromeo cemetery, where monument practices had been carried out since the 1980s and 1990s, the Asociación Memoria y Justicia de Salamanca (Salamanca Memory and Justice Association)

ya anciano, que a paso lento camina a diario hacia aquellas sepulturas de nuevo abiertas. Quizás ni Catalina, ni Francisco estén en la fosa. Pero Luis espera que entre aquellos huesos que gritan silentes esté su padre. O que una de las mujeres rescatadas del cementerio parroquial paternero sea su madre. La misma que desde algún lugar siempre siguió gritando «mis niños, mis niños».» (Translated by the author). Baquero Zurita, *Que fuera mi tierra*, 18.

⁴² Interview with Juan Luis Vega in Paterna de Rivera, July 17, 2019.

⁴³ "Inaugurado en Candeleda (Ávila) un mausoleo a las víctimas del franquismo ante las increpaciones de un grupo de mujeres," 20minutos, February 20, 2011, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.20minutos.es/noticia/965734/0/>.

arranged for the construction of a monument which not only demarcated the area associated with the mass grave, but also, in 2007, they installed an obelisk “En memoria de las víctimas del franquismo. En homenaje a sus familias. Por la Libertad” (In memory of the victims of Franco’s regime. In homage to their families. For freedom). Large plaques with the names of those murdered in Salamanca are also displayed in the complex, and a series of columbariums underneath them were used to house the bodies recovered after two exhumations. They made sure they left more space there for possible future exhumed bodies (Figure 117). Luisa Vicente explained:

We did this because we were finding that we had already done an exhumation several years ago and we had them stored in a cemetery. We didn't have anywhere to take them. And we couldn't identify all the remains, so we had the problem of which one was which because of the conditions of the terrain: they had quicklime poured over them, they had stones poured over them... And so, our idea is, and we always had it, we always had a very clear idea, that apart from the names, we had to have a space for those bodies. Either because of what I was saying, or because they had not been analysed, because often the terrain is not the most appropriate for identification, or because the families did not appear, or because in some of these cases the families say, look, they have been there for many years, why would we separate them? Once they have been identified, we are going to leave them together because this is what the families want. Therefore, we planned this space when we applied to the government for the funding, we had already planned to have these columbariums to be able to collect any remains that could not be returned to the relatives. So, we were very clear about that.⁴⁴

Thus she, together with David Hernández, introduced me to an initiative that not only demonstrated the need for the reburial of unidentified remains, but also the need to prepare in advance for the need itself.

But this was not only a solution suggested by associations. A vault with a similar purpose but organized by local authorities is located in the Pamplona cemetery. This monument was commissioned by the Navarrese government,

⁴⁴ Interview with Luisa Vicente and David Hernández in Salamanca, September 10, 2019.

and a similar initiative was undertaken years later by Gogora, the Institute of Memory, Coexistence and Human Rights, a department of the Basque government. Only a year after its creation, they commissioned the so-called “Columbarium of Dignity” in the Olaso cemetery in Elgoibar, Gipuzkoa, to house the exhumed bodies (Figure 118).⁴⁵ But even years before, in Catalonia, in 2009, an unusual initiative took place to address a similar problem in the context of a battlefield. The valley of the river Ebro is full of bodies, a consequence of one of the biggest battles that happened during the War. Those bodies are turning up everywhere and there is no guarantee that they can be identified.⁴⁶ The solution found by the local authorities was the Camposines monument. On an old trench, a structure preserves the remains found of combatants of the Battle of the Ebro, as well as the names of more than a thousand of them declared missing. It is managed by the COMEBE, the Consorci Memorial dels Espais de la Batalla de l’Ebre (Battle of the Ebro Memorial Consortium) (Figure 119).⁴⁷

Official, civil society, and family experiences show the urgency for a monument practice after exhumations. This is something which is sometimes planned in advance and sometimes arranged in haste when faced with unidentified or unclaimed remains. The fact that the Basque, Navarrese, and Catalan governments have decided to invest, as part of their memory policies, in the construction of large vaults speaks of their political allegiances. There is no governmental regulatory framework to cover the needs that flow from the dissatisfaction that can and usually does arise, despite forensic scientific methodology, nor are they obliged to develop this type of monument practice. Their interest here derives purely from their own political beliefs. But large structures such as those in the Camposinas, Elgoibar or Pamplona are not the only possibility. Direct support for associations and families is also a possibility.

⁴⁵ Jesús Alonso Carballés, *Memorias de piedra y acero: los monumentos a las víctimas de la Guerra civil y del franquismo en Euskadi (1936-2017)* (Gernika-Lumo: Fundación Museo de la Paz de Gernika, 2017), 235.

⁴⁶ Jordi Ramos, “Intervencions arqueològiques a les fosses del Front de l’Ebre,” in *Actes de La II Jornada d’Arqueologia i Patrimoni de La Guerra Civil al Front de l’Ebre*, ed. Joan Martínez i Tomàs and David Tormo i Benavent (Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, Departament de Cultura : COMEBE, 2017), 61-77.

⁴⁷ “Qui Som,” COMEBE, accessed February 25, 2020, <http://www.batallaebre.org/app/index.php?page=comebe>.

They can decide for themselves how they want the monument to be built to house the exhumed bodies, something that once again must pass through the sensitivity and affinity of the political leadership. Exceptionally, I found this perspective in the Andalusian context where Javier Giraldes, Director of Democratic Memory of the Andalusian government until 2019, had provided support for the monument practices, be it technical, financial, or emotional. And this is a fundamental component in understanding the process: personal political responsibility. The exceptional nature of Andalusia, the Basque Country and Navarre makes explicit the differences with the rest of the country, where it became normal to use private means for providing a memorial solution to the dissatisfactions after the exhumations of the graves. Given that, as Heidegger stated, science does not think, it was therefore left in the hands of various social actors to think and develop the solution to the problem generated by the exhumations. However, there is an added problem to the non-identification of bodies that made people turn again to the development of monument practices, which is the possibility of not finding the bodies at all.

MONUMENTS TO HOUSE THE LOST

Between September and October 2019, I visited Galicia, where David Casado Neira was working on places of murder and burial in the context of the 1936 coup and the War. In a text he published a few months later, he points out how difficult was to determine the exact locations of combat, murders, or burials. Therefore, uncertain landmarks were built in the landscape of Galicia:

The acidity of the soil - which implies a rapid decay of any biological remains -, the uncertainty of sources and information - limitations of official sources, to which must be added the growing absence of first-hand informants -, and the progressive modification of the terrain caused by continuous human activity (building of reservoirs, widening of roads, enlargement of cemeteries, among others) resulted in a map of places that exist beyond cartographic certainty, on maps and in geographically precise locations. They are places that are built on imagined landscapes in which

are created loci of certainty, that is to say, they give meaning to a point on the map. That is where the story fixes coordinates and becomes truth.⁴⁸

My research focused only on graves and his covered other types of sites, but we shared an interest in how to develop a monument practice around a violent event whose location is uncertain.

What I found in Galicia was particularly exceptional when compared to other territories. The characteristics of the terrain and the irregularity of the repression, which did not involve large graves in cemeteries or outside them but selective murders after which the bodies could have been buried or abandoned anywhere in the mountains, made it particularly difficult to carry out memorial work. In those days we visited La Coruña, Santa Mariña, Aranga, Sada, Fonsagrada, El Acebo, Mondoñedo, Lorenzana, Ourense, Bande, Furriolo, Mos, Tui, Camposancos, Baiona and Vigo, meeting in some of the places with the campaigners of the monument practices. At the time I felt absolutely bewildered. The orography is radically different from that of Castile, Andalusia or the Levant, and the populations are diffuse, and their boundaries are confused. While on the plateau or the coast it is easy to find one's way around and cross a large part of the territory in several hours. Here, enclosed by mountains threaded through with winding roads there is no such relationship with space. Moreover, the directions to places are never clear. And all this could be transferred and translated into monument practices on mass graves. What is nebulous can be made tangible in a space despite the absence of the bodies, and a monument practice is forced, in these contexts, to

⁴⁸ “Las características de acidez del suelo —que implica una rápida transformación de cualquier resto biológico—, las incertidumbre en las fuentes e informaciones —limitaciones de las fuentes oficiales, a lo que hay que sumar la creciente ausencia de informantes de primera mano—, y la progresiva modificación del terreno causada por una continua actividad humana (construcción de embalses, ensanchamiento de caminos, ampliación de cementerios, entre otros) han dado como resultado un mapa de lugares que existen más allá de la certeza cartográfica, en mapas y en ubicaciones geográficamente precisas. Son lugares que se construyen sobre paisajes imaginados en los que se crean loci de certeza, es decir, dan sentido a un punto cualquiera del mapa. Ahí en donde el relato fija las coordenadas y se hace verdad.” (Translated by the author). David Casado-Neira, “Los lugares en tensión: hacia una búsqueda de los paisajes de muerte del franquismo,” *Sociology and Technoscience* 10, no. 1 (2020): 47.

renounce the importance of the body itself in order to value a space which, at least, those bodies occupied before being killed and buried (Figure 120).

Monument practices are thus proposed as a solution to the impossibility of exhuming or building over the grave itself. This impossibility also arises when there has been a previous exhumation, not for the purpose of identifying the bodies or developing a monument practice, but to free up space in the cemetery. This process is very common throughout the country, known as *mondas*. They generally occur when the Church or the town council decides to sell off municipal land or rent it to private individuals for new graves or to take graves whose owners cannot be contacted or are not up to date with payments for the rights to the graves. In these cases, the bodies are exhumed and dumped in ossuaries. This was the fate of many mass graves. In such a situation where it is impossible to exhume because an exhumation has already taken place, the monument practice re-emerges as a solution to the impossibility of exhuming the bodies. The development of a monument practice around the ossuary was the decision that the ARMH of Cuenca made when they discovered that the mass graves had been exhumed and the bodies taken to the ossuary in Cuenca, according to Juan Pedro Bru Rubiato.⁴⁹ Consequently they built an entrance and placed plaques with the names of the murdered on the walls (Figure 121).

This was a decision taken by various collectives in Guadalajara too, where the mass graves in the Catholic cemetery were removed to sell the land. Xilio Gracia Bilbao explained to me how groups such as the Foro por la Memoria in Guadalajara and relatives of the murdered petitioned the council through the local IU, and although the petition was rejected, they managed to put pressure on the town council to ensure that the lot where the mass grave had been, in the 4th courtyard of the cemetery, was not used for the construction of new graves. The 50-metre grave was converted into a garden area. For this reason, political organizations and relatives in Guadalajara began to place plaques on the soil that was once the mass grave and in the ossuary

⁴⁹ Interview with Juan Pedro Bru Rubiato in Tarancón, April 27, 2019.

where the bodies were dumped (Figure 122).⁵⁰ But on other occasions, the construction of columbariums has made access to the graves impossible, and this has been compounded by the *mondas*. In both cases, these were speculative operations based on the economic exploitation of the cemetery space by its managers. This happened behind the Alhambra palace in 2017 at the Granada cemetery. There the Asociación Granadina para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (Grenadian Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory) had a monument built that includes a long list of names and space for flowers in front of the walls where the murdered were shot after the 1936 coup. Even without bodies, the site is now also considered a Site of Democratic Memory in Andalusia (Figure 123).⁵¹

This situation where the bodies are inaccessible is also the case of many chasms and wells used by the insurgents as places to dispose of the bodies.⁵² Although their existence is not ubiquitous throughout the country, they are particularly important in certain places. Thus, the Jinámar chasm is one of the most representative places of repression in the Canary Islands, together with the grave of La Vegueta and the wells of Arucas and Tenoya. Jinamar is a volcanic hole 80 metres deep into which, after the coup, murdered and even living people were thrown. The difficulty of accessing such a place led to the construction of a first monument with a cross in the 1970s. Today, the Foro Canario de Víctimas del Franquismo (Canarian Forum of Victims of Francoism) is requesting for it to become a “site museum.”⁵³ A similar situation happened in Asturias, where mining activity produced an abundance of chasms in a place where the repression had been fierce. This was a region where the

⁵⁰ Interview with Xulio García Bilbao in Guadalajara, January 112019.

⁵¹ Mari Luz Santiago, “La tapia del cementerio de Granada será Lugar de Memoria para honrar a las víctimas,” El Plural, July 21, 2011, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.elplural.com/autonomias/andalucia/la-tapia-del-cementerio-de-granada-sera-lugar-de-memoria-para-honrar-a-las-victimas_68187102.

⁵² Francisco Etxeberria Gabilondo, Fernando Serrulla, and Lourdes Herrasti, “Simas, cavernas y pozos para ocultar cadáveres en la Guerra Civil española (1936-1939). Aportaciones desde la Antropología Forense,” *Munibe Antropología - Arqueología*, no. 65 (2014): 269-88.

⁵³ Jennifer Jiménez, “Un documental rescata del olvido el tubo volcánico al que fueron arrojadas víctimas del franquismo en Gran Canaria,” eldiario.es, November 21, 2017, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.eldiario.es/canariasahora/sociedad/Sima-documental-represaliados-Gran-Canaria_0_710429174.html.

workers' movement was strong back in 1934 when a revolutionary insurrection took place. Of these places in Asturias, the Pozo Fortuna in Mieres and the Pozo Funeris in Laviana stand out. In Mieres, lorry loads of bodies arrived to be dumped in this pit from 1937 onwards, which was later covered up by the mining company Hulleras de Turón when mining was re-established in the valley. In 2003, the pit was located and in 2005 a sculpture was unveiled, which today is the site of an annual memorial service (Figure 124).⁵⁴ Another similar situation is to be found in the south of Castile, in Villarrobledo, Albacete, where 147 people were shot, many of whom were dumped in the place known as "*Los barreros*." This is a hole of more than 40 metres deep from which mud was extracted to make pottery. The ARMH of Cuenca carried out a survey to exhume the bodies, but faced with the impossibility of recovering them, in 2012 they decided to place a large steel cube displaying the names of the 300 murdered people from Villarrobledo. The monument was built in a car park and that place would otherwise have been lost (Figure 125).

Besides those experiences of monument practices, there are other contexts where there is uncertainty about the specific location of the burials. Such situations prompted the development of monument practices as a way to mark the landscape linked with the lost mass grave. The archaeologist Juan Montero, who has worked on numerous graves in the province of Burgos, explained to me that, in Estepar, after the search for mass graves using scientific methodology started in 2014, it was discovered that the graves were not located exactly there but all over the site. Many of them were not found, and in an act of remembrance that took place after the first exhumation campaign in 2014, the Coordinadora por la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica de Burgos (Coordinating Committee for the Recovery of Historical Memory in Burgos), Espacio Tangente (Tangent Space) and Asociación Cultural Denuncia (Cultural Association Complaint), who had been supporters of the exhumation, scattered small white-painted stone pebbles in the area near the graves and the

⁵⁴ "Que pasó en el Pozo Fortuna," Radio Recuperando Memoria, October 22, 2016, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://radiorecuperandomemoria.com/2016/10/22/que-paso-en-el-pozo-fortuna/>.

commemorative plaque. On each of the stones was carved the name of a murdered person who was known to have been killed and buried there (Figure 126). Many relatives participated in this initiative according to Juan Montero.⁵⁵ Espacio Tangente, the association behind the initiative, describes the action as follows:

The purpose of this action was to make this place visible, which had become a wounded space in the summer of 1936 when it was used as the perfect setting for the most brutal repression, the murder and subsequent disappearance of an indeterminate number of people. Their bodies, even today, almost 77 years later and 36 years after the death of the dictator, are still scattered around this same area.

We consider it an urgent task to mark this wounded place on the map of our province, on our personal map and on our map as a society, not only because human beings need coordinates, references, contexts, that help us to understand our present, but also because the only method we know to find our way once more, to decide where we want to go, is to know exactly where we are.

Briefly, this act of remembrance was designed to allow us to re-signify our space and our time, to turn absence into presence, the erased into the saved, rage into resistance... and we wish to do so through reflection and collective action.

That is why we call on the people to transform this space of impunity into a place of memory, to disobey once and a thousand times the order of forgetting, to rebel against the discouragement and impotence that stifle our view of this past.

We call for action, to scream out in stone the names of the people who were taken from us, to wave like a flag the clandestine, denied memory that resists in secret, but resists, nonetheless.

We call on all to remember and to demand remembrance. ⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Interview with Juan Montero in Burgos, September 14, 2019.

⁵⁶ "Con esta acción se pretendió visibilizar este lugar, transformado en un espacio herido desde que en el verano de 1936 comenzó a utilizarse como el escenario idóneo para la represión más brutal, el asesinato y posterior desaparición de un número indeterminado de personas. Sus restos, aún hoy, casi 77 años después y 36 de ellos tras la muerte del dictador, continúan diseminados por este mismo paraje. Consideramos una tarea urgente marcar este lugar herido en el mapa de nuestra provincia, en nuestro mapa personal y en nuestro mapa como sociedad, no solo porque los seres humanos necesitamos coordenadas, referencias, contextos, que nos ayuden a entender nuestro presente, sino porque el único método que conocemos para reapropiarnos de nuestro camino, para decidir hacia dónde queremos ir, es saber en qué punto exacto estamos. / En definitiva, esta intervención buscó generar un dispositivo

This practice extends the spatiality of the grave into the landscape as a whole in the absence of a specific location but it is not the only way to do this. When exhumations fail to find the bodies, a monument seems to be a good option. I noticed such a monument on the road from El Hornillo to El Arenal too. After a failed exhumation, a monument was placed marking the site in the absence of certainty as to the specific location of the bodies on the part of local activists (Figure 127). A similar initiative was undertaken by a local priest, Alfonso Blanco in Santa Mariña de Langostelle in Lugo. He arranged for several monuments to be placed in the area. One of them is dedicated to three brothers, members of the Juventudes Socialistas Unificadas (Juventudes Socialistas Unificadas). They placed the monument in the place where they would have been arrested, explained Alfonso, as they don't know where the bodies are. And that is why the spot chosen for the monument is a hill overlooking the territory (Figure 128).⁵⁷ He was taking advantage of the unknown location of the grave to choose a more visible place from the road. This is an opportunity that could also present itself inside cemeteries.

In July 2019, in Chiclana, Cádiz, I met Isabel Canto Fornell and Juan Luis Verdier Mayoral, members of the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, Política y Social de Chiclana (Association for the Recovery of the Historical, Political and Social Memory of Chiclana). With the support of the town council and the Andalusian government, they managed to start excavating in search of the mass grave in the local cemetery, where those murdered in the summer of 1936 were buried. However, the courtyards in the cemetery had changed since 1936, and the mass grave was not found. For this reason, they opted for a monument practice that was not limited to the location

que nos permita resignificar nuestro espacio y nuestro tiempo, convertir la ausencia en presencia, lo borrado en lo salvado, la rabia en resistencia... y deseamos hacerlo mediante la reflexión y la acción colectiva. / Por eso convocamos a la gente para transformar este espacio de impunidad en territorio de memoria, para desobedecer una y mil veces el mandato de olvido, para rebelarnos frente al desaliento y a la impotencia que ahogan nuestra mirada a este pasado. / Convocamos a pasar a la acción, a gritar en piedra los nombres de las personas que nos quitaron, a ondear como una bandera la memoria clandestina, negada, que resiste subterránea, pero resiste. / Convocamos a recordar y a exigir recuerdo.” (Translated by the author). “Foro Arte y Territorio > (X,Y): Estépar,” ESPACIO TANGENTE. Centro de Creación Contemporánea, April 13, 2013, accessed May 10, 2021, [http://www.espaciotangente.net/Foro%20Arte%20y%20Territorio/FAYT_\(X-Y\)_Estepar.html](http://www.espaciotangente.net/Foro%20Arte%20y%20Territorio/FAYT_(X-Y)_Estepar.html).

⁵⁷ Interview with Alfonso Blanco in Santa Mariña, September 21, 2019.

of the grave, given the impossibility of locating it, but to another more visible space in the cemetery. Isabel Canto Fornell told me how their first action consisted of placing a stone next to a tree in the first courtyard, so that people would have “a place to find their bearings.” It was placed at the entrance to the cemetery “because the aim was to make it visible,” although they knew that the mass grave was not there. She explained to me:

Although in other places, they had to find the bodies first and then make the tomb, we decided to skip straight to making the tomb. And in fact, in those two columbariums that we decided to make, there is a bottle buried for each of them with a photo and other keepsakes chosen by the families.⁵⁸

Relatives and other attendees placed the bottles inside the monument, with the names of the murdered. But as the monument was not directly linked to the bodies, they also put bottles for the widows of the murdered in there. They were not killed but were also harshly repressed.⁵⁹ Thus the inscription reads “Ni el silencio ni el tiempo borrará vuestros nombres de la historia” (Neither silence nor time will erase your names from history) (Figure 129). A similar initiative was also taken by the ARMH of Cuenca in Tarancón, who didn’t find the place where the members of the International Brigades were buried who died there. Therefore, at request of a relative of a Scottish brigade member who died in the hospital in Tarancón, they placed some monuments with the names of the Scottish Brigades killed in the Battle of Jarama and the names of the members of the local community murdered after the War in a garden that welcomes the visitor, as Pedro Bru Rubiato explained to me (Figure 130).⁶⁰

Some official institutions choose a similar option in face of the impossibility of locating the bodies. Rubén Norniella, journalist, and member of the FAMYR (Asturian Federation of Memory and Republic), showed me a monument placed by the local government at the tourist viewpoint known as

⁵⁸ Interview with Isabel Canto Fornell and Juan Luis Verdier Mayooral in Chiclana, July 17, 2019.

⁵⁹ Angeles Egido León and Jorge J. Montes Salguero, eds, *Mujer, franquismo y represión: una deuda histórica* (Madrid: Sanz y Torres, 2018).

⁶⁰ Interview with Juan Pedro Bru Rubiato in Tarancón, April 27, 2019.

El Fitu, at the top of the Alto de la Cruz (Figure 131). The monument was placed in 2003 and since then that place is has been used for remembrance services. But the fact is that it is not located around a particular grave. All around the Alto de la Cruz are lines of trenches later used as mass graves, and Rubén pointed out that a local worker told him that when the road that links Arriondas with Colunga was built, it destroyed many of these graves full of bodies.⁶¹ A similar solution was enacted in the Sierra del Perdón, Erreniega, by the Directorate General for Peace, Coexistence and Human Rights of the Government of Navarre. Its director, Álvaro Baraibar, accompanied me to a place where pilgrims pass through on their way to Santiago de Compostela. That is why they chose this place, a visible point on this route, to install a cromlech in memory of those murdered, marking on each menhir the 19 municipalities that suffered repression after the successful coup in Navarre in 1936. More than ninety people were murdered in this mountain range and their precise location would be practically impossible to determine today.⁶² Nevertheless, he explained to me how this monument practice was located in a prominent place, the cromlech organizing the landscape and giving it a memorial significance in the face of the impossibility of visiting the specific place where each body was buried (Figure 132).⁶³ The government of Asturias also tried to deal with this impossibility of finding the mass graves in 2010, when the monuments mentioned in the first part were not only placed by mass graves but also in landscapes such as Cabo de Peñas. In 1938, the Falangists of Candás disposed of more than 10 people there because of their political or trade union connections before the 1936 coup. The experience of Cabo de Peñas also highlights another problem for those communities who aim to develop a monument practice by the graves. Maybe the bodies were not even buried but thrown into the sea (Figure 133).

⁶¹ Interview with Ruben Norniella in Arriondas, April 22, 2019.

⁶² “Inauguran un memorial por los 92 asesinados durante el franquismo en El Perdón,” Euskal Irrati Telebista, November 19, 2017, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.eitb.eus/es/noticias/politica/detalle/5221257/inauguran-navarra-memorial-92-asesinados-franquismo/>.

⁶³ Interview with Álvaro Baraibar in Erreniega, March 30, 2019.

That concern was shared by a group of women I met in Asturias.⁶⁴ María Concepción was the granddaughter of María Fernández Menéndez “La Papona,” a UGT trade unionist who worked at the Albo cannery where she was known for her support for workers and her fight against injustice. María Fernández Menéndez was one of the eight murdered women known as *les Candases* (Those from Candás) because of their trade union affiliation, political involvement, or family links with other persecuted people. Their bodies were some of those thrown over the cliffs of Cabo de Peñas, so that the final fate of their bodies was unknown to the survivors. However, María Concepción began to investigate out of love for her mother, who had a very hard childhood after the murder when she was only 13 years old. She came across a small cross in Bañugues cemetery. The locals told her how there they had buried some corpses there that they had found on the beach around the time of the killings at Cabo de Peñas. In 2017, the exhumation took place; however, the site had been previously excavated and only one of the bodies was found, belonging to Daría González Pelayo. She was the only one of *les Candases* who had no relatives. They received the news through the press, as ARMH disappeared after the exhumation. In the face of the impossibility of locating the other women, they decided to develop a monument practice. Sonia Santoveña Fernández, daughter of María Concepción and great-granddaughter of María Fernández Menéndez, explained to me how they set up a monument in a prominent spot on the bay, the *prau* de San Antonio. They erected a large monolith with a plaque looking out over Candás thanks to the support of the local town council (Figure 134). “N’ alcordanza de ‘Les Candases’ y les víctimes del franquismu. Aunque la seronda de la historia anubra les vuestres tumbes col visible polvu del escaecimientu, enxamás vamos arrenunciar nin al más vieyu de los nuesos suaños” (In memory of “Those from Candas” and the victims of Francosim. Even though history has shrouded your graves in the mists of oblivion, we will no longer give up even the oldest of our dreams).

⁶⁴ Interview with María Concepción Fernández Fernández and Sonia Santoveña Fernández in Candás, November 17, 2019.

After achieving this prominent place for their monument practice in the absence of the bodies, this initiative was followed by giving the name of *les Candases* to a square in the municipality, thus bringing them to the city centre.⁶⁵ This proposal was again supported by the town council, but it required the work of Sonia and María Concepción to collect signatures, with great support from the locals. Soon, a book and a documentary about these women will be published. To the strength and memory of Sonia and María Concepción we owe a monument practice that overcomes melancholy, overcomes the impossibility of exhumation, resists historical institutional humiliation, and manages to transcend on its own initiative, establishing itself in the landscape. They have achieved the recognition of their community so that they finally come to occupy the centrality of the urban space with their name in a square. Their struggle does not end here, and the monument practice is carried on through the memories of the tributes that have been paid and the fact that *les Candases* are a local legend. From the monument at the top of Candás you can see how the life of the people continues. But they do not walk alone and *les Candases* watch over all from high up on their monument – an example to all (Figure 135).

⁶⁵ A. G. Ovies, “Les Candases ya tienen plaza,” El Comercio, January 6, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.elcomercio.es/asturias/mas-concejos/candases-plaza-20190601001115-ntvo.html>.

THIRD PART

CHAPTER SEVEN

Memory of the Body and Memory of Bodies

FROM SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS TO MONUMENT PRACTICE

When Alexandre Kojève defined the “dialectic of the master and the slave” in his lectures on Hegel, he posed an ideal situation that would seem to describe the confrontation to which society was subjected during the Second Republic. According to Kojève, the confrontation is based on the encounter between two beings, in which one of them sees the other as nothing more than an “animal:”

Now, in the beginning, he sees in the other only the aspect of an animal. To know that this aspect reveals a human reality, he must see that the other also wants to be recognized, and that he, too, is ready to risk, “to deny,” his animal life in a fight for the recognition of his human being-for-itself. ¹

And this model can be applied to a real context, such as that of the Kingdom of Spain. In this sense, following Gerald Brenan’s thesis, until 1931 the State was defined as *Ancien Régime*. Even then he said:

Spain is one of those countries with an undeveloped, primitive economy which is divided by a fairly definite line into two sections. Above are the upper and middle classes, say one-fifth of the population, who vote, read newspapers, compete for

¹ Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, ed. Raymond Queneau (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), 13.

Government jobs and generally manage the affairs of the nation. Beneath are the peasants and workmen, who in ordinary times take no interest in politics, frequently do not know how to read and keep strictly to their own affairs. [...] It is easy to see therefore why Spanish politics of the last two hundred years gives such an impression of inconsequence and futility. The people took no part in them.²

However, a radical change in the political landscape took place in 1936. The republican parties won by a landslide in the multi-party elections, their victory was accepted by the regime in view of its instability. The king escaped and the Spanish Republic was proclaimed from the town halls.³ Although the political agenda was defined by reformism and the conservative parties also achieved electoral success, a new political framework appeared: legal political parties and trade unions and full voting rights for women. The people's self-perception had changed, and they had come to aspire to personhood. The Other was becoming a human being, leaving behind the conditions of servitude where even voting itself was controlled by the landowners.⁴ This connects with the next step in Kojève's dialectic, when the other is no longer an "animal" and can perhaps become another being. This situation will force a fight to the death, in order to produce the most absolute negation of the other, whose physical elimination preserves his own self-conscious existence.⁵

Applying this to the reality of the Second Republic, we find how the leader of the Spanish Falange, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, stated that:

If this is to be achieved in some cases by violence, let us not stop at violence [...]. Dialectics as the first instrument of communication, yes, is fine. But there is no other acceptable dialectic than the dialectic of fists and guns when justice or the homeland are insulted.⁶

² Gerald Brenan, *The Spanish Labyrinth: An Account of the Social and Political Background of the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 87-88.

³ Unai Belaustegi Bedialauneta, "Gipuzkoa y las raíces de la II República: del pacto de San Sebastián a la proclamación de la República en Eibar," in *Pensar con la historia desde el siglo XXI: actas del XII Congreso de la Asociación de Historia Contemporánea*, ed. Pilar Folguera et al. (Madrid: UAM, 2015), 4439-4458.

⁴ María Gemma Rubí i Casals, "Derribar la ciudadela del caciquismo en el ámbito local. Denuncia y movilización contra la corrupción político-electoral en la España de Alfonso XIII," *Historia social*, no. 97 (2020): 2.

⁵ Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 13.

⁶ "Si esto ha de lograrse en algún caso por la violencia, no nos detengamos ante la violencia [...]. Bien está, sí, la dialéctica como primer instrumento de comunicación. Pero no hay más dialéctica admisible que la dialéctica de los puños y de las pistolas cuando se ofende a la justicia o a la Patria." (Translated by the author). Joan

Thus, the Spanish Falange as the vanguard of the reactionary forces developed a “strategy of tension” through terrorism with a view to the “social construction of fear”⁷ facilitating the seizure of power by those members of the army, church, nobility, bourgeoisie and landlords interested in a military coup.⁸ In May, Emilio Mola signed a top secret order for the future coup plotters stating: “It should be taken into account that the action taken must be extremely violent in order to weaken the enemy, who is strong and well organized, as quickly as possible.”⁹ Subsequently, on 19 July 1936, he issued the instruction to start the mass murders:

It is necessary to create an atmosphere of terror, to leave a feeling of domination by eliminating without scruple or hesitation anyone who does not think as we do. We must make a great impression, anyone who is openly or secretly a supporter of the Popular Front must be shot. ¹⁰

However, not all those who aspired to be self-conscious beings in society, such as women with the right to vote, freemason lodges, trade unions or workers’ and republican parties, were killed after the 1936 coup. Kojève points to a logic that underlies the dialectic of master and slave:

if both adversaries perish in the fight, ‘consciousness’ is completely done away with, for man is nothing more than an inanimate body after his death. And if one of the adversaries remains alive but kills the other, he can no longer be recognized by the other; the man who has been defeated and killed does not recognize the victory of the conqueror. Therefore, the victor’s certainty of his being and of his value remains subjective, and thus has no ‘truth’ [...] Therefore, it does the man of the Fight no good to kill his adversary. He must overcome him ‘dialectically.’ That is, he must leave him life and consciousness, and destroy only

Maria Thomàs, *Lo que fue la Falange: la Falange y los Falangistas de José Antonio, Hedilla i la Unificación : Franco y el fin de la Falange Española de las JONS* (Barcelona: Plaza Janés, 1999), 31.

⁷ Roberto Muñoz Bolaños, “Ecuadras de la muerte: militares, Falange y terrorismo en la II República,” *Amnis. Revue de civilisation contemporaine Europes/Amériques*, no. 17 (2018).

⁸ Sergio Vaquero Martínez, “La autoridad, el pánico y la beligerancia. Políticas de orden público y violencia política en la España del Frente Popular,” *Historia y política: Ideas, procesos y movimientos sociales*, no. 41 (2019): 66.

⁹ “Se tendrá en cuenta que la acción ha de ser en extremo violenta para reducir lo antes posible al enemigo, que es fuerte y bien organizado.” (Translated by the author). Paul Preston, “Franco y la represión: la venganza del justiciero” in *Norisíma. II Congreso Internacional de Historia de Nuestro Tiempo*, ed. Carlos Navajas Zubeldia, Diego Iturriaga Barco (Logroño: Universidad de La Rioja, 2010), 59.

¹⁰ “Es necesario crear una atmósfera de terror, hay que dejar sensación de dominio eliminando sin escrúpulos ni vacilación a todo el que no piense como nosotros. Tenemos que causar una gran impresión, todo aquel que sea abierta o secretamente defensor del Frente Popular debe ser fusilado.” (Translated by the author) Julián Casanova Ruiz, *República y Guerra Civil* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2007), 199.

*bis autonomy. He must overcome the adversary only insofar as the adversary is opposed to him and acts against him. In other words, he must enslave him.*¹¹

This is how the policy applied to those who survived the annihilation by the insurgents, can be understood. They had to survive to acknowledge the truth of the master.

The starting point is to understand the Dictatorship as a repressive system based on coercion, violence and exclusion¹² and the following step during the Transition to a “Pact of Silence” where the government of the new Kingdom of Spain denied the existence of the crimes.¹³ Therefore, in order to analyse the monument practice, it would be necessary to situate the action of remembrance and understand it as a complex process that refers to a material reality that produces the memory of the murder and at the same time conditions the way of remembering it. In this sense, Elisa Magrì points out how the passage from the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (1807)¹⁴ used by Kojève was isolated and freely interpreted, leaving aside the fact that a situation as described by him was based on bodies that exist, inhabit and configure a space.¹⁵ A good starting point might therefore be the analysis of the action of remembering by Edward Casey, who, from a phenomenological reading of memory, can help to interpret the act of thinking about monument practices.

Monument practices can be thought of initially from the point of view of the subjective conscience of its initiators. Their consciousness has been defined by surviving the struggle to the death and in that they have taken on the status of a slave. On the assumption, therefore, that those who remember are not abstract subjects, but someone subjected to a situation of domination, we can turn to Edward Casey’s theory without falling into idealism to find the fundamental components that define the act of remembering. From his phenomenological reading, Casey defines how we

¹¹ Kojève, 14-15.

¹² Julio Aróstegui Sánchez, “Coerción, violencia, exclusión. La dictadura de Franco como sistema represivo,” in *Franco, la represión como sistema*, Julio Aróstegui and Manuel Álvaro Dueñas (Barcelona: Flor del Viento, 2012), 19-59.

¹³ Roldán Jimeno Aranguren, *Amnistías, perdones y justicia transicional: el pacto de silencio español* (Pamplona: Pamiela, 2018).

¹⁴ Georg Wilhelm Fredrich Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Terry Pinkard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 102-16.

¹⁵ Elisa Magrì, “The Problem of Habitual Body and Memory in Hegel and Merleau-Ponty,” *Hegel Bulletin* 38, no. 1 (2017): 42.

maintain memory in the mind. Among other characteristics, he suggests that memories can be encapsulated or expanded, and above all that they have a dual dimension in temporal terms. He suggests that there is what he calls “persistence,” the prolongation of the past in the present.

To speak of remembering as temporally expansive is already to invoke the pastness of the remembered experience as it extends into the present; and to speak of encapsulment is to refer, overtly or covertly, to the persistence of such an experience within an abbreviated form.¹⁶

An example of this is the testimony of people such as José Vidorreta, the son of one of those murdered and buried in the graves of El Carrascal in La Rioja, who explained to me how:

Every year, at the stroke of 2 a.m. on 2 September, my thoughts go back to the events of that cursed night in 1936. This is when they charged them, this is when they killed them, and so it goes on and on.¹⁷

The memory of José persists in his mind, and in fact pushed him to return to his native Cervera del Río Alhama after having moved for work reasons. His memory was defined, encapsulated and yet it persisted and returned to the present, in a somewhat “abbreviated” form. This same persistence was present in those who did not cease to remember the murders and can be seen in the fact that the women did not stop laying flowers in Estepar, La Barranca, Mondoñedo, Ocaña, or that in the seventies they decided to place plaques in Talavera or in the new century in Guadalajara. It was this persistence that would cause the lists to be updated with more names as in Coín or that campaigned for the first exhumations as in La Rioja, Extremadura and Navarra or the recent ones from the milestone of Priaranza del Bierzo. In order for these practices to take place, persistence had to connect memory with the present. And above all, the memory was available in a sufficiently abbreviated form to be subsequently communicable. This mental dimension is impossible to prove by scientific means, but it can be intuited in later formalized

¹⁶ Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: a Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 39.

¹⁷ “Todos los años, al sonar las 2 de la madrugada de día 2 de septiembre me invade el pensamiento haciendo un recorrido en los hechos de aquella maldita noche del 36. Ahora los cargarían, ahora los matarían y así sigue y sigue.” (Translated by the author) Jesús Vicente Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada: La Rioja 1936* (Logroño: Ochoa, 2012), 430.

remembrance services and commemorations. Examples of those were memorial services to commemorate the date when people were murdered. 21 April, the day of the firing squad, was significant for the relatives of the Tiraña mass grave; the first days of September for the relatives of Otsoportillo; 18 July for Andalusian relatives and activists, as this is the date of the failed *coup d'état* and when the repression began in Seville and Cadiz; 22 May, the date of the mass escape of prisoners from Mount Ezkaba, as the murder of hundreds of them took place in the days that followed. Year after year, the memories of these events return, encapsulating the repressive experience.

Following Casey, “Persistence in memory is persistence *into* the present, but that which persists also derives *from* the past and is itself a persistence *of* the past.”¹⁸ That is to say, the logic of remembering every year makes explicit a distance from what is remembered, the past is what persists and is introduced into the present. In this way, remembering is imbued with the characteristic that Casey calls “Pastness,” which is the quality of what is remembered that situates its origin and provenance in a period prior to the present,¹⁹ whether in 1936 or in the years that followed, when violence continued to be exercised by the insurgents and the Spanish State. However, there is one last characteristic to be noted from those described by Casey that allows an interpretation of the act of remembering prior to the monument practice. This is that of “Virtuality.” According to Casey, “Virtuality names quite another aspect of remembering. It designates first of all, a readiness of former experiences to be reactivated in memory.”²⁰ This point is essential, especially in a context in which people who have been murdered since 1936 can be remembered in different ways, either according to the regime’s criteria as “guilty” or “reds” or according to emotional criteria such as family ties “mothers,” “grandparents,” etc. or political criteria “victim,” “martyr,” “hero,” “comrade,” etc. Both the person and the act of murder and its motive must be designated in some way in the memory. Thus, while in some cases I have recognized in accounts people whose family ties to the murdered person led them to construct a narrative in which the facts were presented as

¹⁸ Casey, *Remembering*, 40.

¹⁹ Casey, 40.

²⁰ Casey, 41.

treacherous against someone “who did nothing,” in other cases the good deeds of those people during the years of the Republic, the War or the post-War period were pointed out, thus placing the murder in a substantially different context. Arturo Peinado, president of the Federación Estatal de Foros por la Memoria pointed out from his own experience “those people did not die of the flu, they died for political reasons. They were killed because... There are always those things they tell you when they talk about exhumations: no, it’s just that he had a girlfriend, or that they were envious of him, because...”²¹ However, Arturo also pointed out to me that when they reviewed the documentation, they found that these people had been activists in political organizations and had occupied lands during revolutionary processes. He observed how “it always happens, that guilt, that internalisation of the defeat and the apologies for what your father was, that is very traditional and common for families who have suffered such a trauma.”²²

Therefore, to make it comprehensible, the memory is fundamentally conditioned by spending the later phase of one’s life within a dictatorship. From a Freudian perspective it can be understood that a sovereign regime has been established where everyone plays the role assigned by the master through his signifiers, which is what happened after the War. In this way, the repressed are not subjects in themselves, but subjects of the regime. Based on the signification given to them by the master, they think of themselves and want to be an actor in this discourse.²³ Orlando Patterson, in his work on slavery inspired by Hegel, defines this type of situation. Although he refers to those who were enslaved, the reason why they were enslaved is defeat in a violent confrontation where death is the only alternative to slavery. Death as such is replaced by a “social death” that can have psychological and physical manifestations in the survivor.²⁴ The loss of identity, names, physical punishment, dress codes or even the shaving of the head are practices to which slaves have been subjected, have also been used against relatives and companions of those killed in the post-War period by the Spanish State. Throughout

²¹ Interview with Arturo Peinado in Madrid, November 5, 2019.

²² Interview with Arturo Peinado in Madrid, November 5, 2019.

²³ Franck Chaumon, “Segregación y discurso analítico,” *Desde el jardín de Freud* 0, no. 13 (2013): 174.

²⁴ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 105-296.

the country, there were episodes of baby stealing and the usurping of their identity.²⁵ There were professional disqualifications and purges of civil servants too.²⁶ Moreover the society return to labour exploitation and caciquism on agrarian areas, and thousands of women were subjected to sexual aggression, public humiliation, and economic repression.²⁷ But, in addition to these measures to condemn them to “social death,” the organizations to which they were linked - parties, trade unions, athenaeums, etc. - were dissolved and outlawed.

The new social strata were put in place by the regime, exactly like in the contexts studied by Patterson, where the oppressed could only be reincorporated into society as slaves.²⁸ And this was the logic that guided the creation of the *Patronato para la Redención de Penas* (Trust for the Redemption of Prisoners), a governmental institution dedicated to the management of prisoners used for construction works. The Foreign Minister of Italy reported by 1939 that those prisoners were not treated as human beings: “they are not prisoners of war, they are slaves of war,” the Spanish officials told him.²⁹ This initiative began in 1937 and was documented until 1970, overcrowding them in concentration camps, and penitentiary colonies. The wages were paid to the State, and the workers received just 50 cents a day.³⁰ In this way, even working as a slave could seem like a viable alternative to a stay in prison, where torture, hunger and humiliation killed thousands of people, so much so that “hunger will inevitably occupy a prominent place in the memories of the prisoners.”³¹

Violence in this context is linked with the psychological effects of self-blame and recognition of the regime’s authority, according to Patterson.³² And such traumas experienced since the repression started by 1936 were transmitted generationally until

²⁵ Neus Roig Pruñonosa, “La búsqueda de la filiación biológica. La detención ilegal de recién nacidos y la usurpación de su identidad, en España en el periodo 1938-1996 “. (PhD diss., Universidad de Almería, 2016).

²⁶ Juan Carlos Berlinches Balbacid, “Las depuraciones de funcionarios como elemento de control político: el caso de Guadalajara,” *Espacio, tiempo y forma. Serie V, Historia contemporánea*, no. 27 (2015): 181-202.

²⁷ Mónica Moreno Seco, “La dictadura franquista y la represión de las mujeres,” in *Represión, resistencias, memoria: las mujeres bajo la dictadura franquista*, ed. Mary Nash (Granada: Comares, 2013), 1-21.

²⁸ Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 240–61.

²⁹ Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust* (London: HarperCollins, 2008), 519.

³⁰ Isaías Lafuente, *Esclavos por la patria: un antídoto contra el olvido de la historia* (Barcelona: Planeta, 2018), 171-202.

³¹ Domingo Rodríguez Teijeiro, “Morir de hambre en las cárceles de Franco (1939-1945),” *Historia contemporánea*, no. 51 (2015): 663.

³² Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 77–101.

now, as the work of psychologists such as Anna Miñarro shows.³³ In an effort to completely erase their existence, so much fear was generated that these people were no longer spoken about, no longer named, to the point where their deaths were not even registered in council records, or if they were, they were registered as having died of natural causes or for other reasons unrelated to the repressive act.³⁴ This is why Enesida, a descendant of those murdered and buried in the Tiraña grave, stated that when it was announced that “the war is over,” it turned out that “the war, or even worse than the war for us, started here.”³⁵ Where “here” is a material reality of repression, labour exploitation and “social death.”

Nevertheless, there is a potential heterogeneity that characterizes the minds of those who initiate the monument practices and that can be seen as fundamental to their taking shape as discourse, as each person reacted differently to the 1936 coup, War and Dictatorship and their consequences, even if remembering a shared situation of repression. Thus, Casey juxtaposes a series of “Mnemonic Modes.” These are fundamental for interpreting this state prior to monument practices: “Reminding,” “Reminiscing,” and “Recognizing.” “Reminding” is that mode in which something comes out of the past and challenges us, a reminder with an individual title without there necessarily being social bases or conventions around the sign (generally external to the mind) that challenges.³⁶ However, the second mode, “Reminiscing” implies a social origin and consistency.³⁷ That is to say, when remembering the grave, one would no longer simply remember the place or the murdered people in emotional terms, but within a repressive political system, a truncated social project or with an ideological framework. This is when the “Recognizing” mode of remembering comes into play. This is when there is an explicit orientation towards the past or the future through which memory helps to shape the present and makes it available, accessible, positively identifiable, giving it a nameable identity.³⁸ It is this last mode that makes

³³ Anna Miñarro, “Memoria, duelo y psicoanálisis en el largo camino de dolor entre 1939 y 2017,” *Norte de Salud Mental* 15, no. 58 (2018): 95–104.

³⁴ Francisco Espinosa Maestre, Francisco Moreno Gómez, and Conxita Mir, *Morir, matar, sobrevivir: La violencia en la dictadura de Franco* (Barcelona: Booket, 2004), 104.

³⁵ Enesida García Suárez, *Mi infancia en el franquismo: Tiraña, Asturias, 1938* (Oviedo: Cambalache, 2018), 12.

³⁶ Casey, 90.

³⁷ Casey, 105.

³⁸ Casey, 123.

monument practice possible, which is evident in accounts such as those of some of the first advocates of monuments themselves. The grave needed to become a monument to let people “know what had happened.” Also for those who remember, a monument “gives the murdered a name,” “gives them the dignity they deserve,” “gives them a dignified burial,” or “enacts justice.” It is no longer simply remembered for its own sake, nor is it remembered socially, but it is remembered in order to influence the present and the future. This is the moment when the subjectivity of remembrance can become social. In fact, in contrast to other phenomenological readings of remembering, what is relevant in Casey’s proposal is that starting from such a mental schema, monument practice can be understood through what he defines as “Pursuing Memory beyond Mind,” that is, when memory takes shape outside in the material world as physical actions: marking places and performing commemorations.

First, in speaking of “body memory,” not “memory of the body,” Casey’s emphasis is on the memory that is intrinsic to the body and its own ways of remembering. The memory of the body refers to the multiple ways in which we remember the body as an accusative object of our consciousness.³⁹ But it is this importance of the body as the site of remembering that gives the action itself a social dimension, and it is the embodied character of memory that is one of the pillars Paul Connerton points to in defining how societies remember. Connerton points out, like Casey, how habitual memory of the past is, so to speak, sedimented in the body.⁴⁰ But a fundamental point that Connerton makes in understanding the social dimension of this corporeality is that it is essentially through the embodied nature of social existence that practices of incorporation and inscription can be produced. The former will provide us, as a product of the social context in which we inscribe ourselves, with notions of how to think and how to live, but the latter will represent a systematic transfer of the temporal properties that can be enunciated by a person into formal marks.⁴¹ What is relevant to Connerton’s proposition is that the bodies of survivors are a requirement for some kind of monument practice to take place.

³⁹ Casey, 147.

⁴⁰ Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 73.

⁴¹ Connerton, 73.

The memory, in the abstract, must have been stored in the minds of members of the society configured after the repressive process from which the mass graves derive. Without a “referential gesture” towards space, memory has no place except in the mind.⁴²

The need for a “referential gesture” therefore makes two points explicit. First, that this form of memory which precedes the monument practice is linked to bodies because they are practically the only means available to communicate memory on the basis of the material conditions given to it: the body which comes to lay flowers, the body which places itself on the grave, the body which lays a stone, the body which builds a structure. It is essentially the work of the body through which the forms necessary for the inscription of memory are formulated, forms which bring us to a second point. Memory is necessary, and memory must be present in bodies that can influence space. Thus, finally the presence of the “object” takes up “space.” In remembering, specific places are brought to mind, and this is where Casey recognises the historical limits of phenomenology:

*To be embodied is ipso facto to assume a particular perspective and position; it is to have not just a point of view but a place in which we are situated. It is to occupy a portion of space from out of which we both undergo given experiences and remember them. To be disembodied is not only to be deprived of place, unplaced; it is to be denied the basic stance on which every experience and its memory depend. As embodied existence opens onto place, indeed takes place in place and nowhere else, so our memory of what we experience in place is likewise place-specific: it is bound to place as to its own basis. Yet it is just this importance of place for memory that has been lost sight of in philosophical and common sense concerns with the temporal dimensions of memory.*⁴³

Therefore, the memories are situated in the place of the body and in a place outside. And in this context, both have a direct link to violence through the presence of the bodies of the murdered and thus appeal to the material reality that have modulated the memory in the minds of the living. But, in addition, on a practical level, the

⁴² Connerton, 76.

⁴³ Casey, *Remembering*, 182.

presence of a specific place in space implies new conditioning factors, as does the need for memory itself and for bodies to remember.

In relation to this, Casey points out how the Greeks in antiquity devised an “art of memory,” which was in fact something more than a merely instrumental mnemonic technique and in which the role of place as “locus” was crucial. Defining *locus* “as a place easily grasped by the memory, such as a house, an intercolumnar space, a corner, an arch, or the like. A given place or set of places acts as a grid onto which images of items to be remembered are placed in a certain order.”⁴⁴ This, applied to the monument practices, highlights the formal importance of the mass grave where there are murdered bodies buried. The mass grave has become important since the post-War period when people continued to lay flowers there. Antonio Lozano explained to me how in Alcolea in 1977 “we spoke to one of the few remaining people who were forced to bury those who had been shot, and he said, look, this is where everyone is”⁴⁵ and it was there that they would begin to tidy up, to plant flowers, to construct specific recognizable structures to continue remembering. That place could also be crucial for the exhumations to be possible, and in this sense the stories of those who showed the forensic experts where to dig to recover the bodies in the 1970s are common again from the 2000s onwards to continue to exhume and build structures.

Carlos Solana explained to me that when they exhumed in Arnedo in 1979, when they did not find the grave, a man from the village came up to them and asked:

*‘Who are you looking for? Those from Arnedo? Yes. He said, ‘Wait, don’t dig any more, I’ll bring you someone now.’ And after a while he arrived with a woman who had witnessed the murders and the burial of the bodies “and that woman said, don’t dig here, they are here, and don’t dig with the shovel, you’ll find them soon.’*⁴⁶

Lucía Socam explained to me about the exhumation in Gerena more than 30 years later: “it was thanks to the testimony of José Domínguez Núñez who showed them

⁴⁴ Casey, 182-83.

⁴⁵ Interview with Antonio Lozano Aguilar in Alcolea del Río, May 28, 2019.

⁴⁶ Interview with Carlos Solana in Arnedo, January 21, 2019.

the specific place with his walking stick” because at the age of seven he witnessed the murder and the burial of the murdered women in a prepared grave. “Thanks to José Domínguez, we opened it and there were the 17 roses.”⁴⁷ This “dig there” that witnesses to the digging of the graves were able to communicate implies that the physical place is recognized as an essential component in order to recover the bodies and subsequently continue the monument practice that would give a specific shape to the grave. Without specific visual forms, the memory cannot be so easily communicated. This was also the case for those monument practices that had to be developed in places approximating to that of the grave or of the murder when the specific place was not found but creating a specific recognizable form: on the road from El Hornillo to Arenal, in El Fitu, in the mining shafts of Asturias, in Cabo de Peñas or in Chiclana. Also, in those developed on graves already exhumed, such as those of O Acevo, Etxauri or Puerto Real.

It is in this way that the monument practice can take place, with the memory in mind, a body with which to communicate the memory in space, and a place like the mass grave, either an approximate location or a site to re-bury the recovered dead bodies: either in 1936 itself or eighty years later. And these transitions from memories that are purely kept in the mind towards material monuments is how memory passes from subjectivity to a social space. This is how that action of remembering is transferred to other spectators who can recognize a certain discourse about the past in a simpler way, because as Paul Connerton states: “Buildings or other topographical features are conceived as an amplification of the body’s experience, as opportunities for the trans-position of our interior states onto inanimate forms.”⁴⁸

SURVIVAL IN MONUMENT PRACTICES

According to Connerton, when we think of place names, we think of marks and spaces, which are the way in which past is remembered. This is something that in commemorations often results in the adoption of more elaborate code forms and can be linked to the more transient structures of spatial movement. “Much ceremonial

⁴⁷ Interview with Lucia Socam Guillena, May 29, 2019.

⁴⁸ Paul Connerton, *The Spirit of Mourning History, Memory and the Body* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 148.

action, for instance, is performed by bodies moving in set ways within entirely prescribed places.”⁴⁹ It is appropriate at this point to describe and recognise some of the patterns that work to prescribe these places, the material result of monument practices. Practices which, although marked by their heterogeneity, represent shared formal solutions to a shared social situation. They generate a stable memory device in the shape of a monument, that encapsulates in space a specific memory that has passed through different mental and social phases until it can be formulated. Leaving aside the content, a description of these forms chosen for this communication of memory in space is needed, because what we find in the monument is no longer the memory itself but the result of a monument practice, that is to say, a communication of a certain idea in the form of a material structure.

A mass grave does not have its own feature that can identify it from the surface and this condition is one of the factors that fundamentally affects monument practices. This is more common on those graves located outside of the cemeteries. The memory of the grave exists, but perhaps the location was uncertain. Thus, on a formal level, most of these spaces do not have a clear identifying feature. However, although mass graves are perceived today as a defining feature of repression, it was not necessarily the case decades ago, when mass graves for the poorest sectors of society were still common. Moreover, there are those mass graves located outside cemeteries, where there might be indications that the space is a mass grave. But if there was no record of it, just changes in the relief of the soil, with the simple change of seasons the graves would disappear into the landscape covered by vegetation and become integrated into the environment. Therefore, when listening to accounts of mass graves, the shape of the mass grave itself is a major conditioning factor in defining the forms of future monument practice. It is for this reason that some of the first monument practices that took place consisted of finding ways to mark the place of burial. At the beginning I listed stones such as the one placed over the mass grave at Villamayor de los Montes, Alcaráz, Morata de Jalón in Zaragoza, Cobertaleda, Guillena, Guisando or Tiedra. It is difficult to provide a formal description of these stones as they gave way to other monuments later on. However,

⁴⁹ Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) 13.

on the basis of the descriptions I recorded, it is easy to recognise that they were small stones, no larger than 50 centimetres, which would have come from the surrounding area. The stone to be placed over the mass grave is therefore conditioned by the geology of the site. A similar interaction with the landscape is found in other early forms of intervention on mass graves, such as engraving a cross on a nearby tree, as in Castillejo de Martín Viejo, where the mark is a discreet indentation in a holm oak. On other circumstances a specific tree might become the reference point for other types of offerings, taking integrating nature in the monument practice. This was what happened at Estepar, where a specific holm oak tree stood around which various monument practices took place, of which a fundamental one, together with the placing of stones, was that of the floral offering.

Thus, bunches of flowers, of which it is not possible to specify more precisely what they consisted of, were placed to avoid the encounter with military police and locals on Estepar. This initiative also took place in Puerto de la Pedraja. This is another place where flowers were placed by the side of the road in the area around the mass graves. In other places such as cemeteries, the control was stricter. Flowers were also the form chosen for these first monument practices, as they could be placed under clothing or thrown over the walls to drop them on the mass graves located in cemeteries such as Guadalajara or Dos Hermanas. However, not all these offerings were clandestine and there are testimonies of floral offerings in more stable situations. In this sense, if we look at photographs from the years of the Dictatorship, such as those of the mass graves of Ocaña or La Barranca, it would be difficult to determine whether such a place contained dozens or hundreds of bodies. Nevertheless, floral offerings gave an indication. In La Barranca in particular, the floral offerings were the visible sign of the monument practice for decades, to which was added the presence of the bodies of the people who were remembered and who were placed in the mass grave. The photographs allow us to recognise rows of flowers of different colours placed on the ground, where the bodies presumably lay. These rows combine flowers of different types and contain both cut flowers and flower pots. A similar logic can be seen in the Ocaña photographs where the space is covered with flowers. Once again, different flowers are combined in a spontaneous offering

that nevertheless covers a wide space. Throughout both the La Barranca and Ocaña experiences, therefore, a pattern is evident in these early forms of monument practice: marking the outline of the mass grave with flowers. In this sense, if we move forward in time to the monument practices of the 1970s, it is noticeable that the floral offerings take on defined forms that once again respond to the shapes of the mass grave.

Marking the perimeter of the mass grave was a common form of monument practice in the 1970s, like at the graves in Alcolea del Río or Lora del Río. The placement of a black tulle, in the first case, and of a rope, in the second, was the first step taken, and later the space was covered with flowers. The same type of initiative took place hundreds of kilometres away in Cervera del Río Alhama, where in the first memorial service organized in El Carrascal, the place where the mass grave was located, the monument practice took the form of covering the space occupied by the bodies with flowers. But this also occurred inside cemeteries, as in La Carolina, where again ropes delimited the space which was covered with flower pots and flowers of different types, as was also the case in La Barranca. In the cases where these interventions occurred without the tension brought about by tributes that were individual or clandestine, the forms also reproduce certain geometric patterns. In La Barranca it is possible to appreciate certain rhythms in the placement of flowers, spacing the pots every meter. In La Carolina, the larger ones occupy the centre and sides, generating a certain symmetry in the intervention. However, what was common to all of them was the delimitation of the space. This was something that was progressively adopted by the organizers of the monument practices that would move from the ephemeral nature of the floral offering to other permanent plant structures such as gardens.

In Alcolea del Río they began by clearing the space to plant flowers. The landscaping continued and today the mass grave is covered by a grassy esplanade, bordered by one-metre high hedges of trimmed conifers. Inside, a few flowers continue to grow. That garden was planned in 1977. Today in 2020, more gardens are planned to complement the pyramid that houses the exhumed bodies in the old cemetery of Malaga. In relation to the garden, geometric shapes, and patterns in the

placement of the cypress trees can be recognised. There is symmetry in the use of shrubs and most of the area is laid to lawn. However, the gardens have also been used by cemetery workers. We do not know whether their aim was to develop a monument practice, but they nevertheless created the gardens knowing that they were working on a mass grave. This is the case of the mass graves located in the Seville cemetery. There, the main form that defines them is that of hedges of a height of one metre, trimmed and delineating the mass graves. Inside these hedges there is a mixture of rose bushes, cypresses, palm trees and other species. In another context, in Mancha Real, the ground is bare, but jasmine grows up the wall and rose bushes are covering the metal structure that delimited the mass grave. But these were just one way to demarcate the perimeters of the graves.

The plants were not the only way to mark the contours of the mass graves. The Oviedo mass grave is a perfect example of this. Although flowers had been placed there since the 1960s, it was in 1967 that a stone enclosure was constructed: a small kerb of 50 centimetres wide and no more than 20 centimetres high, which nevertheless clearly divides the area into an interior and an exterior space. In the 1970s, after having recurrently covered the mass graves in Ocaña with flowers, the decision was made to develop a monument practice and cover the entire surface of each of the three graves in the cemetery with a large granite slab. In addition to these, bollards linked with chains were added to limit access to the cemetery. This type of paved surface with bollards and chains to mark the perimeter was also chosen in Dos Hermanas. There, tiles were chosen for the surface and marble for the posts, which are again linked by a black chain. Several hundred kilometres away in Valladolid one of the graves had several metallic stakes with a rope that outlined the grave, and at the one known as the “Fosa de Pablo Iglesias” similar action was taken: metal stakes with chains fixed to a 20 centimetre high concrete kerb. Also in Benavente the mass grave is marked out with concrete pylons and chains. Meanwhile, in other places, small fences are used, as in Baeza, Talavera or Alcaraz. Even in places such as Estepar, where the location of the grave was uncertain, as a monument practice had developed around a tree, the surrounding area was paved, creating a rectangle with a cement kerb and square stone slabs on the inside. These decisions from the 1970s

are also reproduced after the 2000s in other places such as in Paterna, where after the exhumation four stakes and some tape delimit the square previously occupied by the grave, awaiting the future construction of the monument which will house the exhumed bodies. Even un-exhumed graves such as the one in Toledo are delineated by a low stone kerb and covered in their entirety with artificial grass. However, these forms, where the perimeter is marked with vegetation, stone or by means of chains, usually have a central element that rises above ground level.

In Lora del Río, before building the monument, the area directly surrounding the grave was cordoned off with ropes in order to place a sign with a poem in the middle. And this first step would lead to more fixed structures in other places such as Alcaraz, where a brick structure was built first and then a fence was constructed around it. In Alcolea, there is a marble pyramid jutting sharply up out of the centre of the garden, again surrounded by decorative marble posts linked with chains. Also, on top of Burgos mass grave four large pillars were built around an imposing tree. In Valladolid, the fence of chains encloses a one and a half metre high pedestal topped by a bust of Pablo Iglesias. In the same way, three large marble obelisks were built on each of the three large slabs covering the mass graves in Ocaña. In Utrera, a pedestal with a sculpture was placed in a small garden in a place close to the graves. And in the centre of the Benavente mass grave there is also a metre-high pedestal supporting another sculpture. In Magallón, the shape chosen was that of a large tombstone in the centre of the grave space. And in places where the exact location of the graves is unknown, large, roughly-hewn stones have been placed, dominating the surroundings, as in Candeleda, in Val do Limia, El Fitu, or in Cabo de Peñas. This is also the shape chosen at La Pedraja where, although the exact location of the graves is uncertain, there is a low stone walled enclosure topped with a small fence and a four metre high inverted obelisk at its centre.

These forms are associated with the monument practices around mass graves, but there could be other patterns for those places where graves have been exhumed. One of the most frequent forms is that of a oblong structure at least two metres long by one metre wide, as if to house a body or coffin, although they are usually filled with much smaller boxes. A stone tomb could be located on this structure which

would store the bodies. The dimensions may differ, the greater the number of bodies stored, the greater the size of the structure itself and of the tombstone. In the 1970s this type of structure was built in places such as Arnedo, Cervera, Alcanadre and Casas de Don Pedro: large tombs with space for the storage of all the exhumed bodies, to which is added a space at the back to display large plaques with the names. This is a format that was reproduced in the new century in places such as Villamayor, Puebla de Alcocer, or Fonsagrada. However, when there is a greater number of exhumations, sometimes this type of structure gives way to larger ones, in both periods.

A large structure such as those built after an exhumation of more than a dozen bodies was found at Uclés, where a two metre high vault houses the exhumed bodies. A similar solution was planned for Salamanca or Candeleda, where where a mural were added to the inside a vault. Also, after the exhumation of Paterna de Rivera, a rectangular monument was built, crowned in the centre with a sculpture. In Magallón, the central focus of the space is a large stone structure, about one and a half meters high, with an opening at the back to place the exhumed bodies in boxes. The plaque that was previously located in the middle of the enclosure is now located on top of this monument. The columbarium in Elgoibar, where two structures have been arranged on either side of a corridor, over eighty meters long with shelves to house the exhumed bodies. Another large construction is the pyramid in Malaga, which is more than six meters high and contains several thousand bodies exhumed from mass graves. In all cases these constructions are made of types of stone: marble, concrete, limestone, or granite, with doors made of steel and aluminium, or sometimes plastic. Internal access staircases are also frequent in some of the larger ones, such as in Aranda, and the use of shelves in the interior to keep the bodies in order is also common.

Having reached this point in the formal description of the monument practices on the basis of the recurring motifs, they can be superficially analysed to show how the specific theme of the mass grave is often expressed through this type of form. These forms may seem disconnected from each other in a historical trajectory but, in the absence of a defined formal logic around the choice of these

forms, I suggest turning to a reading that allows us to understand how they are guided in a certain sense by a subconscious by which certain “ancient” forms “survive” in monument practices. This notion, that of the “Nachleben,” is based on Aby Warburg’s readings of the European Renaissance, suggesting that there is a use of ancient forms that is linked to mechanisms by which certain motifs and expressive forms are kept in memory to re-emerge in moments of crisis as cultural symptoms at certain moments in history.⁵⁰ Warburg borrows this thesis from Edward B. Tylor and his concept of “survival,”⁵¹ which has previously been applied to tombs from antiquity to modernity by Erwin Panofsky.⁵²

With this in mind, it is relevant to start relating the use of flowers to the “survival” notion. Flowers are perhaps one of the most frequently observed resources throughout my research, as I have mentioned: flowers on the mass graves in cemeteries, carried clandestinely under conditions of repression; flowers that marked the places where the graves were to be found in the middle of the countryside which shepherds and passers-by found without knowing who had placed them there; flowers that publicly covered the graves from the Transition onwards; flowers brought by relatives and activists to the cemeteries in the midst of the repression; flowers taken by relatives and activists to the final destination of the bodies after they were exhumed from the mass graves or on the graves themselves where some kind of intervention was carried out; flowers that, year after year, are taken to these places, on dates marked by their political significance or mourning; flowers that take the most diverse forms: bouquets, wreaths and all kinds of political emblems. The metaphorical aspect of these actions could be interpreted in many ways, but few answers would be found from a formal point of view. All we know is that the laying of flowers dates back to times about which we know little, despite scientific and historiographical advances.⁵³ The first data on the subject in the Iberian Peninsula

⁵⁰ Aby Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and Humanities, 1999).

⁵¹ Edward B. Tylor, *Anthropology: An Introduction to the Study of Man and Civilization* (London: Macmillan, 1889).

⁵² Erwin Panofsky, *Tomb sculpture; four lectures on its changing aspects from ancient Egypt to Bernini* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1964).

⁵³ Recently in Shanidar a debate has arisen when Neanderthal remains were discovered in the mid-20th century, since while some scientists claimed that they were killed by falling rocks, others claimed that they were buried in a formal rite with the use of flowers. This 2020, as a result of stratigraphic analysis, researchers have shown

are provided by Pliny the Elder, who documented this type of practice in Roman Hispania. He reported the presence of nurseries in the vicinity of the cities, where plants were produced not only for the decoration of gardens and houses but also for placing by tombs, where flowers, fruit and garlands of laurel leaves were placed.⁵⁴ Although the chronicle does not determine the origin of the practice, it proves its prevalence, which survives today, as it is difficult to approach not only a cemetery without flowers but also a tribute on a mass grave without them. However, it is also important to point out the presence of gardens in these ancient chronicles, which are also a formal resource for many of the monument practices I have been working on.

As funerary gardens are a practice already documented in Egypt,⁵⁵ beyond the possible symbolic readings, it is a monument practice in relation to the dead that also survived from the Greek and Roman world,⁵⁶ and that spread throughout the Etruscan and Roman world, circulating and surviving in the Mediterranean world and finding a special importance in Al Andalus.⁵⁷ Perhaps having survived in this way since ancient times through Arab culture, they explain why it is in the south of Castile and above all in Andalusia where landscaped mass graves are most frequently found. This Mediterranean necro-botany contrasts with that described by Thomas W. Laqueur as being linked to the Anglo-Saxon world of the churchyards.⁵⁸ However, it is not only these botanical practices that have a certain aura of timelessness.

Forms made of stone are also particularly relevant in this context and survived for longer in the Atlantic world. Given the lack of knowledge of a real function, archaeologists and historians have developed all kinds of speculations on the subject, which in any case imply a complex relationship with the space and a desire to transform it symbolically. Whether or not they had a funerary function, as has often

that it was a voluntary burial. Emma Pomeroy et al., “New Neanderthal Remains Associated with the ‘Flower Burial’ at Shanidar Cave,” *Antiquity* 94, no. 373 (2020): 11-26.

⁵⁴ José María Blázquez Martínez, “Los Jardines En La Hispania Romana,” in *Historia de los Parques y Jardines en España*, ed. Carmen Añón (Madrid: Grupo FCC, 2001), 25-35.

⁵⁵ Alix Wilkinson, “Gardens in Ancient Egypt: Their Locations and Symbolism,” *The Journal of Garden History* 10, no. 4 (1990): 199-208.

⁵⁶ Mario Erasmo, *Reading Death in Ancient Rome* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2008), 177.

⁵⁷ Dede Fairchild Ruggles, *Gardens, Landscape, and Vision in the Palaces of Islamic Spain* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 219.

⁵⁸ Thomas Walter Laqueur, *The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 132-137.

been attributed to them despite the subsequent verification that there were no bodies under them, the menhirs have been interpreted as the earliest incident of burial. In the 19th century Grant Allen argued:

*There can be very little doubt that every one of these monuments is essentially sepulchral in character. The menhir or standing stone is the ordinary gravestone still in use among us: the dolmen is a chambered tomb, once covered by a tumulus, but now bare and open: the cairn is a heap of stones piled above the dead body: the stone circle is apparently a later temple built around a tomb, whose position is marked by the menhir or altar-stone in its centre. And each has been the parent of a numerous offspring. The menhir gives rise to the obelisk, the stone cross, and the statue or idol; the dolmen, to the sarcophagus, the altar-tomb, and the high altar; the cairn, to the top and also to the pyramid; the cromlech, or stone circle, to the temple or church in one at least of its many developments.*⁵⁹

Although his analysis may seem old-fashioned and somewhat daring from its evolutionist perspective, it is not without value. It allows us to think about the survival of practices, whether or not they have a causal relationship with previous ones, since coexistence with the heritage of the past would allow their use as a form, updated to be relevant in the present.

The placing of a stone, like the menhir, to mark the grave, as in the stories of Fernando in Villamayor de los Montes or Manuel in Alcaraz, is the most basic gesture with which to mark a place. A stone placed on grave acquires a special significance which, over the millennia, becomes the stone tomb generalised throughout the Roman world. The placing of a stone became a vital part of the funeral service, but it would no longer be a simple stone but a stone carved with an inscription.⁶⁰ This Roman practice was taken over by the Christian world,⁶¹ which has survived to the present day, has been used in the mock vaults over mass graves such as those of Guadalajara, and Toledo, among hundreds of others. However, without abandoning

⁵⁹ Grant Allen, *The Evolution of the Idea of God* (Frankfurt: Outlook Verlag, 2019), 79.

⁶⁰ Erasmus, *Reading Death in Ancient Rome*, 124.

⁶¹ Jaś Elsner, *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph: The Art of the Roman Empire AD 100-450* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 77-99.

the stone, the original menhir, it is also interesting to think about Allen's suggestion of stone circles around a central menhir.

The "cromlech" is not only reproduced directly in the Sierra del Perdón, but echoes of it can also be found in the urge to cordon off the graves along their perimeter and then placing a vertical sculpture or stone in the centre, as in Benavente, Talavera, Dos Hermanas, or Mancha Real. This central form, also raised above the landscape, which Allen associates in its formal refinement with the sculpture or the obelisk, has also been used on the graves, as in La Barranca or Jaén. As well as the logic of the *cairn*, which is translated millennia later into the pyramid, as a great construction for burial. It is intended for burial, but also allows access, and it is also the formal solution opted for on a large scale in Málaga, Camposinas, and Elgoibar, as well as on a small scale in places as varied as Paterna de Rivera, Magallón or Puebla de Alcocer.

These are constructions that have references to the funerary tradition rooted in antiquity, when during the Romanisation of the country there was a progressive abandonment of the rituals of the original peoples of the peninsula, as well as of the incorporated Phoenician or Punic practices, such as cremation and the depositing of ashes in urns, in favour of the burial of the bodies.⁶² The urn was abandoned in favour of burials such as the double-sided *tegulae* which covered coffins or bodies buried in the ground, *tegulae* cists where the bodies were buried in a cavity made of *tegulae*, covering the grave in the ground or made of brick, and burials inside large amphorae, the *tumuli* as a covering of a burial by means of various solid materials and possibly held together with mortar, the *arca lapidea* or stone sarcophagi, the cist of slabs and slabs of stone, making a solid receptacle without large blocks, the burials inside monuments or on the contrary in *fosae* covered in different ways.⁶³ But this form of burial also marks social differences, and this is made explicit in the presence in the cities of extremely poor social classes who would be buried without a grave in mass graves or *puticuli*, as has been documented in Balsa and Emerita Autusta in

⁶² Alberto Sevilla Conde, *Funus hispaniense: spaces, uses and funerary customs in Roman Hispania* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2014), 142-49.

⁶³ Sevilla Conde, 167-88.

Lusitania, in Corduba and Malaca in Baetica and in Tarraco in Tarraconensis, among others.⁶⁴ In all these systems of covering bodies with different materials, fact is evident that the way of producing monument practices on mass graves has not differed substantially since antiquity on a formal level.

Finally, it is pertinent to point out how Warburg approached the images that integrated bodies and formed part of these practices that survived from antiquity. I refer to the typology of incorporation or “*Verleibung*” and that of magico-religious absorption or “*Apsortion*.” The object and the subject can be related in various ways: the subject can carry the object and vice versa, but it suggests a third way of relating the two in which the subject itself can be located in the interior of the object and ultimately the subject constitutes the object itself in a process of imitation by identification or “*nachahmen*” or “*identifizieren einhüllen*”, where “*einhüllen*” is translated as covering, enveloping, burying.⁶⁵ Subject and object become physically and psychically interpenetrated in such a way that the image that started from the body returns to the body, as happens with the monument practices on mass graves: they are built over the grave to identify the body buried under the monument in the construction itself, or they are built after the exhumation of the grave to identify the new structure with the absent grave and with the bodies it contained. Body - mass grave - monument are identified with each other and it is in the process of the monument practice on the mass grave that the incorporation of the bodies into the monument takes place. It is possible to understand the function of the forms chosen for the monument practices under this logic, a notion that could be applied to the monument practice in its possible facet as a “substitutive image act” in Horst Bredekamp’s terms.

THE SUBSTITUTIVE IMAGE ACT IN MONUMENT PRACTICE

In his work on the theory of the image act, Bredekamp defines one of its possible variants as the “substitutive image act.” He defines this as the empowerment of the image, endowed with a life of its own through its substitute equivalent. It does not

⁶⁴ Sevilla Conde, 83.

⁶⁵ George Didi-Huberman, *Surviving Image: Phantoms of Time and Time of Phantoms: Aby Warburg's history of art* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2018): 364-65.

simply imply the mutual animation of image and body, but the exchange of one for the other: “In the process of substitution bodies are treated as images and images as bodies.”⁶⁶ This is the act that happens with images from the illustration of the sacred and the natural world to political and legal iconography and he associates that too with contemporary image warfare and iconoclasm. While Bredekamp pays attention to forms of *tableau vivant*, automata or generally figurative animated objects, his theory could be associated with other practices that are not necessarily figurative. And it is at this point that thinking about monument practices on mass graves from the perspective of his theory is relevant.

The first actions that can be documented relating to the mass graves, along with the placing of stones and other signs, are those of the floral offerings, sometimes public but generally clandestine. These initiatives also began to change the image of the mass grave, albeit temporarily: the flowers were a temporary way of giving this space associated with the mass disappearance of bodies a different aesthetic. The long rows of flowers on the mass graves of La Barranca, those that marked the perimeters at La Carolina, those of Ocaña among the widows, are forms that replace a previously “other” landscape. The grave becomes a floral space. In other words, this first monument practice produces an image that is associated with the bodies and the mass grave and yet replaces them. It is no longer possible to visualise a hostile terrain or the absence of bodies, but a place covered with flowers. In fact, it is relevant that it was this type of form that many mass graves took on during the Transition before building stable monuments.

The mass graves covered with flowers in La Carolina, El Carrascal or Alcolea del Río implied the substitution of the previous image of the grave by a completely different one, which would progressively give way to landscaping, monoliths, plaques, sculptures, and other structures, as I have mentioned in previous points. When it comes to honouring the bodies, one no longer turns to the mass grave but to the image that has been produced within the framework of monument practice, so that initiatives such as covering a sculpture or monolith with flowers, sash or flags

⁶⁶ Horst Bredekamp, *Image Acts a Systematic Approach to Visual Agency* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 137.

on it, in some way make it explicit that the sterile landscape of the grave has been replaced by a structure that stands in for the absent body of the murdered. By honouring and visiting a sculpture or monolith, one honours and encounters the bodies of the murdered buried in the mass grave. But this also applies to the action of exhumation for the reinterment of the bodies in a new structure. In this sense, it cannot be ignored that the initiatives in the first part developed during the Transition were replacing the image of the grave with a new image in another place where a structure was built to house the bodies inside. In this way, the bodies are integrated into an image that replaces the image of the bones and the grave, which had previously functioned as a visualisation of memory. Thus, the substitution of the grave for a grave with a monument or the grave for a vault to house the bodies represents in some cases substitutive image acts, something that would occur again after the year 2000.

As I mentioned in previous points, despite the arrival of the “forensic turn,” most exhumations lead to the construction of structures to house the exhumed bodies, which would only be identified and individualised in a small percentage of cases. This was exactly the strategy of the regional and local governmental institutions most committed to the process, such as the Basque Country, Navarre, Catalonia, and the city of Malaga. In this way, the image of the mass grave was not the only one being substituted. Also, the image of the bodies offered by forensic science, of the open grave with the corpses and skeletal remains, was substituted with a new one through the construction of a vault for housing the bodies and the image of the grave was also substituted where a monument practice takes place on empty graves. There, in the absence of bodies, the image of the grave itself is also substituted by a new one, which represents it but at the same time changes it substantially, as occurs in exhumed graves such as those of Etxauri, Candeleda or Puerto Real. But additionally, this substitutive image act also takes place when in the search for the mass grave the bodies are not found, thus necessitating a new image to replace that of the grave, which at the same time, given the impossibility of integrating the bodies, represents them with its material presence, as in Chiclana, Candás or on the road from El Hornillo to El Arenal. These images performed their function again when the mass

graves continued to be the object of monument practices of the last decades, reproducing the same logic of the substitutive image act in 2020 as in 1976 or 1937. A phenomenon that I observed in the remembrance services and commemorations that have continued to take place over the years, such as processions to the monuments, which are covered with flowers, sash, flags, is that the relatives and activists kiss the monuments, touch the plaques and the names, so that physical contact with the new image represented by the monument functions as physical contact with the absent or present body. Indeed, when one asks for the mass grave, people point to the monument, not the ground anymore.

Perhaps most tellingly, a key example Bredekamp gives for understanding the substitutive image act is the *Vera Icon*. In these images of Christ, where the impression was produced by his own biological particles, which would have emanated from the body itself, impregnating the cloth and creating an image of the face, the new image takes on the organic and makes it a “true” image. The body of Christ is fully present, even though it is no longer living matter.⁶⁷ Like the image produced by the monument practice, the monument with the bodies inside or at a significant point in the space linked to them, replaces that of the mass grave itself and the bodies in the same way, acquiring the organic matter of the bodies in the mass grave and turning it into a “true” image. The aim of the monument practice in intervening in mass graves is thus to produce a new image that replaces that of the grave: it is no longer an area of soil or a group of skeletal remains, it is a monument. On the contrary, the mass grave and the bodies come to be represented by the very image of the monument, they are replaced and acquire its properties, bringing a character of “truth” to their presence in the space and also questioning the community of the living.

In this sense, it is important to note how Bredekamp, in introducing the history of the image act, suggests that at the beginning of human evolution there was already a capacity to produce images, linked to gestural-bodily communication, and how it progressively moved towards common forms of attention and intentionality.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Bredekamp, 142.

⁶⁸ Bredekamp, 11.

Therefore, it is tempting to see this type of integration between body-grave-monument as a substitutive image act has a certain aura of “primitivism” or a “magical-religious” character. However, a theory in a certain sense, like Warburg’s, draws on an interpretation of the production of images with a Darwinian evolutionary bias.⁶⁹ Thus George Didi-Huberman warns of the accusation already made in the time of Tylor, from whom Warburg took the notion of “survival” for his “*Nachleben*,” that it was a concept that was too structural, abstract and defied the possibility of factual verification.⁷⁰ However, the substantial problem that should lead us to be wary of such interpretations is that Tylor, like Warburg, associates the analysis of “survivals” with a notion of “Primitive Culture,” linking the use of such forms to magic, astrology, religion and superstition.⁷¹ These interpretations are analysed by David Freedberg, who assumes that, although Warburg disapproved of modern America when he formulated his analysis of survivals among the Pueblo Indians, he was already part of it. Warburg was still projecting the idea of “primitivism” onto the original peoples and was unable to formulate an objective analysis in the absence of parallels in his own culture.⁷² Therefore, this inaccuracy in “primitivist” interpretations, despite their colonial bias, need not stem from ill will, but from a simple inability to synthesize local knowledge and engage the same society that has produced monuments.

Perhaps these ways of analysing the forms need not be entirely discarded and it can be helpful to follow Bredekamp’s thesis. His description of the production of a “true” image can be observed in the substitutive act on the mass grave and the bodies of the murdered. Similarly, the concept of gesturally producing the image is evident in the concept of the monument practice. A gesture that draws on previous forms and from a will, that of substitution for the production of a new image. And on this point, if we understand that images do not derive from reality, “They are, rather, a form of its condition. Images, through their own potency, empower those

⁶⁹ Bredekamp, 248.

⁷⁰ Georges Didi-Huberman, “The Surviving Image: Aby Warburg and Tylorian Anthropology,” *Oxford Art Journal* 25, no. 1 (2002): 62.

⁷¹ Edward Burnett Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom* (London: Murray, 2006), 101-44.

⁷² David Freedberg, “Warburg’s Mask: A Study in Idolatry,” *Anthropologies of Art*, ed. Mariët Westermann (Massachusetts: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2005), 17.

enlightened observers who fully recognise this quality. Images are not passive. They are begetters of every sort of experience and action related to perception.”⁷³ For Bredekamp this would be the *quintessence* of the image act. Nevertheless, it is not possible to stop analysing the monument practice at the level of form. It is therefore worth exploring further the notion of how monument practices around mass graves are drawing on forms that have survived from antiquity as resources available at the material level to achieve some kind of communicative purpose of memory, and how this underlies a communal cultural logic that signifies the forms in a particular way. Therefore, the uniqueness of these monument practices in contrast to other funerary or memorial acts would be the character of the monument as an image that replaces the mass grave, and the bodies enter a play of meanings that is eminently linguistic and social. An analysis of the possible meaning of these monument practices around the mass graves since 1936 can only take place if we consider that the memory derives from a practice that takes on multiple forms but that finally integrates body and grave in an image that integrates and substitutes the previous ones, building a monument made of bodies.

⁷³ Bredekamp, *Image Acts a Systematic Approach to Visual Agency*, 283.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Writing History through the Sepulchral Gesture

MONUMENT PRACTICE AS SOCIOLINGUISTIC ACTION

In approaching the gestation of a monument practice from the act of remembering, it is relevant to look at Casey's comments on how remembering also takes place beyond the mind, in space, in the shape of commemorative forms:

In view of such a concern with lastingness, it is not at all surprising to discover that many memorials are constructed of stone, the most durable natural substance available in large quantities. The very hardness and hardiness of granite or marble concretize the wish to continue honouring into the quite indefinite future-and thus, by warding off the ravages of time, to make commemoration possible at any (at least foreseeable) time. At the same time, a memorial in stone-a tombstone, a memorial plaque, a sculpted figure, etc.-is a public presence and hence accessible to many potential viewers. The distension in time is matched by a comparable extendedness in space.¹

Casey appreciates the materiality of the tombs because this materiality is associated with a specific interpretation. If, as Casey argues, the stone can be associated with a commemorative will, it is because the action of remembering that takes place in space, in this case the monument practice, has a specific purpose through the use of

¹ Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: a Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 227.

that form, which is nothing more than the form available for remembering on the outside by the person who chooses it.

It is possible to place a stone, a cross, a fence, a garden, a pyramid, or a sculpture around a mass grave. In all these cases, although they may seem to be forms that are apparently empty of purpose in themselves, there is a meaning in the very act of their construction in a space beyond the mere survival of these resources based on tradition. These monument practices are not produced as a simple reaction or continuation of the usual funerary practices. And this is where the particularity of the monument practices on mass graves lies with respect to other funerary forms. Therefore they can be defined beyond their aesthetics as “social action.” Following Max Weber:

By “action” is meant human behaviour linked to a subjective meaning on the part of the actor or actors concerned; such action may be either overt, or occur inwardly- whether by positive action, or by refraining from action, or by tolerating a situation. Such behaviour is “social” action where the meaning intended by the actor or actors is related to the behaviour of others, and the action is so oriented.²

It is not mere imitation, as in fact Weber points out how mere imitation of others is not a case of specific “social action” if it is purely reactive. So, we could conclude that mourning immediately after the murder and burial in mass graves or after the exhumation of the bodies from the 1970s or 2000s onwards is not a “social action” *per se* for Weber:

The mere fact that a person is found to employ some apparently useful procedure which he learned from someone else does not, however, constitute, in the present sense, social action. [...] Action such as this is not oriented to the action of the other person, but the actor has, through observing the other, become acquainted with certain objective facts; and it is these to which his action is oriented. His action is then causally determined by the action of others but not meaningfully.³

² Max Weber, *Economy and Society: a New Translation*, ed. Keith Tribe (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019), 78-79.

³ Max Weber, *The Interpretation of Social Reality*, ed. John E. T. Eldridge (London: Nelson, 1972), 77.

Consequently, if a family member decides to just build a mock tomb or place a cross, as in the cemeteries of Guadalajara or Toledo, without making further inscriptions, we could consider that this action is nothing more than a reaction to the fact of death and has no meaning as a “social action.” But if we see this type of action in a context of violence or historical denial of the very existence of those murdered, it means that the action, despite being at a formal level the emptiest of content beyond the traditional funerary or religious character, has a meaning. The same is true of those who, after receiving the exhumed bodies, decide to place them inside a collective structure, or of the interventions on mass graves that respond to the broadest formal criteria. In a social context where memory becomes resistance and subversion of a hegemonic narrative, whatever form the action on mass graves takes could be interpreted as social action according to Weber’s approach. That is, these actions are “social” because, unlike any other traditional funerary reaction, they are oriented towards the behaviour of others.

The differences between actions can be interpreted through the levels that Weber identifies when categorizing “social actions” according to the cause that determines them. He does not try to compartmentalize them in such a way that one action cannot share one or more features with the others, and this blurred boundary between categories is made perfectly explicit in relation to the monument practices on mass graves from 1936 to the present day. Following Weber:

As with any form of action, social action can be determined either

- (1) by purposive rationality: through expectations of the behaviour of external objects and other people, and employing these expectations as a “condition” or “means” for one’s own rational ends, as sought after and considered objectives; or by*
- (2) value rationality: through conscious belief in the unconditional and intrinsic value—whether this is understood as ethical, aesthetic, religious, or however construed—of a specific form of particular behaviour purely for itself, unrelated to its outcome; or by*
- (3) affect, especially emotion: through actual emotions and feelings; or by*
- (4) tradition: through ingrained habituation.⁴*

⁴ Weber, *Economy and society*, 101.

Following this categorisation, tradition-marked “social actions” are those that follow an ingrained habituation, and purely reactive imitative behaviours are at the margins of, and sometimes might be considered to cross over into, meaning-oriented or meaningful action. Weber states that very frequently actions are merely an empty reaction to familiar stimuli following an ingrained pattern.⁵ Then, it is at this point that one of the determinants for monument practices can be seen.

From 1936, when the murders began to take place, most of the first monument practices that took place produced small marks or gestures made by direct relatives of the murdered or by members of the community to which they belonged. In this sense, it is relevant that the flowers laid in places such as Estepar, La Pedraja or La Barranca on unmarked mass graves were generally brought by the widows, daughters, sisters and mothers of the murdered. Also, the fact that formal initiatives were already taking place during the Dictatorship around the graves in those places was also a response to family ties, such as those of the group of men who requested a fence to be created around the mass grave in the Oviedo cemetery, the floral offerings of the relatives of the graves in the Ocaña cemetery and others where, as in Tiraña, there is a story among the relatives that even before Franco’s death people had already started to bring flowers. These gestures of laying flowers have a certain reactive and traditional character, not least because it is a form that has survived from antiquity. This can also be seen in other forms, such as the placing of stones in Tiedra, Guisando, Villamayor, Morata de Jalón or Cobertaleda, other marks such as the crosses engraved on trees as in Castillejo de Martín Viejo, Baiona, and Bercial de Zapardiel or crosses such as those in Castellón, Bañugues, la Sima de Jinamar, San Fernando or Guadalajara. In the latter, it is relevant to point out another form taken by the first monument practices on the mass graves which can also be associated with this idea of tradition where “social action” can even be deprived of that significant orientation which would define it. These are those tombstones over the mass graves that I pointed out in Toledo or Guadalajara.

⁵ Weber, 102.

However, there are also reactive forms or forms linked to a traditional determinant in certain monument practices that are linked to exhumations, exhumation not necessarily being a determinant for the “social action” to be completely significant. And these would be those in which the destination of the bodies acquires a form that apparently does not go beyond that of a family vault. This is the case where the chosen forms very closely resemble those of family vaults such as those of Alcanadre, or Casas de Don Pedro. In this way, if we were to ignore the inscriptions, they would be a simple traditional imitation of an already pre-established burial practice which arose in reaction to the need shared with any other relative or member of the community who saw the death of another and had to take charge of the body. The same happened after the year 2000, as can be seen in vaults such as the one built after the exhumation in Villamayor de los Montes, or Fonsagrada. The idea of the “dignified burial” is therefore present in this first type of determinant for monument practice as a “traditional social action.” And in certain cases, its limited orientation towards society ended here, given that I found certain accounts in which the relatives had already expressed their satisfaction at the moment of the reinterment of the exhumed bodies in the cemetery or the construction of a monument over the grave. These forms have a purpose, even if it is that of a “dignified burial,” but it is limited and its full significance is not clear, although there is definitely a family determinant. Nevertheless, Weber warns: “The greater part of everyday action approaches this type, which not only represents a marginal case for any systematic taxonomy but also because adherence to the familiar can be sustained with varying degrees of self-consciousness,”⁶ so that as a result of greater self-consciousness even in the familiar sphere we could already be talking about the third type mentioned, that of affection as a determinant.

These social actions would be those that go beyond the traditional, reactive, and familial attachment to one of an affective character. In this category there would be a consciously meaningful orientation involving the release of a feeling, in which case there is usually, but not always, the rationalisation of value, or intentional

⁶ Weber, 102.

action.⁷ Examples of monument practices that would fall into this category of determining social action as affective are those in which the degree of self-consciousness of the initiator goes beyond the simple degree of family or community bonding. It could also involve those who, without family ties or without being direct members of the community to which the murdered belonged, decided to develop monument practices on the mass graves. This was the case with those flowers which were laid even during the Dictatorship by activists with or without family ties, such as those linked to the PCE who left flowers on the walls of the cemetery in Guadalajara or in Dos Hermanas where the initiative of the clandestine floral offering came from CNT members.

In addition to this, there is the progressive politicisation of certain relatives who not only inherit the monument practice in its traditional dimension, but who also attach a political character to the affective aspect, as was the case in La Barranca or Ocaña, in their remembrance services which have continued for decades. In this sense, this affiliation that goes beyond the familiar is what determines the affection that inspires the monument practice in these experiences which could also be the driving force behind others from the 1970s onwards, such as the first cleanings of mass graves before planting flowers or building structures, like those of communist activists in Baeza or those of the MC and CNT in Lora del Río. Also, in places like Talavera, where the wall next to the mass grave was covered with memorial plaques engraved with the names of the murdered, the PSOE town council added a central monolith to signify the surroundings as a burial place for people who “Dieron su vida por la Libertad” (They gave their lives for freedom). Likewise, in places such as Oiartzun, the complex built to house the exhumed bodies is not the result of a family initiative but of a Basque nationalist activist initiative. This affectivity is also expressed in the tributes that were paid during the years following the construction of monuments, as occurred in Tíraña with the linking of the commemorations to the local socialist group as a strategy to ensure that it survived the family. This adherence to the monument practice in its social dimension was no longer limited to the family connection but broadened it to a political or ideological affiliation, in which links

⁷ Weber, 102.

were established by the current organizations with the historical ones, as also has occurred through the plaques placed in Guadalajara by organizations such as CNT, PSOE, UGT, PCE and the local feminist groups, without having a direct family connection with those who were murdered and buried in the mass graves. This same affinity can be seen in city councils led by a newly created coalition such as in Toledo which also organized the intervention on the Patio 42 mass grave, or that of socialist mayors such as those of Martos and Mancha Real, where also without direct family links they decided to arrange for the installation of sculptures at the sites of mass graves.

This affectivity would lead to the need to continue marking mass graves from the official institution, as happened in Asturias with the monuments commissioned by the regional government. And, when they ceased to be installed, the monuments were demanded by collectives such as that of Siero, where a platform was formalised to continue marking graves, even though the members of the platform had no direct family links with those who were murdered there. A perfect example of this situation can also be found in Malaga, where the largest memorial complex in the whole of country is being built with the support of a PP mayor who, despite his apparent sensitivity to the Masonic and liberal world. In this sense, these more complex structures display a “rationalisation of value,” which defines the passage from affective social action to social action based on a value, the second of the categories defined by Weber. We can recognise some more of the monument practices described above in this category.

Weber suggests that the affectual orientation differs from value-rational orientation because of its consistent planful orientation. Thus, if we transpose this onto monument practices, it is no longer imitation, as with family flowers or simple vaults after exhumation; it is not a reactive response to a given situation such as the murder and burial in the mass grave or the exhumation and necessity of reinterment of the bodies; it is not an action based on a tradition such as the “dignified burial” and it is not because the result of a specific affection such as for the family or for a political cause. On the contrary, Weber states:

Whoever acts in a purely value rational manner acts without regard to the foreseeable consequences of action in the service of convictions, following the apparent bidding of duty, honour, beauty, religious pronouncement, piety, or the importance of a “cause” of whatever kind.⁸

This is something that could be applied to those monument practices that took place without any planning for the consequences of the initiation of the action. This includes those practices where the exhumation itself did not include in its plan the construction of a monument. This would have happened as in the case of the mass graves in the Uclés cemetery, or as is likely to happen in places where bodies have also been exhumed and will have to be housed in a structure, such as in Puerto Real, Valladolid, Seville or Paterna.

On the contrary, “rational social action of value” in Weber’s sense is an action carried out on the “command” of “demands” that the actor believes to be imposed on him. It is only if social action is oriented towards such demands that one could speak of this “special” form of action. This is an action that differs in certain components, although it is not to be taken as a watertight “type” like the previous ones. But this situation of the value which carries an implicit demand or mandate, which could be planned is exemplified in those experiences where the exhumation of mass graves was directed towards the construction of a monument where the bodies would be housed. This perspective could therefore be associated with experiences such as the one in Cervera del Río Alhama where José explained to me that he wanted to “bring them here,” while we talked in the cemetery. The same planning can be found in other exhumations in that decade in La Rioja, Navarra, Extremadura, or Andalusia, where the need for a vault to house the bodies was planned prior to the exhumation. The same happened after the year 2000 where the monument practices were part of a conscious plan of exhumation for reinterment in a cemetery where a structure was available, as would have happened in places mentioned such as Aranda del Duero or Salamanca. There was also planning in places where, although in a reactive or traditional way, it was decided to clean the surface of the grave under the logic of “tidying the place up,” and a sculpture, vault or structure

⁸ Weber, 102.

was later built over it, such as in Alcolea del Río or in the interventions in ossuaries such as the one in Cuenca. Although it is not possible to speak of a typology as such, this form is sufficiently important to be distinguished as a special type following Weber's approach, especially because this degree of planning is an advance on reaction, tradition, and affective links. There is a consistent planful orientation, which may additionally follow a purpose that is associated with specific consequences expected based on a rational analysis.

It is at this point that the actions are no longer affective or emotional or traditional. There is a rational orientation based on value, in this case of those killed in mass graves for their own significance and what it would therefore imply to honour their graves with a monument. But there would be a principle of marginal utility. In this way, rationality is not based on the value attributed to the object being intervened on but on the process of intervention itself: the monument practice thus becomes a rational instrumental social action. These are monument practices that would not only be prompted by a family or political connection with those murdered, where tradition or the logic of burial would not have moved one way or another when it came to constructing a monument practice, and where, despite a certain amount of planning, there would not have been a clear will to influence reality on the basis of some self-proclaimed criterion of usefulness with respect to others. But also, it is possible to understand that certain monument practices, and even some of those mentioned could be reconsidered from this perspective, were developed with the intention of influencing the society in which they were inscribed. One can think of such a situation through the accounts of Alcolea del Río, where after the first intervention in the surroundings in 1977, the neighbours asked about an intervention on a previously abandoned plot of land in the cemetery. Also in places like La Barranca, where their sustained action since the 1970s went beyond the simple construction of the civil cemetery over the mass graves, but organized, together with the remembrance services, guided visits, publications or educational materials for use in schools. Also as in Guadalajara, which Emilia Cañas associated with an impulse to continue researching and disseminating materials, as the Foro por la Memoria of Guadalajara did, and as the Federación de Foros por la Memoria itself campaigns at

the State level: monument practices in the case of an exhumation that has taken place - exhumations that the Foro also avoids if there cannot be a legal framework for the process to avoid the loss of the testimonies of repression.

Another type of rational instrumental social action, is that of ARMHEx organizing exhumation campaigns that end in the construction of monuments to house the bodies, where the process counts on the voluntary participation of young people through camps organized to raise their awareness.⁹ In the same way, regional official institutions have progressively developed consciousness-raising programmes linked to mass graves, such as those of the Navarrese government and its “Schools Remember” programme, where the graves that have been the object of monument practices in the Alto de las Tres Cruces de Ibero are visited, including the Etxauri Memory Park and the Memorial of the Sierra del Perdón Graves.¹⁰ Also, the “Day of Historical and Democratic Memory of Andalusia,” created by the regional government, is used in certain localities to visit mass graves that have been the object of monument practices.¹¹ In all these actions, whether associative or official, there seems to be an underlying intentionality that defines monument practice in this sense, although not in a watertight manner, since the practices have been able to develop in a complex and dynamic way involving different actors. An example of this is the experience of Ibero, where a mass grave that had already been exhumed by relatives in the 1970s is the object of a subsequent intervention. A park is created, a monument is placed, research is carried out, which is published as a book, followed by the installation of panels explaining the information and the creation of a website where the grave is shared with others through the initiative of the Zurbau Memorialist Collective. Another experience that speaks of this change from a monument practice stemming from the traditional or affective to the intentional rational would be the

⁹ José Manuel Corbacho Palacios and Ángel Olmedo Alonso, *Tras las huellas de la Memoria Histórica en Extremadura (1936-2019)* (Mérida: Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica de Extremadura, 2019).

¹⁰ César Layana Ilundáin and José Miguel Gastón Aguas, “"Escuelas con Memoria": El programa educativo del instituto navarro de la memoria,” *Nuestra Historia: revista de Historia de la FIM*, no. 9 (2020): 217-32.

¹¹ “Instrucción 11/2019, de 7 de Junio de 2019, de la Dirección general de ordenación y evaluación educativa, para la celebración del Día de la Memoria Histórica y Democrática en los centros docentes de la comunidad autónoma andaluza,” Junta de Andalucía, July 6, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021 <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/portals/web/ced/novedades/-/contenidos/detalle/instrucion-11-2019-de-07-de-junio-de-2019-de-la-direccion-general-de-ordenacion-y-evaluacion-educativa-para-la>.

one that started with the exhumation in O Acebo of the murdered combatants of the Galicia Battalion by the ARMH of Galicia and local activists, who after the reinterment of the bodies in the cemetery, opted for a new roadside sign and were planning new strategies to make a grave that was already empty visible. The search for a contemplative space to describe history also underlies the wishes of relatives involved in the exhumation of the large grave at Pico Reja in Seville. María Luisa explained to me that they aspired to create

A space of memory, with trees and benches, where one can be with the satisfaction of having done one's duty. That a national mandate has been fulfilled, because this is not a family affair, the whole country has to know what happened.¹²

The fact that the monument practices have therefore led to community concern speaks of an additional specific character of these particular “social actions:” that on learning about the events to which they referred, they could join in the remembrance, the broadening of the historical knowledge of young people in volunteer camps or visits with associations or high schools to mass graves, and that they have continued to disseminate materials and hold remembrance services that are announced publicly in order to “make people aware of what happened.” Thus, at the instrumental-rational level there is necessarily a communicative formulation, which addresses what Casey calls “many potential viewers.”¹³ Monument practice is therefore a social action in which signs are produced. But Valentin Voloshinov points out:

*Signs can arise only on interindividual territory. It is territory that cannot be called “natural” in the direct sense of the word: signs do not arise between any the members of the species *Homo sapiens*. It is essential that the two individuals be organised socially, that they compose a group (a social unit); only then can the medium of signs take shape between them. The individual consciousness not only cannot be used to explain anything, but, on the contrary, is itself in need of explanation from the vantage point of the social, ideological medium.¹⁴*

¹² Phone interview with María Luisa Hernández, July 27, 2020.

¹³ Casey, *Remembering*, 227.

¹⁴ Valentin Nikólaievich Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (New York; London: Seminar Press, 1973), 12.

The monument practice is not only related to the mass grave itself but also to the society which has given rise to it.

It is at this point that Volokhinov's philosophy of language converges with Max Weber's sociological theory, which in turn allows us to understand the meaning of forms that have survived from antiquity according to Warburg's ideas and that represent substitutive image acts according to Bredekamp's definition. This intentionality must exist in that sign to emerge as a social action. Therefore, when interpreting monument practices, we are studying the social action of producing linguistic signs. In the same way that in the substitutive image act the image of the grave or of the bodies was substituted by that of the monument, we are witnessing a change in the sign of the grave. It is therefore relevant to pay attention to the construction of those individual consciences from which the monument practice started, which was constructed on the basis of the existing sign: the mass graves as landscapes of terror, social death for the survivors, the story of the victory of the Spanish State, the silence with respect to the past in the Transition or the incorporation of neoliberal ideals in the struggles for justice since the year 2000. This developing consciousness therefore had to deal with remembrance on a mental and subjective plane, but at a certain point the act of remembering must take place "beyond mind," which Casey defined as bodies, places, and commemorations,¹⁵ for my purposes, in monument practices. As Voloshinov suggests: "Consciousness can harbor only in the image, the word, the meaningful gesture, and so forth."¹⁶ Meaning, therefore, cannot necessarily be analysed in the content of the monument, but in the meaningful gesture that the monument practice represents.

THE SEPULCHRAL GESTURE AS A PROCESS OF WRITING HISTORY

Starting from an understanding of the monument practice as a social action, and such a social action as a meaningful gesture pertaining to the mass graves, the character of that meaningful gesture can be looked into in detail. For this purpose, this gesture can be linked with another one described by Paul Ricoeur in his work on history and

¹⁵ Casey, *Remembering*, 144-60.

¹⁶ Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, 13.

memory: the sepulchral gesture. He suggests that the historiographical process is the scriptural equivalent of the social rite of burial. Thus, Ricoeur states:

Sepulcher, indeed, is not only a place set apart in our cities, the place we call a cemetery and in which we depose the remains of the living who return to dust. It is an act, the act of burying. This gesture is not punctual; it is not limited to the moment of burial. The sepulcher remains because the gesture of burying remains; its path is the very path of mourning that transforms the physical absence of the lost object into an inner presence. The sepulcher as the material place thus becomes the enduring mark of mourning, the memory-aid of the act of sepulcher.¹⁷

This definition of the “act of sepulchre” or “*geste de sépulture*,”¹⁸ that may be translated as “sepulchral gesture” to maintain the gestural character, is significant when it comes to comparing it with the idea of monument practice. It is a gesture that makes an inner journey through the subjectivity of the individual who inhabits the society that has emerged from the repressive process unleashed in 1936 to the “Pact of Silence” and the emergence of “Historical Memory.” It is a gesture that is defined as a traditional social action making use of funerary forms, for affective reasons or for the family or political motivations, when planning to develop a specific practice around a mass grave in a premeditated manner. It is a gesture that links with the idea of the meaningful gesture through which a consciousness is expressed, following Voloshinov, and of that signic and linguistic character of that image that remains behind the gesture, as in the stable monuments behind the monument practices around which all kinds of rituals, educational programmes and public debates are organized. Therefore we could link the definition of the monument practice with Ricoeur’s definition of the “*geste de sépulture*” with another one of Michel de Certeau. He is Ricoeur’s point of reference when it comes to establishing the analogy between historiography and burial. Certeau suggests how he would make the social act of existing today present in language and provide it with a cultural referent, just like what might happen in the historiographical exercise. According to Certeau, the writing of history gives way to emptiness and hides it by creating accounts of the past

¹⁷ Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, history, forgetting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 366.

¹⁸ Paul Ricoeur, *La memoire, l'histoire, l'oubli* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2000), 476.

that are the equivalent of cemeteries in cities to exorcise and recognise the presence of death in the society of the living.¹⁹ This is why Ricoeur establishes an equation between “writing” and “sepulchre” when approaching the historiographical practice.²⁰ It is therefore the possibility pointed out by Ricoeur of generating an equation between writing and sepulchre that could allow us to clear the different variables in order to invert the result and understand that if “writing” can be understood as “sepulchre” there would be certain components of “writing” that could define “sepulchre” from a new perspective.

In relation to the writing of history, Certeau highlights a series of paradoxes. One of which is that “writing places a population of the dead on stage.”²¹ Alluding to other ways of interpreting history such as “galleries” that are “indexes of proper names,” he suggests other directions of writing that would opt for “signifying” rather than “showing” in a sort of “literary inversion of procedures.”²² To this end, he considers how the specific function of writing is not contrary to that of practice, but different and complementary to it. He states that “writing plays the role of a burial rite, in the ethnological and quasi religious meaning of the term; it exorcises death by inserting it into discourse.”²³ This statement on writing as a sepulchral gesture could therefore lead us to conclude that if the monument practice is a kind of sepulchral gesture, it could also share those features to which Certeau alludes of exorcising death and inserting it into discourse by means of this Weberian social action, given that it would not be a simple tradition or reaction for religious reasons, but that there is a will to influence society, to appeal to others.

In this respect, Certeau states that “it possesses a symbolizing function; it allows a society to situate itself by giving itself a past through language, and it thus opens to the present a space of its own.”²⁴ Following this logic of the sepulchral gesture, the mass grave with the bodies becomes the focus of a monument practice in order to build around it or to exhume bodies, thus taking shape in a meaningful

¹⁹ Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 100.

²⁰ Ricoeur, *La memoire, l'histoire, l'oubli*, 477.

²¹ Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 99.

²² Certeau, 100.

²³ Certeau, 100.

²⁴ Certeau, 100.

gesture, following Voloshinov, in the different forms we have mentioned above, which here is linked to the idea of writing. Thus, Certeau argues that one would only be “marking” a past “to make a place for the dead,” that is, following a traditional logic, but also “to redistribute the space of possibility.”²⁵ A logic that also refers to the need to have a space on which to write. This can be seen in the search for the locations of mass graves to build structures over them or to exhume the bodies and build monuments with the bodies inside. But this could be especially revealing in those cases where the grave was sought and not found and yet some kind of structure was built. In these monuments, what is expressed is the need for that space of possibility. That space where a meaningful gesture is produced that allows the communication of memory and the general device for remembrance in society, as has been done since antiquity. It is a gesture that generates a “mark” in the country as if we are “writing” and in a certain way “to use the narrativity that buries the dead as a way of establishing a place for the living.”²⁶

This point in Certeau’s analysis is crucial, given that it is the living who not only carried the memory but who also decided to construct a space that communicated this memory in society. They built a place where the dead could have a “dignified sepulchre” but where the “living” could also develop a sense of duty that could have religious or traditional overtones. It also involves influencing society, since, as Certeau suggests, it is through this gesture that “what must be done” is also negatively determined.²⁷ This duty to be done, as Certeau points out, was therefore not only evident in the family’s commitment to a proper sepulchre, or in the activist’s commitment to the political agenda of the murdered, but it is also evident in the monument practices developed with the idea that “this should be known,” “this should not happen again,” with the idea of including the names of the murdered, the dates of their murder, their places of origin, the reasons why they were shot or the ideals for which they fought.

Writing speaks of the past only in order to inter it. Writing is a tomb in the double sense of the word in that, in the very same text, it both honours and

²⁵ Certeau, 100.

²⁶ Certeau, 100.

²⁷ Certeau, 100.

eliminates. Here the function of language is to introduce through saying what can no longer be done. Language exercises death and arranges it in the narrative that pedagogically replaces it with something that the reader must believe and do. This process is repeated in other unscientific ways, from the funeral eulogy in the streets to burial ceremonies. But unlike other artistic or social “tombs,” here taking the dead or the past back to a symbolic place is connected to the labour aimed at creating in the present a place (past or future) to be filled, a “something that must be done.”

²⁸

This interposition of the past through writing, which is common to monument practice as a sepulchral gesture that underlies the substitutive image act for the new “text,” could be what would underlie the idea that in monument practices a substitutive image act is taking place, as defined by Bredekamp.

The apparently meaningless way of incorporating bodies into an image that finally replaces them, as happens in the garden, monolith, or sculpture over the mass grave, in the monument to commemorate the missing grave or in the vault that houses the bodies after exhumation, could have an eminently historiographical meaning. It gives “honour” and “eliminates” the previous image. There is no longer a mass grave: there is a monument as sepulchre, that “enduring mark of mourning” or “memory aid” as Ricoeur would describe.²⁹ But this sepulchre also addresses society. The new sign is pointing the reader to what to believe and what to do. And this is achieved through a sign that is in turn a sign, as it contains the very evidence to which it refers: it speaks of the murdered, but the murdered themselves are inside the text. Thus, it is this aspect of writing history that underlies the intentionality of the monument practice as a social action. This meaningful gesture is like writing, except by other means which do not correspond to those traditionally associated with historiography. Certeau attributes similar virtues to these means in this association between sepulchral gesture and history writing when it comes to being able to produce a discourse. This is based on a series of techniques and historiographic operations such as the integration of bodies in the image and the fact that the image itself refers to a past space and time with a view to being read from the present and

²⁸ Certeau, 101.

²⁹ Ricoeur, *Memory, history, forgetting*, 366.

influencing the reader from that place. Based on this reading of monument practice, this situation can be understood through a review of certain experiences compiled throughout the research.

When I visited the cemetery of Castellón in October 2018, I was welcomed by Juan Luis Porcar and Queta Ródenas from the Grup per la Recerca de la Memòria Històrica de Castelló. At that time, the archaeological company ArqueoAntro was exhuming several of the graves in which those who had been shot up to 1944 had been buried. There were several relatives there whom I interviewed. Some of them had come to the cemetery to bring flowers during the Dictatorship itself, others had come as part of the exhumation process that had revealed the presence of their relative's body there. One of them, the granddaughter of a murdered man, had thought of taking the body to her family vault when she had heard the news of her grandfather's location. However, she changed her mind. The Grup per la Recerca de la Memòria Històrica de Castelló was seeking the support of the city council and the Provincial Council to build a monument where unclaimed exhumed bodies could be kept. This was to be a structure on the site of the grave itself, politically significant and where, thanks to its investigative work, explanatory information was to be provided on panels, as well as the names of those murdered. The prospect of linking the bodies to the monuments seemed more attractive to this relative. She thought that she would probably be cremated when she died, and that perhaps if her family followed the same idea in a few years no one would pay for her family vault and they would disappear in an ossuary. A disappearance that would therefore include the murdered grandfather. However, if his body remained in the monument in the cemetery of Castellón "it will be there forever."³⁰ The exhumed body could be integrated into a monument which, through the garden or the plaques, expressed the survival of forms in the tradition as well as producing a substitutive image act by integrating the body into the new structure. But this new structure is also generating this writing by eliminating the previous image of the grave and producing a new sign through this sepulchral gesture.

³⁰ Interview with Juan Luis Porcar, Queta Ródenas and relatives of the murdered buried in the mass grave of Castellón in Castellón, October 1, 2019.

It is this consideration that would have led that family member not to claim the exhumed body but to contribute to a “social action,” to a “practice” which would be the “writing of history,” done by means of a monument practice integrating the body into the monument. In this sense there is a first basic step, taken in most of the monument practices I studied: the connection of the grave with a series of specific names of the murdered people, following the need, as Certeau pointed out, to create “indexes of proper names.” This was done in the form of readings of the names during ceremonies but also inscribing them into plaques. Names are a fundamental component in giving meaning to the monuments, and it is the very attribution of specific names that is the mainstay of many of them. The fact is that, as Thomas W. Laqueur points out, “Naming marks the entry not into biological but into human life.”³¹ He links this to Greco-Latin civilisation, taking as his earliest references to it Herodotus’ expression of surprise at finding villages in North Africa where the residents did not address each other by name. This also has an impact on Christianity, and thus on the society in which the mass graves are inscribed. Not only did God create and name Adam and Eve, but baptism as the manner of that person’s entry into the ecclesiastical community through the washing away of his or her original sin also involves the attribution of a name.

Having entered the society of the living through nominalism, the importance of “necronymy” after death in this writing through the sepulchral gesture is therefore not surprising. Thus Laqueur argues, drawing on the work of Sigmund Freud, that by considering the name of the deceased person as an essential part of his or her personality, the significance of that person is fully embodied by the words: “For my purposes, the point is not the conflation of things and words that Freud points to, but the elision of the distinction between name and person.”³² His statement would explain how the sepulchral gesture as substitutive image act serves the interest of writing. To this he adds another fundamental factor: the presence or absence of these

³¹ Thomas Walter Laqueur, *The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 367.

³² Laqueur, 374.

names in certain places speaks of the logic of inclusion and exclusion. This logic may in certain contexts be administrative, but it therefore sustains:

*The names of the dead in any form, and more specifically their names on lists, are not of this sort; they are there to be remembered, forever; others -not on the list- are forgotten, either purposely excluded or, more commonly, having never counted in the first place.*³³

And this analysis on the work of the dead by Laqueur thus merges with Certeau's concept of the sepulchral gestusture as the writing of history.

Additionally, the importance of the written names acquires special relevance in a context in which the politics of memory was based on the construction of a mythological and fetishized epic around the idea of "Spain" with a systematic forgetting of the republican project,³⁴ of the consequences of the War and of the very existence of the vanquished.³⁵ This is why the oldest tombstones and mock vaults over the mass graves of Toledo and Guadalajara include the names of the people lying in each grave, or in cemeteries such as the one in Talavera, where the placing of plaques by each family member on a wall creates a large mosaic of names, making it clear that this is not just any old landscaping.³⁶ The question of names in this process of writing also implies that they were a necessary part of the updating, as I pointed out in the first part, of the monument practices in the seventies and eighties and later, after the year 2000. The profusion of studies on repression and the initiative to access archives by the grandchildren's generation, as well as by academics and activists, made it possible in the last two decades to access complete lists of the people who lay in mass graves, which were often inaccurate or incomplete in the 1970s due to the impossibility of accessing archives. Adapting the structure to install plaques with the most detailed lists of names possible after an investigation is something that was done in places as disparate as the mass graves in the cemeteries of Coín in Málaga, Lleida in Catalonia or Alcaráz in Albacete. The three large graves in the cemetery of Ocaña

³³ Laqueur, 375.

³⁴ Ledesma and Rodrigo, "Caídos por España, Mártires de la Libertad. Víctimas y conmemoración de la Guerra Civil en la España posbética (1939-2006)," *Ayer*, no. 63 (2006):236.

³⁵ Espinosa Maestre, Moreno Gómez, and Mir, *Morir, matar, sobrevivir: La violencia en la dictadura de Franco* (Barcelona: Booket, 2004), 104.

³⁶ Interview with Emilio Sales Almazán in Talavera, January 13, 2019.

and Toledo stand out in this respect. There, Cármén Díaz Escobar explained to me how, thanks to the installation of those large slabs on the monumentalized graves with the names of the murdered on them, those people “are no longer anonymous.”³⁷ Luisa Vicente and David Hernández, members of the Asociación Salamanca Memoria y Justicia had similar perceptions in this respect. In their project, together with the solution for the reinterment of the exhumed bodies, as well as the different sculptures, the element that stands out above them all is a long list of names, with those murdered in Salamanca in the framework of the repression after the 1936 coup.

This is done, listing the names, because they think that I don't know... A very low percentage have their names somewhere. The fact is that the vast majority of their names were nowhere to be found, and not only their names, but also their recognition as victims of Franco's regime. So it was important to put up those names. Look, my grandfather and my uncle, who are there, never had a plaque, a grave, a place, where their name was put, to say where they died. Well, we are proud to say, well, we have been able to say, we have been able to put it there. The people who come here already know who is here. Why these names are here. And what happened in Salamanca. It's a bit like initiating people and saying that here in Salamanca there were these people. And we even have a child. A two-year-old boy, who wasn't killed, he wasn't shot... but he died in the prison of Saturráan and he was with his mother. Because of the bad conditions in the prisons, this child died, and we consider it appropriate that this child was one more victim of Franco's regime. Because if you put a child and its mother in such conditions that it is impossible for the children to survive, then they end up here. We have him there: García Rodrigo, he is here but perhaps you can see that besides him there are unidentified bodies here as well. Because we have the death certificate: we have found them, we have buried them, but nobody has bothered to note their names. So we didn't want them to be forgotten, even though they don't have names, but they are there, you know? Waiting to be identified.³⁸

A similar initiative was taken in Granada, where the long list was put forward by the Asociación Granadina Verdad, Justicia y Reparación also included dozens of unknown people. “The 4,000 murdered in Granada now have a name,” said the local

³⁷ Interview with Cármén Díaz Escobar in Ocaña, January 23, 2019.

³⁸ Interview with Luisa Vicente and David Hernández in Salamanca, September 10, 2019.

press on the occasion of the unveiling,³⁹ as if it was through the written aspect of the monument practice that those people had been restored. Thus, the inclusion of the names goes beyond the materiality of the monument itself and also forms a fundamental part of remembrance services on the graves themselves. At the monument erected in the centre of the courtyard containing the mass graves in the Valencia cemetery,⁴⁰ during the remembrance service held on 13 April, hundreds of names were read out by those present, after which a red carnation was dropped in the area where the grave is believed to be located, though it can never be located with certainty after the destruction of the graves during the Rita Barberá administration.⁴¹

The inclusion of all names, even naming those people whose whereabouts are unknown, is therefore a necessity if the monument practice is to be a sepulchral gesture that also writes history. Although on some occasions the lists produced may include people whose bodies are absent, they were killed and have a connection to the significance given to the names. For this reason, the inclusion of their names was a recommendation in the monument practices following the exhumations carried out by Ángel Olmedo of ARMHEX. Even if their bodies were not found, or even if they did not manage to identify all of them, the plaques should not omit them.⁴² And the aim of all this, far from providing any kind of historiographical rigour or contributing scientifically to knowledge of the past, is the desire for restitution, to fight against oblivion, to restore their lost identity to those who were murdered. José M^a Rojas showed me the great work they had done installing the plaques with the names on the large monument built in the Aranda del Duero cemetery to house the bodies of those exhumed in the region.⁴³ Rojas stated that the impact of the monument practice in Aranda de Duero is that “their names will never be forgotten.” Even if they tried to erase them, the bodies themselves would be “the best testimony that they did not

³⁹ Josefa Rozalén, “Los 4.000 asesinados en Granada ya tienen nombre,” El Plural, July 28, 2017, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.elplural.com/autonomias/andalucia/los-4-000-asesinados-en-granada-ya-tienen-nombre_107289102.

⁴⁰ Miguel Mezquida Fernández, “La pesada losa de hormigón sobre la Memoria Histórica en la ciudad de Valencia,” *La Linde Arqueología*, 3 (2014): 150-56.

⁴¹ Matías Alonso Blasco, “Las fosas silenciadas,” Levante, May 14, 2006, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.levante-emv.com/opinion/3143/fosas-silenciadas/194902.html>.

⁴² Interview with Ángel Olmedo in Mérida, December 5, 2019.

⁴³ José María Rojas, “La Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica en las comarcas de la ribera del Duero y del Arlanza (Burgos),” in *La Represión Franquista En Castilla y León*, ed. Luis Castro and Agustina Merino (Cornellà de Llobregat: Associació per a la Memòria Històrica i Democràtica del Baix Llobregat, 2018), 32-35.

succeed.” Rojas explained how they made an effort to capture their memory in books, monuments, exhumations, press articles so that little by little “they will become part of History.”⁴⁴ This comment by José M^a Rojas is ultimately revealing. If there is anything to associate with the names in the form of writing, it is that they are never just carved on monuments or read out during services. The monument practice is self-perpetuating, as we have seen in the experiences of La Barranca and Fort San Cristóbal, where visits by young people were organized, or in Andalusia and Navarre, where visits to graves are part of educational programmes. This practice has not been developed in order to conceal, but rather this sepulchral gesture is produced as a way of writing history at the moment when the plaques mention the names together with references to the historical and political dimension of the grave and its context, and contributes to these facts being communicated to the society of the living.

“Fatxismoak eraildakoen omenez” (In recognition of those murdered by fascism) is carved on the menhir above the exhumed grave of Ibero, *Toki* explained to me that there had been no room for discussion, the stonemason took the initiative.⁴⁵ “En memoria al sacrificio de los que dieron su vida por la libertad y la democracia en el 80º aniversario de su fusilamiento. Y aquí grabados en la piedra vuestros nombres dignificados y honrados para siempre” (In memory of the sacrifice of those who gave their lives for freedom and democracy on the 80th anniversary of their execution. And here your names, engraved in stone, will be dignified, and honoured forever) says the plaque installed in 2019 at the vault with the bodies of those exhumed in 1978 in Casas de Don Pedro. “Al alba y por la Libertad” (At dawn and for freedom) are the inscriptions on some of the tombstones built over the mass graves in the Toledo cemetery, “D’aqueells que han mort sense tenir el cap cot. En memòria de les persones sepultades en aquest cementeri que van perdre la vida per haver defensat la dignitat, les libertats i els drets individual i collectius, l’autogovern de Catalunya i la legalitat republicana (1939-1948)” (Those who died with their head held high. In memory of the people buried in this cemetery who lost their lives for defending dignity, freedom and individual and collective rights, self-government of

⁴⁴ Ferrández, “Death on the Move,” in *A Companion to the Anthropology of Death*, ed. Antonius C. G. M. Robben (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2018), 189.

⁴⁵ Interview with Joaquín Iraizoz Vizkar “Toki,” in Ibero, March 29, 2019.

Catalonia and a republican legal framework (1939-1948)) is written next to the names on the mass grave in the Tarragona cemetery. “¡Viva la Libertad y el Socialismo!” (Long live freedom and socialism!) is printed on a sign under the name of the murdered man in one of the mass graves in the Guadalajara cemetery. “A la mujer republicana, su dignidad y sacrificio” (For the republican women, for their dignity and their sacrifice) next to the names of those murdered in the Curva del Esparragal in Candeleda, on the plaque of the monument that Mariano López Díaz had placed there. “En homenaje a la militancia libertaria y cenetista y a todas las víctimas del franquismo” (In tribute to the libertarian and CNT cause and to all the victims of Francoism) on the plaque at the foot of the monument placed by CNT in Monte de Estepar, after the name of one of the murdered trade unionists. “Vítimas da intolerancia e a barbario. Quitáronvos a vida, mais non a dignidade. Que a historia non esqueza os vosso nomes e que a vosa traxedia inspire nas conciencias das xeracións vinideras o desebo de PAX E XUSTIZA” (Victims of intolerance and barbarism. They took your lives, but not your dignity. History won’t forget your names and your tragedy will inspire the consciousness of future generations and the wishes for PEACE and JUSTICE) concludes the plaque placed on the initiative of Xosefa Ortiz de Galisteo Pérez and Jesús Samartino Murias in the cemetery of Mondoñedo. Thus, it is essential to consider that in this writing, not only names are carved. This writing moves from history as a “gallery” to history as a “grave,” linked by Certeau to the idea of sepulchre. Thus, how we name them, in what language we do so and in what way they are named are all ways in which writing allows us to place today’s society in the context of the past through these forms of burial.

Nevertheless, how history is written is crucial too as history is not necessarily objective and impartial and has specific implications in our societies. That’s why it is necessary to return to Laqueur’s approach to the inscription of names and the implication that this has for being excluded or remembered,⁴⁶ something that fits in perfectly with the policy of forgetting during the Dictatorship and the Transition. In this oblivion lies an added unease, which is the absence of governmental recognition. The convictions have not been overturned, and the reparation contemplated by the

⁴⁶ Laqueur, *The Work of the Dead*, 375.

2007 Law is “moral” only. Therefore, one of the aspirations in various monument practices is that they should be produced by government initiative rather than being privately managed. That the writing of history should cease to be a civic, family, political activist or community task and be carried out from a privileged place within the framework of the State. The experience of the Guadalajara cemetery is significant in this respect. The Foro in Guadalajara provided the lists of those murdered after its voluntary research work and supported the initiatives to install plaques in a self-managed manner. Xilio García Bilbao, spokesman for the organization said:

All this while we were waiting for the government team to put up the plaque with everyone’s names, but in the end we had to do that ourselves – we do not resent this, but really it should have come from the authorities, so that this place becomes what it should be: a place of memory, and not just a garden, as it is at present.⁴⁷

It is exactly from this relationship between the murdered and the State that the concept of “victim” is strongly configured, a status that is desirable for certain groups of people as the political actions of the murdered have yet to be acknowledged. At the very least, when we speak of “victims,” we seek to recognise that they were the object of an injustice, even if other aspects are not valued, and we aspire to official recognition. Gabriel Gatti speaks of “victims, those, many, in a nascent state, individuals and collectives who claim the right to be named and protected by this category and who do not yet exist.”⁴⁸ This is a position that is essentially subaltern by Gatti’s own admission, which can be seen in certain monument practices where the idea of names is associated in “writing” with that of “victims.” However, although in many recent cases names are named as “victims,” this is not the totality of writing through the sepulchral gesture.

⁴⁷ Foro por la Memoria de Guadalajara, “Las feministas alcarreñas colocan una placa de homenaje a las fusiladas por el franquismo,” Foro por la memoria, April 3, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.foroporlamemoria.info/2019/03/las-feministas-alcarrenas-colocan-una-placa-de-homenaje-a-las-fusiladas-por-el-franquismo/>.

⁴⁸ “Víctimas, aquellas, muchas, en estado naciente, individuos y colectivos que reclaman el derecho a ser nombrados y protegidos por esa categoría y que aún no lo están y que, por eso no existen” (Translated by the author). Gabriel Gatti Casal de Rey and María Martínez González, “El campo de las víctimas. Disensos, consensos e imaginarios compartidos con el nacimiento del ciudadano-víctima,” in *Un mundo de víctimas*, ed. Gabriel Gatti (Barcelona: Anthropos, 2017), 89-90.

As in Guadalajara, when a tombstone is carved with “Murieron por la Libertad” (They died for freedom), when every year hundreds of people gather to lay flowers and sing “The Internationale,” flags are waved, and life stories of the murdered are read, highlighting their contribution to a political agenda, when they do these things, they are celebrating them instead of labelling them as “victims,” which others might have done. “Aquí yacen los restos de los Mártires de 1936 al 1940. El recuerdo a cuantos como ellos perdieron la vida por la libertad de España. Sus familiares y compañeros os recuerdan” (Here are the remains of the martyrs of 1936 to 1940. The memory of all those who, like them, lost their lives for the freedom of Spain. Their relatives and comrades remember you) is written on the plaque on the grave exhumed in the 1980s in Almodóvar del Río, Córdoba. Similar references to freedom, sacrifice, democracy and dedication to social justice can be found in numerous municipalities: Fuenteovejuna, in the province of Córdoba; Ayamonte, Beas, Cañaveral de León, Corteconcepción, Cumbres Mayores, Campillo, Gibraleón, La Nava, Rociana del Condado, Valverde del Camino, Villanueva de Castillejos, in Huelva; Arjonilla, Baeza, Baños de la Encina, La Carolina, in the province of Jaén; Antequera, Arriate, Cuevas de San Marcos, Marbella, in the province of Málaga; Carmona, Constantina, Dos Hermanas, Écija, El Madroño, El Real de la Jara, Herrera, La Campana, Las Cabezas de San Juan, Lora del Río and Villanueva del Río, in the province of Seville. The list could be much longer and cover the whole country if there were databases of the same quality as the Andalusia map of graves in other regions. The databases of graves in Navarre and Aragón show similar results. These types of references in the monument practices in those years are ubiquitous. But these references are not only explicit in the text. They are also in the forms of gardens, monoliths, fences, sculptures, and plaques. The different forms of writing through the sepulchral gesture thus pose, following Certeau’s thesis, different forms of writing which, nevertheless, share one fact. The dead are “eliminated” and with the construction of the new text they are “honoured” in one way or another. Certeau considers that only historiography, in contrast to other “artistic or social tombs,” can

take the dead back to a symbolic place. And for Certeau this is done to create a place in the present that proposes a duty, a “what must be done.”⁴⁹

In Ibero, *Toki* showed me the research work he had carried out with Jesús Aldaba on those murdered in the Zendea⁵⁰ and the monument practices developed around the grave exhumed along the roadside on the way to Etxauri.⁵¹ Thus, without having any family ties with them, and with no bodies left in that ditch, they decided to build that environment through the “auzalan.”⁵² This is work carried out by the community, free of charge, in the Basque tradition for the benefit of the local community. This is a perfect outworking of the interest of the community as a whole in ensuring that the history of the village is not lost, even though it did not pertain to anyone’s own family history. The mass grave constituted a moral imperative for them. A similar initiative was developed in Etxauri, the municipality bordering Ibero, where the road led along which the mass grave was situated. There I was received by Idoia Aritzala Etxarren, mayoress for EH Bildu, who explained to me the initiative that the town council had taken years earlier to place a large menhir and explanatory signs at the site of the mass grave and to turn the area into a “Memorial Garden.” The grave had been exhumed in the 1970s, and those murdered were not from Etxauri. So, when they opened the site in 2011, they invited the relatives who had exhumed the mass grave forty years earlier. Speaking to them and to the residents of Etxauri, she pointed out the importance of this monument practice as “writing history.”

It is an honour and a moral and political obligation for this administration to repair the injustice done to the people murdered at the gates of the Etxauri cemetery in the summer of 1936. It is an honour because we stand up for their ideals and like them, we stand up for the workers. They lived out their ideals through their actions. They were the standard-bearers of ideals that not only have not disappeared, but are still relevant today: the rejection of economic injustice, social marginalisation and political cronyism is still one of the currencies of social

⁴⁹ Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 101.

⁵⁰ Jesús Albaba and Joaquín Iraizoz, *Oltza 1936: víctimas de la represión en la Zendea* (Tafalla: Altaffaylla Kultur Elkartea, 2017).

⁵¹ Interview with Joaquín Iraizoz Vizkar “Toki,” in Ibero, March 29, 2019.

⁵² “Collective or neighbourhood work carried out by the inhabitants of a village for the benefit of the community (auzoa - neighbour, lana - labour). Each house must send a person or, if not, pay the wages of the person who replaces them”. In Gran Enciclopedia de Navarra, “AUZALÁN,” accessed July 21, 2020, http://www.enciclopedianavarra.com/?page_id=4579.

progress, and with it humanity identifies a need to transform the inequality that has been imposed on the world by the big economic groups. However, now is neither the right time nor the right place to analyse the lapses and manifest weaknesses of the Spanish political Transition in the tremendous task of dealing with the consequences of the human massacre in Navarre during the civil war. That absence of commitment, however, enhances our intentions today, Sunday, 29 May 2011, as it is a source of pride to make imperishable, through this sober but expressive monolith, the meaning of what these people were and what they stood for. The simplicity of this tribute and the modest means with which we approach of the recovery of their memory do not tarnish their lofty purpose: to make their memory public and visible; to immortalise their ideals in this place which was the last one they set eyes on; to indicate to future generations the responsibility they took upon themselves and suffered the ultimate consequence to achieve an existence without exploited and exploiters.

This moral and political obligation, which we assume as local government, includes to their relatives, friends, and neighbours, and to all those who remember them, because the drama of murder and death is a harsh legacy that falls on the living. Only those who have survived the ignominious repression can express their pain, their sorrows, the loneliness of absence, the marginalisation then and the waiting afterwards... To them we send our condolences, with them we express our solidarity; this initiative is also addressed to them; we share their sorrow and their dignity for having persisted and maintained the memory of those people who wanted to open the doors to a more just and egalitarian world and paid for that effort with their lives.⁵³

The site, though emptied of bodies decades before, and this monument practice organized by the community was nevertheless officially recognised by the government of Navarre as a Place of Memory.⁵⁴

In the rites organized around the monuments, it is possible to perceive how a reading of the new sign leads to new duties for those attending. I pointed out in the second part how the feminist groups in Guadalajara had no family connection with the murdered women, but nevertheless felt linked to them by their struggle, and when

⁵³ Idoia Aritzala Etxarren, "Speech," 29 May 2019. Personal archive.

⁵⁴ "RESOLUCIÓN 13/2019, de 17 de abril, del Director General de Paz, Convivencia y Derechos Humanos, por la que se inicia el procedimiento de declaración e inscripción del Parque de la Memoria de Etxauri como Lugar de Memoria Histórica de Navarra," Comunidad Foral de Navarra, April 17, 2019, accessed May 10, 2021, https://gobiernoabierto.navarra.es/sites/default/files/lm-2019-0012-resolucion_13_2019.pdf.

a plaque was put up in their memory they referred to how it was dedicated to the murdered women who fought for “freedom from fascism” and how both for the murdered women and for those present “Together we are creating a future, even in the middle of the night no one will stop us.”⁵⁵ Xulio García Bilbao, member of the Foro in Guadalajara explained this idea to me as well in relation to the 14th April, Republic Day, as a day not just to go to the cemetery, but also to continue building a new republic. In the same way, this duty to act on what one has read at the grave site was present in the speeches of 14 April in Paterna, when the service concluded with a shout of “For the third!” in reference to the proclamation of a new Republic. So, as Colin Davis points out, the dead would return because their “affairs on earth are not yet complete.”⁵⁶

Zoe de Keragnat argues that the exhumations of the Transition set up a “community of the vanquished” that did not only include the murdered.⁵⁷ Therefore, beyond these shared values on both sides of the equivalence between history writing and sepulchral gesture, attention should be paid to this communal dimension of monument practice, since it is this that additionally endows it with its own values in contrast to the notion of “science” and “institutionality” of the historiography in use. In this sense, the inscription on the monument over the mass grave at San Lorenzo del Escorial could not be more revealing: “Ellos no pudieron lograrlo, pero no estaban solos, porque nosotros estamos aquí. No lo perdieron todo, porque nosotros estamos aquí. No lucharon en vano, porque nosotros estamos aquí. Y nosotros somos la memoria de su futuro. Libertad, Igualdad, Fraternidad.” (They couldn’t make it, but they were not alone, because we are here. They did not lose everything, because we are here. They did not fight in vain, because we are here. And we are the memory of their future. Liberty Equality Fraternity.)

⁵⁵ Foro por la Memoria de Guadalajara, “Las feministas alcarreñas colocan una placa de homenaje a las fusiladas por el franquismo,” Foro por la memoria, Abril 3, 2019, accessed Mayo 10, 2021, <https://www.foroporlamemoria.info/2019/03/las-feministas-alcarrenas-colocan-una-placa-de-homenaje-a-las-fusiladas-por-el-franquismo/>.

⁵⁶ Colin Davis, *Haunted Subjects: Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis and the Return of the Dead* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 2.

⁵⁷ Zoé de Kerangat, “Remover cielo y tierra. Las exhumaciones de víctimas del franquismo como fisuras del silencio en la transición” (PhD diss., Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2019), 84.

SCRIPTURES OF A LOST COMMUNITY

In the second part I put forward the idea of the construction of a memory from defeat through the remembrance services organized around monuments. I referenced Luis García Montero's poem about the visit to Antonio Machado's tomb, which produced the reading of the "helpless feeling of sharing a defeat."⁵⁸ It is in this way, by going to the tomb, that a reading of history takes place in which one is also aware that one is reading a historical narrative based on the murdered, on the failure of one project, on the triumph of another one based on the repressive process that led the reader to find himself in front of the mass grave that is the object of the monument practice. This past could be labelled as "left-wing nostalgia" following Enzo Traverso definition⁵⁹ or as "Post-Apocalyptic" situation following James Berger. We would be "haunted by multitudes of ghosts, who are ourselves, the living symptoms of historical catastrophes, and we cannot determine how to respond to our traumatic histories."⁶⁰ In this sense, what is relevant about this particular way of writing history is that it is done by a community of the defeated. In this sense, it cannot be overlooked that one of the antecedents that Certeau points to for the exercise of writing history is "hagiography," that is, the writing of the lives of the saints by the Christian community.

Regarding such writings, Certeau points out how the life of each of the saints is approached as a system that "organizes a manifestation, thanks to a topological combination of 'virtues' and 'miracles.'"⁶¹ It is this combination that can be seen in the approach to monument practices on mass graves. The mass graves talk about ideas of resistance and contribution to values such as "freedom," "justice," or "democracy." Likewise, it is common in the services and commemorations to recount the life stories of the assassinated, which generally express not only the virtuous behaviour that led to their assassination, but also the great or small contributions they made to their communities, as a sort of small "republican miracle"

⁵⁸ "desarmada emoción de compartir una derrota" (Translated by Judith Kingston and the author). Luis García Montero and Françoise Dubosquet Lairy, *Une mélancolie optimiste = Una melancolia optimista* (Paris: Al Manar, 2019), 103.

⁵⁹ Enzo Traverso, *Mélancolie de gauche: La force d'une tradition cachée (XIXe-XXIe siècle)* (Paris: La Découverte, 2018).

⁶⁰ James Berger, *After the End: Representations of Post-Apocalypse* (University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 52.

⁶¹ Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 270.

that they were able to perform as mayors, councillors, trade unionists, teachers or prominent members of the community who taught others to read or who contributed in some other way to the life of the community. If anything characterises the construction of the narrative in relation to both the saints and those murdered in the mass graves the most, it is their “exemplarity.”⁶² Likewise, Certeau points out with regard to the similarities with the way of writing about the saints that:

Arising together with liturgical calendars and the commemoration of martyrs by the sites of their tombs, hagiography in its first centuries (from about 150 to 350) is concerned less with the existence than with the death of the witness.⁶³

This background also links hagiography to the forms of monuments around mass graves. As with the saints, a kind of “geography of the sacred” is constructed which “determines the space of a constancy.”⁶⁴

Pilgrimages were linked to the saint through their tombs; it meant the local communities had a physical grave to tend to and pilgrims had a destination for their pilgrimage. The similarities are obvious with the marches to the mass graves described in the second part. In these, marches are organized on foot or in caravans of cars that connect the different repressive spaces to culminate in remembrance services and the laying of wreaths around the mass graves, as happened in Valencia, Castuera, Valle del Tiétar, Monte Ezkaba, Dos Hermanas, or El Puerto de Santa María, among others. However, as Certeau points out, it is not only the physical location of the grave that is important, but also the dates on the calendars when they are visited, that are common to mass graves. They are visited on the anniversaries of assassinations, the proclamation of the Republic, the failed *coup d'état*, as well as the first of May or All saints’ Day. Thus, Certeau continues, “From this point a great growth of hagiography ensues, in which mystics and founders of religious orders assume growing importance. Now it is the life-and no longer the death-on which they are based.”⁶⁵ And this is a fundamental component also shared by monument practices. In them, through this meaningful gesture, they bring about a substitutive

⁶² Certeau, 276-79.

⁶³ Certeau, 270.

⁶⁴ Certeau, 280.

⁶⁵ Certeau, 271.

image act where the mass grave is no longer a simple place of burial but a new sign through which a narrative is written. Moreover, as monuments contain the same bodies that those narratives are referring to, that narrative doesn't need to be verified since their history makes itself known, just as Certeau also proposes with the cult of saints.⁶⁶ In this way, Certeau suggests that a community is built around the saints through practices that have “indeed, a pure will to signify, whose non-place is here a discourse of places.”⁶⁷ And in this sense Jacob Burckhardt points out in relation to the martyrs with respect to the saints:

*There is a superiority of martyrs over the other saints; the expressions for martyrdom are *passio*, *agon*, *certamen*. Christianity subsists here essentially on those who died professing it. It becomes entirely a religion of martyrs, in complete contrast to the religions of antiquity which made no fuss about their believers and had only a mythical view of their original propagators.*⁶⁸

Alongside those of the saints, characteristics of the cult of the martyrs can therefore also be seen in the monument practices. Understanding the importance of the martyrs for the Christian community, in a context of resistance, is therefore vital to understand the importance of the believers who have been killed for their commitment to a cause that opposed the ruling elite.

Jan Willem van Henten and Ihab Saloul look at the figure of the martyr in different times and cultures, linking to the importance of evidence:

Moreover, the commemoration of martyrs entails a process of canonisation because many groups who remember their martyrs have established a more or less fixed group of martyrs and sometimes also canonised the documents about those martyrs. Yet, this canonisation of martyrs goes hand in hand with two other processes: First, the canonisation implies the inclusion and exclusion of martyrs and the writings connected with them; martyrs who are heroes for one group are flatly contested by another group; that is to say, canonisation usually emerges in a plural of diverse and conflicting canons. No matter how martyrs are configured during their commemoration, they function as heroes and models for the in-group, which designates them as idealised figures. And, second, the

⁶⁶ Certeau, 271.

⁶⁷ Certeau, 282.

⁶⁸ Jacob Burckhardt, *Judgements on History and Historians* (London: Routledge, 2016), 41.

ways martyrs are remembered in documents, visual material and narrations, performances, and rituals build on and re-interpret older textual and pictorial traditions that are either connected with older martyrs or are interpreted in new settings through the lens of commemoration. The canons, lists, and cultural texts of martyrdom are open to later and various traditions; these are present and future-oriented practices which are not permanently closed. Moreover, inasmuch as martyrdom involves actively opting for death rather than abandoning a belief, martyrs also publicly embrace political, ideological and religious positions that oppose powerful institutions and dominant discourses.⁶⁹

In this sense, meaning through different practices based in historical facts has an additional connection to the Christian tradition that Bredekamp himself uses for the foundation of his theory on image acts.

This way of using body and image proposed by Bredekamp as a revolution in the theoretical foundations of the substitutive image act, was based on the 4th century concept that an imprint of Christ's face on a cloth was the first "true image" of Him.⁷⁰ Thus a dead body can be an image itself, and furthermore have the attribute of being "real." And this presence of the body in the *Vera Icon* is considered real because the body is present in fullness even though it is no longer composed of living matter. The body may have been replaced by the image, but at the same time the image is equivalent to the body, making it "present." According to Bredekamp, this is a principle that has been used in nature research, economics, forensics, and other media, and here we can see it at work in monument practices. By intervening on the mass grave and the bodies it contains, having had contact with them, we replace them with this new sign that is also a "true image," having laid the foundations for other substitutive image acts.⁷¹ The monument practice is fuelled by a mechanism of truth', a testimonial one, which functioned as with the body of Christ: the ultimate referent of the "miraculous" dimension and of "virtue," as with the saints and the martyrs. In fact, the relevance of the latter would be to think about how the bodies are venerated because they themselves "bear witness" through their tombs, as Certeau suggested.⁷²

⁶⁹ Thab Saloul and Jan Willem van Henten, eds, *Martyrdom: Canonisation, Contestation and Afterlives* (Amsterdam University Press, 2020), 22.

⁷⁰ Horst Bredekamp, *Image Acts a Systematic Approach to Visual Agency* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 138.

⁷¹ Bredekamp, 156.

⁷² Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 270.

It is therefore pertinent in this sense to point out a shared logic in the use of the bodies in this meaningful gesture and the substitutive image act that takes place in the monument practice of exhumation. Whether or not the integration of the bodies into a monument has been carried out using forensic methodology, the truth underlies the presence of the bodies themselves. Now those bodies are substituted by the image, and that image has a testimonial character in society. We know that the facts that are recorded through the monument practice are “true” because the image itself is “true;” it contains the actual bodies of the murdered or is linked to them. It not only allows us to remember them through their forms, but their forms are the murdered themselves.

This way of producing images could be interpreted in terms of Hans Belting’s theory. In his anthropological reading of the production of images of death by humans, Belting states that it is more important to produce them than to possess them:

The making of the image was an active response to a disturbance in the community, more important in fact than the actual possession of the image, for this act of making reestablished the natural order: the dead were given back a status that they needed in order to maintain their presence in the social group.⁷³

And this idea can be recognised in different aspects of monument practice, from the incorporation of bodies into the spatial logic of cemeteries to their introduction into a discourse about the past by now including their identities and giving them a certain political agency through the new image resulting from the monument practice.

Belting considers that the image is given the power to present itself in the name and in the place of the deceased in such a way that the image is a compensation for the deceased, that it supplants him and acquires a “being” by presenting itself in his name without refuting the appearance of the body that ceased to be.⁷⁴ This happens with the substitutive image act, in such a way that the mass grave ceases to be the image of the soil that hides the bodies, but acquires another signifying form.

⁷³ Hans Belting, *An Anthropology of Images Picture, Medium, Body*. (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014), 86.

⁷⁴ Belting, 84-87.

And this happens even in spite of the previous images of the bodies that have been produced by exhumations and forensic methodologies. Thus, in the face of such scientific advances, Belting argues that, in addition, as magical praxis fell into disuse, images became merely a means of remembrance, but still a way of embodying the image. However, the shift from remembrance to the individual subject has erased the collective practice of worshipping the dead through these images.⁷⁵ And this perspective is key for understanding the monument practices relating to mass graves. Beyond sharing notions with other theories described above, the transition towards a model of individual subjects that erases collective practices in society, underestimates the capacity for symbolisation that was exercised in ritual acts.

However, instead of associating these images with the idea of “magic,” it would be helpful to approach them from a sociological perspective, following the theories of David Le Breton. He proposes the importance of the human body in popular traditions as a vector of inclusion by the community, something he exemplifies, once again, with the saints. For Le Breton, the saint does not live for himself, and his life is inextricably linked with the community, living through and for it by sacrificing his own life. In this way, according to Le Breton, relics of saints serve to recall formulas of faithfulness to God around which the community comes together.⁷⁶ Here, the value of the saints have an additional component: the community. Similarly, the monument practices relating to mass graves are initiatives that in most cases originate from communities or are the result of pressure from them. Despite being heterogeneous and difficult to determine sociologically, I found family members and activists who sometimes shared several of these roles at the same time. In their work of signification of the bodies through the monument practice they were performing the actions that meant the murdered would no longer live for themselves but for the community making use of their bodies in this particular exercise of writing. That is why one must interpret the monument practice as a social action: a will to influence in one way or another the other members of the society into which their lives have been written. However, this principle of the community

⁷⁵ Belting, 89.

⁷⁶ David Le Breton, *Anthropologie du corps et modernité* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2013), 57.

who uses monument practices to attribute value to the bodies of those killed came under threat.

The arrival of the “forensic turn” in the wake of individualistic neoliberal values implied a discarding of certain popular knowledge in favour of biomedical knowledge, as Le Breton argues. Nevertheless, despite the fact that this type of knowledge has been progressively encroaching since the seventeenth century, Le Breton suggests that, although social and cultural frameworks have been transformed, popular traditions about the body continued to maintain their influence, even if they were considered to be at odds with anatomical biomedical knowledge.⁷⁷ This is a symptom that can be seen in the fact that, despite the introduction of exhumations under forensic protocols since 2000, most of the interventions on the graves have once again led to the construction of structures as monument practices in which traditional forms are still used. This is why Le Breton argues that there is a disconnect with respect to the body between scientific and popular community culture. The body has remained central in the community culture, and within this culture it was logical to use them in their monument practice as it was done in the past with Christ, the saints, and the martyrs.

With regard to such strategies, it was Maurice Halbwachs who, based on his frameworks of interpretation of collective memory,⁷⁸ put his theory into practice in his documentary and field research in the British Mandate of Palestine, with the aim of defining the “legendary topography of the Gospels in the Holy Land.”⁷⁹ Thus, when Halbwachs tried to reconstruct the places through which the memory of the Gospels had survived thanks to the first Christians, he observed that, in the face of harassment, they had resorted to fixing the events of Christ’s life in the space in places where some kind of previous Jewish rituals took place, as a strategy to prevent the memory from being lost. This was within a survival strategy framework of the production of a memory because it was a counter-hegemonic narrative until the third century, the period on which he focused his study. For this reason, these monument

⁷⁷ Le Breton, 78.

⁷⁸ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed. Lewis A Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

⁷⁹ Maurice Halbwachs, *La topographie légendaire des Évangiles en Terre sainte: étude de mémoire collective*, ed. Marie Jaisson (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2017).

practices also inherited this character of community resistance. This leads us to the monument practice as a field in dispute. A dispute that, therefore, in spite of pretending in this meaningful gesture to function as the writing of history on the basis of the fact and the “true image” that the substitution of bodies by the new image after the monument practice entails, raises the problem that Valentin Voloshinov associates with social existence in the sign. The sign does not “reflect” but “refract” due to its ideological character, resulting in the intersection of very diverse social interests, even within the limits of the same semiotic collective.⁸⁰

Voloshinov sought to socially problematise the question of the sign, claiming: “The historical memory of mankind is full of such worn out ideological signs incapable of serving as arenas for the clash of live social accents.”⁸¹ He was therefore aware of how:

*Dominant ideology is always somewhat reactionary and tries, as it were, to stabilize the preceding factor in the dialectical flux of the social generative process, so accentuating yesterday’s truth as to make it appear today’s. And that is what is responsible for the refracting and distorting peculiarity of the ideological sign within the dominant ideology. And that is what is responsible for the refracting and distorting peculiarity of the ideological sign within the dominant ideology.*⁸²

This suggests that an “insult” can become “praise,” and a “living truth” can become a “lie” for Voloshinov. And this statement, applied to the monument practices, means that we are dealing with ideological signs that seek to write the history of communities on the basis of their own values, confronting a dominant ideology that first supported criminalisation, then oblivion and finally partial victimisation. We should therefore be wary of the meaning derived from the monument practice, as the sign of the grave will be an arena for the clash of live social accents in the Kingdom of Spain.

⁸⁰ Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, 57.

⁸¹ Voloshinov, 23.

⁸² Voloshinov, 24.

CHAPTER NINE

The Monument Practice in Dispute

SLAVERY IN WORDS, HONOUR IN FORMS

When thinking about ceremonies, Edward Casey defines commemoration as a call to remember or to preserve the memory that “solemnizes.” He points out how “solemnizing” implies dignifying or honouring someone through some kind of formality and includes here the very materiality of constructions such as tombs, associating stone with the idea of “honour.”¹ In this sense, Certeau also pointed out in relation to writing and burial linked to honour: “Writing is a tomb in the double sense of the word in that, in the very same text, it both honours and eliminates.”² A reading of the forms used in the monument practices described above could be based on recognizing these resources as strategies for conferring honour on the bodies. Whether in the placement of tombstones, fences, gardens, sculptures or the construction of vaults and other structures, formal resources are used which feed into the solemnization mentioned by Casey, but also the rituals performed around the monuments serve to solemnize too. I also pointed out that commemorations consist of solemn acts, where biographies and speeches are read, flowers are presented, and hymns are sung. From a sociological point of view, this ritual behaviour could also be interpreted as a “form of quasi-textual representation” as defined by Paul Connerton. Following his theory, it is possible to perceive:

¹ Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: a phenomenological study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 227.

² Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 101.

*the ways in which ritual functions to communicate shared values within a group and to reduce internal dissension; what rituals tell us, in this view, is how social stability and equilibrium are constituted. They show us what a culture's ethos and the sensibility shaped by that ethos look like when spelled out externally, articulated in the symbolism of something like a single collective text.*³

If we look at rituals as a text that can be read in a unified way to the material result of the monument practice as a whole, it would be relevant to pay attention not so much to the textual contents but to the forms themselves. Connerton points out that when studying these kinds of practices there is a “tendency to focus attention on the content rather than on the form of ritual.”⁴

Therefore, when interpreting the monuments and the rituals organized around them as a linguistic act, it is necessary to take into account their history within a community and to pay attention to the logic of their forms.⁵ This should be done without neglecting the fact that in the struggle to establish monument practices and the rituals around them, there is a will to impose values, but they contribute only in part to the meaning. We must therefore consider that the meaning of these monument practices, as social actions that take the form of meaningful gestures, is not always fully encompassed in their expression.⁶ Therefore, if we stop focusing on the specific themes of each expression, such as “family mourning” during the Dictatorship, “freedom” and “democracy” during the Transition and “victims,” “dignity,” and “human rights” post-2000, the reading of forms will show us that there is a common aesthetic of “honour” and “solemnity” in all monument practices. This is a key point in the construction of the subjectivity of those who established the monument practices and of those who read the texts that they represent, from 1936 to the present day.

At the beginning of this third part, I placed the monument practice in the framework of a repressive process in which Orlando Patterson’s notion of “social death” could be applied to understand this construction of the slave’s consciousness.

³ Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 49-50.

⁴ Connerton, 53.

⁵ Connerton, 53.

⁶ Alejandro Raiter, “Voloshinov: construcción dialéctica del sujeto individual y social en y por el lenguaje,” *Texturas*, no. 14 (2015): 28.

Returning to Paterson's thesis, it is important to note how in the process of repression and the exercise of power by the master, the notion of "honour" is also present, so that to value a person at a high price is to "honour" him; at a low price, it is to "dishonour" him. But high and low, in this case, are to be understood from the point of view of the master's criteria.⁷ This component of dishonour is fundamental to the logic of the mass graves, since in the accounts of repression we found examples of humiliation prior to the murder, including rape, haircuts, public mockery and burial face down. A testimony to the degradation of the murdered person is the recurring reference to the fact that "they were buried like dogs," as was often reported in the vicinity of the mass graves. Thus, Patterson states how in all slave societies, the slave was considered a degraded person without honour; while the master's honour was reinforced by the subjugation of his slave, thus affording slavery structural importance. The whole tone of slaveholder culture tended to be centred around honour.⁸ This is illustrated by the contrast between those killed in the repressive process who were first humiliated and then robbed of their social existence and those who died in the revolt from 1936 onwards and who were honoured as "Fallen for God and Spain" and finally the victors who, like Francisco Franco, would acquire a status of "honour" which they have kept even to the present day. It is on these principles that this relationship between master and slave functions according to Patterson, which leads to a specific situation:

The slave, by his social death, and by living "in mortal terror of his sovereign master" becomes acutely conscious of both life and freedom. The idea of freedom is born, not in the consciousness of the master, but in the reality of the slave's condition. Freedom can mean nothing positive to the master; only control is meaningful. For the slave, freedom begins with the consciousness that real life comes with the negation of his social death.⁹

This leads Patterson to postulate that this new consciousness will lead to its progressive externalisation being communicated, in a transition between the subjectivity of memory and its social impact. A transition that would be related to

⁷ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 45–47.

⁸ Patterson, 77.

⁹ Patterson, 98.

that dialectical position in which “honour” plays a fundamental role, since, as Patterson points out, in that process of struggle for liberation, a new contradiction is going to arise:

Confronted with the master’s outrageous effort to deny him all dignity, the slave even more than the master came to know and to desire passionately this very attribute. For dignity, like love, is one of those human qualities that are most intensely felt and understood when they are absent- or unrequited.
Slavery, for the slave, was truly a “trial by death,” as Hegel called it. Out of this trial the slave emerged, if he survived at all, as a person afire with the knowledge of and the need for dignity and honour. We now understand how very superficial are assertions that the slave internalized the degraded conception of him held by the master; or that his person was necessarily degraded by his degraded condition. Quite the opposite was the case, Hegel speculated, and what evidence there is fully supports him.¹⁰

By shifting the analysis from what is expressed in these meaningful gestures to the significance of the very form of the gesture as a text, it turns out that this notion of “honour” runs through the forms used. They provide not only a proper burial but also a value to the bodies that are part of the monument and more specifically, beyond what is expressed, contribute to an overcoming of the status historically assigned by the master. However, Patterson warns that a fundamental characteristic of slavery also derives from this situation:

What does the master make of the slave’s yearning for dignity, itself part of his wider yearning for disalienation and relief from the master’s all-embracing power? In all but a handful of slaveholding societies the master exploits this very yearning for his own benefit. How?

He does so by manipulating it as the principal means of motivating the slave, who desires nothing more passionately than dignity, belonging, and release. By holding out the promise of redemption, the master provides himself with a motivating force more powerful than any whip. Slavery in this way was a self-correcting institution: what it denied the slave it utilized as the major means of motivating him.¹¹

¹⁰ Patterson, 100.

¹¹ Patterson, 101.

Therefore, it is under this logic that we may have reached a revealing point in understanding monument practices as a meaningful gesture. If, following Connerton, we were to shift our focus from “expression” to “form,” we would find the will to endow the murdered with “honour” through the monument practice. However, the social existence in the sign of burial would not reflect the real situation of the murdered despite being “solemnized” and “honoured” through monument practice. The meaning of the monuments as sign would be “refracted” by their ideological character according to Voloshinov.¹²

When Voloshinov stated that the “historical memory of humanity” is full of dead ideological signs, he warned of the will of the ruling class to give the ideological sign an eternal character as a mono-accentual sign.¹³ It is in this operation of signification, that there is a gap between the meanings expressed by the forms in relation to honour and the statements where “freedom,” “democracy” in the Transition and “human rights” or the dimension of “victim” since the year 2000 make explicit the need for recognition as a society of “slaves,” as Patterson suggested. This type of expression can therefore represent a need for recognition as equals of a certain social group that was, in fact, dishonoured. In this way, for the strategies of the master, dignity could be guaranteed as long as it remains a tool of domination. But the master would never allow the restitution of honour. If the master accepts the slave’s honour, it would contribute to the misalignment of the slave, putting his status at risk.

This dialectic, being limited to identity, cannot be disassociated from the “politics of resentment” defined by Francis Fukuyama. These are movements of rebellion against the masters which are only faced in cultural terms, so that whoever rebels today in pursuit of “dignity” for the few is fighting for “dignity” for everyone as far as it is not involving historical-materialist perspectives.¹⁴ “The demand for the equal recognition of dignity animated the French Revolution, and it continues to the

¹² Valentin Nikólaievich Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (New York; London: Seminar Press, 1973), 9-16.

¹³ Voloshinov, 23.

¹⁴ Francis Fukuyama, *Identity* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018), 40-41.

present day.”¹⁵ Applied to the field of exhumations it is clear from the 2007 Law of Memory that to “restore dignity to the victims of Francoism” is one of its main objectives. It is here that monument practices, despite their limitations as a meaningful gestures and their limited impact as a social action, have nevertheless been historically marginalized as precisely representing those forms of progressive consciousness and expressions of honour in relation to the memory of the people who were murdered. Moreover, since the arrival of the “forensic turn,” the exhumation of graves with monuments built on them has led to the destruction of those constructions that provided honour to the bodies, arguing it was done for their dignity. In the same way, when monuments are vandalized, it is once again a bid to dishonour, and when the 2007 Law of Memory itself refers to the “dignity of the victims of violence,” it is a denial of the restitution of honour. This is a statement included in a text in which the development of monument practices is completely absent, only favouring mass grave exhumations being carried out as archaeological digs instead of as part of criminal investigations and monument practices, which do not imply the restitution of honour. These three points feed into a fundamental principle that lends monument practices the characteristic of a sign, where the substitutive image act performed through the sepulchral gesture calls into question the solemn and honourable image of the bodies.

MONUMENT PRACTICES IN THE BATTLE FOR A SENSE OF THE PAST

Seen as a sign, it explains why the signifier produced by the sepulchral gesture in monument practice is in dispute. Therefore, monument practice can be interpreted as a social action based on a meaningful gesture from which a material form is derived. This gesture seeks to influence society by creating a kind of writing where history is told in which idealized characters are constructed by a community of the defeated in their search for honour. Other social actors have other interests with respect to the sign of the grave and the possibilities of the new signs that replace it within the framework of monument practices and their substitutive image acts.

¹⁵ Fukuyama, 42.

The sign represented by the mass graves was necessarily associated with the strategy of terror. To that extreme violence which Emilio Mola referred to as “exemplary punishments [...] to strangle the movements of rebellion or strikes”¹⁶ with the creation of an “atmosphere of terror” which left a “sensation of domination.”¹⁷ Therefore, the sign of the grave, unaltered, would continue to fulfil its social function as a repressive strategy that condemned the murdered to oblivion on the one hand, and subjected the living to a situation of control. When during the Dictatorship it was not possible to openly perform monument practices around mass graves, it was also preventing the mass grave from becoming something else. This sign associated with terror was then subverted by those who began to lay flowers clandestinely or in acts of resistance. The “Pact of Silence” of the Transition, which meant that the major political forces at State level avoided dealing with the question of repression and developing policies of memory, also perpetuated the sign represented by the mass grave exactly as it had been inherited from the War and the post-War period. The mass grave continued to be a device that functioned as an “exemplary punishment” and that reproduced the sensation of “domination” even after the Transition. It is therefore at that time that families, communities, and activists, even against the prevailing tide of their parties, took matters into their own hands and began to develop monument practices in a context of violence during the seventies and eighties.

The stories collected in the first part about threats, aggression and attacks were all examples of the strategy of exercising violence directly against those who sought to alter the meaning of the mass grave by replacing the previous image with a new one through monument practices as a meaningful gesture. The bodies of the murdered were thus in dispute as part of the creation of a new reading of the past, a reading that had to be written through the sepulchral gesture. Therefore, when decades later, post- 2000, a new wave of exhumations and monument practices took place, the insistence on the right to a “dignified burial” without “politicizing” only

¹⁶ Paul Preston, “Franco y la represión: la venganza del justiciero” in *Norísima. II Congreso Internacional de Historia de Nuestro Tiempo*, ed. Carlos Navajas Zubeldia, Diego Iturriaga Barco (Logroño: Universidad de La Rioja, 2010), 59.

¹⁷ Julián Casanova Ruiz, *República y Guerra Civil* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2007), 199.

reinforced the policy of employing the sign of the mass grave as a tool of repression and an exemplary punishment. This policy came out explicitly in statements by the leadership such as those by Manuel Fraga, Franco's minister for information and tourism and historic member of the PP, that the past should be left behind, or by Juan Carlos Rodríguez Ibarra, president of Extremadura for more than twenty years for the PSOE, and Santiago Carrillo, Secretary General of the PCE, when in "opposition" to "leaving the past behind" they defended the right to "Christian burial."¹⁸ More recently, liberal politicians such as Albert Rivera insisted that "If I am Prime Minister, I am committed to ensuring that relatives know where their dead are and that they have access to their families. That our dead can be buried with dignity and not according to political colours."¹⁹ This statement would later be repeated in 2021 by the Deputy Prime Minister of Spain Carmen Calvo for the PSOE when she stated in the presentation of her plan for exhumations that are not part of a criminal investigation and not linked to any monument practice that the memory of the "victims" of the Dictatorship "cannot have a political colour."²⁰

However, the dispute over the meaning of the bodies also underlies more violent acts that go beyond the simple limitation of the development of the meaningful gesture that monument practices entail in favour of maintaining mass graves without altering their social function or encouraging family burials apparently empty of meaning beyond the emotional one. In 2011, a few months after its official unveiling, the vault in the Candeleda cemetery was covered with graffiti: swastikas, Celtic crosses, and threatening writings such as "sons of bitches" or slogans like "Heil Hitler" or "Arriba España" (Up with Spain). In 2015, in Burgos, the monument at the port of La Pedraja was also vandalised with swastikas and again the slogan "Arriba

¹⁸ "Fraga y Carrillo se enfrentan por la memoria histórica en '59 segundos,'" RTVE.es, December 3, 2008, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.rtve.es/noticias/20081203/fraga-carrillo-se-enfrentan-memoria-historica-59-segundos/202275.shtml>.

¹⁹ "Si soy presidente del Gobierno me comprometo a que los familiares sepan dónde están sus muertos y a que tengan acceso a sus familiares. Que a nuestros muertos podamos enterrarlos dignamente y no en función de colores políticos" (Translated by the author). Juan José Mateo, "Rivera se compromete a apoyar las exhumaciones de la Guerra Civil," *El País*, November 18, 2015, accessed May 10, 2021, https://elpais.com/politica/2015/11/17/actualidad/1447796568_381704.html.

²⁰ "no puede tener color político" (Translated by the author). "Calvo afirma que el recuerdo de las víctimas de la dictadura 'no puede tener colour político,'" Ministerio de la Presidencia Presidencia, Relaciones con las Cortes y Memoria Democrática, April 3, 2021, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/serviciosdeprensa/notasprensa/mpresidencia14/Paginas/2021/040321-calvoplan.aspx>.

España.”²¹ On 14 April 2016, the sun rose to reveal swastikas, Celtic crosses and phalluses on the murals and sculptures of the memorial complex at La Barranca as well as the phrase “we have passed and we will pass” on the graves themselves, referring to the anti-fascist slogan of the people of Madrid, “No pasarán” (They shall not pass).²² A few months after this incident, the Republican flag painted on the portico was replaced by a red and yellow one.²³ The monument located above the Otsoportillo pit, in the Sierra de Urbasa, has on several occasions been vandalized, days before the annual remembrance service on the first Sunday in September. Red and yellow flags were painted on the monument in 2010, accompanied by the text “Ya no puede haber paz porque perdisteis la Guerra. Os voy a reventar” (There can no longer be peace because you lost the war. I’m going blow you away),²⁴ and in 2017 the coat of arms of the Spanish Falange with the threat “Aún hay sitio para más” (There is still room for more)²⁵ was written across the sculpture by José Ramón Anda. The red and yellow flag was also painted on the monument of the Sierra del Perdón in 2018.²⁶ The monument placed in Villarobledo in Albacete was also subjected to graffiti saying “Rojos no” (Reds no), as well as swastikas and the letters “SS” in 2018 and 2019.²⁷ In fact, during the summer of 2018 when the Spanish government showed its willingness to exhume Francisco Franco from the Valley of the Fallen there was also a wave of attacks on monuments in Asturias.²⁸ They could be

²¹ “Destrozan con pintadas el monumento de La Pedraja,” El Correo de Burgos, September 29, 2015, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://elcorreodeburgos.elmundo.es/articulo/provincia/destrozan-pintadas-monumento-pedraja/20150929053000202866.html>.

²² “La Barranca aparece este 14 de abril con pintadas nazis,” nuevecuatrouno, April 14, 2016, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://nuevecuatrouno.com/2016/04/14/la-barranca-aparece-este-14-de-abril-con-pintadas-nazis/>.

²³ “Vandalismo en La Barranca: pintan la bandera republicana,” Rioja2, April 3, 2019, 2, <https://www.rioja2.com/n-130534-2-vandalismo-en-la-barranca-pintan-la-bandera-republicana/>.

²⁴ “Ataque fascista al monumento de la sima Otsoportillo,” Gerinda Bai Bi, November 6, 2010, accessed May 10, 2021, <http://gerindababi.blogspot.com/2010/11/ataque-fascista-al-monumento-de-la-sima.html>.

²⁵ Iker Rioja Andueza, “Pintadas amenazantes en el monumento por las víctimas de la Guerra Civil en Otsoportillo,” eldiario.es, September 2, 2017, accessed April 13, 2020, https://www.eldiario.es/navarra/Pintadas-amenazantes-Guerra-Civil-Otsoportillo_0_682432140.html.

²⁶ “Denuncian un ataque con pintura al memorial de las víctimas franquistas de la sierra de El Perdón,” Navarra.com, April 2, 2018, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://navarra.elespanol.com/articulo/sucesos/ataque-pintura-memorial-perdon-franquista-victimas/20180204194050169059.html>.

²⁷ Carmen Bachiller, “Pintadas en el monumento a los represaliados por el franquismo en Villarrobledo: ‘Es un acto fascista,’” eldiario.es, Januray 19, 2019, accessed April 13, 2020, https://www.eldiario.es/clm/Pintadas-monumento-represaliados-franquismo-Villarrobledo_0_858814293.html.

²⁸ “Oleada de actos vandálicos contra monumentos de la Memoria Histórica,” La Voz de Asturias, November 12, 2018, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.lavozdeasturias.es/noticia/asturias/2018/11/12/oleada-actos-vandalicos-contra-monumentos-memoria-historica/00031542009089036698829.htm>.

interpreted as the iconoclastic act described by Bredekamp where, derived from the substitutive image act, the aggressor sees in the image the very body it replaces.²⁹ But whether this identification takes place or not, what they make explicit is that the monument practice has been able to produce a new meaning for the mass graves and that this sign is challenged and countered by others that seek to maintain the supremacy of the narrative of the Dictatorship over other possible writings of history by sabotaging those monument practices. But vandalism was not the only way of undercutting the new meaning that the mass graves adopted through monument practice.

Mass graves are seen as “inconvenient” for the land development. This was the conflict that arose in places such as Castuera, where Antonio López Rodríguez explained to me how they had to fight against the town council to protect the remains of the concentration camp and the mass graves adjacent to it, as the construction of a solar panel plant was planned on the site. The local association was accused of trying to inhibit the town’s progress by protesting against the possibility of destroying the remains of the concentration camp in general and in particular the mass graves. Also in La Pedraja, the graves were exhumed because of the construction of a wind farm, just as, in Estepar, the graves were scheduled for removal because of the construction of the high-speed train tracks. But the fact is that the archaeologist Juan Montero reports through the oral testimonies of residents of the towns of Estépar and Villagutiérrez, as well as former builders who worked on the construction of the Burgos-Valladolid motorway, that other graves were destroyed, first due to the excavation of sand for the construction of houses in the sixties and then during the construction of the motorway in the eighties.³⁰ In places such as Malaga, the Cemetery of San Rafael was to disappear in favour of the new urban planning for that area. In these cases, the mass graves are regarded as obstacles to the development of economic projects, where the sign represented by the mass graves is not even relevant in a context of the reproduction of capital. On this topic, the forensic expert Francisco Etxeberria announced in 2015:

²⁹ Bredekamp, *Image Acts a Systematic Approach to Visual Agency*, 167-86.

³⁰ Juan Montero, email, March 19, 2021.

The graves have been completely neglected in Spain, electricity pylons have been placed in the roadside ditches and graves have been blown up exposing the contempt of the left-wing councillor, whom we may have voted for, but who didn't give a damn about the issue. Same with the widening of a road or the construction of an industrial area. But most of the mass graves on the outskirts of the villages have been destroyed as a result of the growth of those villages. There are mass graves under the motorway. There are places with ditches like this one [Loiti, Navarre], where if you take your time and you delay for a few days, this happens. Because they have built a motorway over them. Now go and look for the pit. And this has been scorned by the town councils, by the councillors and everyone. In places like this one [Azkoitia, Gipuzkoa] we removed more than 5 metres of rubbish, because this was the rubbish dump. It became a rubbish dump, and when they told us that there were some burial sites there, we didn't believe it. We removed the rubbish from the town and there they were...³¹

Finally, there are other destructions of mass graves in the framework of the exhumations as described in the second part. Those represent an aggression against many monuments too, monuments that were the result of practices developed during the Dictatorship and in the seventies and eighties, such as the mass graves of Valladolid, Paterna or Guadalajara. There, forensic anthropologists, and archaeologists destroyed the structures that gave the mass graves a significance beyond that associated with terror. They destroyed them to access the bodies, remove them from the grave and take them to the laboratory for possible identification. The success of this endeavour was negligible in places like Valladolid and only partial in places like Paterna or Guadalajara. Thus, the fact that certain actors who support exhumations through the “forensic turn” therefore try to make use of the bodies for their identification and eventual return to the relatives, means that although the sign of the grave is altered, its social function remains unchanged. It continues to function as a terror device. And so, by not producing a new sign this type of action has been interpreted by activist organizations such as the Foro por la Memoria as “erasure of history.”

³¹ Francisco Etxeberria Gabilondo, “Congreso Internacional: Cuerpo, ciencia, memoria y política en las exhumaciones contemporáneas, ILLA-CSIC, 2015”, YouTube, September 23, 2015, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5hEoEDtil4>.

Arturo Peinado, president of the Federación Estatal de Foros por la Memoria, told me about the exhumations of mass graves:

*What is being done by moving human remains from one site to the other is a destruction of memory. It is an act of enormous gravity, moreover. To a certain extent it is a final victory for Francoism because you are fulfilling its aims. It is like what the Nazis did with night and fog, the Nacht und Nebel Decree. You destroy the person as a person, and at the same time you destroy their passage through humanity and through life and nobody remembers them. [...] The mass grave loses all meaning, not only the political meaning, but also the historical meaning, the meaning of remembering what happened to those people. Because these people did not die of the flu, they died for political reasons.*³²

Foro por la Memoria tries to stop mass grave exhumations being carried out as archaeological digs instead of as part of criminal investigations. They also encourage monument practices to take place and move in a political agenda that involves the vindication of the republican past. Therefore, the threat of the disappearance of the graves in the course of the exhumations makes monument practices a social action that confronts this situation “honouring” those who were murdered writing history with their bodies. Also with monument practices signs are generated that can be clearly identified by one or other political factions such as socialists, communists, republicans, anarchists, trade unionists, as well as social organizations such as Freemasonry or broad movements such as feminism. In the same way, many of the monument practices make use of languages such as Galician, Basque, Catalan, or Valencian, constructing an identity not only through the forms but also through the language used, drawing attention to a dispute over the meaning of these bodies based on regional and national agendas rather than that of the Kingdom of Spain.

At this point, the value of a monument practice does not so much lie the historiographical accuracy of the writing. Rather, it creates an arena for the dispute, a battlefield where the possibility of monopolizing the meaning of bodies underlies the different memorial and burial strategies: the prevention of monument practices and their aggressive or conscious destruction by active opposition to them. Also, the

³² Interview with Arturo Peinado in Madrid, November 5, 2019.

unconscious destruction resulting from paradigm shifts such as the economical or forensic paradigms. In addition, around the mass graves there are also different collectives, organizations and individuals with different interests and proposals for reading the grave as a sign and what new sign should result from the monument practice. This is a dynamic practice and, therefore, it is not possible to generate a definitive interpretation of the results of these “disputes,” especially as it is a living phenomenon that will continue to change in the coming years.

THE FUTURE OF MONUMENT PRACTICES

Following a petition in the parliament of La Rioja in 2018, the regional government began the procedures for the declaration of La Barranca as a “Bien de Interés Cultural” (Asset of Cultural Interest).³³ This figure is regulated by Law 16/1985, of 25 June 1985, on “Patrimonio Histórico Español” (Spanish Historical Heritage). The introduction of that Law raises the following questions:

Spanish Historical Heritage is the major witness to the historical contribution of the Spanish people to universal civilization and to their contemporary creative capability. The protection and development of the assets that comprise it represent underlying commitments that bind all public authorities, according to the directive addressed to them by article 46 of the Constitution.³⁴

It also establishes that the Assets of Cultural Interest are

Within the Spanish Historical Heritage, and in order to grant greater protection and preservation, the category of Assets of Cultural Interest acquires a particular value, which extends to the portable and permanent assets of that Heritage which, in a more obvious way, require such safeguard. Such a category also

³³ Grupo Parlamentario Socialista, “PROPOSICIÓN NO DE LEY EN PLENO relativa a que el Parlamento de La Rioja inste al Gobierno riojano a incoar y acordar designar el cementerio civil-memorial ‘La Barranca’ como Bien de Interés Cultural (BIC)” Parlamento de La Rioja, July 9, 2018, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.parlamento-larioja.org/conoce-el-parlamento/legislaturas-anteriores/legislatura-9/iniciativas/pnlp/9l-pnlp-0339>.

³⁴ “El Patrimonio Histórico Español es el principal testigo de la contribución histórica de los españoles a la civilización universal y de su capacidad creativa contemporánea. La protección y el enriquecimiento de los bienes que lo integran constituyen obligaciones fundamentales que vinculan a todos los poderes públicos, según el mandato que a los mismo dirige el artículo 46 de la norma constitucional.” (Translated by the author). Jefatura del Estado, “Ley 16/1985, de 25 de junio, del Patrimonio Histórico Español. “BOE” Núm. 155, de 29 de Junio de 1985, Páginas 20342 a 20352 (11 Págs.),” BOE, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-1985-12534>.

implies particular measures that the Law establishes according to the nature of the assets.

The Law also provides the necessary formulas to make this valuation possible, since the defence of the Historical Heritage of a people should not be carried out exclusively through protocols that forbid certain actions or limit certain uses, but through requirements that stimulate its preservation and, consequently, allow its enjoyment and facilitate its enhancement.³⁵

The fact that in 2018 the regional Parliament suggested naming the site an “Asset of Cultural Interest” might lead one to question whether this “historical contribution of the Spaniards to universal civilisation and their contemporary creative capacity” should be based on mass murder. On the contrary, it is understood that La Barranca as a testimony to the repression would not be the Asset of Cultural Interest, but rather the will of the survivors to continue to develop autonomously, against the will of the State, a particular conversion of the meaning of the grave. The material result of the sepulchral gesture therefore becomes the object that is designated as a heritage site by the authorities. The situation of La Barranca is exceptional, but it speaks of a notable fact in relation to a practice that began with the subversive act of the “women in black” in the immediate post-War period who continued to bring flowers to the mass graves. This practice led to the building of monument over the graves, where they carry out remembrance services and school visits, which are accompanied by educational materials produced by the La Barranca association itself.

This principle of incorporating this particular heritage into the State system has been under debate since 2020, when successive preliminary drafts of a new Law on “Democratic Memory” were published by the Spanish government. In the latest

³⁵ “En el seno del Patrimonio Histórico Español, y al objeto de otorgar una mayor protección y tutela, adquiere un valor singular la categoría de Bienes de Interés Cultural, que se extiende a los muebles e inmuebles de aquel Patrimonio que, de forma más palmaria, requieran tal protección. Semejante categoría implica medidas asimismo singulares que la Ley establece según la naturaleza de los bienes sobre los cuales recae. / La Ley dispone también las fórmulas necesarias para que esa valoración sea posible, pues la defensa del Patrimonio Histórico de un pueblo no debe realizarse exclusivamente a través de normas que prohíban determinadas acciones o limiten ciertos usos, sino a partir de disposiciones que estimulen a su conservación y, en consecuencia, permitan su disfrute y faciliten su acrecentamiento.” (Translated by the author). Jefatura del Estado, “Ley 16/1985, de 25 de Junio, del Patrimonio Histórico Español. “BOE” Núm. 155, de 29 de Junio de 1985, Páginas 20342 a 20352 (11 Págs.),” BOE, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-1985-12534>.

of these, it raises the possibility of recognizing “Lugares de Memoria Democrática” (Places of Democratic Memory):

A Place of Democratic Memory is that space, building, site or intangible piece of cultural heritage in which events of singular relevance have taken place or taken shape due to their historical or symbolic significance or their repercussion on the collective memory, linked to democratic memory, the struggle of Spanish citizens for their rights and freedoms, women's memories, as well as the repression and violence against the population as a consequence of the resistance to the coup d'état of July 1936, the War, the Dictatorship, the exile and the struggle for the recovery and deepening of democratic values.³⁶

This category that was quickly adopted by various civil organizations as it could be attributed to the graves where they carried out their monument practices. A category that paradoxically was made public at the same time as a new plan was announced for mass grave exhumations being carried out as archaeological digs instead of as part of criminal investigations, this time without the need for the involvement of relatives, which, according to sources in the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces, would be aimed at ensuring that, despite there being no family will to exhume, town councils could destroy monuments to sell the space occupied by the graves under them in the cemeteries.³⁷ This situation, whereby mass graves with the associated monument practices can be appropriated by the Spanish government or freely destroyed by town councils in order to speculate with the land, opens up a new field of dispute for the future over the character of the sign of the grave.

³⁶ “Lugar de Memoria Democrática es aquel espacio, inmueble, paraje o patrimonio cultural inmaterial o intangible en el que se han desarrollado o plasmado hechos de singular relevancia por su significación histórica, simbólica o por su repercusión en la memoria colectiva, vinculados a la memoria democrática, la lucha de la ciudadanía española por sus derechos y libertades, la memoria de las mujeres, así como con la represión y violencia sobre la población como consecuencia de la resistencia al golpe de Estado de julio de 1936, la Guerra, la Dictadura, el exilio y la lucha por la recuperación y profundización de los valores democráticos.” (Translated by the author). “MPR. 11/11/2020. Anteproyecto de Ley de Memoria Democrática,” Ministerio de la Presidencia, Relaciones con las Cortes y Memoria Democrática, November 11, 2020, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.mpr.gob.es/servicios/participacion/audienciapublica/Paginas/VSGT2020/apl-memoria-democratica.aspx>.

³⁷ “El Gobierno ha concedido ayudas para 114 proyectos de exhumación de fosas,” Ministerio de la Presidencia Presidencia, Relaciones con las Cortes y Memoria Democrática, April 3, 2021, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.mpr.gob.es/memoriademocratica/notas-informativas/Paginas/2021/ayudas-proyectos-exhumacion-fosas.aspx>.

This tension becomes obvious in the fact that the 2020 Law proposal aroused some scepticism in certain organizations, as it implied a specific reading of the mass grave sign by the Spanish government. This reading not only involved a category attributed to the site but also the proposal of a national day for commemorations: 31 October, as “a day of remembrance and homage to all the victims, the date on which the Spanish Constitution was approved in 1978 by the Cortes in plenary sessions of the Congress of Deputies and the Senate.” However, this desire for communion between the republican memory and that of the Transition from Dictatorship to parliamentary monarchy was not well received, despite the fact that mass graves that had been the object of monument practices for decades could now be recognised by the State as “Lugares de Memoria Democrática.” For this reason, a total of 95 associations reacted to the government’s proposed law by organizing the “Encuentro Estatal de Colectivos de Memoria Histórica y de Víctimas del Franquismo” (State Meeting of Historical Memory and Victims of Francoism Collectives). Most of the associations that have developed monument practices around mass graves throughout the country and from a wide range of political spectrums participate in these meetings. They have been meeting regularly since the end of November and have published several articles. As well as criticisms of the reading of the commemoration day itself, for not having any symbolic meaning for the “victims,” expressing their disconnection with the monarchic constitutional agenda, those involved identified a need to condemn the Dictatorship in the terms established by the United Nations, to apply the definition of “victims” based on International Law, to officially overturn the repressive sentences, and to enforce effective judicial protection for the exhumation processes and the criminal prosecution of the criminals.³⁸ These demands were later included in a manifesto calling for “a law that puts an end to the silence, oblivion and impunity for so many crimes of that genocidal dictatorship.”³⁹

³⁸ Encuentro Estatal de la Memoria, “Propuestas del V Encuentro Estatal de la Memoria al Anteproyecto de Ley de Memoria Histórica,” Foro por la Memoria, September 12, 2020, accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.foroporlamemoria.info/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/CONCLUSIONES-V-ENCUENTRO-10-24-OCTUBRE-2020-def.pdf>.

³⁹ “una ley que ponga fin al silencio, olvido e impunidad sobre tanto crimen de aquella genocida Dictadura.” (Translated by the author). Encuentro Estatal de la Memoria, “Manifiesto por una Ley de Memoria que ponga fin a la impunidad del Franquismo,” Encuentro por la Memoria, March 26, 2021, accessed May 10, 2021,

After decades of developing monument practices autonomously at local and regional level, the late arrival of the Spanish government to the development of monument practices around mass graves provoked such strong reactions precisely because this implied a desire to re-signify the sign of the mass grave and the meaningful gesture that the monument practices entailed and to encourage their disappearance through mass grave exhumations being carried out as archaeological digs and without a monument practice linked to the final destination of the bodies. Two circumstances may result from this: on the one hand, the non-adherence of the collectives involved in the demand to the reading of the history that they wrote through their monument practices. On the other hand, the agency that the graves themselves have after having been the object of monument practices, which may be uncomfortable for the political agenda of the Spanish government.

From the monument practices around the mass graves flows that duty to act what Certeau indicated, which does not go beyond the simple recognition of “dignity.” There is a desire for “honour” on the part of the communities, as Patterson suggested when analysing the dialectic of master and slave. The “honour” snatched away and longed for by this lost community. Thus, there is a progressive consciousness and manifestation of this awareness in the space in order to influence the society in which they are inscribed by their monument practice. It is not simply a subjective phenomenon, but something that goes beyond the mind, as Casey suggested, to become social action in Weber’s terms. Therefore, when activists, and relatives pointed out that the future of memory policies was uncertain if governmental institutions were not involved, given the advancing age of the relatives and the lack of generational transmission of memory. Although, the involvement of governmental institutions can also generate suspicions on the part of civil society. It may even generate the feeling of interference in the competences of the different administrations, as it was with the governments of Andalusia, the Basque Country, Catalonia, and Navarre who, faced with the inaction of the Spanish government in past decades, decided to develop monument practices. This whole situation would

therefore speak of how the monument practices around the mass graves, as meaningful gestures, will continue to be in dispute in the future, and how the resulting signs will also be the object of conflict in the face of the possibility of generating a narrative monopolized by a single social agent.

Moreover, if exhumations continue and monument practices are not carried out to contain the exhumed bodies as proposed in the draft bill, the sign of the grave could disappear. Such a disappearance resulting from the current model of exhumations will not leave an opportunity for a monument make use of the bodies as a substitutive image act to produce a new image and thus a new meaning. Also, the advance of political positions that have no interest in the continued existence of such signs could lead to stronger and more constant aggressions or to the destruction of the structures that house the exhumed bodies, causing them to be thrown into ossuaries, as has been happening for decades. Finally, the appearance of new groups and collectives that continue to develop monument practices outside of governmental structures, and the commitment of the official institutions to establishing policies of support for monument practices, speaks of how they can continue to grow and increase in the future, perhaps integrated into the State.

In conclusion, it is worth considering that monument practices, understood as that social action which, through a meaningful gesture, replaced the grave with a new image that dictated what to do with respect to the future, can have an impact on present-day society. Undoubtedly, for decades, associations, unions, political parties, and relatives have connected their acts of remembrance through monument practices. To recognise to what extent they have influenced not just subjective but also objective conditions in society would be difficult to determine. Nevertheless, the fact that through monument practice a change in the symbolic order of death has taken place is a fact, and this will undoubtedly continue to take place in the future. In which direction, however, is something that will be answered by the resolution of each dispute over the sign of each mass grave in the landscape where there has been, is, will be or will not be a monument practice.

Conclusions

At this point, it can be overwhelming to go through such a complex history based on the traces of these monument practices around the mass graves scattered throughout the country. This history could not solely be understood chronologically, but also had to be problematized by participating in that society on the basis of a heterogeneous theoretical framework such as the monument practices themselves. I have tried to define these practices working from the hypothesis that the monument practices around mass graves derive from a process of consciousness in which memory is communicated in a meaningful gesture limited by the material reality that integrates the bodies in the construction of a new image with which they seek to influence society

Practices that I interpreted as the result of a cultural logic that hails from antiquity but has become its own particular sign, characteristic of mass graves. These signs derive from these gestures of burial, through which the history has been written - a history in which the bodies bear witness to the meaning of the past and, despite the biomedical advances of forensic research, continue to be used in a traditional and communal paradigm, with specific political objectives. These objectives mean that these signs are in dispute, since, like all signs, there is an open struggle to monopolize their meaning. What makes these monument practices related to mass graves unique, compared to other funerary traditions,

is that the bodies themselves are used to write history and continue to influence society.

The objective I proposed for this research was to define the historical development of monument practices and the forms they had taken, to understand them in the society which they seek to influence, and to try to attribute a meaning to them as meaningful gestures that imply a consciousness in this communication of memories marked by limitations that affected them. This was an objective that I formulated based on the idea of answering the questions that guided the research: How did the production of monument practices evolve over time and what forms did monuments take? How were monument practices inserted into the society they sought to influence? What could be the significance of this communication of memory through monument practices in the process of creating consciousness? These questions were formulated by covering a blind spot in the studies dedicated to the memory of the War and the Dictatorship since 1936. Leaving aside the academic literature on the history of the period itself, most of the studies dealing with the production of memory had a special emphasis on the processes of exhumations and their social impact. What in this research I have called “monument practices” were studied outside of art history and with an eminently regional focus in the works of Javier Giráldez in Andalusia, Conxita Mir in Catalonia, Jesús Alonso in Esukadi, Jesús Aguirre in La Rioja, John Thompson in Galicia, or local ones such as those of Ricard Conesa in Barcelona, Francisco Ferrández in Aranda de Duero and Vicent Gabarda in Paterna. For this reason, it was necessary to look at monument practices from a perspective that broadly encompassed the entire country where they had been produced. At the same time, it was also necessary to carry out an analysis that would shed light on the history of art, which had historically ignored this type of practice and an essential part of the material culture of the recent past and the contemporary period.

I therefore focused on the whole country and shifted the object of study from the “works of art” that enjoy such status to other types of cultural

practices and artefacts. Consequently, it was necessary for me to opt for an interdisciplinary methodology, and I incorporated concepts ranging from Weber's notion of Verstehen to Panofsky's iconology, in order not only to describe but also interpret the meaning of monument practices and identify the significant context. It is at this point that the interdisciplinary notion that factual and expressive meanings could be interpreted using ethnographic techniques or qualitative methodology - and not so much through the means used in the classical study of signs from scholarship - made sense. The focus of this research methodology was an interdisciplinary study of verbal and visual media, which represents a novelty in the field of study of the memory of the War and the Dictatorship. But despite its originality in the field, this was nothing more than the incorporation of ways of working from critical iconologies or *Bildwissenschaft*. Because of the long methodological experience of these disciplines, I avoided falling into certain mistakes of the past in the field. I participated fully in the field, relating to the different agents in a horizontal way and avoided projecting the traditional ideas of the "savage" or "primitive," "ignorance," and "superstition" onto those practices of image production that do not correspond to those of the established "work of art." In this way, I avoided, as has happened in the past, resorting to explaining belief in "magic" from the "irrationality" of the "popular." In this sense, the research also presented a novel contribution at the methodological level to the field of study by introducing the same disciplinary innovations not previously applied. For this reason, I bring to the disciplinary level an experience in which a monument practice that comes from the communities and that does not correspond to the traditional concept of "work of art" can have the same status in the construction of an artistic historical narrative as any other object of study without feeling the need to impose artistic elitist prejudices on them.

Starting from these assumptions, I based my research plan on an in-depth study of both the existing literature on the subject and the information circulating on social networks and databases of mass graves, through which I was able to recognize numerous vaguely documented monument practices.

Alongside official maps such as those of Galicia, the Basque Country, Navarre, Aragon, Catalonia, Extremadura, Valencia, Andalusia, Asturias and Ciudad Real, I found it essential to use information from networks such as Facebook, Twitter or Telegram, which is generally absent in the scientific literature. As a result of this review, I created a database of more than 600 records, which allowed me to obtain a general picture from which to recognize patterns and heterogeneities, to begin to address the questions that guided the research and to cut down the sample. I avoided generalizations, in favour of taking into account 100 localities where monument practices have taken place, to include a sample of locations from the database as diverse as possible. I visited these sites to visually document and interview the agents involved in the production of the monument practices, such as family members, activists, politicians, archaeologists, forensic experts, and local and regional authorities. In addition, whenever possible, I went as an observer or participant observer to openings, services, anniversaries, and marches organized around the mass graves. In this way, having collected information between December 2018 and March 2020, I moved on to the analysis of the data collected with the aim of answering the questions that had guided the research. From this position I finally constructed the text, formulated by answering the questions that guided the data collection and the subsequent analysis in each of its three parts respectively, answering the same questions through the three chapters that constituted each part.

In the first part, I answered the question of how the production of monuments evolved over time and what forms they took. In the first chapter, “From Violence to Resistance,” I narrated how extreme violence did not prevent stories such as the one in Candeleda, where a girl prayed an Our Father every time she passed by the mass grave, or the one in Cervera del Río Alhama where José recounted his memories of the repressive process that led to the burial of his father and his companions in the mass grave. Others opted for marking the landscape with visible forms such as stones, crosses, marks on trees, as in Villamayor de los Montes, Castillejo de Martín Viejo, Bercial de Zapardiel, Morata de Jalón, Alcaraz, Guillena, San Fernando and Cobertaleda.

These early practices also took the form of clandestine floral offerings by relatives and activists in places such as Puerto de la Pedraja and Monte de Estepar, as well as in cemeteries such as Guadalajara, Dos Hermanas and Ocaña. These actions were also carried out openly, as a gesture of resistance to authority, as the women in La Barranca had been doing since the immediate post-war period.

In the second chapter, “Recovering Bodies and Places,” I pointed out that it was in the second half of the 1970s when there was a real explosion in the number of monument practices around mass graves. These practices were prompted by the high level of social conflict, the transition of the regime after Franco’s death, the multi-party elections, and the new Constitution. These practices arose in a climate of self-management from the family, activists, and local administrations, in the face of a Spanish government and majority political formations that adhered to the “Pact of Silence.” Therefore, in a particular alliance between relatives, activists and other members of the community, the monument practices on the graves took shape in a process that began to tidy up the graves themselves in those cemeteries where they had been ignored for decades, such as in Baeza, Alcolea and Lora del Río. Structures began to be built on the grave itself, referring to notions such as “Freedom” or the reason for the struggle of those buried there. This was the case for those forms found in the cemeteries of Magallón, Ocaña, Guadalajara, Valladolid, Paterna, Talavera, Seville, Camposancos, Mancha Real, Burgos, Barcelona, Valencia, Dos Hermanas, Coín, Castellón, Salamanca and Oviedo. If the grave was located in the cemetery, some kind of construction was generally built over it, in a large variety of forms: gardens, monoliths, chain link fences, large slabs, sculptures, obelisks or pyramids, usually produced by local craftsmen. A similar operation was carried out on graves in places such as La Barranca, La Pedraja or Monte de Estepar. However, for those located outside the cemeteries, the most common method was the exhumation of the bodies and their burial in structures inside the cemeteries, as was the experience in numerous

municipalities in La Rioja, Navarre, and some in Extremadura, although it also occurred inside cemeteries in Valdepeñas, Aranjuez and La Carolina.

In the third chapter, “Building Monuments in times of ‘Historical Memory’,” I observed how these monument practices, which involved exhumations, gave way to a new wave of interventions after the year 2000. While during the 1970s and 1980s the most widespread practice was to intervene on the mass grave, and not to exhume, the ultra-media visibility of the Priaranza del Bierzo exhumation led to a multitude of exhumations that nevertheless ended up with the bodies being reinterred in structures within the framework of a monument practice. These were the experiences of places such as Villamayor de los Montes, Estepar, Mérida, Puebla de Alcocer, Paterna de Rivera, Fonsagrada and Guillena, where small and medium-sized vaults were built which shared their function with large initiatives such as those of Aranda de Duero, Málaga, Elgoibar, Pamplona and La Fatarella. From the smallest, linked to local and family initiatives, to the latest ones, which have come about as a result of the official policies of regional governments, a line of memory policies was traced that responds to a historical trajectory rooted in local practice. Initiatives that nevertheless coincided in time and space with other forms that took place on the graves themselves, as occurred in the 1970s and 1980s. There have also been new interventions and updates of those that took place decades ago. These are the experiences reported in places such as Ocaña, La Barranca, Benavente, Colmenar Viejo or Coín, where there were renewals of existing structures, now with plaques or political references. This also included the institutional will to mark mass graves under the category of “Places of Memory” in Andalusia, Catalonia, Navarre, and Asturias.

This course allowed me to define monument practices as a process that takes place over several decades and that does not occur in isolation, but on the contrary, is part of a complex society immersed in ideological debates and material constraints that affect in the possibilities of materialization, whether on the grave or after exhumation. I have thus defined the process of production of monument practices in its historical development in three major stages,

described in each of the three chapters of the first part. The first stage was during the Dictatorship, when the first tributes and offerings began to appear despite the repression; the second during the Transition and the following years, when there was an explosion of interventions on the graves themselves or after their exhumation for the development of monument practices that had to negotiate with the threat of violence and political consensus; and, finally, the period beginning in 2000, when the notion of “Historical Memory” entered the political agenda with the “forensic turn” and the concepts of “dignity” and “victim”, producing hundreds of practices on the graves and after the exhumations, which made heterogeneous use of forms.

In the second part, I went on to answer the question of how monument practices were inserted into the society they sought to influence. Thus, I paid attention to various aspects that problematized monument practices socially, with greater emphasis on the observation and participation through ethnographic techniques of the events that take place around the graves. Thus, in the fourth chapter, “A Public yet Private Space,” I started from the social construction of mourning around mass graves. This is a process that arises from the feeling of family loss, which in these particular experiences is linked to the failure to achieve political goals. The calendar of rites and the formats of the ceremonies speak of an affective bonding of the attendees, but also of their adherence to abstract ideals and specific political projects. In this sense, I suggest that the monument practices are producing constructions of political identity based on defeat. This includes unionists, republicans, socialists, anarchists and communists, Freemasons, and feminists, or those who fight for regional and national identities other than those of Spanish centralism, such as Galician, Andalusian, Valencian, Catalan or Basque. From this defeat I also extrapolate a fundamental spatial aspect to understanding monument practices in relation to urbanity. The very location of the mass graves has conditioned monument practices, generally relegating them to the less visible parts of the cemeteries or to places hidden in hills and ditches. As a result, the most common types of services and local memory policies served to connect the

mass grave to the central urban area, through memorial marches, maps, networks, and other initiatives that connect the dots between the vindication and the symbolic construction of public space.

In “Forensic Turning Points,” the fifth chapter, I explained how these experiences that take place around monument practices are also brought to the forefront by the irruption of the scientific paradigm. I see the “forensic turn” as the arrival of the possibility of carrying out exhumations using scientific protocols with the aim of identifying the corpses of those who were buried in mass graves, at the same time as the popularization of the rhetoric of “Human Rights” and “Dignity.” However, I identified that this situation is associated with an individualistic dynamic as well as the supremacy of the scientific paradigm over previous logics of monument practices. Experiences were presented where the physical testimonies of monument practices were being destroyed in the process of exhumations, as has happened in Guadalajara, Valladolid or Paterna.

Socially problematizing the “forensic turn” vis-à-vis monument practices highlighted how the former enjoyed an acceptability that could be imposed on the logic of monument practices. But, given the low rate of identification of exhumed bodies, this has led to the need to build structures to house the bodies. To this I devoted the sixth chapter, “The Return to the Monument.” Here, I explained monument practices as a pragmatic response to the inadequacies of the “forensic turn” through experiences of building vaults and columbaria, and a new opportunity for the production of monuments as I described in Uclés, Paterna de Rivera, Magallón, Aranda del Duero, Villamayor de los Montes, Candeleda, Salamanca, Pamplona, Elgoibar and Paterna. Also, that in some cases the problem caused by exhumations initiated within the framework of the “forensic turn” has been that, together with the non-identification of the corpses, the corpses have not even been found. In these cases I have collected experiences such as those of Santa Mariña, Cuenca, Granada, Jinámar, Mieres, Laviana, Villarobledo, Llanes, Arriondas, the Sierra del Perdón, Candás and Chiclana, where, faced with the impossibility of

producing a monument on the exact location of the grave or with the skeletal remains themselves, they produced structures to make up for this absence in the face of the dissatisfaction following the expectations generated by forensic science.

This broad perspective on the society in which monument practices are developed allowed me to define them as fundamental parts of the social construct of mourning and of a culture of defeat. Something that I have also characterized by the urban ostracism to which these practices are condemned, and the reaction this has prompted in the form of remembrance acts that are linked to monument practices. These social components, together with those of the “forensic turn” and the attendant destruction or rebuilding of monuments, allowed me to define how monument practices were inserted into the society they sought to influence: from political culture and spatiality to biomedical knowledge.

Taking into account the complexity of the long history of the production of monument practices and their positioning in a society that generates tributes, acts of mourning and at the same time confronts the popularization of scientific advances, that I was able to generate a transversal reading of the way in which monument practices on mass graves function and to answer the question about the meanings of this communication of memory through the meaningful gesture in the process of creating consciousness. This was the content of the third part, where I try to answer the question of what the significance might be of this communication of memory through meaningful gestures in the process of creating consciousness. Thus, in the seventh chapter, “Memory of the Body and Memory of Bodies,” I started from a phenomenological reading of the dialectical situation of opposition. This situation of dialectical opposition will have triggered the repressive process that shaped the consciousness of society insofar as, consciences dominated by the regime since the post-War period, memory was the fundamental component. The persistence of memory represents a necessary first step for the very existence of monument practices. It would therefore be the process of

becoming aware following the frameworks of interpretation established by Edward Casey. Turning out to be conscious of the past and their material reality as dominated that is made explicit in subjectivity itself. These would have allowed memory to be communicated in specific forms: services, commemorations, and monuments. I therefore described the different forms that monument practices could take, explaining the dynamics of placing stones, flowers, or crosses as one of the first and most basic practices that would have taken place around the mass graves, to be followed by projects such as creating a garden, fencing off the perimeter or the construction of monoliths and sculptures on the graves themselves as well as vaults and columbaria in various forms. I propose interpreting these forms as a “survival” of funerary practices that have been reproduced since antiquity following Aby Warburg’s thesis, something that was also made explicit in the fact that in this type of monument practice a “substitutive image act” is produced. This, according to Horst Bredekamp, is where bodies are replaced by images, which then become part of a whole that functions in a unified manner.

Bredekamp suggests that the form itself is devoid of meaning, but that does not mean that is used in a meaningless way. Although monument practices can be associated with a previous funerary culture, there is a specificity in their social function, and this was the aim of the eighth chapter, “Writing History through the Sepulchral Gesture.” These forms chosen for the monument practice respond to the material conditions in which remembrance is produced, while also continuing to seek to influence society, and can therefore be interpreted as social actions according to Max Weber’s definition. We are not dealing with simple reactions that respond to the logic of tradition, but, on the contrary, with monument practices we look for a specific and rational end goal, a result based on planning or an emotional response within the framework of the society in which they are inscribed. This is what turns monument practices from simple funerary forms that merely reproduce patterns passed down from antiquity into social actions that, following Valentin Voloshinov’s theory, can be interpreted as meaningful gestures so that the individual conscience from

which the memory was born is expressed socially and at the same time can be explained in society. In this way, I interpret this meaningful gesture represented by the monument practice in the context of the idea of the writing of history proposed by Paul Ricoeur and Michel de Certeau. The sepulchral gesture corresponds to the idea of the writing of history, since it not only draws on the past, but is fixed in the present in a specific form, leaving an “*aide-mémoire*” behind in the gesture of burial that the living will be able to read. The sepulchral gesture as “writing” gives a place to both the dead and the living, who establish a duty to act with respect to the murdered in the present and in the future. This is the case in the monument practices of including the names of the murdered, the dates of their murder, their places of origin, the reasons why they were shot or the ideals for which they fought and justifying them with the idea that “this should be known,” “this should never happen again.” These motivations, together with the forms, are precisely those that show the need to establish a community in relation to the murdered, which can function like those built around the image of Christ, the saints, and the martyrs: the corpses of the murdered are integrated into architectural devices in that meaningful gesture. A gesture that will write that history in which virtuous referents are created. A gesture that connects the past with the present and dictates that duty to act under certain ideal parameters. Precisely the fact that this type of strategy takes place despite the authority of the biomedical framework of the “forensic turn,” shows the resistance to popular knowledge about the body, following David Le Breton’s thesis. Those dead bodies in mass graves integrated into the monument practice, as with the saints, no longer live for themselves but for the community.

Despite the signic character of monument practice, another fact that is inseparable from any communicative process is the dispute over its meaning, which I characterize in the ninth chapter, the last chapter of the third part, “The Monument Practice in Dispute.” In this sense, a first symptom of the ideological character of monument practices underlies the gap between the forms associated with “honour” and the discourses linked to “dignity.” Thus,

mental schemas resulting from domination continue to be reproduced in those who produced the monument practices, following Orlando Patterson's approach regarding the impossibility of the master allowing the former slave to acquire the same status after having degraded him. Thus, while the forms solemnize and honour the dead, the possibilities for institutional acceptance of these practices are limited. In fact, the signifying nature of monument practices comes out in the confrontations they may cause. This was the case with those strategies employed by the broadly dominant political sectors to prevent these practices from happening, with the destruction of mass graves in the framework of development policies, or with fascist aggressions against existing ones. The fact that the "forensic turn" was not initially compatible with monument practices, and that institutions are progressively becoming more interested in the mass graves on which they want to carry out their own monument practices, also reveals other aspects of this dispute. Therefore, if in the future monument practices disappear due to disinterest, due to the advance of exhumations "without political colours," or if on the contrary they find a sustained development through local and regional initiatives or if they are institutionalized by governmental action, it will herald new pages in the history of these types of practices. But in any case, they will continue being explicitly a sign in dispute.

In this way, through this third part, I have been able to understand that this memory starts from the mind and has progressively been communicated through different forms that I interpret from the perspective of the survival of the forms of antiquity and the substitution of the previous images of the graves for new ones in this process of monument practice. It is a process defined as a social action, a sepulchral gesture and as a writing of history. A monument practice can be understood as a meaningful gesture in which a social conflict is produced by the dispute over its meaning. Therefore, I assumed that the meanings of this communication of memory as the writing of history through the meaningful gesture go hand in hand with the level of consciousness of specific communities.

Having formulated these partial conclusions through the individual parts, I can finally formulate a general conclusion about the monument practices. Monument practices began after the murders themselves, when the first marks and offerings were made on the mass graves despite the repression. They occurred on a massive scale during the Transition and the years that followed, when they took various forms on the graves themselves or after their exhumation. Again since 2000, under the notion of “Historical Memory,” new monument practices have been produced, motivated by the new wave of exhumations, practices that once again take shape around mass graves or after exhumations. A long road of practices has been sustained for decades, which were inserted in society as fundamental parts of the social construction of mourning and of a culture of defeat, condemned to urban ostracism. They were inserted in a society that also changed radically with the implementation of biomedical knowledge in the form of the “forensic turn” and the rhetoric of dignity. Society nevertheless continued to resort to the production of monument practices in the face of the limitations of forensics. Thus, these practices, which would have started in the mind, have been communicated using forms that have survived over time, and which have an explicit social meaning. Through these forms that have replaced the bodies, a writing of history has been produced based on the sepulchral gesture, with which it has sought to influence society, creating a narrative of a lost community, reminiscent of Christianity and its saints and martyrs. A narrative that, being based on the production of meaningful gestures, may well be disputed. This very particular use of bodies for the writing of history is therefore the singularity that can be recognized behind the understanding of the monument practices as a whole, a writing that does not simply refer to the murdered, but presents their corpses manifested in the chosen forms on the landscape.

The significance of monument practices for society in the future is not a task for this research, although it may perhaps influence my interpretation of it. It is up to society itself to continue to give meaning to the past, and precisely by doing so they will make explicit the anomaly of the Kingdom of Spain in the

European context as far as the production of memories is concerned, both by the communities themselves and by the authorities. This research, like any other social action, has its limits. And the limit of this one was set in 2021. What will happen to those artifacts constructed on the mass graves or with the bodies of those who have been murdered since 1936 will be another page to write in the long history of monument practices. Practices that began perhaps with a few flowers or an “Our Father” when walking along a rural path and that today are progressively institutionalized by the State. If in a few decades’ time, like Poussin’s shepherds, someone stops by a monolith to be surprised that there, in Arcadia, death was also present, it could be understood as a failure of the agency of monument practices around mass graves. Or perhaps of a success, where that monument practice has influenced society, no longer simply interpreting the past but changing the present so that Arcadia becomes that country of dreams, and thus will not only have changed the symbolic order of the dead, but also the world in which they are inscribed, the utopia with which they are associated through the epitaph:

ET IN ARCADIA EGO
MORTUUS EST PRO LIBERTATE
IN DEFENSIONEM REIPUBLICAE
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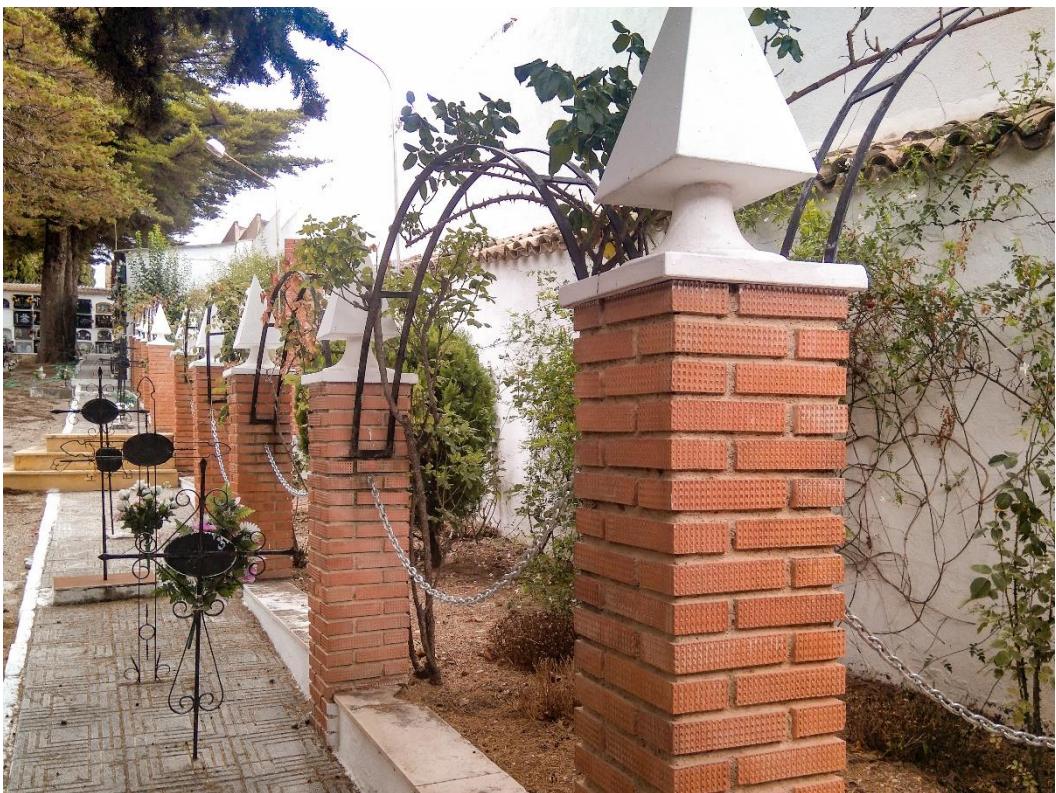


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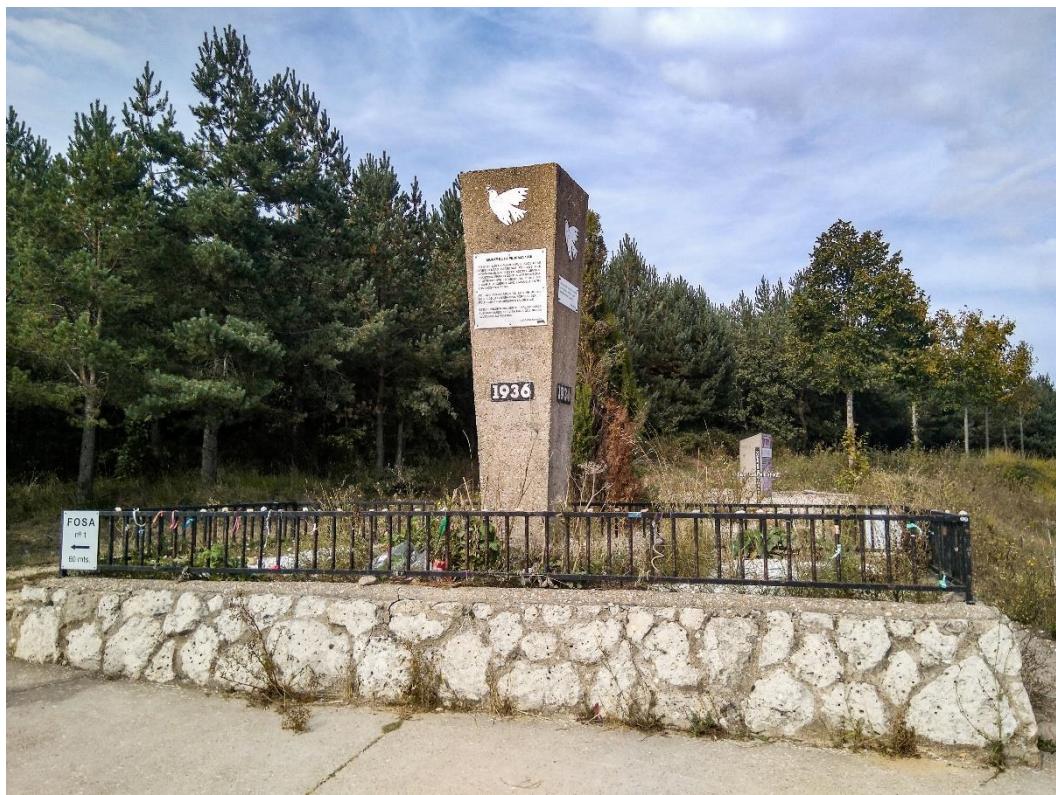


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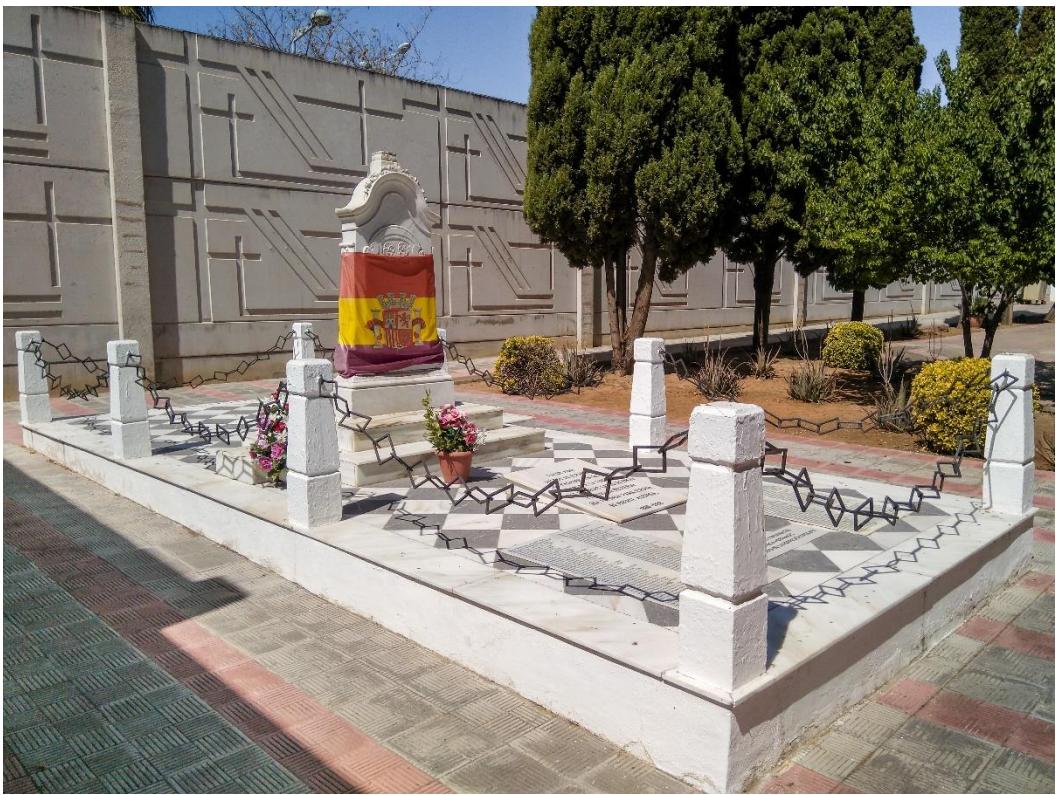


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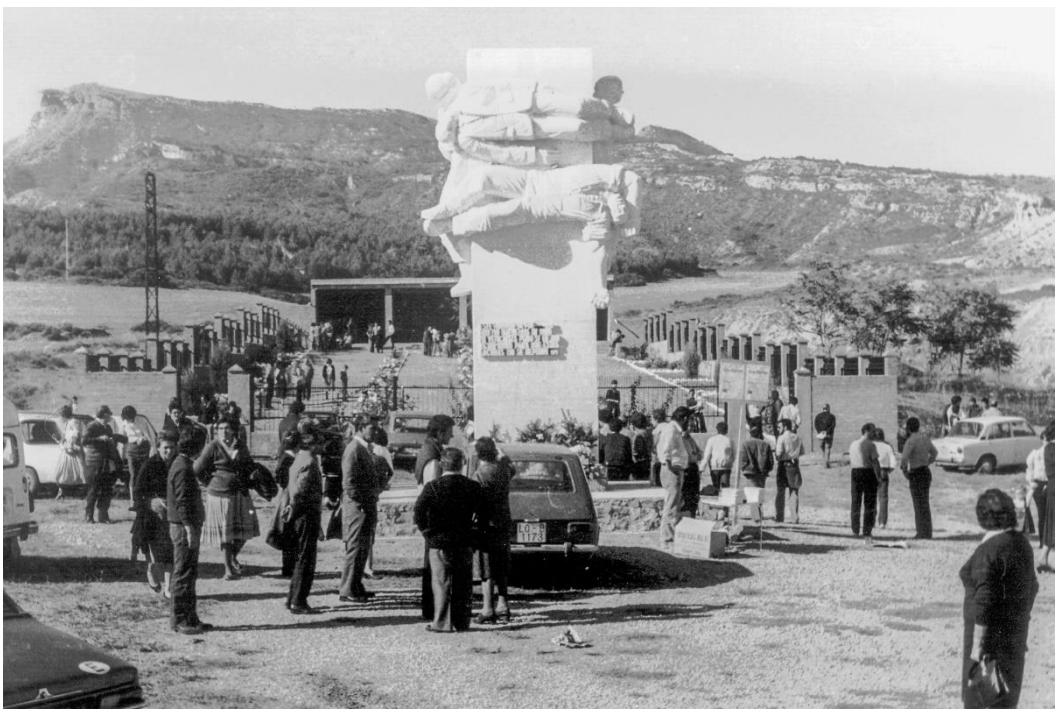


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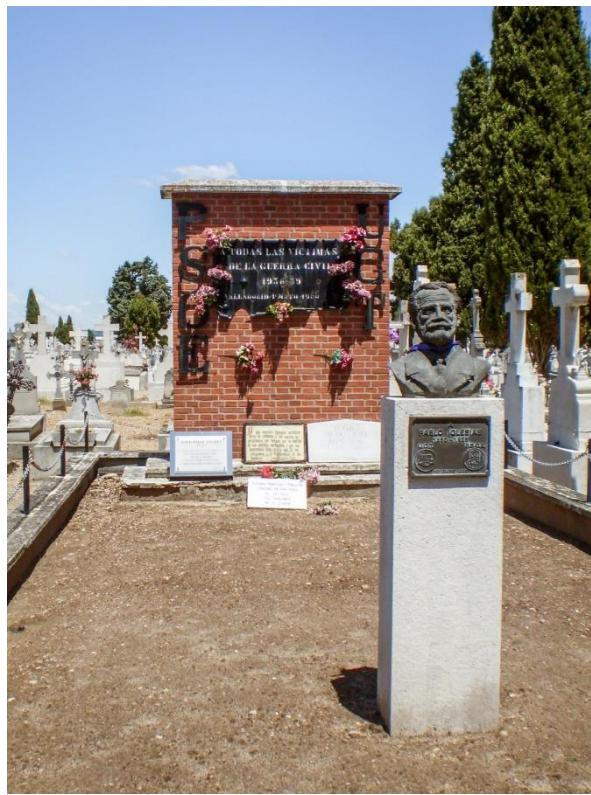


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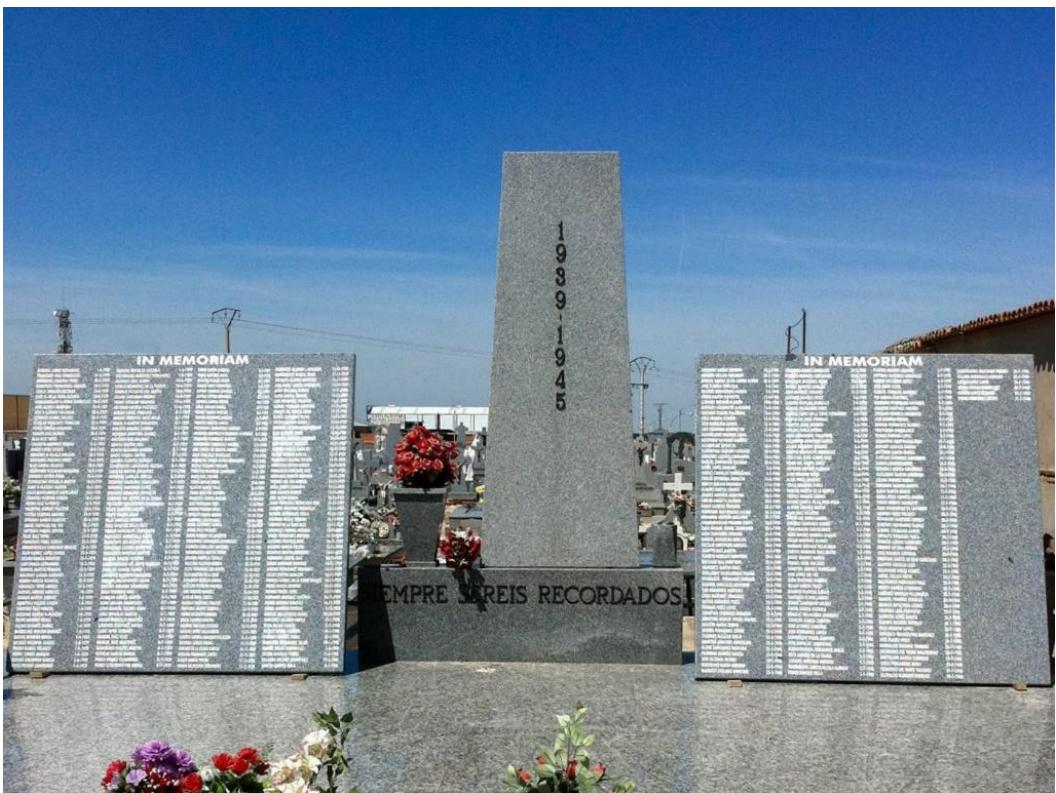


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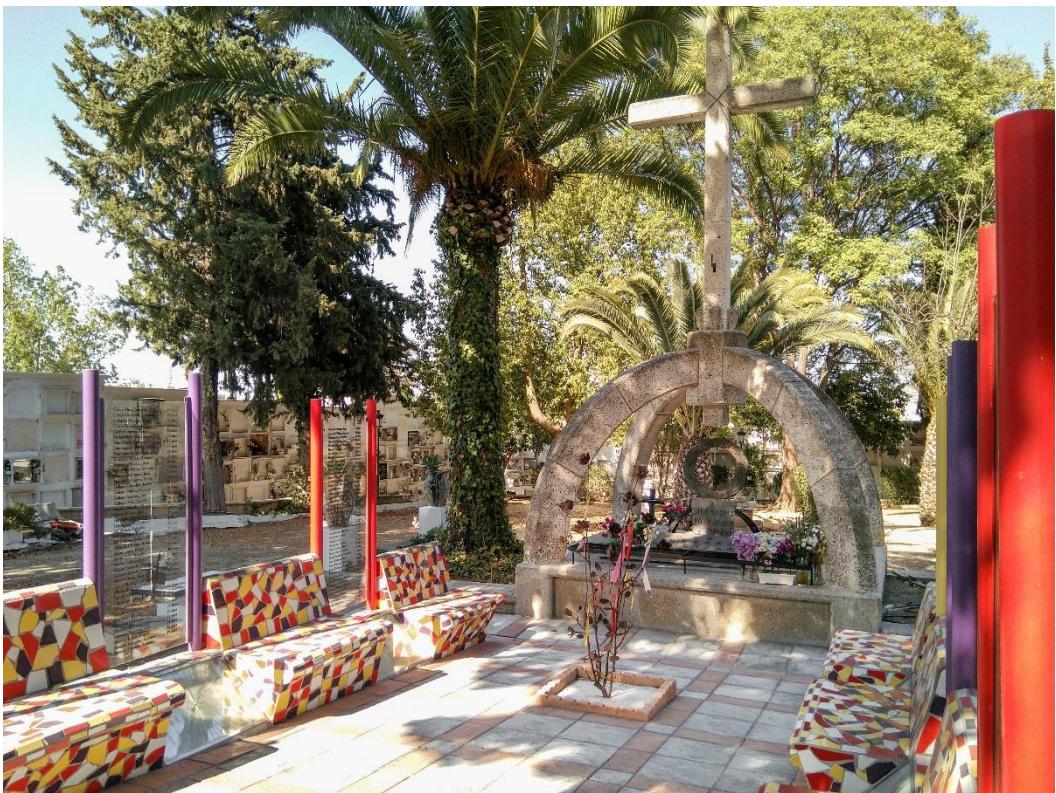


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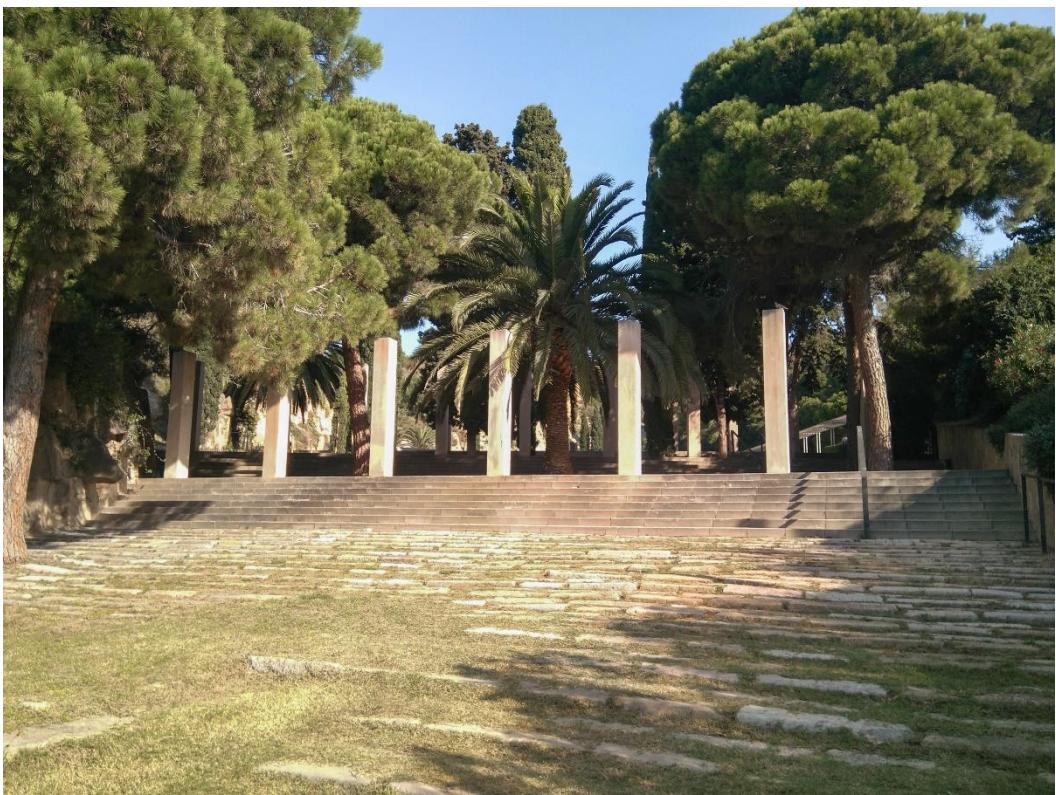


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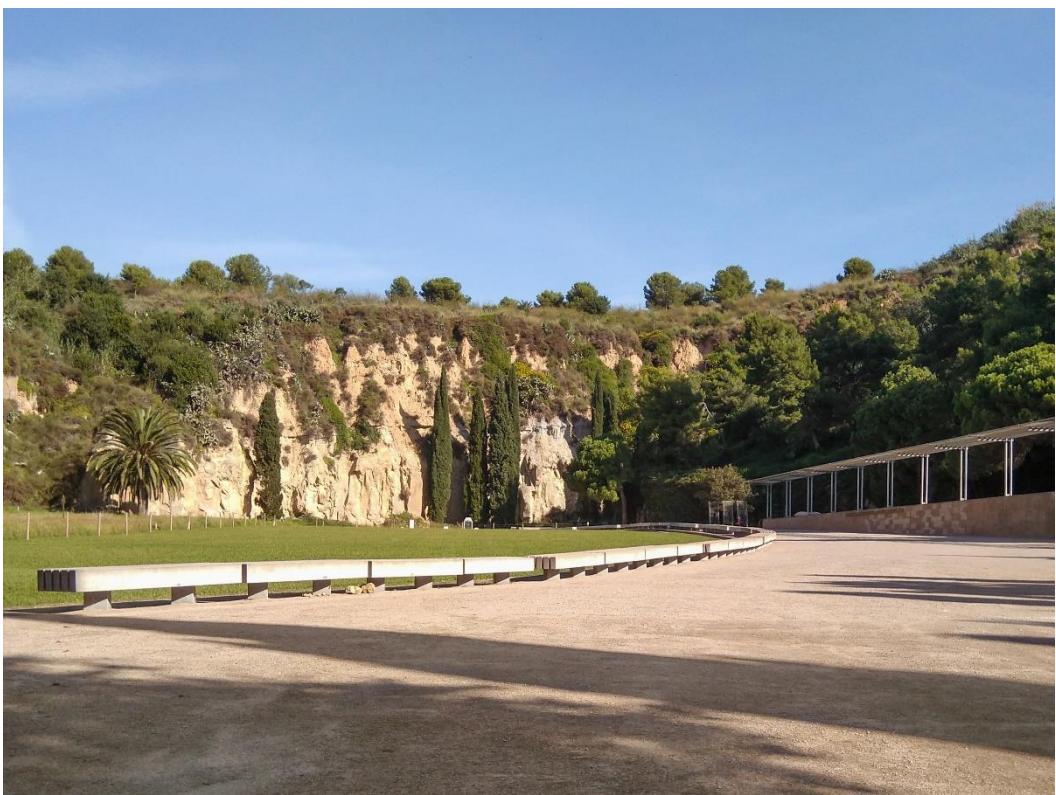


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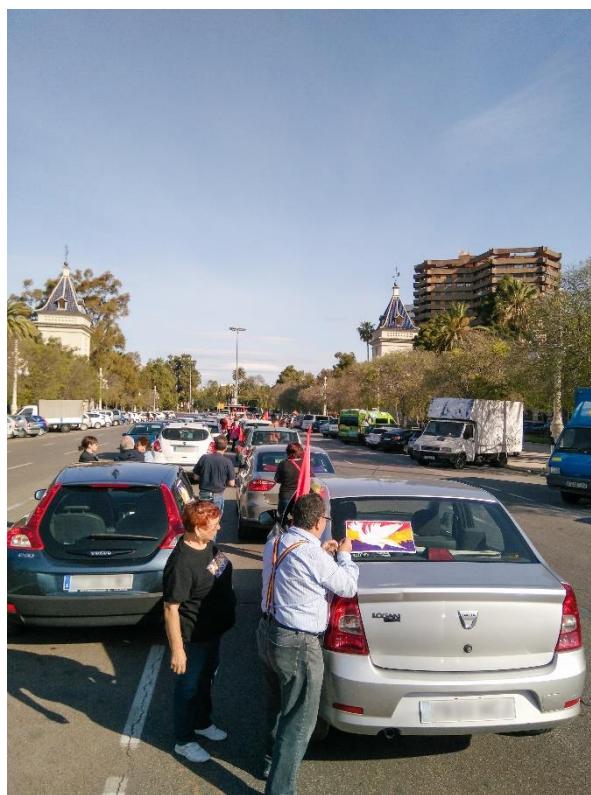


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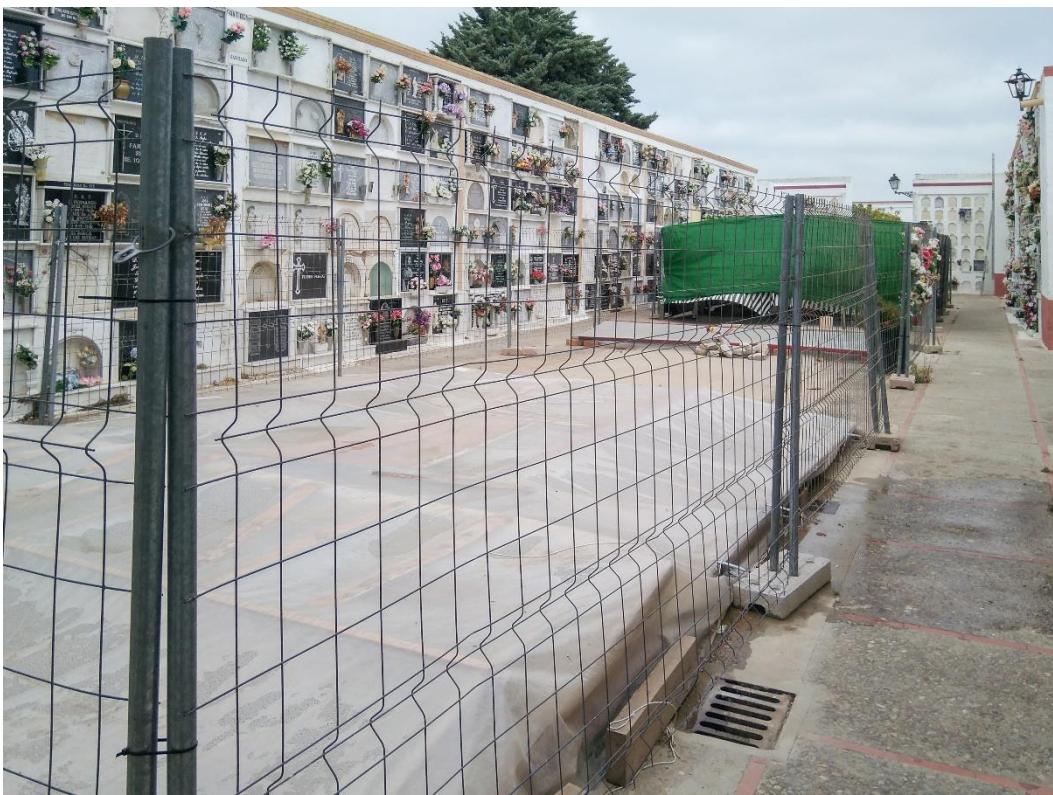


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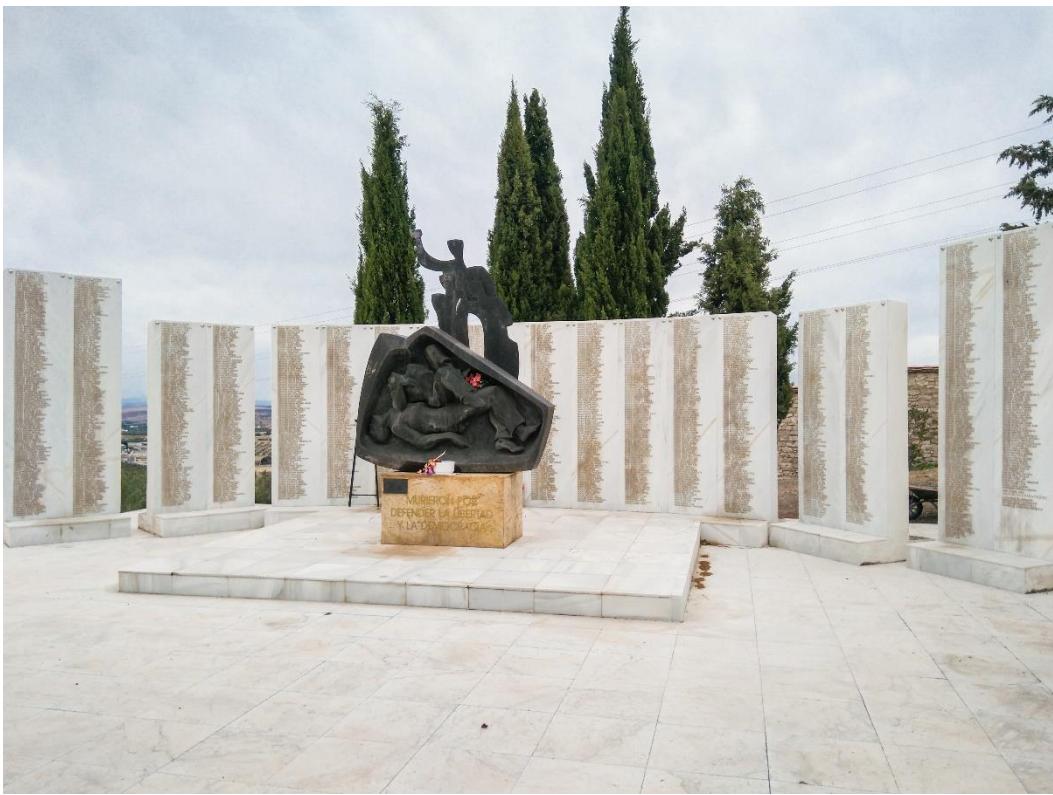


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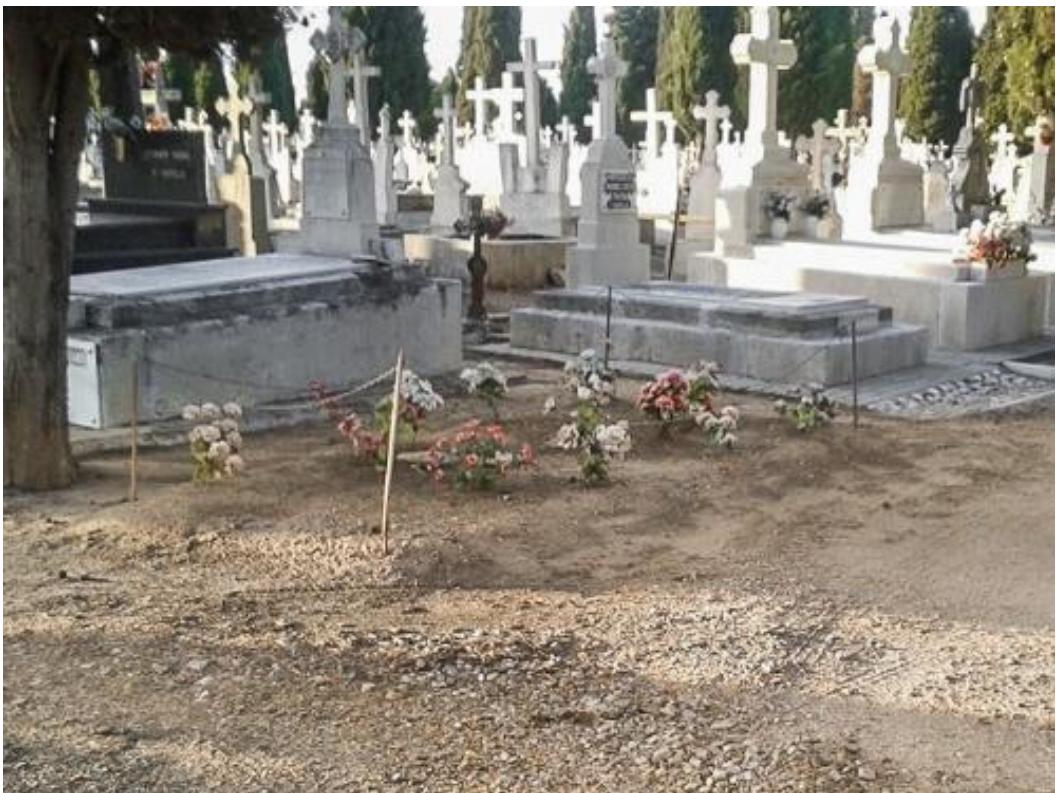


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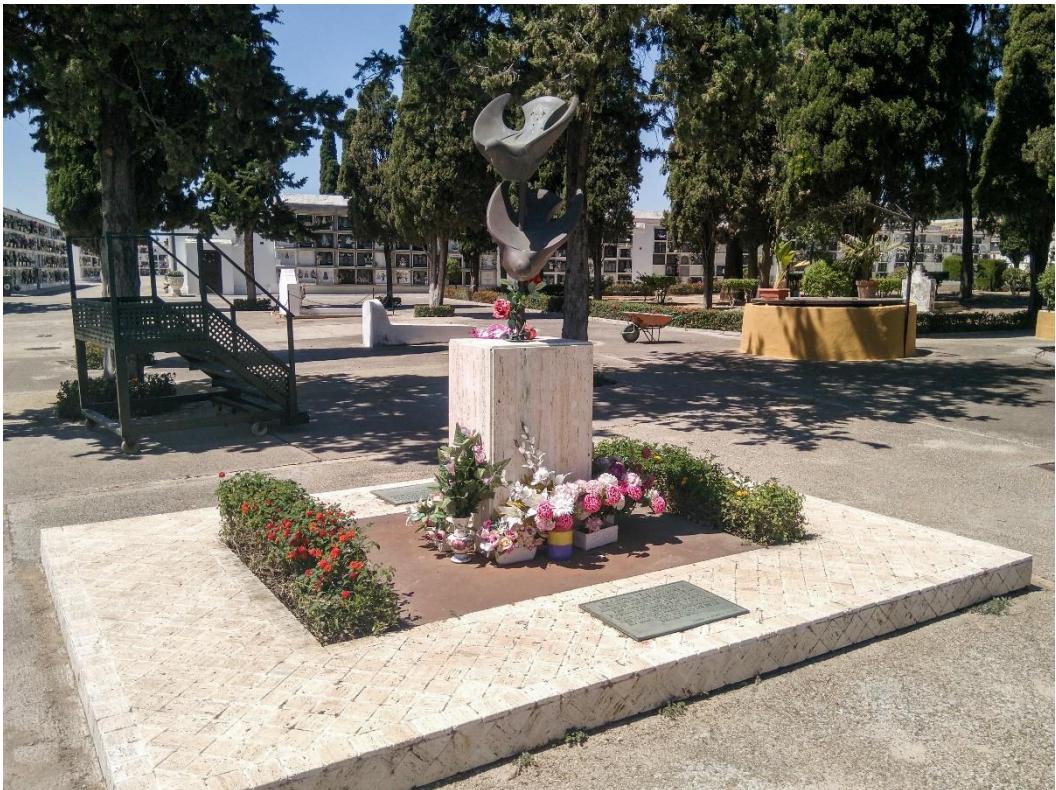


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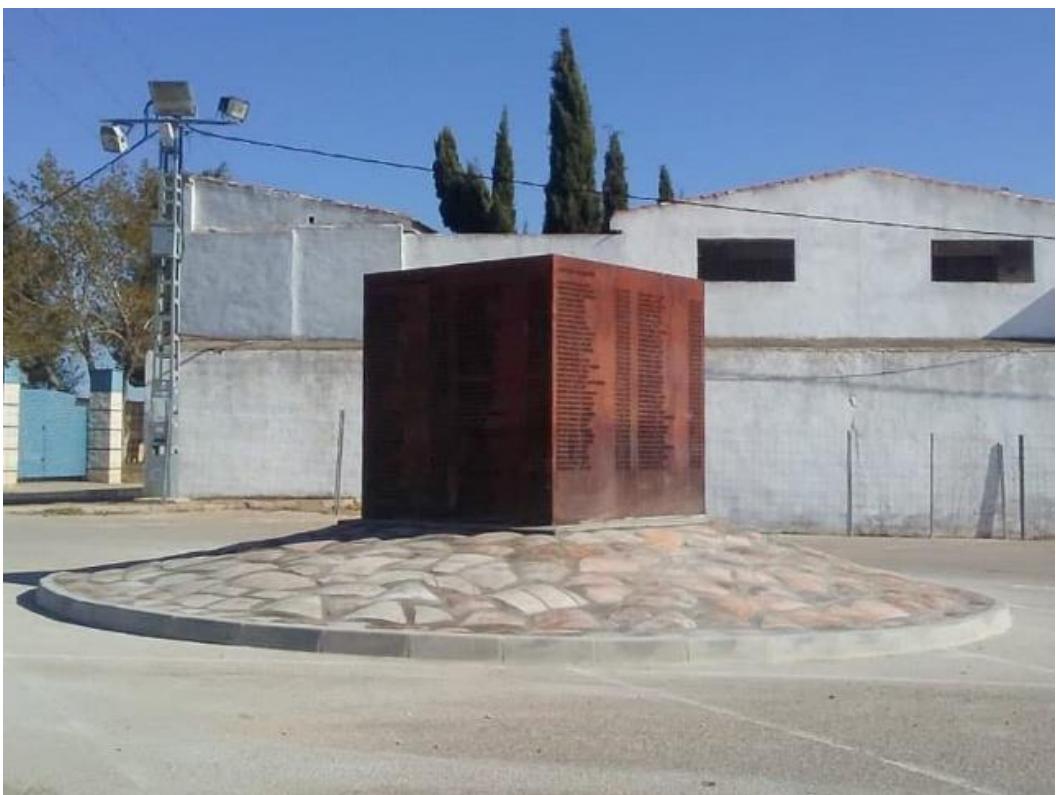


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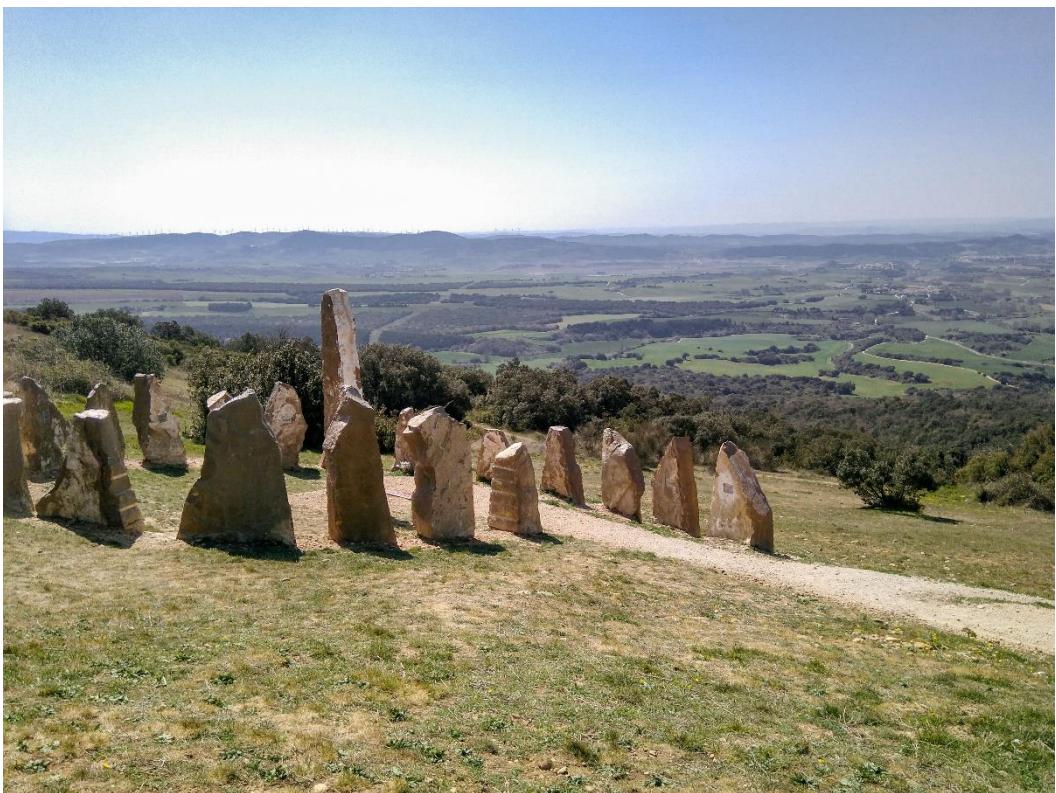


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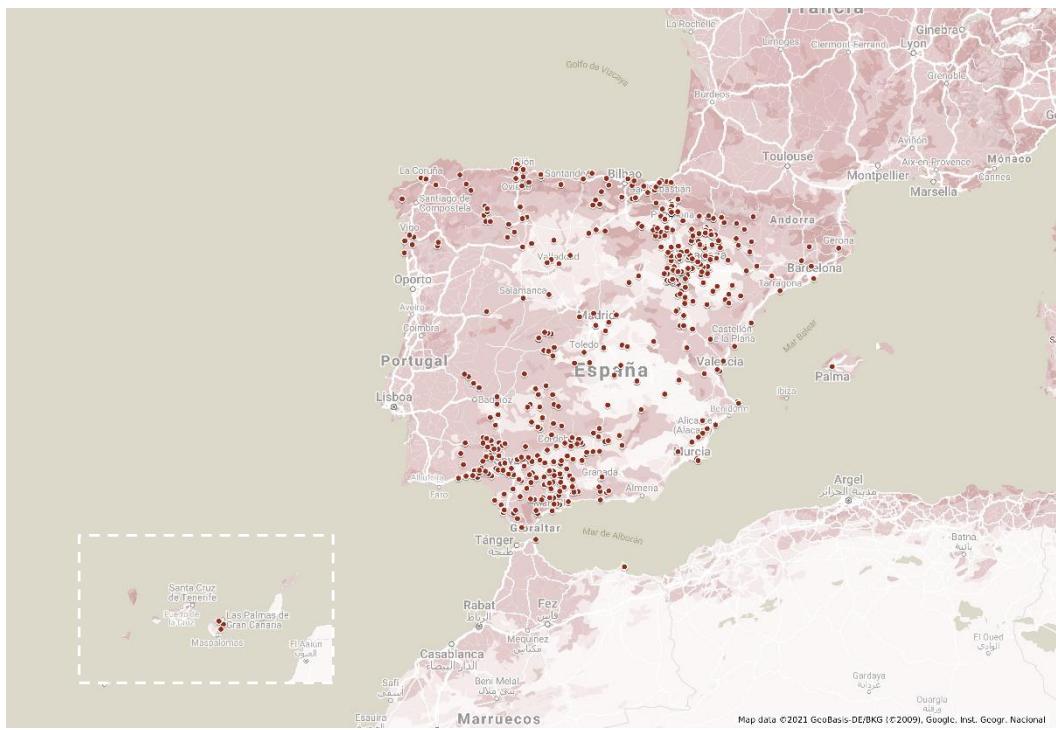


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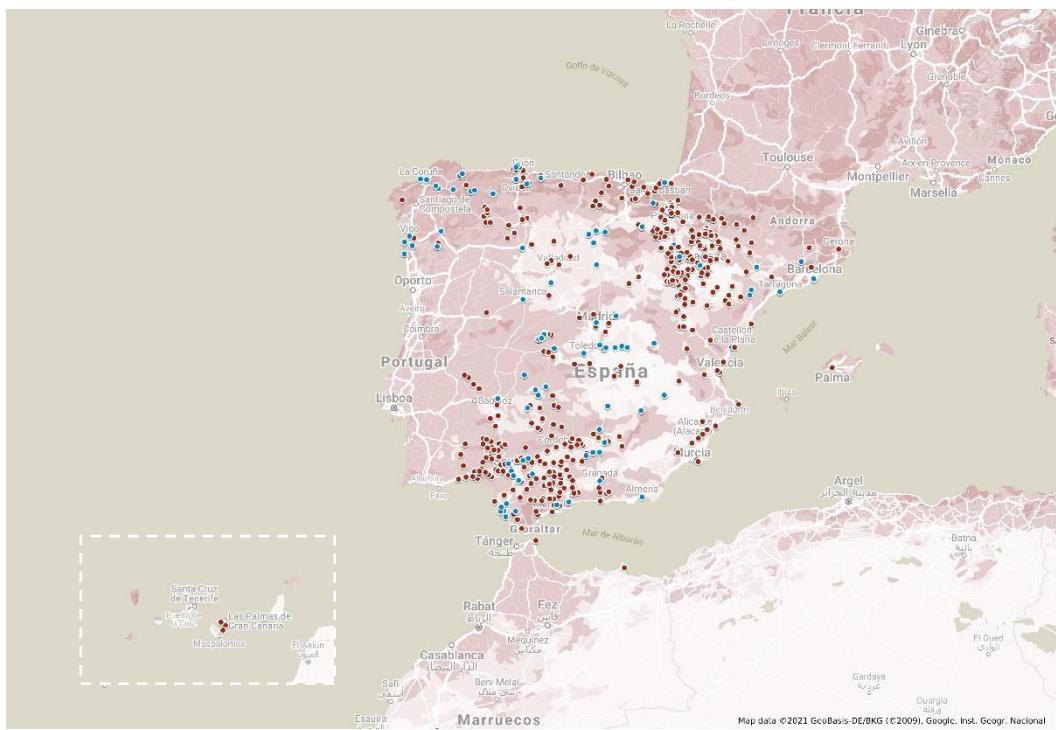


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Map 2. Municipalities with monuments included in the fieldwork (2021) Author's personal database. Map from GeoBasis-DE/BKG, Google, Instituto Geográfico Nacional.

Annexes

ANNEX I

Municipalities with Monuments around Mass Graves

ANDALUSIA	Palma del Rio	Higuera de la Sierra
Cádiz	Peñarroya	La Granada de Río
Benalup	Pozoblanco	Tinto
Benhamaoma	Santaella	La Nava
Bornos	Villafranca de Córdoba	Lepe
Chipiona	Villaharta	Linares de la Sierra
Grazalema	Villanueva de Córdoba	Minas de Riotinto
Jerez de la Frontera	Granada	Nerva
Medina-Sidonia	El Valle	Palos de la Frontera
Paterna de Rivera	Granada	Paterna del Campo
Puerto de Santa María	Órgiva	Paymogo
Puerto Real	Padul	Rociana del Condado
San Fernando	Pampaneira	Rosal de la Frontera
Tarifa	Salobreña	San Juan del Puerto
Trebujena	Víznar	Santa María La Real
Córdoba	Huelva	Santa Olalla de Cala
Aguilar de la Frontera	Almonte	Trigueros
Almodóvar del Río	Aracena	Valverde del Camino
Aljaraque	Ayamonte	Villanueva de los Castillejos
Baena	Beas	Zalamea la Real
Bélmez	Bonares	Jaén
Bujalance	Cala	Alcaudete
Castro del Río	Campillo	Arjona
Fuente Ovejuna	Cañaveral de Leon	Arjonilla
Hinojosa del Duque	Corteconcepción	Baeza
Los Blázquez	Cumbres de San Bartolomé	Baños de la Encina
Lucena	Cumbres Mayores	Cazorla
Montilla	Gibraleón	Jaén
Montoro	Huelva	La Carolina
		Linares

Lopera	Riogordo	Lora de Estepa
Mancha Real	Ronda	Lora del Río
Marmolejo	Ronda	Los Corrales
Martos	Sierra de Yeguas	Los Molares
Torredonjimeno	Teba	Marchena
Úbeda	Villanueva de Tapia	Marinaleda
Villacarrillo	Villanueva del Trabuco	Martín de la Jara
Málaga	Sevilla	Montellano
Abdalajís	Alcolea del Río	Morón de la Frontera
Alameda	Aznalcóllar	Osuna
Alhaurín	Badolatosa	Palomares del Río
Álora	Cañada Rosal	Paradas
Alozaina	Cantillana	Sanlúcar la Mayor
Antequera	Carmona	Sevilla
Arriate	Castilleja del Campo	Utrera
Casarabonela	Constantina	Villanueva del Río y Minas
Casares	Dos Hermanas	ARAGÓN
Coín	Écija	Huesca
Colmenar	El Castillo de las Guardas	Agüero
Cuevas de San Marcos	El Madroño	Albalatillo
El Burgo	El Real de la Jara	Alcampell
Fuente de Piedra	El Rubio	Alcubierre
Gaucín	El Saucejo	Almudevar
Guaro	Estepa	Ayerbe
Humilladero	Gerena	Barbastro
Málaga	Herrera	Benabarre
Marbella	La Campana	Benasque
Mollina	La Puebla de Cazalla	Callén
Periana	Las Cabezas de San Juan	Colungo
Pizarra		

Escuer	Cabañas de Ebro	Novallas
Esquedas	Calatayud	Nuez de Ebro
Fraga	Caspe	Paracuellos de Jiloca
Gurrea de Gállego	Castejón de las Armasz	Pastriz
Huesca	Cosuenda	Pedrola
Jaca	Daroca	Perdiguera
La Jacetania	Ejea de los Caballeros	Pitano
La Paúl	El Frago	Pozuelo de Aragón
Lierta	Epila	Remolinos
Loarre	Épila	Ricla
Morillo de Monclús	Erla	San Mateo de Gállego
Plasencia del Monte	Farasdúes	Santa Eulalia de Gállego
Quinzano	Fuendejalón	Santed
Santa Eulalia	Illueca	Sierra de Luna
Santa María	Jarque	Sofuentes
Sobás	La Almunia de Doña Godina	Talamantes
Sobrarbe	La Cartuja	Tauste
Zaragoza	La Muela	Terrer
Agüero	Las Pedrosas	Tierga
Ainzon	Leciñena	Torrecilla de Valmadrid
Alagón	Magallón	Torrellas
Alagón	Mainar	Torrijo de la Cañada
Alfajarín	Mallén	Uncastillo
Alfajarín	Maluenda	Utebo
Alfamén	Miedes de Aragón	Val de San Martín
Almonacid de la Cuba	Monzalbarba	Valmadrid
Aranda de Moncayo	Morata de Jalón	Vera de Moncayo
Arandiga	Movera	Villafranca de Ebro
Asso-Veral	Murillo de Gallego	Villalva de Perejil
Ateca		

Villarroa de la Sierra	Santander	Quintanar de la Orden
Zaragoza	Torrelavega	Talavera
ASTURIAS	CASTILLA – LA	Toledo
Arriondas	MANCHA	CASTILLA Y LEÓN
Aviles	Albacete	Ávila
Bañugues	Albacete	Bercial de Zapardiel
Candas	Alcaraz	Candeleda
Fitu	Alcázar de San Juan	El Arenal
Mocin	Casas-Ibáñez	Pedro Bernardo
O Acevo	Villarobledo	Santa Cruz del Valle
Oviedo	Ciudad Real	Burgos
Pozu Fortuna	Agudo	Aranda de Duero
Pozu Funeres	Almadén	Arlanzón
Siero	Almadenejos	Espinosa de los Monteros
Tiraña	Chillón	Estépar
Xixon	Valdepeñas	Montija
BALEARIC ISLANDS	Cuenca	Mozuelos
Palma de Mallorca	Santa Cruz de Moya	Quintanilla de Montija
CANARY ISLANDS	Cuenca	Valdebezana
Las Palmas	Tarancón	Valdivielso
Telde	Uclés	Valdenoceda
Las Palmas	Guadalajara	Valle de Sedano
La Laja	Guadalajara	Villafranca de Montes de Oca
CANTABRIA	Toledo	Villafranca de Montes de Oca
Bejes	Alcañizo	Villamayor de los Montes
Limpias	Alcaudete de la Jara	
Santander	Calera y Chozas	
	Menasalbas	
	Ocaña	
	Orgaz	

León	CATALONIA	Gipuzkoa
Astorga	Barcelona	Andoain
Burón	Barcelona	Asteasu
Carrocera	Castellar del Vallès	Donostia
Fabero	Manresa	Elgoibar
Fresnedo	Prats de Lluçanès	Hernani
La Bañeza	Girona	Oiartzun
Leon	Girona	Tolosa
Ocero	Lleida	Tolosa
Pinilla de la Valdería	Lleida	Zumarraga
Priaranza del Bierzo	Tarragona	EXTREMADURA
Quilós	Camposinas	Badajoz
Salas de los Barrios	Tarragona	Alburquerque
Valderas	Tarrés	Cabeza del Buey
Valverde de la Virgen	CEUTA	Casas de Don Pedro
Villasumil	Ceuta	Castuera
Palencia	BASQUE	Feria
Montes Torozos	COUNTRY	Herrera del Duque
Torozos	Araba	La Serena
Frechilla	Bóveda	Medina de las
Salamanca	Gopegi	Torres
Castillejo de Martín	La Tejera	Mérida
Viejo	Legutiano	Puebla de Alcocer
Salamanca	Orduña	San Vicente de
Soria	Bizkaia	Alcántara
Cobertelada	Amorebieta	Torremejía
Barcones	Carranza	Villafranca de los
Valladolid	Derio	Barros
Valladolid	Guernica	Villar del Rey
Zamora	Mungia	Cáceres
Benavente		Valencia de Alcántara

Garciaz	Laredo	Cascante
GALICIA	MADRID	CASADA
A Coruña	Alcalá de Henares	Cizur
Aranga	Colmenar	Deierri
Coruña	Fuencarral	Donamaría
Sada	Fuenmayor	Esteribar
Lugo	Laredo	Etxauri
Fonsagrada	Madrid	Falces
Mondoñedo	Rincón del Soto	Fustiñana
Santa Mariña de Lagostelle	San Lorenzo de El Escorial	Gesalatz
Ourense		Ibargoitia
Bande		Ibero
Furriolo	MELILLA	Juslapeña
Pontevedra	Melilla	Lantz
Baiona		Larraga
Camposancos	MURCIA	Larraga
Mos	Cartagena	Milagro
Tui	Murcia	Monreal / Elo
Vigo	Totana	Olaibar
LA RIOJA	NAVARRA	Oteiza
Alcanadre	Alsasua	Pamplona
Arnedo	Antsoain	Sartaguda
Ausejo	Aranaratxe	Sierra de Urbasa
Autol	Azkoién / Peralta	Tiebas-Muruarte de Reta
Calahorra	Bera	VALENCIA
Cervera del Río	Berriobeiti	Alicante
Alhama	Berriozar	Albatera
El Villar de Arnedo	Caparroso	Alicante
Fuenmayor	Carcar	Denia

Elche
Monovar
Orihuela
Xabia
Castellón
Castelló de la Plana
Vinaròs
Valencia
Bunyol
Paterna
Sagunt
Valencia

ANNEX II

Municipalities with Monuments Included in the Fieldwork

Alcalá de Henares	Berrioplano	Dos Hermanas
Guadalajara	Ibero	Marchena
Talavera	Olabe	Medina del Campo
Aranda de Duero	Etxauri	Benavente
Villamayor de los Montes	Zariquiegui	Tudela
Colmenar Viejo	Valencia	Fuencarral
Cervera del Río Alhama	Paterna	Málaga
Arnedo	Oviedo	Coín
Lardero	Tíraña	San Fernando
Alcanadre	Siero	Jerez de la Frontera
Ausejo	Arriondas	Paterna de Rivera
Ocaña	Caravia	Chiclana
Noblejas	Tarancón	Puerto de Santa María
Santa Cruz de la Zarza	Cuenca	Puerto Real
Toledo	Uclés	Granada
Oiartzun	Arenas de San Pedro	Gandesa
Sevilla	El Hornillo	La Fatarella
Almería	Candeleda	Belchite
Aranjuez	Poyales del Hoyo	Alsasua
Herrera del Duque	Alcolea del Río	Valdepeñas
Pamplona	Lora del Río	Salamanca
	Guillena	Jaén
	Utrera	Martos

Mancha Real	Castellón
Baeza	Albacete
La Carolina	Alcaraz
Estépar	Barcelona
Arlanzón	Manresa
Burgos	Lleida
Coruña	Tarragona
Santa Mariña de	Magallón
Lagostelle	Candás
Aranga	Bañugues
Sada	Puebla de Alcocer
Fonsagrada	Castuera
O Acevo	Casas de Don Pedro
Mondoñedo	Garciaz
Lorenzana	Mérida
Ourense	
Bande	
Furriolo	
Mos	
Tui	
Camposancos	
Baiona	
Vigo	
Zaragoza	

ANNEX III

Research Participants

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Emilia Cañadas - Relative / former member of the PT / Foro por la Memoria de Guadalajara

Pedro García Bilbao - Foro por la Memoria de Guadalajara

Emilio Sales - Foro por la Memoria de Toledo

Fernando García Martinez and Jose Maria Rojas - Relatives / ARMH de Burgos

Mariano Martín García, Pablo Aldama Blanch and Roberto Fernandez Suarez - Ayuntamiento de Colmenar Viejo / Ganemos Colmenar

Ricardo Blanco, Jesús Vicente Aguirre González, Jesus Vicente Aguirre, Pedro Navarro Bretón and Francisco Marin Yécora de La Barranca - Relatives / Asociación para la Preservacion de la Memoria Historica en La Rioja

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Olatz Retegi - Kattin Txiki Memoria Historikoa Oiartzun

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Members of the PCPE in Valencia

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94 de Paterna

Vicent Gabarda – Universitat de Valencia

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Javier Giráldez - Dirección General de Memoria Democrática de la Junta de Andalucía

Ángel del Río – Universidad Pablo Olavide

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Fosa Común de Tiraña

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Relatives of the mass grave of Tiraña

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Fosas Comunes de Siero

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Antonio Lozano Aguilar – Relative / Former mayor of Alcolea del Río

Rafael López Alvarez - Lora de Río

Lucia Socam - Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica “19 Mujeres” de Guillena

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Iván Aparicio - Asociación Recuerdo y Dignidad de Soria

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Arturo Peinado and Miguel Ángel Muga - Federación Estatal de Foros por la Memoria

ANNEX IV

Cotutelle Translations

Resumen

A partir de 1936 con el golpe de Estado contra la República Española y el establecimiento del nuevo Estado español desde 1937, asesinatos masivos en el marco de la represión dieron lugar a la constitución de cientos de fosas comunes en todo el país. La transmisión generacional de la memoria de los asesinados quedó en manos de los familiares y activistas que optaron por diferentes estrategias para marcar los lugares en los que se hallaban los cuerpos y hacer trascender el recuerdo de sus identidades y convicciones. Inicialmente, a pesar de la represión imperante durante la Guerra y la Dictadura, esas estrategias se concretaron en la colocación de piedras, cruces y flores en las fosas comunes. Posteriormente, desde la Transición, esos espacios se fueron monumentalizando progresivamente con la construcción de estructuras perdurables como monolitos, jardines y esculturas sobre las fosas comunes, y eventualmente las exhumaciones de algunas fosas llevaron a la construcción de panteones, pirámides u obeliscos para alojar los cuerpos exhumados. En el año 2000, tras una nueva oleada de exhumaciones, proliferó la construcción de numerosos monumentos en todo el territorio nacional sea sobre las fosas exhumadas, las no exhumadas o con los cuerpos exhumados de las fosas.

La investigación parte de la definición de estas prácticas sobre las fosas comunes en tanto que gesto significativo por el cual se produce una nueva imagen por medio de los cuerpos enterrados, tratando de influir en la sociedad que ha ignorado su existencia durante décadas, como una acción social que parte de una externalización de la memoria más allá de la mente donde se guardaba el recuerdo. Estas prácticas monumentales en torno a las fosas comunes son, por tanto, el objeto de la investigación, que está guiada por tres preguntas principales: ¿Cómo se desarrolló la producción de prácticas monumentales a lo largo del tiempo y qué formas adoptaron los monumentos? ¿Cómo se insertaron las prácticas monumentales en la sociedad en la que pretendían influir? ¿Cuál podría ser el significado de esta externalización de la memoria a través de gestos significantes en el proceso de creación de conciencia? El objetivo de la investigación es por tanto definir el desarrollo histórico de las prácticas monumentales y las formas que adoptaron, comprenderlas en la sociedad en la que pretenden influir, e intentar atribuirles un significado como gestos significantes que

impliquen una conciencia en esta exteriorización de la memoria marcada por las limitaciones que les afectan. A través de estas preguntas, formulé la siguiente hipótesis: las prácticas monumentales en torno a las fosas comunes derivan de un proceso de toma de conciencia en el que la memoria se exterioriza en un gesto significante limitado por la realidad material que integra los cuerpos en la construcción de una nueva imagen con la que buscan influir en la sociedad. Para ello, se combinaron diversas técnicas de la metodología cualitativa etnográfica en un estudio que se enmarca en la historia del arte. El corpus de análisis quedó conformado por una amplia muestra de monumentos que fueron documentados en un primer momento de manera cuantitativa dando lugar a una base de datos de más de 600 registros en todo el territorio, para pasar a un análisis cualitativo de una amplia muestra de 100 monumentos que hubieran sido producidos en diferentes regiones, con diferentes temporalidades, formatos de promoción y contexto de los asesinatos. La documentación de estos no solo implicó la revisión de los materiales publicados al respecto sino también entrevistas a las personas implicadas en la producción de las prácticas monumentales y registros de observaciones participantes en servicios de recuerdo, conmemoraciones, construcciones e inauguraciones.

Tras analizar la información obtenida, la tesis se organizó en tres partes. La primera expone el desarrollo de las prácticas monumentales desde 1936 hasta la actualidad. La segunda, inscribe las prácticas monumentales en un contexto social complejo donde se aborda la dimensión social del duelo, la construcción política desde la derrota, la espacialidad de los monumentos y los homenajes, la llegada del giro forense y de las políticas en torno a la identidad, y las consecuencias que esto ha tenido a la hora de seguir desarrollando prácticas monumentales. La tercera parte se despliega la perspectiva analítica final en torno a la práctica monumental y para ello se recurre a los aportes de Edward Casey, Max Weber, Orlando Patterson, Paul Connerton, Aby Warburg, Horst Bredekamp, Paul Ricoeur, Michel de Certeau, Hans Belting, David Le Breton y Valentin Voloshinov. A través de ellos, se sugiere una interpretación original de las prácticas monumentales observadas en tanto que externalización de la memoria en un contexto de confrontación social, donde se ha producido una toma de conciencia y por la cual se ha creado una imagen nueva que sustituye a la de la fosa. Esa forma de producir imágenes se interpreta como la producción de signos escriturales que funcionan como una particular escritura de la historia. Una escritura que característicamente puede identificarse con la de una comunidad perdida, que a través de esta práctica pone en disputa el sentido por el pasado. Una disputa, por esa voluntad de influir a la sociedad que caracteriza a las prácticas monumentales, que se encuentra abierta. Por ello, la conclusión de la investigación permite confirmar la hipótesis de trabajo, pero el sentido y los límites de la pretensión de influencia a nivel social de la práctica monumental está condicionada por las dinámicas sociales futuras.

INTRODUCCIÓN

Et in Hispania Ego

Anochece. Hay un grupo de pastores idílicamente representados: limpios, musculados y bien peinados. Estos se encuentran detenidos al borde de un camino ya que la tierra se ve compactada. Los árboles están llenos de hojas y algunas amarillean. Podría ser fin del verano y las nubes producidas al final del día por la humedad y la temperatura cálida. Pese a que está oscureciendo, estas personas están paradas observando detenidamente un volumen de piedra con unas características muy específicas. Colocado en el medio del paisaje, no resulta accidental. No se trata de un gran canto rodado. Los sillares están muy bien labrados y está rematada en la parte superior. Este tipo de formas dotan de una importancia a esta piedra pese a encontrarse en un espacio con el que aparentemente está desconectada. Nadie trabaja en vano para labrar los sillares, transportarlos y construir una estructura sin ningún tipo de finalidad. Por tanto, como espectadores, los pastores asumen que una construcción de este tipo en un entorno así implica algo para su sociedad. La piedra les está ofreciendo algún tipo de información en este lugar específico. Así, los dos pastores de la izquierda se encuentran leyendo una inscripción. Los dos de la derecha ya la han leído y la están comentando. Su gesto es sombrío y el joven sobre el que la mujer reposa el brazo muestra cierta sorpresa o incredulidad. Esto nos lleva a pensar que la información que ofrece la inscripción ha alterado de forma sustancial su

forma de percibir su realidad. Algo le ha impactado. Bajo el dedo del pastor arrodillado se lee: “ET IN ARCADIA EGO.”

Aunque han surgido dudas debido a la vaguedad del enunciado y las posibilidades de traducir erróneamente el latín desde nuestra perspectiva actual, Erwin Panofsky aclaró que el concepto no puede ser leído de otra manera. La muerte está presente incluso en Arcadia.¹ La muerte se ha hecho presente a los pastores interrumpiendo su realidad bucólica y sin embargo la muerte no está representada explícitamente en el cuadro.

Esa duda quizás surge dado que tenemos una relación distante a la cultura latina al contrario que en otros momentos de la historia. Lo interesante de esta representación es que nada explicita la presencia de la muerte en la forma pero la forma adquiere importancia en el entorno. No se trata de una piedra cualquiera pues invita a detenerse y a tener en cuenta su mensaje. Un mensaje inequívoco que interpela al lector. La sorpresa y el dramatismo parten de que la Arcadia era un país ideal según lo proyectó Publius Vergilius Maro, Virgilio. No obstante, la bondad de sus habitantes y lo maravilloso de su naturaleza que expresa en las *Bucolica X 4-6*, resulta una invención pues es un país que nunca existió. Lo interesante, y que es estudiado también por Panofsky, es que Virgilio omitió las descripciones de Publius Ovidius Naso, Ovidio, de la Arcadia. Ovidio por el contrario la describió con mayor crudeza en los *Fasti II*: Un lugar donde no existiría civilización alguna, sino habitado por seres que ignoran las artes y se asemejarían a bestias. Señala Panofsky “It was, then, in the imagination of Virgil, and of Virgil alone, that the concept of Arcady, as we know it, was born- that a bleak and chilly district of Greece came to be transfigured into an imaginary realm of perfect bliss.”² De esta manera, siendo la Arcadia un lugar violento sin embargo ha pasado a ser un lugar idílico y utópico compartido por la literatura y el arte romántico.³ Dejemos morir a

¹ Erwin Panofsky, “Et in Arcadia Ego: Poussin and the Elegiac Tradition,” en *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (New York: Garden City, 1957), 296.

² Panofsky, 300.

³ Erwin Panofsky y Gerda Panofsky, “THE «TOMB IN ARCADY» AT THE «FIN-DE-SIÈCLE»,” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 30 (1968): 287–304.

Virgilio, Ovidio y Poussin, nacemos como lectores tomando Arcadia como *mito* a leer desde una óptica contemporánea. Pues esta lectura puede que resulte sugerente, reveladora. Invito al lector a usar la obra, como hice yo. Como simple fetiche que nos puede ayudar a entender un contexto absolutamente diferente en el tiempo y el espacio.

Parecería llegados a este punto que Virgilio habría sido parte de una campaña de lavado de imagen de Arcadia. Que esa Arcadia aun hoy es leída como lugar utópico, como lugar paradisíaco, como lugar que podríamos incluso imaginar como destino para unas vacaciones. Arcadia como un destino exótico al que tomar un vuelo y encontrarse de nuevo con la vida bucólica y rural. En este contexto podría funcionar un *slogan* sencillo, pero que quede en la memoria de todos: *ARCADIA IS BEAUTIFUL AND DIFFERENT. VISIT ARCADIA.* O incluso más simple: *ARCADIA IS DIFFERENT.* La economía de Arcadia estaría basada en el turismo desde entonces, para recibir de año en año más y más turistas deseosos de conocer esa tierra, contándose por millones. Incluso rapsodas contemporáneos habrían compuesto canciones que hablarían de las bondades de Arcadia, como paraíso terrenal

*Entre flores, fandanguillos y alegrías,
Nació mi Arcadia, la tierra del amor
Solo Dios pudiera hacer tanta belleza
Y es imposible que pueda haber dos
Y todo el mundo sabe que es verdad
Y lloran cuando tienen que marchar
Por eso se oye este refrán
¡Que viva Arcadia!*

Naturaleza, gastronomía, patrimonio, sol, playas y fútbol, pues en eso Arcadia también suele ser campeona. “Porque Arcadia es la mejor” confirma el rapsoda. Por tanto, muchos preguntarían ruborizados “¿Qué tendrá que ver Arcadia con la muerte?” Pero la inscripción que los pastores han encontrado en esa construcción junto al camino es inequívoca. Y no sería la única construcción de ese topo. Hay muchas otras y no dejan lugar a la duda.

Estos pastores emigrados a la ciudad descienden de padres que no quisieron hablar del pasado y a cuyos hijos no les enseñaron su importancia. El reto era la modernización de la Arcadia, y la construcción de una Utopía. Pero si no sólo leemos a Virgilio sino también a Ovidio veremos que Arcadia no siempre fue una Utopía. Aunque dejaron atrás a los muertos, allí donde estaban se encuentran estas construcciones, como la que representa Poussin. La muerte, también está presente en Arcadia. Y de una manera masiva. No tenemos claro dónde está presente: aquí quizás estén dentro de la construcción, bajo ella o en algún punto del paraje. No lo saben, pero esa construcción no es la única, se cuentan por cientos y todas traen la presencia de la muerte al mundo de los vivos. La muerte está en todas partes porque se aplicó de manera sistemática en el marco de un proyecto represivo y de instauración de un régimen del terror. Arcadia existe, y no es una utopía. Se llama Reino de España, *SPAIN IS DIFFERENT*,⁴ y *ESPAÑA ES LA MEJOR*,⁵ y recibe al año millones de turistas ajenos a toda esa violencia.⁶ El país es una gran fosa común y en el territorio estos artefactos se lo recuerdan a los vivos. Integran los cuerpos en las formas arquitectónicas que sobreviven de la antigüedad y testimonian el pasado violento, escriben la historia no enseñada en las escuelas. Los marcos legales internacionales hoy hablan de “genocidios.” La prensa y la literatura académica hablan de “víctimas.” Pero las humanidades y las ciencias sociales nos lo han explicado históricamente en otros términos.

El mito instaurado por Alexandre Kojève resulta revelador en este sentido: la dialéctica del amo y el esclavo. Herbert Marcuse interpretó la síntesis de Kojève como una revitalización de los estudios sobre Hegel en la Francia de Posguerra, que evidenció “the inner connection between the idealistic and

⁴ *SPAIN IS DIFFERENT* es una de varias versiones de un *slogan* publicitario que tuvo especial difusión por parte de la dictadura hacia la década de los años sesenta de cara a fomentar el turismo. Para más información consultar Alicia Fuentes Vega, “Aportaciones al estudio visual del turismo: la iconografía del boom de España, 1950-1970”, (Tesis doctoral, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2015), 66–75.

⁵ Este enunciado y los versos versionados anteriormente proceden del pasodoble popularizado por Manolo Escobar, *Que viva España* (1971) compuesto por Leo Caerts y Leo Rozenstraten. Consultar: José Manuel Gómez, “Así nació el Y viva España,” *Tiempo*, no. 1624 (2013): 58–59.

⁶ En 2019, previo a la pandemia del COVID-19 el Estado Español registró un nuevo récord en la recepción de turistas, en una tendencia que se arrastra desde los años sesenta. Consultar: Carlos Molina, “España rozó los 84 millones de turistas en 2019,” Cinco Días, 20 de Enero de 2020, consultado Mayo 10, 2021, https://cincodias.elpais.com/cincodias/2020/01/20/economia/1579518415_556581.html.

materialistic dialectic.”⁷ Kojève tomó de Hegel el pasaje “Self-consciousness is in and for itself while and as a result of its being in and for itself for an other; i.e., it is only as a recognized being,”⁸ que se desarrolla en el primer epígrafe del cuarto capítulo de la *Phänomenologie des Geistes* de 1807.⁹ Un texto que presentó precisamente una explicación de la propia existencia humana a través de las experiencias subjetivas. En el pasaje tomado por Kojève se ilustraba una situación en la que dos seres se encuentran. De ese encuentro se produjo una situación particular: Uno de ellos, habría visto en el otro nada más que un “animal.” Y pudo ignorarlo, pero se da cuenta de que no lo es, y que quizás el otro también deseas ser reconocido como “ser.” Entonces, se convierte en un riesgo, y de ello surge la necesidad de negarlo en una lucha por el reconocimiento de su ser para sí mismo.

En 1931 se produjo la victoria mayoritaria de partidos republicanos en las elecciones pluripartidistas aceptadas por el régimen ante su inestabilidad. Pese a que el marco legal de la Monarquía de Alfonso XIII no reconocía la posibilidad de proclamar una República, en los gobiernos locales se tomó la iniciativa: en Eibar se alzó la primera bandera republicana en la cornisa del Ayuntamiento.¹⁰ A ellos se sumaron miles por todo el territorio. Se constituyó por segunda vez en la historia la República Española. Se la dotó con una constitución que la configuraba como democracia liberal equiparable a otros Estados europeos. Con ello se rompió con la tradición del liberalismo español, siempre rendido a la reacción monárquica y clerical.¹¹ Se proclamó el Estado laico.¹² Se estableció el sufragio universal, incluyendo a las mujeres que

⁷ Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution. Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955), 440.

⁸ Georg Wilhelm Fredrich Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Terry Pinkard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 108.

⁹ Hegel, 102–116.

¹⁰ Unai Belaustegui Bedialauneta, “Gipuzkoa y las raíces de la II República: del pacto de San Sebastián a la proclamación de la República en Eibar,” en *Pensar con la historia desde el siglo XXI: actas del XII Congreso de la Asociación de Historia Contemporánea*, ed. Pilar Folguera et al. (Madrid: UAM, 2015), 4439–4458.

¹¹ Manuel Álvarez Tardío, “Libertad, poder y democracia: un debate trascendental en la España de la Segunda República,” *Historia Contemporánea* 0, no. 43 (2012).

¹² José María Cayetano Núñez Rivero, “La configuración constitucional del Estado laico en la Segunda República española,” *Laicidad y libertades: escritos jurídicos*, no. 13 (2013): 201–40.

participaban ahora activamente en política.¹³ Se planteó la igualdad ante la ley y se estableció división de los poderes del Estado.¹⁴ El trabajo se convirtió en una obligación social y se proyectó una reforma agraria.¹⁵ Se estableció el salario mínimo y las vacaciones anuales retribuidas.¹⁶ Los estatutos de autonomía de las regiones se convirtieron en una posibilidad de autogobierno al interior de la República,¹⁷ y se comenzaron a construir colegios e iniciaron campañas de alfabetización y democratización de la cultura.¹⁸

En ningún caso se trató de un proyecto revolucionario, ni siquiera como los proyectos revolucionarios liberales que sacudieron Europa hasta 1848.¹⁹ El reformismo y la medida marcaron la agenda política. Pese a ello, el nuevo marco con partidos y sindicatos legalizados permitió un cambio en las condiciones subjetivas de autopercepción del pueblo. Ahora en la joven república pudo verse reconocido como sujeto histórico, como ser en sí. Y en esa percepción de uno de los seres de sí mismo que describió Hegel resultaba aterradora para el anterior único ser consciente: que el otro dejase de ser animal y pudiera convertirse en otro ser. Kojève señaló a propósito de esa situación: el ser autoconsciente que antes dominaba la realidad lo provocará, lo forzará a comenzar una lucha a muerte. El riesgo de la autopercepción del otro, de la autoconciencia desencadenaría la negación más absoluta que no puede sino

¹³ Ana M. Aguado, “La República de las ciudadanas: libertad, ciudadanía femenina y educación durante la Segunda República,” en *La Constitución de Cádiz. Genealogía y desarrollo del sistema educativo liberal: XVII Coloquio Nacional de Historia de la Educación. Cádiz, 9-11 de julio de 2013*, ed. M. Gloria Espigado Tocino et al. (Cádiz: Universidad de Cádiz, 2013), 577–588.

¹⁴ Rafael Escudero Alday, “Las huellas del neoconstitucionalismo. Democracia, participación y justicia social en la Constitución Española de 1931,” en *Constitución de 1931: estudios jurídicos sobre el momento republicano español*, ed. Sebastián Martín Martín, Luis Ignacio Gordillo Pérez, y Víctor Javier Vázquez Alonso (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2017), 101–24.

¹⁵ Maria Antonia Ferrer i Bosch, “Consideracions sobre la reforma agrària de la segons república,” en *La II República española: Perspectives interdisciplinàries en el seu 75è aniversari*, ed. Montserrat Duch Plana (Tarragona: URV, 2007), 121–144.

¹⁶ Fernando Valdés Dal-Ré, “El Derecho del Trabajo en la Segunda República,” *Relaciones laborales: Revista crítica de teoría y práctica*, no. 1 (2006): 291–321.

¹⁷ Àngel Duarte Montserrat, “Republicanismo, federalismo y autonomías: de los proyectos federales de 1873 a la Segunda República y los Estatutos de Autonomía,” en *Los nacionalismos en la España contemporánea: ideologías, movimientos y símbolos*, ed. Jean-Louis Guereña, y Manuel Morales Muñoz (Málaga: Centro de Ediciones de la Diputación de Málaga (CEDMA), 2006), 187–206.

¹⁸ Alejandro Tiana Ferrer, “La educación en la Segunda República,” en *Las dos repúblicas en España*, ed. Ana Martínez Rus, y Raquel Sánchez García (Madrid: Fundación Pablo Iglesias, 2018), 259–80.

¹⁹ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789-1848* (London: Abacus, 2014).

materializarse en la eliminación física de quien supone un potencial riesgo para su propia existencia autoconsciente²⁰.

El pasaje hegeliano parece nuevamente hablar de aquellos años. Durante la Segunda República, la Falange Española desarrolló una actividad terrorista bajo una “estrategia de la tensión.” El objetivo era la “construcción social del miedo” bajo el proyecto de José Antonio Primo de Rivera de que la organización se convirtiese en una fuerza paramilitar al servicio del Ejército. Junto a ellos, Jose Antonio conspiró para la toma del poder.²¹ Los asesinatos a manos de la Falange, de sectores reaccionarios de la Guardia Civil y de otros grupos armados “pretendían dramatizar los desórdenes con el fin de preparar el terreno para la sublevación militar” según Sergio Vaquero.²² La agresividad de los terratenientes en las zonas rurales, unida a las élites monárquicas, los militares reaccionarios y la burguesía fascista urbana fue latente frente a la reforma republicana.²³ Esos hombres que habían perpetrado la explotación y la injusticia durante siglos parecían dispuestos a llevar la violencia a sus últimas consecuencias, autoconscientes de su ser y de su lugar en el mundo, no podían aceptar ningún otro lugar en el mismo. Debían que detener el curso dialéctico de la historia y si eso no era posible, avanzarían hacia adelante eliminando al otro para establecerse en una nueva posición dominante. Así, finalmente Emilio Mola firmó en mayo una instrucción reservada que indicaba a los futuros golpistas:

Se tendrá en cuenta que la acción ha de ser en extremo violenta para reducir lo antes posible al enemigo, que es fuerte y bien organizado. Desde luego, serán encarcelados todos los directivos de los partidos políticos, sociedades o sindicatos no afectos al movimiento, aplicándoles castigos

²⁰ Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, ed. Raymond Queneau (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), 13.

²¹ Roberto Muñoz Bolaños, “Escuadras de la muerte: militares, Falange y terrorismo en la II República,” *Amnis. Revue de civilisation contemporaine Europes/Amériques*, no. 17 (Julio 16, 2018).

²² Sergio Vaquero Martínez, “La autoridad, el pánico y la beligerancia. Políticas de orden público y violencia política en la España del Frente Popular.,” *Historia y política: Ideas, procesos y movimientos sociales*, no. 41 (2019): 66.

²³ Gerald Brenan, *The Spanish Labyrinth: An Account of the Social and Political Background of the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

ejemplares a dichos individuos para estrangular los movimientos de rebeldía o huelgas.²⁴

Las instrucciones de Mola se produjeron meses después de la victoria en las urnas del Frente Popular. El Gobierno saliente de la Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas apoyada por el Partido Republicano Radical había dado ciertas garantías a la reacción, explicitadas en la contención de las reformas y la represión de la Revolución de 1934. Finalmente, el 18 de julio de 1936 se produjo el intento de golpe. El 19 de julio de 1936 Mola dio la instrucción que inicia los asesinatos en masa:

Es necesario crear una atmósfera de terror, hay que dejar sensación de dominio eliminando sin escrúpulos ni vacilación a todo el que no piense como nosotros. Tenemos que causar una gran impresión, todo aquel que sea abierta o secretamente defensor del Frente Popular debe ser fusilado.²⁵

Las cifras de los asesinados se cuantifican entre 100.000 y 130.000 siguiendo a historiadores como Santos Juliá,²⁶ Julián Casanova,²⁷ Francisco Espinosa,²⁸ y Paul Preston.²⁹ No obstante, entre los investigadores se considera que estas cifras podrían aumentar más aún si muchos archivos y expedientes fuesen también desclasificados y se desarrollasen investigaciones en el territorio, pueblo a pueblo.

Los sublevados, iniciaron la ofensiva bajo la pretensión de no ser negados por esa nueva autoconciencia de un pueblo camino de la construcción de diversos proyectos bajo el ala del republicanismo. Así, desencadenaron un proceso de asesinatos sistemáticos y alevosos. Las tímidas reformas republicanas no fueron tolerables. El Ejército colonial, los terratenientes, la burguesía, la Iglesia y la nobleza perdían su razón de ser como dueños absolutos

²⁴ Paul Preston, “Franco y la represión: la venganza del justiciero” en *Novísima. II Congreso Internacional de Historia de Nuestro Tiempo*, ed. Carlos Navajas Zubeldia, Diego Iturriaga Barco (Logroño: Universidad de La Rioja, 2010), 59.

²⁵ Julián Casanova Ruiz, *República y Guerra Civil* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2007), 199.

²⁶ Santos Juliá, ed., *Víctimas de la guerra civil* (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 2006).

²⁷ Francisco Espinosa Maestre, Francisco Moreno Gómez, y Conxita Mir, *Morir, matar, sobrevivir: La violencia en la dictadura de Franco* (Barcelona: Booket, 2004).

²⁸ Francisco Espinosa Maestre, *Violencia roja y azul: España, 1936-1950* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2010).

²⁹ Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust* (London: HarperCollins Publishers Ltd, 2008).

de la realidad, como únicos seres socialmente existentes. Cualquier otro ser aspirando a la existencia debía de ser aniquilado para la supervivencia del régimen en esa lucha a muerte. La existencia de cientos de fosas comunes en todo el territorio es el testimonio material más evidente del plan de exterminio. No obstante, no todos fueron asesinados. Una lógica que subyace en el planteamiento de la dialéctica del amo y el esclavo de Kojève:

That is to say: if both adversaries perish in the fight, ‘consciousness’ is completely done away with, for man is nothing more than an inanimate body after his death. And if one of the adversaries remains alive but kills the other, he can no longer be recognized by the other; the man who has been defeated and killed does not recognize the victory of the conqueror. Therefore, the victor’s certainty of his being and of his value remains subjective, and thus has no ‘truth.’³⁰

La muerte es el fin de la conciencia de aquel que perece. Quien muere asesinado deja de habitar en el mundo natural y el superviviente no tiene ya un otro con el que ser reconocido como amo. No podría esperar nada ya para sí mismo si ha aniquilado al otro. Por ello apunta Kojève

Therefore, it does the man of the Fight no good to kill his adversary. He must overcome him ‘dialecticallly’. That is, he must leave him life and consciousness, and destroy only his autonomy. He must overcome the adversary only insofar as the adversary is opposed to him and acts against him. In other words, he must enslave him.³¹

Así puede entenderse la política aplicada a los que sobrevivieron la aniquilación de los sublevados. Pues el nuevo régimen necesitó no solamente ser reconocido en tanto que amo, sino que requirió de esclavos, de los trabajadores explotados que estaban tomando conciencia de sí mismos y pasando a ser entes existentes a través partidos, sindicatos, logias masónicas y otras organizaciones durante la República. A la humillación sistemática de los vencidos y sus familias,³² se unieron las prácticas de esclavitud de los presos políticos³³ y a la explotación

³⁰ Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 14.

³¹ Kojève, 15.

³² Enrique González Duro, *Las rapadas: el franquismo contra la mujer* (Madrid: Siglo XXI de España, 2012).

³³ Isaías Lafuente, *Esclavos por la patria: un antídoto contra el olvido de la historia* (Barcelona: Planeta, 2018).

laboral sistemática que supuso no solo la pérdida de la perspectiva de reforma sino también un retroceso en derechos laborales y propiedad de los medios productivos,³⁴ en una sociedad condenada al hambre y la miseria.³⁵

Elisa Magrì señala no obstante que el pasaje de la *Phänomenologie des Geistes* de 1807 tomado por Kojève³⁶ ha sido aislado y entendido libremente desde la antropología y la filosofía social.³⁷ A propósito de Hegel hay un aspecto fundamental también para esa visión del ser que se centra en el papel de la habitualidad como actividad corporeizada y situada en un contexto.³⁸ Siguiendo así una indagación en torno a cómo por tanto se habría construido el recuerdo a partir de las fosas comunes resulta pertinente acudir a la teoría de Edward Casey, quien precisamente reconoce los límites históricos de la fenomenología al sugerir

*To be embodied is ipso facto to assume a particular perspective and position; it is to have not just a point of view but a place in which we are situated. It is to occupy a portion of space from out of which we both undergo given experiences and remember them. To be disembodied is not only to be deprived of place, unplaced; it is to be denied the basic stance on which every experience and its memory depend. As embodied existence opens onto place, indeed takes place in place and nowhere else, so our memory of what we experience in place is likewise place-specific: it is bound to place as to its own basis. Yet it is just this importance of place for memory that has been lost sight of in philosophical and common sense concerns with the temporal dimensions of memory.*³⁹

La memoria, por tanto, parte de la mente, pero tiene lugar en un espacio y tiempo concretos que condicionan materialmente las posibilidades de la construcción de la conciencia. Y esos tiempos y espacios en los que se ubican particularmente las memorias de la represión son poco propicios para ser

³⁴ Glicerio Sánchez Recio y Julio Tascón Fernández, *Los empresarios de Franco: Política y economía en España, 1936-1957* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2003).

³⁵ David Conde Caballero, “Tiempos sin pan. Una etnografía del hambre en la Extremadura de la postguerra” (Tesis doctoral, UNED. Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2019).

³⁶ Hegel, *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel*, 102–16.

³⁷ Elisa Magrì, “A Note on Some Contemporary Readings of Hegel’s Master-Slave Dialectic,” *Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy* 12, no. 1 (2016): 238-256.

³⁸ Elisa Magri, “The Problem of Habitual Body and Memory in Hegel and Merleau-Ponty,” *Hegel Bulletin* 38, no. 1 (2017): 42.

³⁹ Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: a Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 182.

comunicadas. La conservación del recuerdo de la represión, refiere a una realidad concreta se enfrenta a las limitaciones materiales exteriores para el desarrollo del propio acto de recordar: si bien en un primer momento la Dictadura basó su sistema represivo en la coerción, la violencia y la exclusión,⁴⁰ en la Transición derivó en un “Pacto de Silencio” por el cual se negó la existencia de los crímenes.⁴¹ Además, la violencia cambió de forma, pero siguió presente en el territorio, siendo unos años marcados por el terrorismo, la represión y la guerra sucia por parte del Estado.⁴² Un Estado que no favoreció la deconstrucción del relato hegemónico de la Dictadura. La transmisión generacional de ese recuerdo de los asesinados quedó en manos de familias, militantes y activistas, que finalmente operaron en los márgenes de un sistema educativo basado en el olvido del pasado reciente.⁴³

Ubicados en esos espacios y esos tiempos, optaron diversas estrategias para que la memoria fuese más allá de la mente. Y en este sentido Casey señala la importancia de la antigüedad de asociar la memoria a lugares concretos,⁴⁴ esto llevado a la memoria de la represión implica que ese lugar es una fosa común donde yacerían los cuerpos de quienes fueron asesinados desde 1936. En este sentido, las formas elegidas para que esos recuerdos fueran externalizados van a resultar sintomáticas de esa necesidad de definir un lugar y de establecer un cierto orden. En un primer momento esto se tradujo formalmente en la colocación de piedras, cruces y flores sobre las fosas comunes pese a la represión. En un segundo momento en los años finales de la Dictadura se produjo la progresiva perimetación de los espacios. Estas formas dejaron paso a la construcción de estructuras más estables tales como monolitos, jardines, esculturas... cuando no se exhumaba los cuerpos mismos

⁴⁰ Julio Aróstegui Sánchez, “Coerción, violencia, exclusión. La dictadura de Franco como sistema represivo,” en *Franco, la represión como sistema*, ed. Julio Aróstegui Sánchez (Barcelona: Flor del Viento, 2012), 19–59.

⁴¹ Roldán Jimeno Aranguren, *Amnistías, perdones y justicia transicional: el pacto de silencio español* (Pamplona: Pamiela, 2018).

⁴² Mariano Sánchez Soler, *La transición sangrienta: una historia violenta del proceso democrático en España (1975-1983)* (Barcelona: Península, 2010).

⁴³ Enrique Javier Gutiérrez Díez, *La asignatura pendiente: la memoria histórica democrática en los libros de texto escolares* (Madrid: Plaza y Valdés, 2020).

⁴⁴ Casey, *Remembering*, 182–83.

y se los integraba en panteones, columbarios, pirámides u obeliscos en los años de la Transición. Acciones que se han seguido reproduciendo hasta la actualidad.

Se tratan de unas formas que de alguna manera representarían una supervivencia de estrategias de memorización de la antigüedad, y que revelan cómo en tiempos de crisis ese tipo de formas vuelven, bajo la idea de los “Nachleben der Antike” de Aby Warburg. Unas formas en las que precisamente el objeto de la representación va a ser integrado en la propia imagen que lo representa en el interior del objeto. Warburg describió estas situaciones como imitación por identificación o “nachahmen,” que podrían llegar a implicar la idea del “einhüllen” como cubrir, envolver o sobre todo traducible como “sepultar.”⁴⁵ Una compenetración entre cuerpo e imagen que Horst Bredekamp describe como “acto icónico sustitutivo,” un proceso de sustitución en el que “bodies are treated as images and images as bodies.”⁴⁶ Pero estas formas no han estado vacías de sentido, se recurrió a ellas en un contexto de limitación material donde no existía otra posibilidad para la externalización del recuerdo. Además su producción representó una voluntad de influir sobre su y por tanto se ubican en cierta tradición funeraria, pero tienen una especificidad en tanto que “acciones sociales:”

By “action” is meant human behaviour linked to a subjective meaning on the part of the actor or actors concerned; such action may be either overt, or occur inwardly- whether by positive action, or by refraining from action, or by toleration of a situation. Such behaviour is “social” action where the meaning intended by the actor or actors is related to the behaviour of others, and the action is so oriented.⁴⁷

Así siguiendo la definición de Max Weber para la “acción social,” destaca que el mero hecho de que una persona se encuentre aplicando algún procedimiento aparentemente útil que haya aprendido de otra persona como sería la

⁴⁵ George Didi-Huberman, *La imagen superviviente historia del arte y tiempo de los fantasmas según Aby Warburg* (Madrid: Abada Editores, 2013), 364–65.

⁴⁶ Horst Bredekamp, *Image Acts a Systematic Approach to Visual Agency* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 137.

⁴⁷ Max Weber, *Economy and Society: a new translation*, ed. Keith Tribe (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019), 78–79.

reproducción de formas tradicionales o de la antigüedad a la hora de producir memorias sobre las fosas comunes no constituiría por sí misma una acción social. El carácter de acción se basaría en que el productor, mediante la observación de los otros en sociedad, se ha familiarizado con ciertos hechos objetivos y es a éstos a los que se orienta su acción. La acción social estaría para Max Weber determinada causalmente por la acción de los demás, pero no significativamente.⁴⁸ Por tanto, es posible ver que la decisión de externalizar el recuerdo sobre los asesinados en este contexto pasará por los afectos, pero también por los valores y por criterios de racionalidad.⁴⁹ Así, la acción social de producir una forma en relación con las fosas comunes adquiriría un carácter sínico, por no estar surgiendo en un territorio interindividual, sino que por el contrario implica una realidad social dada. Por tanto, a través de esas acciones corporales, de la intervención en los lugares y conmemoraciones se estaría produciendo una memoria más allá de la mente,⁵⁰ recordando, construyendo con las fosas comunes y acudiendo a las mismas en ritos y homenajes pese a las limitaciones materiales para el recuerdo. Es entonces cuando resulta explícito que habiendo partido del acto represivo y de dominación de la sociedad desde 1936, la producción de estas formas estaría produciendo una manifestación de conciencia de quienes recuerdan en relación con la sociedad, pues siguiendo la teoría de Valentín Voloshinov “Consciousness can harbor only in the image, the word, the meaningful gesture, and so forth.”⁵¹ Ese gesto significativo de producir una nueva imagen por medio de los cuerpos enterrados en las fosas comunes tratando de incidir en la sociedad que ha ignorado su existencia durante décadas como acción y que parte de una exteriorización del recuerdo más allá de la mente donde se albergaba el recuerdo de los asesinatos, es como se definirían las *prácticas monumentales sobre las fosas comunes*. Esas prácticas que van a producirse sobre las fosas comunes son así el objeto de la presente investigación.

⁴⁸ Max Weber, *The Interpretation of Social Reality*, ed. John E. T. Eldridge (London: Nelson, 1972), 77.

⁴⁹ Weber, *Economy and Society*, 101.

⁵⁰ Casey, *Remembering*, 144–60.

⁵¹ Valentin Nikólaievich Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (New York; London: Seminar Press, 1973), 13.

Ante dicho objeto de estudio, surgen por tanto tres grandes preguntas ¿Cómo se habría desarrollado históricamente el proceso de producción de las prácticas monumentales y que formas habrían tomado las mismas? ¿Cómo se insertarían las prácticas monumentales en esa sociedad en la que buscarían incidir? ¿Cuáles podrían ser los sentidos de esa externalización del recuerdo a través del gesto significante en el proceso de toma de conciencia? El objetivo por tanto de la investigación derivó en tratar de definir ese desarrollo histórico del proceso de producción de las prácticas monumentales y las formas que habían tomado, entenderlas en la sociedad en la que buscan incidir y tratar de atribuirles un sentido en tanto que gestos significantes que implicarían una toma de conciencia en esa externalización de los recuerdos marcada por unas limitaciones que han jugado en su contra. Sería a través de la consecución de estos como formuló la siguiente hipótesis: las prácticas monumentales sobre las fosas comunes derivarían de un proceso de toma de conciencia en el cual el recuerdo es externalizado en un gesto significante limitado por la realidad material que integra los cuerpos en la construcción de una nueva imagen con la cual se busca incidir en la sociedad.

No obstante, los propios caracteres complejos de las prácticas monumentales no permitieron acercarse a las mismas a través de una sola disciplina cerrada desde la cual se formulase el estudio. De esta manera, el estudio pudo verse amparado por el enfoque interdisciplinario que se ha popularizado en la última década en torno a los denominados como *Memory Studies*. Una popularización formalizada en la creación de centros y departamentos concretos en universidades dedicados a este campo, y la formalización de la *Memory Studies Association* en 2016. Multitudinarias conferencias han tenido lugar en Ámsterdam, Copenhague y Madrid, precisamente esta última mientras desarrollaba mi investigación.⁵² *Journals* y *book series* dedicados al campo se han comenzado a reproducir internacionalmente. Y las teorías de Maurice Halbwachs sobre *La mémoire*

⁵² Harmer James, “The Memory Studies Association,” Memory Studies Association, consultado el 8 de Mayo de 2020, https://www.memorystudiesassociation.org/about_the_msa/.

*collective*⁵³ así como las reformulaciones posteriores de la misma por Jan Assmann y Aleida Assmann en torno a la *Kulturellen Gedächtnisses*⁵⁴ y sintetizadas por Astrid Erll en *Memory in Culture*⁵⁵ son referenciadas una y otra vez. La posibilidad de abordar la memoria desde un campo metodológico expandido ha resultado fundamental para legitimar la propuesta de investigar las prácticas monumentales, ya que en el campo podrían verse como *Kulturellen Gedächtnisses*, o como parte de una *mémoire collective*.

Estas nociones han sido una parte poco estudiada en el marco de los estudios sobre la Guerra, Dictadura, Transición y la configuración de la sociedad actual en el Reino de España, y ha resultado novedosa su investigación. No obstante, hay algunos antecedentes. Javier Giraldez ha sido una de las personas que con mayor sistematicidad y amplitud han estudiado este tipo de prácticas monumentales en el contexto de Andalucía.⁵⁶ Su tesis representa un documento único por su gran esfuerzo a la hora de documentar cientos de lugares, y a su vez explicita su gran sensibilidad e interés en las prácticas monumental, las cuales fomentó durante su elogiado desempeño como Director General de Memoria Democrática de Andalucía. Junto a él los trabajos de Conxita Mir para las capitales catalanas,⁵⁷ o el de Ricard Conesa para el *Fossar de La Pedrera* de Barcelona en particular⁵⁸ son claves para entender la experiencia catalana. También los trabajos en Euskadi de Jesús Alonso,⁵⁹ en La Rioja de Jesús Aguirre⁶⁰ y en Galicia de John Thompson,⁶¹ que indirectamente

⁵³ Maurice Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective*, ed. Gérard Namer (Paris: Albin Michel, 1997).

⁵⁴ Aleida Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2018).

⁵⁵ Astrid Erll, *Memory in culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

⁵⁶ Javier Giraldez Díaz, “Política de la memoria y memoria de la política. Una reflexión sobre la memoria histórica en Andalucía” (Tesis doctoral, Universidad de Sevilla, 2014).

⁵⁷ Conxita Mir y Josep Gelonch, eds., *Duelo y memoria espacios para el recuerdo de las víctimas de la represión franquista en perspectiva comparada* (Lleida: Edicions de la Universitat de Lleida, 2013).

⁵⁸ Ricard Conesa, “Monumentos para el duelo, lugares para la memoria: de la Barcelona franquista a la democrática,” en *Memorias de guerra, proyectos de paz: violencias y conflictos entre pasado, presente y futuro : VIII Encuentro de Memorias en red*, ed. Iratxe Momoitio Astorkia, y Ana Teresa Núñez Monasterio (Gernika-Lumo: Centro de Documentación sobre el Bombardeo de Gernika, 2017), 25–34.

⁵⁹ Jesús Alonso Carballés, *Memorias de piedra y acero: los monumentos a las víctimas de la Guerra civil y del franquismo en Euskadi (1936-2017)* (Gernika-Lumo: Fundación Museo de la Paz de Gernika, 2017).

⁶⁰ Jesús Vicente Aguirre González, *Aquí nunca pasó nada: La Rioja 1936* (Logroño: Ochoa, 2012).

⁶¹ John Thompson, “Tres monumentos que conmemoran víctimas do franquismo: participación cidadá e a confluencia de historia oral e historiografía,” *Murguía: revista galega de historia*, no. 29–30 (2014): 55–70.

abordan algunas prácticas sobre fosas comunes. Francisco Ferrandiz ha abordado la experiencia de la práctica monumental post exhumación en Aranda de Duero,⁶² Vicent Gabarda ha realizado no solamente un estudio extensivo de la represión en Valencia sino también del proceso de construcción de lápidas y monumentos en el Cementerio de Paterna⁶³ y Layla Renshaw ha tratado el debate sobre las dimensiones éticas de las conmemoraciones, atendiendo brevemente a los enterramientos colectivos tras la exhumación.⁶⁴ Por otra parte, la escasa existencia de publicaciones en relación con el testimonio material de la fosa o de la exhumación, en tanto que monumento, contrasta con la abundancia de publicaciones dedicadas a las exhumaciones y su dimensión social. De ellas han destacado por su impacto los trabajos de Francisco Ferrández,⁶⁵ Paloma Aguilar,⁶⁶ Layla Renshaw⁶⁷ y Walther L. Bernecker,⁶⁸ entre otros⁶⁹. También resulta sintomático que los trabajos estén principalmente adscritos a entornos territorialmente definidos desde la política: Andalucía, Galicia, La Rioja, Euskadi y Cataluña, todos ellos territorios marcados por una fuerte identidad regional y/o nacional propias. Por ello la presente investigación aporta de manera novedosa al abordar una parte poco estudiada de la memoria sobre las fosas comunes y además analizarla en el conjunto del territorio.

Por ello, a la hora de formular mi metodología debí desplazar el eje temático del pasado mismo, a cómo se ha una narración del pasado producido: ya no estudiar la represión misma ni cómo se ha retratado desde los medios de

⁶² Francisco Ferrández, “Death on the Move,” en *A Companion to the Anthropology of Death*, ed. Antonius C. G. M. Robben (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2018), 189–204.

⁶³ Vicent Gabarda Cebellán, “El Cementerio de Paterna Com a Exemple de Monumentalització Popular,” en *Postguerres / Aftermaths of War*, ed. Teresa Abelló i Güell et al. (Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2019).

⁶⁴ Layla Renshaw, “Ethical Considerations in the Investigation and Commemoration of Mass Graves from the Spanish Civil War,” en *Ethical Approaches to Human Remains: A Global Challenge in Bioarchaeology and Forensic Anthropology*, ed. Kirsty Squires, David Erickson, and Nicholas Márquez-Grant (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 533–34.

⁶⁵ Francisco Ferrández, *El pasado bajo tierra* (Barcelona: Anthropos, 2014).

⁶⁶ Paloma Aguilar Fernández and Leigh A Payne, *El resurgir del pasado en España: fosas de víctimas y confesiones de verdugos* (Barcelona: Taurus, 2018).

⁶⁷ Layla Renshaw, *Exhuming Loss: Memory, Materiality and Mass Graves of the Spanish Civil War* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

⁶⁸ Walther L. Bernecker y Sören Brinkmann, *Kampf der Erinnerungen der Spanische Bürgerkrieg in Politik und Gesellschaft: 1936-2010* (Heidelberg: Verlag Graswurzelrevolution, 2020).

⁶⁹ Puede encontrarse una bibliografía exhaustiva del tema en: Antonio Alonso et al., *Las Exhumaciones de La Guerra Civil y La Dictadura Franquista 2000-2019. Estado Actual y Recomendaciones de Futuro* (Madrid: Ministerio de la Presidencia, Relaciones con las Cortes y Memoria Democrática, 2020).

comunicación, la historiografía, la literatura o las exhumaciones, sino a través de esas particulares prácticas monumentales sobre fosas comunes. No se aspiró a conocer el pasado como tal a través de las fosas comunes que habrían sido objeto de prácticas monumentales, sino precisamente el entramado de relaciones en el que las mismas se sitúan y las constituyen. Seguí las advertencias de José M^a Durán de como tal desplazamiento ayuda a superar dos obstáculos de larga tradición teórica en occidente: “la falacia del empirismo con su verdad objetiva” y “la conocida respuesta idealista que considera que lo real no es más que el resultado del pensamiento, confundiendo así lo real con lo pensado.”⁷⁰ Este planteamiento que Durán aplica a las artes es pertinente para abordar las prácticas monumentales pues estudiarlas implica en un primer momento el rechazo de la propia práctica monumental en tanto que representación del recuerdo o de la memoria en sí misma. La propia noción de la memoria que emana de las fosas no debe ser tanto el objeto de estudio, puesto que depende de un entramado social que las precede y que por tanto determina su carácter en tanto que representación. Habría que entender así la práctica monumental como una acción que tiene lugar en un contexto concreto, sin que por ello deba entenderse que la práctica monumental deba someterse causalmente a lo material o económico, pero que sí que se va a ver limitada por ella. Como planteaba Weber, hablamos de una acción social orientada hacia los otros⁷¹ y que está causalmente determinada por la acción de otros, pero no a la hora de adquirir un significado.⁷²

Resulta por tanto relevante seguir también la advertencia de Weber a cerca del rigor del conocimiento que podría arrojarse con relación a las acciones sociales, ya que estaríamos realizando una aproximación interpretativa de los valores subjetivos que los promotores de las prácticas monumentales hubieran puesto en sus acciones y cómo las mismas se ubicaban en un contexto

⁷⁰ Jose María Durán, “El ‘objeto’ de una teoría materialista del arte // Breve ensayo,” Contraindicaciones, 16 de Octubre de 2013, consultado el 14 de Mayo de 2021, https://contraindicaciones.net/el_objeto_de_una_teoria_materialista_del_arte_breve_ensayo_de_jos_e_maria_duran/.

⁷¹ Weber, *Economy and Society*, 78–79.

⁷² Weber, *The Interpretation of Social Reality*, 77.

específico. Esto sería, entender el estudio desde la comprensión o *Verstehen*, de cara a explicar las motivaciones que han llevado a alguien a hacer algo en un contexto concreto. Afiraría Weber a propósito de esa sociología comprensiva “For a science concerned with the meaning of action, ‘explanation’ amounts to identification of the meaningful context to which directly understandable action belongs, corresponding to its subjectively intended meaning.”⁷³ Este postulado llevado la historia del arte explica ciertas inquietudes comunes de la iconología con la sociología que proceden de esa década de 1920. Así cuando Erwyn Panofsky planteaba de qué manera ocuparse de la materia o el significado de las obras de arte, por oposición a su forma, intentaba definir la distinción entre materia o significado, por un lado, y forma, por otro. Ello lo ejemplificaba a través de la idea de un *Gentleman* que saluda retirándose el sombrero. Reconocemos un objeto, el “gentleman”, un evento “el quitarse el sombrero” y automáticamente atribuimos un “significado” que es el del saludo.

*The meaning thus perceived is of an elementary and easily understandable nature, and we shall call it the factual meaning; it is apprehended by simply identifying certain visible forms with certain objects known to me from practical experience, and by identifying the change in their relations with certain actions or events*⁷⁴

A ese significado “factual” Panofsky suma otro “expressional” identificado por la empatía y que amplifica la significación. Por ello advierte que para entender un gesto como el del *Gentleman*, y por tanto para entender un gesto como el de la práctica monumental, no solamente deberíamos ser familiares con el mundo de los objetos y los eventos, sino también con otras cuestiones más que prácticas de las costumbres, tradiciones, y otros elementos de un contexto específico.⁷⁵ No obstante Panofsky advierte que, pese a que hay que estar familiarizado con los temas o conceptos a través de fuentes literarias o por la tradición oral, la información obtenida permite el análisis, no se garantiza que ese análisis sea correcto u objetivo. Podemos entender que ese gesto de la

⁷³ Weber, *Economy and Society*, 84.

⁷⁴ Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 3.

⁷⁵ Panofsky, 12.

práctica monumental, como el de quitarse el sombrero, puede responder a ciertas tradiciones o reproducir patrones anteriores, pero podríamos estar ignorando hacia quién se dirige ese gesto de la práctica monumental. Como el quitarse el sombrero, la práctica monumental se realiza ante otra persona u contexto particular que habla de la especificidad de dicho gesto. Advertía Panofsky que tampoco por describir simplemente las formas se logra un correcto análisis pre-iconográfico ni por aplicar indiscriminadamente el conocimiento literario de los motivos se logra un correcto análisis iconográfico.⁷⁶ En este sentido Anne D'Alleva advierte para los análisis históricos y transculturales que “it may prove to be a challenge to move from the level two to level three: all sorts of gaps in the historical record or your own knowledge, as well as your own preconceptions, may complicate your work.”⁷⁷ Ello respalda la idea de cómo a pesar de la voluntad interpretativa no dejamos de tener una aproximación comprensiva al fenómeno en la historia del arte. En este sentido W.J. Thomas Mitchell señala que, si bien la idea de “iconología” parecería estar obsoleta en la historia del arte en una búsqueda incansable del significado de alegorías y motivos, el estudio interdisciplinar de los medios verbales y visuales “has become a central feature of modern humanistic study. And new forms of critical iconology, or bildwissenschaft or “image science,” have emerged across the fields of humanities, social sciences and even the natural sciences.”⁷⁸ En esto la iconología habría jugado un papel clave, y por ello esas precauciones iniciales no deben de dejarse de lado a la hora de aproximarse a un objeto de estudio como las prácticas monumentales sobre las fosas comunes.

En otro aspecto, Mitchel advirtió años más tarde cómo no obstante se habrían seguido produciendo interpretaciones de tintes imperiales, en las que el totemismo, el fetichismo y la idolatría se atribuyen como creencias sobre las producciones visuales de otras personas en base a sistemas de prejuicios raciales o colectivos. Interpretaciones que asocian dichas prácticas a la idea de lo

⁷⁶ Panofsky, 12.

⁷⁷ Anne D'Alleva, *Methods & Theories of Art History* (London: Laurence King, 2012), 21.

⁷⁸ William John Thomas Mitchell, *Iconology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 13.

“salvaje” o “primitivo”, a la “ignorancia” y a la “superstición.”⁷⁹ Esta es una crítica compartida por David Freedberg en su trabajo sobre el poder de las imágenes, donde buscó contrarrestar la creencia en lo “primitivo” de las reacciones “populares” frente al arte denigrándolas que eran denigradas en tanto que irracionales, supersticiosas o explicables solo en términos de “magia.”⁸⁰

Propongo por tanto entender las prácticas monumentales como una expresión de la memoria que toma una forma específica y ubicarlas en el entramado social que las precede y sobre el que inciden teniendo en cuenta las limitaciones que ha implicado para la propia práctica monumental. Aporto así una lectura del sentido de ese gesto significante que representa la práctica monumental, siendo consciente de la posible proyección de percepciones propias pese al profundo conocimiento de la cultura en que se inscriban y las aspiraciones de objetividad. Partiendo de tales premisas, organicé un plan de investigación que atendiera en primer lugar al reconocimiento de las formas mismas sobre el espacio antes que proyectar ningún tipo de análisis. Durante los nueve primeros meses de investigación realicé una profunda de numerosas bases de datos en relación con las fosas comunes, así como literatura y redes sociales. De las primeras destacan los mapas de fosas y las bases de datos asociadas como los mapas de fosas elaborados por gobiernos autonómicos como el de Galicia, País vasco, Navarra, Aragón, Cataluña, Extremadura, Valencia y Andalucía. A ellos se suman iniciativas de centros universitarios como los mapas y bases de datos elaborados desde la Universidad de Oviedo para Asturias y la UNED para Ciudad Real.⁸¹ Así mismo mucha información ha sido publicada en canales como Facebook, Twitter o Telegram, donde diversas asociaciones de memoria tienen grupos y canales para difundir información dentro de la cual muchas veces se refería a prácticas

⁷⁹ William John Thomas Mitchell, *Image Science: Iconology, Visual Culture, and Media Aesthetics* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2018), 75.

⁸⁰ David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

⁸¹ Una recopilación de dichos mapas puede consultarse en: ILLA-CSIC, “Mapas de Fosas Comunes,” Las políticas de la memoria, consultado Abril 6, 2021, <https://politicasdelamemoria.org/mapa-de-fosas-comunes/>.

monumentales.⁸² Estas últimas redes sociales han tenido una especial importancia, y cada vez la tendrán más en el campo humanístico en general, en el de los *Memory Studies* en particular⁸³ y en el de las fosas comunes vinculadas a mi estudio en concreto.⁸⁴ En contraste, la prensa ha perdido valor a la hora de documentar procesos como los que trato de estudiar, que no tienen un respaldo institucional claro, o si lo tienen, no disponen de los medios para ingresar en los cauces de comunicación que posteriormente quedan sistemáticamente ordenados en las bibliotecas y en los buscadores web, políticamente mediados.⁸⁵ En base a esa revisión pude elaborar mi propia cartografía de prácticas monumentales sobre fosas comunes en el territorio, superando los 600 registros (Mapa 1 y Anexo I). Ese conocimiento superficial de las prácticas monumentales habría resultado fundamental para disponer de un primer material sobre el que trabajar y focalizar la investigación desde lo cuantitativo.

En una primera base de datos en bruto donde contemplaba datos muy básicos como el municipio, la provincia, si era una fosa o fruto de la exhumación, la temporalidad, la financiación o el promotor. No obstante, muchas veces estos datos ni siquiera era posible obtenerlos. También atendí a ciertos aspectos reconocibles a simple vista a través de la documentación visual disponible, lo cual también sistematicé: la forma, los textos, el espacio, la visibilidad... que me permitieron realizar una primera lectura antes de poder emitir análisis comprensivos. Gracias a ello di con varios datos relevantes: la concentración de monumentos tras la exhumación en aquellas regiones donde los asesinatos habían sido irregulares, grandes fosas en las zonas ocupadas ante el avance militar, preferencia por los jardines en el sur o por la simulación de

⁸² Una recopilación de dichos enlaces puede consultarse en: ILLA-CSIC, “Enlaces a entidades y organizaciones de memoria histórica,” Las políticas de la memoria, consultado Abril 6, 2021, <https://politicasdelamemoria.org/en-los-medios/enlaces/>.

⁸³ Andrew Hoskins, *Digital Memory Studies: Media Past in Transition* (New York: Routledge, 2018).

⁸⁴ Francisco Ferrández, “From Tear to Pixel Political Correctness and Digital Emotions in the Exhumation of Mass Graves from the Civil War,” en *Engaging the Emotions in Spanish Culture and History*, ed. Luisa Elena Delgado, Pura Fernández y Jo Labanyi (Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press, 2016), 242–61.

⁸⁵ Whitney Webb, “The Trust Project: Big Media and Silicon Valley’s Weaponized Algorithms Silence Dissent,” MintPress News, Junio 7, 2019, consultado Mayo 14, 2021, <https://www.mintpressnews.com/the-trust-project-big-media-and-silicon-valleys-weaponized-algorithms-silence-dissent/259030/>.

sepulturas en la meseta. Se trataban de simples patrones, pero de ellos pude tener las intuiciones suficientes para reconocer que se estaba desarrollando una respuesta muy heterogénea a un problema compartido. En este sentido, resulta importante reflexionar sobre las nuevas posibilidades que los recursos digitales ofrecen a los investigadores y como las Humanidades Digitales integran las herramientas hermenéuticas y críticas tradicionales del campo, a un nuevo espectro de posibilidades. Ante esta situación Rens Bod pregunta “Who’s Afraid of Patterns?”⁸⁶ Para Bod precisamente la noción de patrón cubre aquello que se encuentra entre la tendencia inexacta y la ley específica. Consiste en una regularidad, a menudo con excepciones, y que precisamente a través de técnicas digitales es posible de reconocer con una facilidad anteriormente imposible.⁸⁷ Y tal fue mi experiencia tras una revisión exhaustiva de bases de datos y redes sociales. Al contrario que la literatura y los medios afirmaban, existían cientos de lugares donde las fosas comunes habían sido objeto de una práctica monumental. De hecho, aunque pude reconocer más de 600, probablemente existan más.

Pero lo relevante, no era el patrón en sí, sino que el patrón fuese síntoma de algo mucho más complejo. Y he ahí uno de los retos a la hora de desarrollar una investigación en un campo dan poco trabajado: era necesario encontrar las analogías y conocer tantas experiencias como fuese posible a fin de dar con un patrón a través de las formas que permitiese entender las prácticas monumentales. Entenderlas en una trayectoria histórica de producción de formas específicas, ubicadas la sociedad en la que buscarían incidir y sólo a partir de ahí poder indagar en torno a los sentidos de esa externalización del recuerdo a través del gesto significante en el proceso de toma de conciencia. El reto resultó no caer en la anomalía, indudablemente daría con experiencias excepcionales, pero en ellas no se encontraba la lógica que subyacía en las prácticas monumentales de manera que pudiera generalizarse o extrapolarse. De este modo resulta evidente que las interpretaciones no surgen de la nada y

⁸⁶ Rens Bod, “Who’s Afraid of Patterns?: The Particular versus the Universal and the Meaning of Humanities 3.0,” *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 128, no. 4 (2013): 171–80.

⁸⁷ Bod, 173.

que, por el contrario, están basadas en el análisis de las experiencias. Partiendo de la gran cantidad de información de la que se puede disponer a través de medios digitales, el interés sea acercarse a la materialidad misma de las prácticas monumentales. Por ello lejos de buscar la unidad basada en generalizaciones, traté de encontrar la lógica que subyacía en cada una de las experiencias. Para ello decidí tomar una muestra tan amplia como me fuese posible y dejar el estudio cuantitativo para acercarme de manera cualitativa a las propias prácticas monumentales.

Establecí criterios para la elección de la muestra que atendiesen a crear una selección que recogiese el mayor número de variables posible de las que incluía en mi base de datos. Debía incluir prácticas que habían tenido lugar durante la Dictadura, en los años de la Transición y las de las últimas dos décadas: principales períodos en los que reconocía en mi base de datos que estas prácticas se habían producido. Prácticas que atendiesen a una producción comunitaria, otras con participación de administraciones locales y otras con participación de autoridades autonómicas. También en las que las iniciativas hubiesen sido familiares y en las que las que hubieran partido de perfiles más políticos o militantes. Además, debía incluir tantas regiones como me fuese posible, tomando siempre varios casos de cada región escogida de cara a que se incluyesen las diferentes variables anteriormente descritas y donde pudiese atenderse también no solamente a la disparidad geográfica, cultural o económica, también al hecho de que la represión habría tenido lugar de manera diferente en diferentes puntos del territorio y eso habría condicionado adicionalmente las propias prácticas. Estos datos los pude intuir a través de la recopilación de datos con la consulta de bases de datos, cartografías, publicaciones y redes sociales, pero no podían entenderse de una manera cualitativa. Si hubiera tomado la muestra en una única región estaría eminentemente sesgada. Por ello seleccioné 100 localidades en base a esos criterios, y acudí a las técnicas etnográficas a desarrollar una comprensión cualitativa sobre la muestra escogida (Mapa 2 y Anexo II). En mi caso necesité más de 25.000 kilómetros de carretera para solo conocer un centenar, de las

más de 600 que se han desarrollado en puntos por todo el territorio. Una muestra bastante amplia pese a todo, que no consistió en visitar solamente los lugares y entrevistar a quienes estaban implicados en estas prácticas: familiares, activistas, políticos, arqueólogos, forenses y autoridades locales y regionales (Anexo III).

Mi interés en las fuentes orales muchas veces no era simplemente la construcción del relato histórico a través del único testimonio que existía del mismo, sino el testimonio mismo partiendo de la premisa de que cada relato representaba un punto de vista en negociación con una memoria colectiva y testimoniaba ciertas significaciones otorgadas a la producción de la práctica monumental en la que ellos tomaban parte desde posiciones muy dispares. En este punto urge aclarar que realicé las entrevistas entre diciembre 2018 y marzo 2020. La entrevista en tanto que técnica de investigación situada, la temporalidad en la que se produjeron resulta fundamental puesto que las opiniones pueden cambiar a lo largo del tiempo, especialmente ante un objeto de estudio que sigue desarrollándose en la actualidad. Pero también es necesario tener en cuenta que participaba de relaciones humanas, que no pueden ser medidas en términos de horas de entrevista, pues el propio contacto humano, la conversación informal, compartiendo el tiempo y los sentimientos resultaron muchas veces más reveladoras que las frías declaraciones en plenos municipales que pueden testimoniarse documentalmente. De hecho, estas relaciones me resultaron fundamentales para poder dar desarrollo a la propia investigación. Como plantea Pablo Pozzi, el considerado que el “mundo militante” es algo que no suele quedar registrado en fuentes escritas pero que resulta central para comprender un momento político o social, situación de la que deriva la necesidad de acudir a la entrevista en la tradición de la historia oral.⁸⁸ Por ello, pese a dicha voluntad, aunque no existan abundantes documentos y pese a poder desplazarse a un lugar a documentar una práctica monumental, contactar con sus promotores no es tan sencillo. Las redes entre las propias personas

⁸⁸ Pablo Pozzi, “Sobre Entrevistar Militantes y Activistas,” en *Haciendo Historia. Herramientas Para La Investigación Histórica*, ed. Pablo Pozzi et al. (Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2020), 201–12.

implicadas en la producción, estudio, promoción y difusión de las prácticas monumentales me resultaron cruciales: disponer del contacto de un arqueólogo, familiar o encargado político en una región me abría las posibilidades a que me contactasen con otras personas implicadas en las prácticas monumentales en el mismo entorno o por el contrario que me lanzasen a otras regiones con las que mantuviesen relaciones.

Este tipo de contactos informales finalmente son los que fraguaron mi agenda de contactos, y esta condicionó mis posibilidades de acceso al conocimiento cualitativo de experiencias de prácticas monumentales a la hora de desarrollar el trabajo de investigación en el campo. Haber tomado una muestra tan amplia no habría sido posible por tanto sin que las propias personas entrevistadas me siguiesen poniendo en contacto con otras personas implicadas en las prácticas monumentales, pero a hay una limitación en mi investigación en ocasiones al haber sobrerepresentado ciertas regiones y a no haber podido incluir muchas más iniciativas en otros lugares a las que no he podido acceder por el simple hecho da la imposibilidad de contactar a los promotores de las prácticas monumentales en dichos lugares. Este punto sugiere además una reflexión metodológica adicional con relación a la técnica y de nuevo es la importancia de la telefonía móvil y de la conectividad a internet en el territorio, lo cual me ha permitido la comunicación a través de aplicaciones de mensajería instantánea las cuales resultan un canal de toma de contacto mucho menos agresivo que la llamada directa y mucho más efectivo que la escritura de cartas o correos electrónicos. Los cambios que nuestra sociedad vive hacia la conexión permanente a este tipo de dispositivos móviles han permitido además un trabajo de investigación en el campo y un contacto con los diferentes actores que solo 10 años atrás hubiera sido impensable en tan corto periodo de tiempo y que hoy son una realidad para el uso de técnicas etnográficas.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ Sandra Staudacher y Andrea Kaiser-Grolimund, “WhatsApp in Ethnographic Research: Methodological Reflections on New Edges of the Field,” *Basel Papers on Political Transformations*, no. 10 Mobilities-In and out of Africa (2016): 24–40.

Llegado a este punto, urge aclarar que, en ningún caso considero que este trabajo fuese una “etnografía” como tal. No habité largo tiempo con una comunidad concreta ni mi objetivo era describir sus prácticas tras dicha convivencia. Tampoco acudí a la etnografía ante una “crisis” de la disciplina de la Historia del Arte, como ocurre bajo la estela de Hal Foster al acudir al diálogo con los saberes y formas etnográficos y antropológicos para privilegiar imágenes asociadas a una alteridad cultural.⁹⁰ Por el contrario, mi apuesta fue por unas técnicas que me permitían acceder de una manera pragmática a mi campo de estudio y de una manera comprometida desde mi apuesta por una historia del arte marcada por la sociología comprensiva: la entrevista, la observación y la participación. Estas me fueron esenciales para poder entender unas prácticas que no habían dejado apenas rastro documental. Hay escasas referencias en medios de comunicación, eventuales declaraciones en plenos municipales o alguna fotografía antigua. Esto refiere al nivel material evidentemente, porque se tratan de prácticas que tienen un recorrido mucho más largo y que dependen esencialmente de los vivos. Por tanto, tendrían una importancia fundamental para comprender las prácticas monumentales los relatos de aquellas personas que promovieron estas iniciativas en origen, que conocieron a quienes las promovieron o que todavía hoy participan del cuidado y reproducción de las prácticas asociadas a la fosa, resulta fundamental. Sobre todo, porque estas prácticas no responden al primitivismo denunciado y si se tratases como prácticas primitivas se produciría un punto de vista jerárquico y que privilegia la producción cultural elitista.

En este sentido, sin resultar una etnografía sino el uso de algunas de sus técnicas, las técnicas como la observación y la observación participante me resultaron un componente fundamental de este trabajo precisamente para romper con esa visión vertical. Acudí a diversos eventos donde la práctica monumental se extiende más allá del propio objeto. Observaciones realizadas en entre enero de 2019 y marzo de 2020. Una observación que siempre traté de

⁹⁰ Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996).

realizar siguiendo los ritmos, la cotidianidad, los deseos de los participantes. Además, en ocasiones la posición de observador traspasaba la frontera hacia la participación de los propios procesos en tanto que miembro más de una marcha memorial, de una ofrenda en un homenaje, de un minuto de silencio en una ceremonia o en la limpieza de una fosa común misma. En esas situaciones ya no se está documentando únicamente el fenómeno, sino que se forma parte de este en tanto que observación participante. Por otra parte, la elección de este tipo de eventos observados responde también a ciertas tipologías definidas: inauguraciones, aniversarios del asesinato o celebraciones específicas anuales tales como el aniversario de la proclamación de la República, el Día de la Mujer Trabajadora o el Día Internacional de los Trabajadores, relacionados con la comunidad política o como el Día de Todos los Santos, con un sesgo religioso, o el de los aniversarios del golpe de Estado de 1936 como fecha de inicio de la represión. También realicé observaciones en procesos de exhumación o de construcción misma de monumentos. No obstante, acudir a todos los homenajes no siempre era posible pese al deseo de incluir diversas tipologías en la muestra. Igual que no lo ha sido a otros investigadores en este mismo campo que se han visto forzados a formular respuestas investigativas rápidas ante lo efímero de ciertos contextos de estudio, que tienen lugar en un periodo muy corto de tiempo y en puntos geográficos muy dispares.⁹¹ Sumada a esta circunstancia, siguiendo la indicación de Eduardo Restrepo, “Bajo ningún motivo la obtención de los datos durante el trabajo de campo puede estar por encima del respeto por la dignidad e intimidad de la gente, no puede implicar ningún tipo de agresión física o simbólica.”⁹² Por ello muchas veces renuncié a fotografiar, a grabar o a entrevistar para, por el contrario, acompañar a aquellas personas que estaban compartiendo conmigo un momento especialmente importante de sus vidas, y precisamente hacerlo también importante para mí como observador privilegiado. Indudablemente esto lastraba mi investigación, pero reforzaba mi ética como investigador, pues además el trabajo versa sobre

⁹¹ Francisco Ferrández, “Rapid Response Ethnographies in Turbulent Times: Researching Mass Grave Exhumations in Contemporary Spain,” *Anthropology Today* 29, no. 6 (2013): 18–22.

⁹² Eduardo Restrepo, *Etnografía: Alcances, Técnicas y Éticas* (Bogotá: Envío, 2016), 92.

una sociedad en conflicto y como investigador se carga con la responsabilidad ética, moral y de las consecuencias posibles de divulgar los materiales con los que se compone el texto a publicar.⁹³

De esta manera, después de doce meses de trabajo de campo, comencé el análisis de los materiales con vistas a hacer frente a las preguntas que guiaron la investigación e hice frente al análisis de los materiales con el objeto de contestar a las preguntas. Organicé así la escritura del texto en tres partes, cada una de las cuales hace frente a una etapa del análisis que se relaciona directamente con cada una de las preguntas que guiaron la investigación. De esta manera en la primera parte se busca contestar a la pregunta de cómo se habría desarrollado históricamente el proceso de producción de las prácticas monumentales y qué formas habrían tomado las mismas, en la segunda parte a la pregunta de cómo se insertarían las prácticas monumentales en esa sociedad en la que buscarían incidir y finalmente en la tercera parte se responde a cuáles podrían ser los sentidos de esa externalización del recuerdo a través del gesto significante en el proceso de toma de conciencia. A su vez estas tres grandes partes están subdivididas en tres capítulos cada una, con sus correspondientes secciones, para progresivamente ir construyendo una argumentación que responda a las particularidades de cada una de esas preguntas.

Así en la primera parte, sugiero un relato cronológico de cómo las prácticas monumentales se fueron desarrollando desde 1936 hasta la actualidad ubicándolas en el contexto en el que se producían y reconociendo las principales formas que tomaban, bien sobre las propias fosas comunes, bien tras la exhumación de estas. En el primer capítulo comienzo con aquellas iniciativas que comenzaron a tener lugar de una manera informal, como actos de recuerdo internos, y cómo progresivamente fueron tomando forma en el exterior en forma de piedras, crucifijos y otras marcas, a las que progresivamente se suman ofrendas florales organizadas abierta o clandestinamente. Tras ello, en el segundo capítulo construyo los relatos de

⁹³ Pablo Pozzi, “La ética, la historia oral y sus consecuencias,” *Historia, voces y memoria*, no. 11 (2017): 81–91.

cómo se produjeron las prácticas monumentales sobre las fosas comunes y tras la exhumación de las mismas en el contexto violento que supuso la Transición en los años setenta y ochenta, para en el tercer capítulo atender a las prácticas monumentales de nuevo sobre fosas comunes y tras la exhumación de las mismas desde el año 2000, cuando irrumpen en el debate las nociones de la “Memoria Histórica” y el “Giro forense.” A la hora de construir esta primera parte convergen fuentes bibliográficas y documentales con relatos orales y la propia documentación visual obtenida a través del trabajo de campo. Trato de ilustrar de manera sistemática el proceso de producción de las formas que adoptan las prácticas monumentales sin entrar en un análisis pormenorizado de su significación social, más allá de ubicarlas en el propio discurso de los productores y marcar esa diferencia entre aquellas que se ubican sobre las propias fosas y las que han necesitado de una exhumación de los cuerpos para tener lugar, dos hechos que marcan líneas cronológicas paralelas en un mismo proceso que marca ciertas diferencias formales y que por lo tanto describo por separado pese a converger en las siguientes partes del texto. Así defino cómo se ha desarrollado históricamente el proceso de producción de las prácticas monumentales y qué formas habrían tomado.

Habiendo aportado una visión amplia del proceso de producción de las prácticas monumentales planteo la segunda parte, “Caminando hacia y desde las fosas comunes.” En esta segunda parte hago frente a que las prácticas monumentales se insertasen ya no en un proceso dialéctico histórico sino en un contexto social complejo. Contexto que habría influido de manera fundamental a la hora de producirlas y que a la vez sería sobre el contexto en que se buscaría incidir en tanto que acciones sociales. En el cuarto capítulo planteo la dimensión espacial de las prácticas sociales organizadas en torno a las fosas que han sido objeto de una práctica monumental, atendiendo a las ideas del duelo, de la derrota política y del ostracismo urbano. Tras ello en el quinto capítulo se plantea la llegada del paradigma forense y cómo el mismo se ha relacionado con las prácticas monumentales a través de las nociones de “dignidad” y “entierro digno,” donde el “giro forense” ha venido de la mano de un individualismo que

ha derivado en la destrucción de fosas comunes donde se habían producido prácticas monumentales. Finalmente, en el sexto capítulo atiendo a la vuelta al monumento, cómo tras las insatisfacciones que ha producido la llegada del “giro forense” se han vuelto a producir prácticas monumentales sobre las fosas comunes tras su exhumación o cuando las fosas no se han podido localizar. Por ello formulo los resultados de esta fase del análisis donde el trabajo de documentación pierde peso en favor de las observaciones y el trabajo etnográfico. En este sentido, de nuevo hice uso de fuentes bibliográficas, documentos, fuentes orales y observaciones directas, e incluyo experiencias de prácticas monumentales no descritas en la primera parte que sin embargo aquí resultan especialmente relevantes por responder directamente a los debates en torno a las exhumaciones y el paradigma forense. Con ello se expongo cómo se insertarían las prácticas monumentales en esa sociedad en la que buscarían incidir.

Ubicadas de esta manera las prácticas monumentales en una trayectoria histórica de su producción y problematizadas en diversos aspectos en la sociedad en la que se inscriben, pasé al análisis de estas atendiendo a la cuestión de cuáles podrían ser los sentidos de esa externalización del recuerdo a través del gesto significante en el proceso de toma de conciencia. Por ello en la última parte “La memoria encarnada de las fosas comunes” planteo en el séptimo capítulo cómo se ha producido el fenómeno de la memoria y cómo puede verse un proceso de exteriorización de la misma. Ese proceso de exteriorización lo defino formalmente y lo asocio a dos componentes: las supervivencias de la antigüedad y el acto icónico sustitutivo, por el cual las prácticas monumentales producen una imagen que va a sustituir a la de los cuerpos asumiendo sus propiedades. En el octavo capítulo expongo como esa particular práctica monumental pese a sus rasgos formales que podrían vincularse a una tradición funeraria responden a una voluntad de influir en la sociedad en la que se inscriben. Esa forma de influir es comparable a la voluntad de escritura de la historia y la asocio a la idea de una comunidad perdida, que hace uso de saberes tradicionales del cuerpo. Tras ello, en noveno capítulo explicito como el

resultado de la práctica monumental, en tanto que proceso de producción de signos, lleva a que la misma se convierta en un campo en disputa. Mientras que a través de ciertas formas se expresa honor, a través de los discursos se reproduce una posición de dominados. Esta situación la complejizo con las voluntades de destrucción de monumentos, de manipulación o de incorporación a las políticas institucionales. Una disputa por tanto que planteo que continuarán en el futuro. Esta tercera parte responde así a un análisis final en el que convergen las teorías de autores muy heterogéneos, por los cuales sugiero una interpretación de los materiales expuestos con anterioridad. Sería tras el análisis como respondo por tanto a cuáles son los sentidos de esa externalización del recuerdo a través del gesto significante en el proceso de toma de conciencia.

De esta manera concluyo el texto habiendo definido el desarrollo histórico del proceso de producción de las prácticas monumentales y las formas que habrían tomado, comprendido la sociedad en la que buscan incidir y atribuyendo un sentido en tanto que gestos significantes que implicarían una toma de conciencia en esa externalización de los recuerdos marcada por unas limitaciones que han jugado en su contra. Determino por tanto que las prácticas monumentales sobre las fosas comunes derivan de un proceso de toma de conciencia en el cual el recuerdo es externalizado en un gesto significante limitado por la realidad material que integra los cuerpos en la construcción de una nueva imagen con la cual se busca incidir en la sociedad. Con ello habría cubierto un tema poco estudiado en el campo de los estudios sobre la producción de memorias en relación a las fosas comunes desde 1936, habría abarcado el conjunto del territorio completando el vacío existente en la literatura académica al respecto, habría desarrollado una investigación que más allá de su interés en base al contenido y aporte novedoso en relación al tema estudiado, y finalmente habría aportado una forma de aproximación al objeto de estudio novedosa para el campo de la historia del arte que trata con temas contemporáneos.

Finalmente urge señalar que la posibilidad real de abordar una investigación de este tipo ha requerido no solamente de un diseño conceptual y metodológico adecuados, sino también de apoyo institucional y de fondos. Lamentablemente, los marcos institucionales de los cuales se puede obtener financiación no se suelen adecuar al avance de los debates teóricos y metodológicos. En este sentido tuve la suerte de resultar beneficiario de un contrato de investigación doctoral MSCA-H2020-COFUND, en el marco del programa pionero EUmanities, en la a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School for the Humanities Cologne de la Universidad de Colonia. Aquí se me ha proporcionado el fundamental apoyo que representa un contrato, y también la absoluta confianza en mi proyecto y en mi apuesta conceptual y metodológica. El espíritu de a.r.t.e.s. está basado en el fomento de investigaciones interdisciplinares en las Humanidades, buscando trascender la fragmentación de la academia entre Artes Liberales, Ciencias Sociales y Ciencias Naturales.⁹⁴ En dicho espíritu se enmarca la vision del programa EUmanities, “to have empowered Early Stage Researchers (ESRs) in the Humanities to become aware of their pivotal role in shaping the future of Europe. In an era of increasingly fast societal and technical transformations, with global and transcultural processes involving constant redefinitions of culture, life, nature and climate, excellent Humanities are highly required.”⁹⁵ Programa que plantea la investigación en Humanidades no de manera estanca sino inmersa en los retos del mundo actual con vistas a implicar socialmente y liderar los debates sociales en el marco de las instituciones democráticas transnacionales. Sin embargo, no desarrollé esta investigación únicamente desde Colonia, donde conté con el apoyo fundamental del Dr. Norbert Nußbaum. A la dirección desde a.r.t.e.s. se sumó la de la Dr. Françoise Dubosquet, directora de *L'équipe de recherche interlangue : mémoires, identités, territoires - ERIMIT* en la Université de

⁹⁴ “About a.r.t.e.s.,” a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School for the Humanities Cologne, consultado el 8 de Mayo de 2020, <http://artes.phil-fak.uni-koeln.de/en/about-artes/profile>.

⁹⁵ “a.r.t.e.s. EUmanities. Our Mission,” a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School for the Humanities Cologne, University of Cologne, consultado el 8 de Mayo de 2020, <http://artes.phil-fak.uni-koeln.de/en/doctorate/funding-programmes/artes-eumanities/our-mission>.

Rennes 2⁹⁶ y el Dr. Francisco Ferrández, investigador principal en el CSIC del proyecto *SUBTIERRO: Exhumaciones de fosas comunes y derechos humanos en perspectiva histórica, transnacional y comparada*,⁹⁷ al cual también me adscribo y se adscribe la presente investigación, esencial también pues agrupa a investigadores de excelencia del campo de las políticas de la memoria. Finalmente la investigación está también adscrita al grupo de investigación *DEVISIONES. Discursos, genealogías y prácticas en la creación visual contemporánea* en la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid,⁹⁸ centro *partner* para la co-tutela del programa.

Me gustaría así agradecer a todos quienes han hecho posible la presente investigación, pues junto a apoyo y guía del Dr. Norbert Nußbaum, de la Dr. Françoise Dubosquet y del Dr. Francisco Ferrández, no hubiera sido posible escribir estas líneas si los encargados del programa EUmanities no hubieran creído en mi proyecto. Por tanto, me gustaría agradecer al equipo de la a.r.te.s. Graduate School for the Humanities, por el apoyo que me han apoyado todo este tiempo. También a los miembros de la *Klasse 5* y del programa EUmanities donde desde el inicio de la investigación pude compartir mis inquietudes en un entorno interdisciplinar. También, gracias a Jesús Carrillo y a Valeria Camporesi por su apoyo desde la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, donde comencé mis estudios hace ya más de 10 años. Agradecer también a todos quienes en algún momento en mis presentaciones o en intercambios académicos me han dado algún *feedback*, buenas ideas y duras críticas en eventos en Santiago de Cuba, Dosotia, Colonia, Grenoble, Rennes, Barcelona, Konstanz, Cambridge o Madrid. Junto a ellos, agradecer también a la Dr. Vanesa Garbero por todos los intercambios desde su estancia en el CSIC y desde entonces, trabajando juntos sobre la memoria de Madrid. Pero imposible no agradecer también a los miembros del proyecto “SUBTIERRO”, pues desde el primer momento me

⁹⁶ “Équipe de Recherche Interlangues : Mémoire, Identité, Territoires (ERIMIT),” Université Rennes 2, consultado el 11 de Mayo de 2020, <https://www.univ-rennes2.fr/structure/erimit>.

⁹⁷ “Las Políticas de La Memoria – Balance de Una Década de Exhumaciones En España,” consultado el 17 de Febrero de 2020, <https://politicasdelamemoria.org/>.

⁹⁸ “DEVISIONES. Discursos, genealogías y prácticas en la creación visual contemporánea / Discourses, genealogies and practices in contemporary visual creation,” DeVisiones, consultado el 11 de Mayo de 2020, <https://www.devisiones.com>.

incorporaron como uno más y fue gracias a sus años de experiencia y profundo conocimiento del campo por lo que pude empaparme del conocimiento necesario para hacer frente al reto que me proponía de cubrir el hueco que representaban las prácticas monumentales en la gran cantidad de estudios que ellos ya habían desarrollado al respecto. Pero de ellos, sobre todo gracias a Miriam Saqqa Carazo, pues fue quien me introdujo en el mundo de las exhumaciones y las investigaciones forenses y cuya investigación sobre las exhumaciones de Posguerra se ha ido desarrollando en el CSIC a la par que la mía, acompañándonos, apoyándonos y compartiendo inquietudes todo este tiempo.

Agradecer así desde el plano personal también a mis padres y familia, a mis amigos y a todos los que en algún momento me han acompañado en mis investigaciones, compartido mis inquietudes o apoyado sin reservas durante todo este tiempo. Una investigación no solo se hace a través de una hipótesis, buenas ideas y planes de recolección de datos sino a través de una práctica del día a día donde el afecto de con quienes convivimos resulta básico. Y finalmente, y de manera fundamental, no puedo dejar de agradecer a todos los familiares, activistas, militantes, asociaciones, investigadores y demás personas implicadas a título individual, colectiva o a institucional en el desarrollo de las prácticas monumentales. Es gracias a ellos a quienes esta investigación ha sido posible, tanto por haber contribuido compartiendo sus experiencias como por haberme abierto las puertas muchas veces a un rincón íntimo pero fundamental de sus vidas. Esta investigación versa sobre su trabajo, sin él las memorias producidas sobre las fosas comunes no existirían y por tanto sin su voluntad de compartir sus experiencias nunca hubiera sido posible estudiarlas y conectarlas unas con otras de esta manera comprensiva. Finalmente agradecer su agencia a quienes fueron asesinados desde 1936 y enterrados en las fosas comunes, pues es a través de sus cuerpos como los vivos han seguido escribiendo la historia para guiarnos en el presente tal y como se va a tratar de sostener en las próximas páginas.

Conclusiones

Llegados a este punto, puede resultar abrumador el paso por una geografía tan compleja como es la que se configura en relación con los rastros de esas prácticas monumentales sobre las fosas comunes dispersas en la totalidad del territorio. Una geografía que no ha podido ser entendida en base a una linealidad cronológica únicamente, sino que ha debido ser problematizada participando de la misma sociedad en la que se inscribe con sus limitaciones materiales que la condicionan, y que ha podido ser interpretada en base a un marco teórico heterogéneo como lo son las mismas prácticas monumentales. Unas prácticas que trataron de ser definidas bajo la hipótesis de que derivarían de un proceso de toma de conciencia en el cual el recuerdo es externalizado en un gesto significante limitado por la realidad material que integra los cuerpos en la construcción de una nueva imagen con la cual se busca incidir en la sociedad. Unas prácticas que inscribí como el resultado de una lógica cultural que proviene de la antigüedad, por la cual, sin embargo, pese a compartir sus formas, se convierten en signos singulares, propios de las fosas comunes. Signos derivados de esos gestos de sepultura, a través de los cuales se ha escrito la historia sobre el territorio. Una historia donde los cuerpos son testimonio del sentido del pasado y que pese a los avances biomédicos de la investigación forense, siguen siendo usados bajo una lógica tradicional y comunitaria, con objetivos políticos específicos. Unos objetivos que llevan a que esos signos se encuentren en disputa, puesto que, como todo signo, existe un combate abierto por monopolizar su significado. Haber usado los mismos cuerpos para escribir de una manera contra hegemónica la historia sobre el territorio, haciendo uso

de las formas preexistentes disponibles, es la especificidad por la cual reconocí lo singular de las prácticas monumentales sobre las fosas comunes.

El objetivo que propuse para esta investigación fue la definición de ese desarrollo histórico del proceso de producción de las prácticas monumentales y las formas que habían tomado, entenderlas en la sociedad en la que buscan incidir y tratar de atribuirles un sentido en tanto que gestos significantes que implicarían una toma de conciencia en esa externalización de los recuerdos marcada por unas limitaciones que han jugado en su contra. Un objetivo que formulé en base a la idea de responder a las preguntas que guiaron la investigación: ¿Cómo se habría desarrollado históricamente el proceso de producción de las prácticas monumentales y qué formas habrían tomado las mismas? ¿Cómo se insertarían las prácticas monumentales en esa sociedad en la que buscarían incidir? ¿Cuáles podrían ser los sentidos de esa externalización del recuerdo a través del gesto significante en el proceso de toma de conciencia? Estas preguntas se formularon cubriendo un ángulo muerto en los estudios dedicados a la producción de la memoria de la Guerra y la Dictadura desde 1936. Dejando a un lado la literatura académica sobre la propia historia del período, la mayor parte de los estudios que abordan la producción de la memoria tuvieron un especial énfasis a los procesos de exhumaciones y a su impacto social. Las que en esta investigación se denominaron “prácticas monumentales” fueron estudiadas fuera de la historia del arte y con un enfoque eminentemente regional en los trabajos de Javier Giráldez en Andalucía, Conxita Mir en Cataluña, Jesús Alonso en Esukadi, Jesús Aguirre en La Rioja, John Thompson en Galicia, o local como los de Ricard Conesa en Barcelona, Francisco Ferrández en Aranda de Duero y Vicent Gabarda en Paterna. Por ello, resultó necesario atender a las prácticas monumentales desde una perspectiva que abarcase de manera amplia el territorio donde se habían producido. A su vez, era necesario también realizar un análisis que arrojase luz desde la historia del arte, la cual había ignorado históricamente este tipo de prácticas y parte esencial de la cultura material del pasado reciente y la contemporaneidad.

Por tanto, puse el foco en la totalidad del territorio y desplacé el objeto de estudio desde las “obras de arte” que gozan de tal estatus a otro tipo de prácticas culturales y artefactos. Por ello me resultó necesario apostar por una metodología interdisciplinar e incorporé desde la noción de la sociología comprensiva o *Verstehen* de Weber hasta la de la iconología de Panofsky, de cara a no solamente describir sino también comprender el significado de las prácticas monumentales, identificando el contexto significativo. Es en ese punto en el que cobró sentido la noción interdisciplinar por la cual los significados factuales y expresivos podrían ser interpretados a través del uso de técnicas etnográficas o propias de la metodología cualitativa -y no tanto desde los medios utilizados en el estudio clásico de los signos desde la erudición. El centro de esta metodología de investigación fue un estudio interdisciplinar de los medios verbales y visuales, lo cual representa una novedad en el campo de estudio de la memoria de la Guerra y la Dictadura. Pero pese a su novedad en el campo, esta no era sino la incorporación de formas de trabajo de las “image science”, “critical iconologies” o del “bildwissenschaft”. Por la larga experiencia metodológica de estas disciplinas pude evitar caer en ciertos errores del pasado en el campo. Participé de manera plena en el mismo, relacionándome con los diferentes agentes desde la horizontalidad y evité que se proyecten las tradicionales ideas de lo “salvaje” o “primitivo”, a la “ignorancia” y a la “superstición” en aquellas prácticas de producción de imágenes que no se corresponden con las de la “obra de arte” establecida. Evité de esta manera, como ha ocurrido en el pasado, acudir a la explicación de la creencia en la “magia” desde la “irrationalidad” de lo “popular”. En este sentido, la investigación presentó también un aporte novedoso a nivel metodológico en el campo de estudio al introducir las mismas innovaciones disciplinares no aplicadas con anterioridad. Por este motivo, aporto a nivel disciplinar una experiencia en la que una práctica monumental que parte de las comunidades y que no se corresponde con el concepto tradicional de “obra de arte” pueda tener el mismo estatus en la construcción de un relato histórico artístico que cualquier otro objeto de estudio sin la necesidad de emitir prejuicios elitistas sobre las mismas.

Partiendo de estas premisas, mi plan de investigación partió de un estudio en profundidad tanto de la literatura existente sobre el tema como de la información que circula en las redes sociales y las bases de datos de fosas comunes, a través de las cuales pude reconocer numerosas prácticas monumentales vagamente documentadas. Junto a mapas institucionales como los de Galicia, País vasco, Navarra, Aragón, Cataluña, Extremadura, Valencia, Andalucía, Asturias y Ciudad Real, me resultó fundamental la información volcada en redes como Facebook, Twitter o Telegram, generalmente ausente en la literatura científica. Producto de esa revisión creé una base de datos que superó los 600 registros y que me permitió obtener una imagen general de la cual reconocer patrones, heterogeneidades, comenzar a hacer frente a las preguntas que guiaban la investigación y recortar la muestra. Evité las generalizaciones, en favor de tomar en cuenta 100 localidades donde se han producido prácticas monumentales, bajo el criterio de incluir diferentes de las reconocidas en la base de datos, tales como la disparidad geográfica, cultural, económica o del formato de la represión. Visité estas localidades para documentar visualmente y entrevistar a los agentes implicados en la producción de las prácticas monumentales, tales como familiares, activistas, políticos, arqueólogos, forenses y autoridades locales y regionales. Además, siempre que me fue posible, acudí como observador u observador participante a inauguraciones, homenajes, aniversarios y marchas organizadas en torno a las fosas comunes. De esta manera, habiendo recopilado información entre diciembre de 2018 y marzo de 2020, di paso al análisis de los datos recopilados con el objetivo de responder a las preguntas que habían guiado la investigación. Desde esta posición construí finalmente el texto, formulado dando respuesta a las preguntas que guiaron la recopilación de datos y el análisis posterior en cada una de sus tres partes respectivamente. Partes que daban respuesta a las mismas preguntas a través de los tres capítulos que componían cada una.

En la primera parte he respondido a la pregunta acerca de cómo se ha desarrollado históricamente el proceso de producción de las prácticas monumentales y qué formas han tomado. En el primer capítulo, “De la

violencia a la resistencia”, narré cómo la extrema violencia no evitó relatos como el de Candeleda, donde una niña rezaba un padre nuestro cada vez que pasaba junto a la fosa común o el de Cervera del Río Alhama donde José reprodujo en su recuerdo el proceso represivo que desembocaba en el entierro de su padre y sus compañeros en la fosa común. U otros que optaron por formas visibles en el territorio, piedras, cruces, marcas en los árboles como en Villamayor de los Montes, Castillejo de Martín Viejo, Bercial de Zapardiel, Morata de Jalón, Alcaraz, Guillena, San Fernando o Cobertaleda. También estas primeras prácticas tomaron la forma de las ofrendas florales clandestinas de familiares y militantes en parajes como el Puerto de la Pedraja y el Monte de Estepar, así como en cementerios como el de Guadalajara, Dos Hermanas u Ocaña. Acciones que pasaron a realizarse también de manera abierta, en gesto de resistencia frente a la autoridad como desde la inmediata Posguerra ya hacían las mujeres en La Barranca.

En el segundo capítulo, “Recuperar cuerpos y lugares”, he puntualizado que en la segunda mitad de la década de los setenta es cuando se ha producido una verdadera explosión en la cantidad de prácticas monumentales sobre las fosas comunes. Prácticas amparadas por la alta conflictividad social la Transición del régimen tras la muerte de Franco, las elecciones multipartidistas y la nueva Constitución. Prácticas que surgieron en un clima de autogestión desde el ámbito familiar, militante y de las administraciones locales, ante un Gobierno de España y unas formaciones políticas mayoritarias que adhirieron el “pacto de silencio”. Por ello en una particular alianza entre familiares, militantes, activistas y otros miembros de la comunidad, las prácticas monumentales sobre las fosas tomaron forma en un proceso que pasó por comenzar a limpiar la propia fosa en aquellos cementerios donde habían sido ignoradas durante décadas, como en Baeza o Alcolea y Lora del Río. Así comenzaron a construirse estructuras sobre la misma fosa, que hacían referencia a nociones como la “Libertad” o la razón de lucha de quienes estaban allí sepultados. De ello derivaron formas como las que se encuentran en los cementerios de localidades como Magallón, Ocaña, Guadalajara, Valladolid,

Paterna, Talavera, Sevilla, Camposancos, Mancha Real, Burgos, Barcelona, Valencia, Dos Hermanas, Coín, Castellón, Salamanca u Oviedo. Si la fosa estaba localizada en el cementerio generalmente se hizo algún tipo de construcción sobre la misma, con gran heterogeneidad en sus formas: jardines, monolitos, perímetros de cadenas, grandes losas, esculturas, obeliscos o pirámides producidos normalmente por artesanos locales. Una operación similar se produjo sobre fosas en parajes como el de La Barranca, el puerto de la Pedraja o en el Monte de Estepar. No obstante, aquellas que se ubicaban fuera de los cementerios la forma más común fue la exhumación de los cuerpos y su inhumación en estructuras al interior de los cementerios, como fueron las experiencias numerosos municipios de La Rioja, Navarra y en algunos de Extremadura, aunque también ocurrió en el interior de cementerios de Valdepeñas, Aranjuez o La Carolina.

En el tercer capítulo, “La construcción de monumentos en tiempos de la “Memoria Histórica””, desarrollé cómo estas prácticas monumentales, que implicaban exhumaciones, dejaron paso a una nueva ola de intervenciones después del año 2000. Mientras que la práctica más generalizada fue la de intervenir sobre la fosa común, y no la exhumación, durante los años setenta y ochenta, la ultra visibilidad mediática de la exhumación de Priaranza del Bierzo derivó en una multitud de exhumaciones que no obstante terminaron por reinternar los cuerpos en estructuras en el marco de una práctica monumental. Estas fueron las experiencias de lugares como Villamayor de los Montes, Estepar, Mérida, Puebla de Alcocer, Paterna de Rivera, Fonsagrada y Guillena, cuyas formas responden a panteones de pequeño y mediano tamaño y que comparten función con grandes iniciativas como las de Aranda de Duero, Málaga, Elgoibar, Pamplona y la Fatarella. Desde los más pequeños vinculados a iniciativas asociativas locales y familiares, a los últimos que han partido de una voluntad institucional por parte de los gobiernos regionales. Se trazó así una línea de políticas de la memoria que responde a una trayectoria histórica con raigambre en una práctica local. Iniciativas que no obstante coincidieron en el tiempo y en el espacio con otras formas que tienen lugar sobre las fosas mismas

como ocurría en los años setenta y ochenta. Se han producido también nuevas intervenciones y actualización de las que ya tuvieron lugar décadas atrás. Estas son las experiencias que se señalaron en lugares como Ocaña, La Barranca, Benavente, Colmenar Viejo o Coín, donde se produjeron ampliaciones de estructuras ya existentes, ahora con placas o referencias políticas. Así se incluyeron también las voluntades institucionales de señalar las fosas comunes bajo la categoría de “Lugares de Memoria” de Andalucía, Cataluña, Navarra y Asturias.

Esta trayectoria me permitió definir en un primer momento a las prácticas monumentales como un proceso que tiene lugar a lo largo de varias décadas y que no se produce de manera aislada, sino que, por el contrario, se inscribe en una sociedad compleja inmersa en debates ideológicos y en limitaciones materiales que intervienen en las posibilidades de materialización sea sobre la fosa o tras la exhumación. Así he definido el proceso de producción de las prácticas monumentales en su desarrollo histórico en tres grandes etapas desarrolladas en cada uno de los tres capítulos de la tercera parte. La primera etapa situada en la Dictadura, momento en el que comenzaron las primeras marcas y ofrendas pese a la situación de represión; la segunda en la Transición y los años siguientes cuando se produjo la eclosión de intervenciones sobre las propias fosas o tras la exhumación de las mismas para el desarrollo de prácticas monumentales que tuvieron que negociar con la amenaza de la violencia y los consensos políticos; y, finalmente, el período que se inicia desde el año 2000 donde la noción de “Memoria Histórica” entra en la agenda política de la mano del “giro forense” y los conceptos de “dignidad” y “víctima”, produciéndose de nuevo centenares de prácticas sobre las fosas y tras las exhumaciones, que hicieron un uso heterogéneo de las formas.

En la segunda parte, pasé a responder la pregunta de cómo se insertarían las prácticas monumentales en esa sociedad en la que buscarían incidir. Por ello, allí presté atención a diversos aspectos que precisamente problematizaban socialmente las prácticas monumentales, con mayor énfasis en la observación y participación por medio de técnicas etnográficas de los eventos que se suceden

en torno a las fosas. Así en el cuarto capítulo, “Un espacio público y a la vez privado”, partí de la construcción social del duelo en torno a las fosas comunes. Este es un hecho que surge del sentimiento de pérdida familiar, el cual en estas particulares experiencias se une a la pérdida de referentes políticos. Los calendarios de ritos, los formatos de las ceremonias hablarían de una vinculación afectiva de los asistentes, pero también de su adhesión a ideales abstractos y proyectos políticos específicos. En este sentido planteo cómo se están produciendo en torno a las prácticas monumentales unas construcciones de la identidad política desde la derrota. Ello agruparía desde sindicalistas, republicanos, socialistas, anarquistas y comunistas a masones y feministas o aquellos que lucharían por identidades regionales y nacionales, que no fuesen las del centralismo español, como la gallega, andaluza, valenciana, catalana o euskalduna. De esa derrota también explicitó un carácter espacial fundamental a la hora de entender las prácticas monumentales con relación a la urbanidad. La propia ubicación de las fosas comunes ha condicionado las prácticas monumentales relegándolas generalmente a las partes menos visibles de los cementerios o a parajes escondidos en montes y cunetas. De ello deriva que fuesen recurrentes homenajes y prácticas institucionales en los que se pone en relación la fosa común con la centralidad del espacio habitado, a través de marchas memoriales, mapas, redes y otras iniciativas que conectan puntos entre la reivindicación y la construcción simbólica del espacio público.

En “Puntos de inflexión forense”, el quinto capítulo, explicité cómo esas experiencias que tienen lugar en torno a las prácticas monumentales y que pueden asociarse a la dimensión familiar y militante del duelo se ven confrontadas también por la irrupción del paradigma científico. Planteo al “giro forense” como la llegada de la posibilidad de realizar exhumaciones bajo protocolos científicos con el objetivo de identificar los cuerpos de aquellos que fueron enterrados en fosas comunes, al mismo tiempo que se produce la popularización de la retórica de los “Derechos Humanos” y la “Dignidad”. No obstante, identifiqué que esta situación se asocia a una dinámica “individualista” así como a la supremacía del paradigma científico sobre las lógicas previas de

las prácticas monumentales. De ello se expusieron experiencias donde los testimonios materiales de las prácticas monumentales estaban siendo destruidos en el proceso de las exhumaciones, como ha ocurrido en Guadalajara, Valladolid o Paterna.

Problematizar socialmente el “giro forense” frente a las prácticas monumentales implicó expresar cómo el primero gozaría de una aceptación que podría imponerse a la lógica de las prácticas monumentales, y que también sufriría de limitaciones. Dada la baja tasa de identificación de los cuerpos exhumados se ha derivado en la necesidad de construcción de estructuras para alojar los cuerpos. A ello dediqué “La vuelta al monumento”, el sexto capítulo. De esta manera expliqué a las prácticas monumentales como una respuesta pragmática a las insuficiencias del “giro forense” a través de experiencias de construcción de panteones y columbarios, y una nueva oportunidad para la producción de prácticas monumentales tal y como describí en Uclés, Paterna de Rivera, Magallón, Aranda del Duero, Villamayor de los Montes, Candeleda, Salamanca, Pamplona, Elgoibar y Paterna. También que en ocasiones la problemática derivada de las exhumaciones promovidas bajo la lógica del “giro forense” ha sido junto a la no identificación de los cuerpos, que no se encuentren los mismos. En estos casos he recogido experiencias como las de Santa Mariña, Cuenca, Granada, Jinámar, Mieres, Laviana, Villarobledo, Llanes, Arriondas, la Sierra del Perdón, Candás o Chiclana, donde ante la imposibilidad de producir una práctica monumental sobre la ubicación exacta de la fosa o con los cuerpos mismos, produjeron estructuras que supliesen esa ausencia frente a la insatisfacción tras las expectativas generadas por lo forense.

Esta amplia perspectiva sobre la sociedad en la que se inscriben las prácticas monumentales me permitió definirlas por tanto como partes fundamentales de la construcción social del duelo y de una cultura de la derrota. Algo que se ha caracterizado también por el ostracismo urbano al que se ven condenadas estas prácticas, y de qué forma se ha reaccionado a través de los homenajes que se vinculan a las prácticas monumentales. Esos componentes sociales, unidos a los del “giro forense” y a la reacción que suscitó bien

destruyendo monumentos bien volviendo a construirlos, me permitieron definir cómo se insertaron las prácticas monumentales en esa sociedad en la que buscarían incidir: desde la cultura política, la espacialidad y los saberes biomédicos.

Solo a partir de esa complejidad del largo recorrido de la producción de las prácticas monumentales y de qué manera las mismas se ubican en una sociedad que genera homenajes, duelos y que a la vez se confrontan con la popularización de avances científicos, me fue posible generar una lectura transversal del modo en que funcionan las prácticas monumentales sobre las fosas comunes y responder a la pregunta acerca de los sentidos de esa externalización del recuerdo a través del gesto significante en el proceso de toma de conciencia. Este fue el contenido de la tercera parte. Así en el séptimo capítulo, “Memoria del cuerpo y memoria de los cuerpos”, partí de una lectura fenomenológica de esa situación dialéctica de oposición. Esa situación de oposición dialéctica habría desencadenado el proceso represivo que configuró las conciencias de la sociedad en tanto que, dominados desde la Posguerra, el recuerdo habría resultado el componente fundamental. La presencia en la memoria del recuerdo representaría un primer paso necesario para la propia existencia de las prácticas monumentales. Sería, por tanto, ese proceso de toma de conciencia con respecto al pasado y la realidad material el que se explica en la propia subjetividad siguiendo los marcos de interpretación marcados por Edward Casey. Estos habrían permitido que partiendo de la memoria se externalice el recuerdo en el exterior a través de formas concretas: homenajes, conmemoraciones y de acciones materiales específicas en el espacio. Por ello describí las diversas formas que podían tomar las prácticas monumentales, explicitando la dinámica de colocación de piedras, flores o cruces como una de las primeras y más básicas prácticas que habrían tenido lugar sobre las fosas comunes, para seguir a lógicas como las del jardín, el perímetro o la construcción de monolitos y esculturas sobre las propias fosas así como de panteones y columbarios con diversas formas. He planteado interpretar estas formas como una “supervivencia” de prácticas funerarias que se habrían

reproducido desde la antigüedad siguiendo la tesis de Aby Warburg, algo que también quedaba explicitado en el hecho de cómo en este tipo de prácticas monumentales se produjesen actos icónicos sustitutivos. Estos, que según Horst Bredekamp, implicarían que los cuerpos se sustituyesen por imágenes, que a partir de ese momento pasarían a integrar un todo que funcionaría de manera unificada.

Bredekamp sugiere que la forma por sí misma estaría vacía de significado, pero no por ello se estarían usando de una manera ajena a todo sentido. Si bien las prácticas monumentales pueden asociarse a una cultura funeraria previa, existiría una especificidad en la función social de las mismas y esa habría sido el objetivo del octavo capítulo, “La escritura de la historia a través del gesto de sepultura”. Esas formas elegidas para la práctica monumental responden a las condiciones materiales en las que el recuerdo se produce, y no obstante siguen buscando incidir en la sociedad, por lo que pueden ser interpretadas como acciones sociales siguiendo la definición de Max Weber. No estaríamos frente a simples reacciones que respondiesen a la lógica de la tradición, sino que, por el contrario, con las prácticas monumentales se estaría buscando un fin específico y racional, un resultado en base a una planificación o una respuesta emocional en el marco de la sociedad en la que se inscriben. Esto es lo que convertiría las prácticas monumentales de simples formas funerarias que podrían reproducir patrones que sobrevivirían de la antigüedad en acciones sociales que, siguiendo la teoría de Valentín Volóshinov, pueden interpretarse como gestos significantes de manera que esa conciencia individual de la que partió el recuerdo se exprese socialmente y al mismo tiempo pueda ser explicada en sociedad. De esta manera, ese gesto significante que representa la práctica monumental lo ubique en relación con la idea de la escritura de la historia propuestas por Paul Ricoeur y Michel de Certeau. Para ellos el “gesto de sepultura” se correspondería con la idea de la escritura de la historia, pues no solamente se recurriría al pasado, sino que se lo fijaría en el presente en una forma específica quedando un “memorándum” tras el gesto de la sepultura que los vivos podrán leer. El gesto de sepultura como “escritura”

dotaría tanto a los muertos de un lugar como a los vivos, que establecerían con relación a ellos un “deber hacer” en el presente y en el futuro. Así ocurriría en las prácticas monumentales al incluir los nombres de los asesinados, fechas de su asesinato, sus localidades de procedencia, los motivos por los que fueron fusilados o los ideales por los que combatían y justificarlas con la idea de que “esto se sepa”, “esto no vuelva a ocurrir”. Esas motivaciones unidas a las formas serían las que precisamente muestran la necesidad de establecer una comunidad en relación a los asesinados, que funcionaría como las construidas en torno a la imagen de Cristo, los Santos y los Mártires: los cuerpos de los asesinados integrados en dispositivos arquitectónicos en ese gesto significante que sería la práctica monumental escribirían esa historia en la que se crearían referentes virtuosos que conectarían el pasado con el presente y dictarían ese deber hacer bajo unos parámetros ideales. Precisamente que este tipo de estrategias tengan lugar frente a las lógicas biomédicas del “giro forense” hablaría de la resistencia de los saberes populares en torno al cuerpo, siguiendo la tesis de David Le Breton. Los asesinados en las fosas comunes integrados en la práctica monumental, como con los Santos, ya no vivirían para sí mismos sino para la comunidad.

A pesar del carácter sínico de la práctica monumental, derivaría otro hecho indisoluble a cualquier proceso comunicativo, que sería la disputa por su sentido lo cual caracterizo en el noveno capítulo y último de la tercera parte, “La práctica monumental en disputa”. En este sentido un primer síntoma del carácter ideológico de las prácticas monumentales subyacería en el desfase entre las formas asociadas al “honor” y los discursos vinculados a la “dignidad”. Por ello se seguirían reproduciendo esquemas mentales producto de la dominación en quienes producirían las prácticas monumentales siguiendo el planteamiento de Orlando Patterson en torno a la imposibilidad del amo de permitir que el antiguo esclavo acceda a su mismo estatus tras haberlo degradado. Así mientras las formas “solemnizarían” y “honrarían” a los muertos, las posibilidades de aceptación institucional de esas prácticas estarían limitadas. De hecho, se producirían confrontaciones que precisamente explicitarían el carácter de gesto

significante de las prácticas monumentales. Este sería el caso de aquellas estrategias por parte de amplios sectores políticos dominantes de que estas prácticas no sucedan, de la destrucción de las fosas comunes en el marco de políticas de desarrollo o de las agresiones fascistas a las ya existentes. También que el “giro forense” no fuese compatible en un primer momento con las prácticas monumentales y que las instituciones progresivamente se estén interesando por las fosas comunes sobre las cuales quieran realizar sus propias prácticas monumentales explicitaría otros estadios de esa disputa. Por tanto, si en el futuro las prácticas monumentales desaparecieran por desinterés, por el avance de las exhumaciones “sin colores políticos”, o si por el contrario encontrarán un desarrollo sostenido a través de iniciativas locales y regionales o si quedarán institucionalizadas por la acción Gubernamental, implicarán nuevas páginas en la historia de este tipo de prácticas. Pero en todo caso seguirían explicitando su carácter de signo en disputa.

De esta manera, a través de este tercera parte, he podido comprender que ese recuerdo parte desde la mente y progresivamente se ha externalizado a través de diversas formas en el territorio que interpreto bajo la lógica de la supervivencia de las formas de la antigüedad y la sustitución de las imágenes anteriores de las fosas por otras nuevas en ese proceso de práctica monumental. Un proceso definido como acción social, gesto de sepultura y escritura de la historia. Una práctica monumental entendida bajo la idea de gesto significante en el cual se produce un conflicto social por la disputa en torno a su significado. Por ello comprendí que los sentidos de esa externalización del recuerdo como escritura de la historia a través del gesto significante van de la mano del proceso de toma de conciencia por parte de comunidades específicas.

Una vez formuladas esas conclusiones parciales a través de cada una de las partes puedo formular finalmente una conclusión general sobre de las prácticas monumentales. Las prácticas monumentales han comenzado tras los mismos asesinatos, cuando se realizaron las primeras marcas y ofrendas sobre las fosas comunes pese a la represión. Se produjeron de manera masiva durante la Transición y los años posteriores cuando se tomaron diversas formas sobre

las propias fosas o tras la exhumación de estas. De nuevo desde el año 2000 bajo la noción de la “Memoria Histórica”, se produjeron nuevas prácticas monumentales motivadas por la nueva ola de exhumaciones. Prácticas que de nuevo toman forma sobre las fosas comunes o tras las exhumaciones. Un largo camino de prácticas sostenidas durante décadas, que se insertaron en la sociedad como partes fundamentales de la construcción social del duelo y de una cultura de la derrota, condenadas al ostracismo urbano. Insertadas en una sociedad que cambió también radicalmente ante la implementación de los saberes biomédicos bajo la lógica del “giro forense” y la retórica de la “dignidad”. Una sociedad que pese a ello siguió recurriendo a la producción de prácticas monumentales ante las limitaciones de lo forense. Así estas prácticas, que habrían partido de la mente y que se han externalizado en el territorio haciendo uso de formas que han sobrevivido en el tiempo, y que tienen un significado social explícito. A través de esas formas que han sustituido los cuerpos se habría producido una escritura de la historia sobre el territorio basada el gesto mismo de sepultura, con el cual se ha buscado incidir en la sociedad, creando una narración de una comunidad perdida, que recuerda a la del cristianismo y sus Santos y Mártires. Una narración que al basarse en la producción de gestos significantes estaría eminentemente en disputa. Ese uso tan particular de los cuerpos para la escritura de la historia es por tanto la singularidad que puede reconocerse tras la comprensión de las prácticas monumentales en el conjunto del territorio, escritura que no refiere simplemente a los asesinados, sino que presenta sus cuerpos encarnados en las formas elegidas.

La significación de las prácticas monumentales para la sociedad en el futuro no sería ya una tarea de esta investigación, pese a que quizás pueda influir mi interpretación sobre la misma. Corresponde a la propia sociedad continuar dando un sentido al pasado y precisamente con ello explicitarían la “anomalía” del Reino de España en el contexto europeo en lo que a producción de memorias se refiere, tanto desde las propias comunidades como desde las instituciones. La presente investigación, como cualquier otra acción social, tiene

unos límites. Y los de esta quedaron marcados en 2021. Qué será de la sepultura de quienes fueron asesinados desde 1936 será otra página para escribir de la larga historia de las prácticas monumentales. Prácticas que comenzaron quizás con unas flores o un padre nuestro al caminar junto a una cuneta y que hoy son progresivamente institucionalizadas por el Estado. Si dentro de unas décadas, como los pastores de Poussin, alguien se detiene junto a un monolito para sorprenderse de que allí, en Arcadia, también estuvo presente la muerte, podría ser entendido como un fracaso de la agencia de las prácticas monumentales sobre las fosas comunes. O quizás de un éxito, donde esa práctica monumental habría influido a la sociedad, dejando de simplemente interpretar el pasado para cambiar el presente de manera que Arcadia entonces sea ese país de ensueño, y por tanto no sólo habría cambiado el orden simbólico de los muertos, sino también el mundo en el que se inscriben bajo la utopía a la que se asocia bajo el epitafio:

ET IN ARCADIA EGO
MORTUUS EST PRO LIBERTATE
IN DEFENSIONEM REIPUBLICAE
MCMXXXVI
